

**TLC Church Council Meeting – October 13, 2020**  
**Transfiguration Lutheran Church**

**Attendees:**

Staff: Pastor Arthur Murray

Council: Melinda Chau, Steve Jorschumb, Allison Lindman (joined at 7:40) , Steve Mattson, Jerry Olson, Gretchen Schroeder, Sandy Stooke, Becky Woll

**Regrets:** Dan Ekholm

**Devotions:** Steve Mattson

**Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Sandy Stooke with second by Melinda Chau to approve the agenda with the addition of Council staffing and an ELC request under New Business. Motion carried and approved.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** Gretchen Schroeder

Motion by Becky Woll with second by Steve Mattson to approve the September Council meeting minutes. Motion carried and approved.

**Financial Report:** Jerry Olson

- General Fund receipts for September 2020 totaled \$38,497. Disbursements totaled \$53,941, resulting in a deficit of \$15,444 for the month. The YTD balance is a deficit of \$63,396. September had the lowest receipts and disbursements to date. Receipts are 8% below budget. October is looking better based on the first two weeks of the month. These numbers do not include the PPP loan amount.
- Capital campaign receipts totaled \$7,330 with expenditures of \$16,077. The September deficit is \$8,747, and the YTD deficit is \$1,972. There remains a surplus of \$8,280 for the entire campaign to date.
- Motion by Becky Woll with second by Gretchen Schroeder to approve the September financial report. Motion carried and approved.

**Pastor's Reports:**

**Pastor Arthur Murray**

General

- We continue to ride together the rollercoaster that is the pandemic. Teachers and families are trying to adjust to the onset of hybrid school models. Our Early Learning Center is doing the same thing. A recent survey in MN schools found that 79% of teachers are anxious. 51% are concerned for their mental health and 25% are considering switching careers. This is just one of the many demographics in our congregation. We have seen layoffs and furloughs continuing. I am beginning to hear of more and more marriages that are under great strain in addition to single people suffering from isolation and depression.

- In light of these realities, I want to draw our attention to three things:
  - We need each other. We need grace. We need the church.
  - These continue to be very unusual times and cannot be evaluated or measured against whatever we think normal is.
  - Our faith tells us that we encounter God most fully at the cross. At the place of suffering. We can expect to encounter God very profoundly in these days.

#### Pastoral Acts

- Since last report:
  - One wedding
  - Two baptisms
  - Four new members welcomed
- Upcoming
  - Possibly six 10<sup>th</sup> graders to affirm their faith (confirmation) on October 25.
  - Three families to join the church on Nov 8 along with five baptisms
  - Three couples preparing for marriage

#### Grace's Farewell

- Will be at 11:30 outdoors on October 25<sup>th</sup>. Incredibly grateful for her time with us.

#### Financial

- StewardshipFest on October 2 was a wonderful event. Many thanks to the team of Hildred D., Norma M-O., Chip S., and Bob R. for putting it together and to John Rosenow for his music. There were a few new families in attendance and beautiful weather. Many thanks to all who attended.

#### Worship

- Outdoor worship will continue as long as weather permits on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. Rally Day, Sept 13 was a highlight as was the outdoor worship on October 11 with baptisms and new member welcome.

#### Youth and Family

- Confirmation began last Wednesday night. It was well attended.
- Sunday School is beginning but participation and interest has been minimal. I question whether families with young children (like my own) have the bandwidth to engage with anything other than school at this point. We will continue to stay in touch and see what offerings families are able to engage with/where can we meet a need.

#### **Pastor Ed Treat**

- Continue to meet with staff, pastoral care team, worship planning, make pastoral calls, preach and lead worship.
- Planned and presided at Addiction Awareness Sunday
- Meet regularly with Addiction Awareness Team to continue team training process. TLC is host to 10 congregations proceeding through this process.
- Hosted webinar, Addiction & Race had 248 registrations.
- Planning next webinar, Addiction & Race, the American Indian Experience, October 22 at 11 a.m.
- Presided at a wedding at Fort Snelling Chapel
- Attended Bishops anniversary celebration to honor my 25 years of service
- Planned and presided funeral services for Caryl Minnetti

- Attended online Event for Center for Changing Lives, Liberia
- Working with Stewardship team to develop giving cards
- Visited with Steve Jorschumb to discuss TLC email use issues. I followed up with consultation with my attorney and was told that the use of TLC emails to inform TLC members of Addiction & Faith ministry events does not violate any laws or regulations for communicating about ministry events with TLC members. The Federal Trade Commissions Can Spam Act is solely related to commercial business use of emails and would not apply to this situation. Furthermore, he said there would be no issue with me continuing to do so after I leave as long as there is a clear way for people to unsubscribe. He said the TLC council could even officially authorize this use of emails as a sign of support for this new ministry if they wanted to. I am willing to remove the emails if you ask me to, but I would be sad about that.

