

TLC Church Council Meeting – March 9, 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, Cary Pao, Gretchen Schroeder, Becky Woll

Regrets: none

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 6:38 pm.

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Dave Dickson with second by Becky Woll to approve the agenda with addition. Motion carried and approved.

Review and Approval of Minutes: Gretchen Schroeder

Annual Meeting: Several revisions were noted. Minutes will be updated for approval at the March meeting.

February Council meeting: Motion by Dave Dickson with second by Cary Pao to approve the February Council meeting minutes. Motion carried and approved.

Financial Report: Melissa Klement

- Financials were positive again in February. General Fund receipts for February 2021 totaled \$76,718. Disbursements totaled \$59,922, resulting in a surplus of \$16,796 for the month. This includes \$7,515 for the benevolence giving match, which will be dispersed to the various agencies in the coming months. Without the benevolence giving match included, the monthly surplus is 9,281. The YTD balance is a surplus of 23,822.
- Capital campaign receipts totaled \$24,013 with expenditures of \$16,852. The February surplus is \$7,161 and the YTD surplus is \$3,869. There remains a surplus of \$37,458 for the entire campaign to date.
- A question was raised on salaries/staffing. Pastor Melanie Heuser Hill and Jordan Zahrt were originally contracted through February 1, but with the benefit that their roles bring, they are currently committed through the end of 2021. Their salaries were included in the approved 2021 budget.
- Motion by Dave Dickson with second by Melinda Chau to approve the February financial report. Motion carried and approved.

Pastors Report: Eva Jensen

As I approach the two-month date of beginning service with you as Interim Co-pastor at Transfiguration Lutheran Church, we are in the middle of our shared Lenten Journey of Faith under the focusing theme: “Pathways to Prayer: Deepening our relationship with God and One Another”. Planning and preparation for the season of Lent and worship has been at the center of our ministry leadership as pastors and staff together. We are working collectively as a staff to create a variety of engaging opportunities for

members, including preparation of Lent packages for families with children and a congregational mailing with ashes and prompts for prayer practices in each envelop.

I celebrate and am grateful for the enthusiastic and creative team ministry of all staff who contribute with multiple gifts to provide meaningful worship of quality. The flexible and welcoming leadership of Rob Reid, Director of Music, is a guiding skill that makes it possible for us to bring our best to worship life with Transfiguration Lutheran Church. Brad Nolte, videographer and producer, is a grace-filled supporter of each of us as we lead the varied parts of each worship service. Brad creates a beautiful whole out of our safely and separately recorded parts – truly revealing the many parts, gifts, and skills of the body of Christ at Transfiguration Lutheran Church.

Worship participation on Sundays has averaged about 400 participants over the past month. Ash Wednesday was 244 and Wednesday Lent average is 112. Over the past month, I have preached two Sundays and on Ash Wednesday. I have presided at three Sunday services and shared presiding with Pastor Arthur on Ash Wednesday.

Areas of emphasis over the past month include:

1. **Pastoral Care:** Pastor Arthur, Marilyn Erickson and I meet every Tuesday to review pastoral care and prayer needs of congregational members. I have designed two different forms to shape and guide our planning and pastoral care ministry. These forms have been adopted to strengthen and clarify our work.
2. **Bible Study:** I have planned the design and some content for a 10-week Bible Study on the Gospel of Mark. I did not clearly communicate the Lent beginning of this series or promote it within the congregation. No one called the church office to indicate interest or a indicate they would participate. I am not sure the design that I have envisioned matches the interest of congregational members and will seek to clarify interests of members to inform next steps in offering a Bible Study.
3. **Discernment of the many ministries, committees, and groups that constitute the ministry of TLC as a congregation.** This is a first step of assessment that will inform the design of a participatory discernment process to shape a practical shared vision for Transfiguration Lutheran Church.

