

**TLC Church Council Meeting – June 8, 2021**  
**Transfiguration Lutheran Church**

**Attendees:**

Staff: Pastor Arthur Murray, Pastor Eva Jensen

Council: Melinda Chau, Dave Dickson, Steve Jorschumb, Melissa Klement, Steve Mattson, Janice Milford, Gretchen Schroeder, Becky Woll

**Regrets:** Cary Pao

**Devotions:** Gretchen Schroeder

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

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Dave Dickson with second by Gretchen Schroeder to approve the agenda with additions. Motion carried and approved.

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

April Council meeting: Motion by Dave Dickson with second by Becky Woll to approve the April Council meeting minutes. Motion carried and approved.

May Council meeting: Motion by Dave Dickson with second by Janice Milford to approve the May Council meeting minutes. Motion carried and approved.

**Financial Report:** Melissa Klement

- General Operating Fund receipts for May 2021 totaled \$32,471, which is a sharp decline for the month. Disbursements totaled \$63,279, resulting in a deficit of \$24,034 for the month. The YTD balance is a surplus of \$58,614. This surplus includes the benevolence match, which leaves an actual deficit of \$4,371 for the year to date.
- Capital campaign receipts totaled \$9,323 with expenditures of \$16,852. The May deficit is \$7,529 and the YTD is now a deficit of \$5,646. There remains a surplus of \$27,943 for the entire campaign to date.
- Motion by Becky Woll with second by Gretchen Schroeder to approve the May financial report. Motion carried and approved.

**Pastors Report: Pastor Arthur Murray**

Re-Opening

- The past month, hopefully, will be remembered as the month in which the pandemic lifted. This was very significant for our life together as a worshipping community. At our Council meeting last month, the Council voted to fast forward our re-opening plan. That decision was very good.
- On May 16 and May 23, we had in-person worship services at 8:30am attended by approximately 20 people each.
- On June 6, we had to move our Graduation Sunday service indoors from the parking lot due to a heat advisory. We had close to 100 people in the building.

- This coming Sunday we will be back to 2 Sunday services in the building for the first time in well over a year.
- These are all very welcome developments.

### Pastoral Acts

- The shift in pastoral acts has been even more dramatic. We have a backlog of funerals, weddings and baptisms. All of these are beginning to happen in fast succession with increasing attendance and fewer Covid restrictions.
- In the last month there have been three funerals (2 - Arthur, 1- Eva) and three baptisms.
- In the coming month we already have four funerals (3- Arthur, 1- Eva), a wedding (Arthur) and several baptisms pending. We expect this trend to continue throughout the summer. It may be fall before we get back to a more predictable pace.
- We currently have 56 people on our Pastoral Care list that we are visiting/caring for/checking in on.

### Benevolence Campaign

- Distribution of Benevolence grants is beginning this Sunday with a presentation to the Early Learning Center of a check for \$4000 which has already been earmarked by the ELC as a scholarship fund for children and families in need of financial assistance.
- August 15 has been designated as a Celebration Sunday at the conclusion of all distributions.
- John Thomson has continued to play a vital and helpful role in moving this process forward and establishing a protocol for communication and distribution of the gifts. Thank you, John!

### Staffing

- I am happy to report that we have hired a new Funeral and Wedding Coordinator, Patti Johansen. Patti is a long time member of TLC. She recently retired from a career working in church administration and faith-based non-profits. We are very blessed to have her step forward in this way!
- I am working with Michelle Reber and the Personnel Team to finalize job descriptions for the following part-time positions, all of which are urgent needs given the prospect of re-opening: Communications, Administrative Associate, Facilities/Custodian
- The latter two needs were on hold from pre-covid days, but now represent barriers to re-opening should they remain unfilled.
- The Communications position is now urgent need due to Brad Nolte's decision to reduce his role (he will be focusing on livestream and video only) and Jordan Zahrte's recent new employment to a full-time position in St Paul Public Schools. Ideally, we would like TLC Weekly, email communications, and social media to be tended to by one staff member.

### Transition

- The CYF Imagination Event was a great success on May 23.
- Please complete the online survey if you were unable to attend (find the link in your TLC Weekly email)
- The event model for our remaining five Imagination Events.
- Schedule:

- June 27 – Building and Property
- July 11 – Seniors and Care Ministry
- July 18 – Diversity and Neighbor Engagement
- Aug 15 – Mission and Outreach
- Aug 22 – Financial Sustainability
- We are asking Council to attend a minimum of two of these events in addition to the final Congregational Visioning Session on Saturday, October 9, 9am-3pm.
- Child care will be provided for all sessions.
- Please mark your calendars.

### Synod

- Many thanks to the Synod for the May 30 (Memorial Day weekend service) which provided a much needed rest for our musical and technical staff and vendors. The service offered up a faithful reflection on the one-year anniversary of George Floyd's passing.