### **Old Business:**

- **Covid-19 Response Team Update:** Pastor Arthur Murray  
Re-Opening Update from the Covid Response Team
  - Process Update: At this point, the team is still advocating a refrain from a broader building use policy – instead addressing potential program implications individually. There is a small number of demographic groups who are questioning an across the board policy of building use. We are finding families with small children are using caution with both participation and providing leadership in programming. Middle School and High School families are expressing more in person contact when possible. The November Covid Response Team meeting will include making a recommendation for in-person gatherings from November-December.
  - Here are some recommendations from the team:
    - We recommend allowing 2 students from the Youth Room Renovation team to start doing some “demo” or prep of the youth room over the next two months. Pete Erickson will be the staff liaison and the timing will be on weekends.
    - We recommend Pete Erickson, on behalf of staff and the Covid Response Team, communicate with confirmation/peer minister families about a potential student exposure to Covid 19. This communication will be in coordination and by permission of the student’s family. Pastor Arthur will be an editor to the communication. Additionally, the Covid Response Team is advocating transparent communication with families when encountering program issues related to the pandemic.
    - We recommend that Rob and Arthur work with Brad Nolte to be sure that there has been adequate training to implement a worship live stream practice from the Sanctuary with trained volunteer leaders.
- **Racial Justice Statement:** Jerry Olson
  - Reviewed racial justice statement and discussed what to do next. Discussed that use of “repent white supremacy” may lead to guilt and shame. That language also prompts discussion. Discussed getting feedback on the statement from congregation. Becky Woll to provide suggested sentence to Racial Justice team to review/adjust for next month.

- **Email list security:** Steve Jorschumb
  - Steve discussed ongoing issue with Pastor Ed. Pastor Ed to follow up with attorney. It appears that the use of the e-mail list is not illegal since churches are not covered by the Can Spam Act. Pastor Ed is willing to remove the emails if requested.
  - Discussed Council being pulled back into this issue and suggestion was made for Pastor Ed to deal with this directly.
  - Acknowledged there may have been missteps, but issue is spiraling and is consuming too much of Council's time.
  - The Council supports the Addition and Faith Ministry, but directs Pastor Ed to remove all emails obtained from the TLC server. Council supports soliciting e-mail sign-up for Center of Addition & Faith in the TLC Weekly emails.

**New Business:**

- **Preliminary 2021 Budget:** Jerry Olson
  - Nancy Waldack put together a preliminary budget for 2021, factoring the pandemic into account. The budget was reduced by \$30,000 to account for lack of loose plate offerings and building rental income, along with reduced utility and ministry expenses.
  - Currently budgeting for 75% of senior level interim pastor.
- **Interim Pastor:** Steve Jorschumb
  - Steve Jorschumb had a call with Craig Pederson at the Synod. Craig is looking for possible candidates for the interim pastor. We need to get him a list of what criteria we are looking for and then form a panel to interview those candidates.
  - We are looking for someone to start December 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **Council Staffing:**
  - Dan Ekholm announced prior to the meeting that he is resigning from the Council. Council will vote on someone to complete Dan's term.
  - Four Council members are completing their two-year terms in January. Jerry Olson and Sandy Stooke will not be continuing on Council. Gretchen Schroeder is willing to serve another term on Council. Allison Lindman is undecided. This information will be passed along to the Nominating Team.
- **ELC request re: staffing issue:** Pastor Arthur Murray
  - The ELC requested making the ELC bus driver Mike Swanson an employee of the church due to a change in the state staffing definitions for the ELC and additional continuing education requirements. This is not related to insurance or Covid. TLC staff did not have any concerns with this request.
  - Motion by Becky Woll with second by Sandy Stooke to provisionally approve making Mike Swanson an employee of TLC until June 30, 2021 with an extension to be requested by ELC by April 30, 2021 if needed.

**Next Meeting Date:** November 10, 2020

**Devotions:** Sandy Stooke

**Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Becky Woll with second by Gretchen Schroeder. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.