### Children's and Family Programming

- Pastor Melanie is organizing a summer bookmobile to connect kids with books from the TLC library over the summer. She, Pete E, and Karen W. are working together to produce two TLC/ELC Family Friendly Community Night gatherings on June 23 and July 21. Volunteers are needed. Please sign up and help out.

### Staff Reviews

- 6 month staff reviews have been completed.
- I completed my 6 month review with Executive Council. Thank you!

### Staff Retreat

- Took place on May 18 at St. Luke's. It was our first in-person staff gathering since the pandemic. We got a lot of scheduling completed for the coming year thanks to the work of Rob Reid who leads us in that process.
- Other highlights included:
  - An overview of the Transition Process from Pastor Eva
  - A proposal from Pastor Melanie to further integrate children into the life of the worshipping community on Sunday mornings. We will be giving some of these ideas a test run in the fall.

### Looking Ahead in the Coming Month

- First BWCA trip June 16-20 – 10 people currently registered
- First Community Night – June 23
- Second Imagination Event – June 27

### **Pastors Report: Pastor Eva Jensen**

During the past month, May 12 through June 8, we have moved from the first half of the Christian liturgical church year that focuses on the Story of Jesus (from Advent through Easter) to the second half of the year that focuses on the "Story of the People of God" – our responses of faith and discipleship to

God's on-going presence and work in the world. In this season of Pentecost, also called Ordinary Time, the lectionary readings invite us to reflect on God's presence in the world, in all that God has made. The season invites us to reflect upon our experiences of God and who we are as disciples and communities of faith. How do we experience, reveal and share God's love, mercy and grace in our lives and the world? This liturgical season supports the intentional commitment to reflection and planning that Transfiguration Lutheran will focus on over the next six months as you embrace the transition process of change that comes with pastoral leadership transition.

Priority Focus Area: As your Interim Pastor, I am working with staff and lay leaders to design and lead a process of congregational reflection, conversation, discernment, and decision-making that will guide and support your development of a shared vision for ministry that is rooted in a clear understanding of yourself as a community of faith – your mission, values and plans for the future. This work will equip the call committee to complete the "Mission Site Profile" that is submitted to the synod and will inform the articulation of the pastoral staff position for your next pastoral call process.

On-going ministry – immediate planning (funerals, summer programs, staff coordination, communication) and shorter-term planning (2021-2022 calendar planning) – will be sustained and is integral to the longer term visionary planning, both grounding our keen awareness of current reality and interests and informing aspirations for the future.

Following is the Interim Transition Planning Process that has been designed, based on the focused Interim Transition Planning Process done at the Council Retreat on May 2nd.

The process will involve the work of three TLC Interim Leadership Teams:

Staff Team: focus on assessment of current reality, implementation of ministry plans, measurement of accomplishments, participation in evaluation and revisions, as well as engaging membership of the congregation.

Transition Team: High commitment team of Pastoral Staff, Church Council Representatives, Strategic Planning and Ministry Lay Leaders who will participate in most of the transition planning events, and 3-4 strategic planning workshops (total of 10-12 hours – a 1 ½ to 2-day retreat) to prepare a synthesis of the TLC current reality, a shared vision for the future (with clear mission and values), identify contradictions that block movement toward future, and strategic directions to address the blocks and move TLC toward the future.

Ambassadors: staff and members who promote the process and planning initiatives and goals, serve as a resource to members with questions and concerns, promote engagement in the process, and provide feedback to Transition Team.

The process will be implemented through a series of participatory events designed to be inclusive of staff and congregational members. The intention is to create opportunities for people to express thoughts and ideas, listen to the thoughts and ideas of one another, and generate inspiring, faithful and creative ideas for the future life and ministry of TLC, rooted in a review and assessment of the current reality.

Five Congregational Imagination events:

- June 13th – Children, Youth and Family; Intergenerational Ministry
- June 27 - Property and Building
- July 11 – Seniors and Care Ministry
- July 18 - Diversity and Neighbor Engagement
- August 15 - Mission and Outreach
- August 22 – Financial Sustainability

June 13th - Sunday Worship Focus - Overview of Interim Transition Process

Four Extended Staff meetings:

- June 15 - Ministry Mapping and associated roles/responsibilities
- June 29 - What's working well and What is blocking us from working effectively & collaboratively as a staff team?
- July 13 - How can we address these blocks and build a vital team of collaboration in ministry?
- July 20 - Report back on Action Teams &/or FC training

Transition Team: This team is recruited and formed in June (and July, if necessary). Team members participate in 3 of the 6 Congregational Imagination Events, collectively review and synthesize the outcomes of the 6 events, participate in the October 9th Congregational session and commit to full participation in the Strategic Planning workshops (10-12 hours in October/November).

Congregational Event: October 9 – 6 hour session: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, including lunch.

- Journey of Faith - including glimpse into the future, trends, emerging priorities, waning energies; Congregational Story and Identity
- Mission, Values, Behaviors, Messages, Image Shift

In addition to designing and planning the Interim Process, ministry focus over the past month has included:

1. Worship planning and leadership: Four Sunday services were offered by TLC – 1 pre-recorded Synod worship service, one scheduled outdoor worship service (moved indoors) with graduation focus, baptisms and welcome to new members, two recorded services, one of which was also offered as an 8:30 am indoor service. This past month I presided in 2 services.
2. Pastoral Care: Pastor Arthur, Marilyn Erickson and I continue to meet every Tuesday to review pastoral care and prayer needs of congregational members. Our pastoral care and prayer list continues to hover at around 50. The number of funeral services has increased significantly, both recent deaths and previously postponed services being requested as we are able to safely gather. I officiated at one funeral in May and am planning for one in June.
3. Children, Youth and Family Ministry: Pete Erickson and Melanie Heuser-Hill, Pastor Arthur and I meet weekly for on-going planning for Children, Youth and Family ministry. A Sunday afternoon in-person 3-hour facilitated Imagination Event was held on May 23rd to foster wider engagement of members and deepen conversation and imagination about the future of CYF ministry. Nineteen persons participated, including 4 staff. The session was highly interactive and generative of energy and enthusiasm for CYF. The outcomes of this session will be integrated

into the whole congregation transition planning processes that will be taking place through October 2020.

4. Staff transition planning involved work with Pastor Arthur to implement the TLC Council's acceptance of the resignation submitted by Brad Nolte. Additionally, Patti Johansen was hired as a Funeral and Wedding Coordinator. We had an initial on-boarding conversation to shape coordination with Marilyn Erickson, Michelle Reber and Pastors. More to follow.

Summary of engagements in addition to the above:

Staff meetings every week: pastoral care, all staff, worship-planning, extended worship planning and pastoral team leadership. One full day 2021-2022 planning session was held on May 18th with all staff.

Worship recording sessions with Brad Nolte

Finance Team meeting

Stewardship Team meeting

Weekly gatherings with My Grandmother's Hands study group, led by Pastor Laura Thelander, Jordan Zahrte, Irene Amon, and Pastor Arthur

Mission and Outreach Committee meeting: reviewed pledges/contributions to the "Double the Gift" campaign and planned for distribution of the gifts received.

Racial Justice Team Meeting

Covid Team Meetings

Personnel Committee meeting. We have begun an assessment of the current staff positions and roles, multiple ministries, and staff alignment with current ministries of TLC. Focus this month on immediate need for communication staff person, office administrative assistant, and facilities support person(s).

Strategic Planning Team meeting – continuation of review and updates from each TLC strategic planning team - what has been done/is happening. Working to develop Organizational chart.

Council Meeting

I enjoyed a week of vacation, added to the Memorial Day weekend off. The time for rest and renewal is deeply appreciated. I enjoyed a road trip to the Rocky Mountains and a visit with my family in Wyoming. Many thanks to Pastor Arthur and staff for their support for this truly "away time".

I pray for God's blessings of wisdom and grace to continue to guide us.

#### **Covid-19 Response Team Update:**

- Things are continuing to open up as numbers continue to go down.
- Masks will be encouraged at the 8:30 service and will be required at 10 am service.
- Also dropping social distancing and no singing policies.

#### **Old Business:**

- **1 + 1 Fund:**
  - There is a plan in place to start distributing funds in person.
  - Planning to have a program on August 15<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the campaign

- **Children, Youth and Family Imagination Event:**
  - The first imagination event went well.
  - There were 19 people in attendance, with a broad range in age.
  - All events will incorporate a zoom option for those not able to attend in person.

**New Business:**

- **Congregational Imagination Events:**  
Encourage as many people as possible to attend these future events. This provides a good cross-section of ideas.
  - Property and Building – June 27.
  - Seniors and Care Ministry – July 11
  - Diversity and Neighbor Engagement – July 18
  - Missions and Outreach – August 15
  - Financial Sustainability – August 22.
  
- **Political Signage:**
  - The ELC is looking for guidance on the display of political signage on church property.
  - Consistent with IRS Revenue Ruling 2007-41, no TLC employee, staff member, vendor, or contractor may endorse or promote a political party or candidate on church property.
  
- **Allocation and Disbursement of Funds:**
  - Gifts and Memorials is a small group, part of the Mission and Outreach team.
  - Nancy Waldack is working on cleaning this up and getting some excess funds off our books.
  - Bob Riley is working on matching designated funds with real needs.
  - Nancy has identified \$8,000 from 2 funds that have been sitting in the account for years that are designated to missions.
  - Motion by Gretchen Schroeder with second by Melissa Klement to approve the recommendation of the Mission and Outreach team to use these funds to fulfill the commitment to support Irene Amon this year. Motion carried and approved.

**Next Meeting Date:** July 13, 2021

**Devotions:** Cary Pao

**Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Dave Dickson with second by Becky Woll. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.