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

Worship recording sessions with Brad Nolte

Finance meetings with Nancy Waldack and Pastor Arthur and the Finance Team

Youth and Family, children's and Intergenerational ministry planning with Pastor Arthur, Pete Erickson and Pastor Melanie

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

TLC Racial Justice Committee meeting

TLC RIC Committee meeting and meeting to coordinate RIC worship leadership and participation – an affirming celebration of the RIC Ally Team! They would like to continue planning visible participation within the life of TLC.

TLC Mission and Outreach Committee meeting: promotion of the “Double the Gift” campaign to expand community partnerships, service and justice and plan distribution of the gifts received. \$28,755 has been contributed by members to date, which will total \$57,510 when matched by John Thomson.

TLC Personnel Committee meeting. We have begun an assessment of the current staff positions and roles, which also inform the design of a participatory discernment process to shape a practical shared vision for Transfiguration Lutheran Church.

Antares Tech. support and trouble-shooting continues to equip in-home and office based work.

Strategic Planning Team meeting – review and orientation to the TLC strategic planning work that has been done within TLC.

One-on-One in-depth meetings with Jane Voss, Jeanine Brown, Pete Erickson, and Melanie Heuser Hill Council Meeting

Monthly meeting of the Minneapolis Area Synod Interim Ministers Association Team – presented the participator methods and processes I use to guide identity, mission, vision, and strategic planning with congregations in transition.

I appreciate every person I have met and every conversation which deepens my relationships and understanding of who you are as a congregation and members of TLC – the expansiveness of your faith, life and ministry as a community. I look forward to continuing this good work begun ... and living into the promise of Easter hope and Resurrection.

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

Pastor Eva Jensen

Pastors Report: Pastor Arthur Murray

Personal

- Many thanks to those who were praying for my daughter, Richenard, today. It was a minor surgery, but any surgery is a big deal. All went well.
- My move to 80% time as of February 1 has been a little challenging. I don’t feel that I have achieved that reduction of hours yet. That said, the addition of Pastor Eva does make a big difference and we are gradually living into the division of responsibilities as outlined at the annual meeting.

Pastoral Acts

- We had our first funeral (6 people) and our first wedding (18 people) in the church building in a year.
- Most families are choosing to wait a little longer for baptisms until we can have a physical gathering.

Lenten Worship

- Many thanks are due to the dedicated and creative work of many people to produce a mailing that went to all members with ashes for self-imposition on Ash Wednesday.
- I am particularly grateful to Pastor Melanie and Pete Erickson for their inter-generational approach to youth and family ministry as evidenced by Wed night prayer practices during Lent (paper prayers, ribbon prayers). Look for Pastor Melanie’s interview with Marilyn Erickson tomorrow night during worship and an introduction to praying while knitting.

- Rob Reid and the music team continue to curate outstanding, creative worship as they have throughout the pandemic.
- Sincere thanks to Pastor Eva, Jane Voss and all the RIC Ally Team, along with Guest preacher Rev. Jeff Sartain from Edina Community Lutheran for a truly meaningful Reconciling in Christ Sunday on February 28.

Building

- A special thanks are due to Michelle Reber and Keith Olson who continue to keep a close eye on building needs. This past week a lift was rented, and lighting was replaced in the sanctuary with LEDs along with moving, and cleaning of the ceiling fans. Keith, Michelle and Brad did the work themselves.

Adult Education

- The My Grandmother's Hands book study led by Jordan Zahrte, Pastor Laura Thelander and Irene Amon continues its strong start. I believe this will be a transformational process with a wide impact.

Synod Events

- Synod Tool Kit 2021 is Saturday March 13 9am-Noon. This is highly recommended for all Council members and congregational leaders.

Covid Response

- Even with our move into Phase 4 of our response plan with numbers currently at 17 per 10,000 over the last 14 days, it appears that case counts are beginning to plateau, while a majority of scientists are predicting another surge. Even as we experiment with more in-person offerings, I remain very grateful for the Covid Team and their work to stay on top of this trends on a weekly basis.

Holy Week Services

- Much of our Holy Week planning is complete. We are expecting to produce newly recorded services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday and offer a livestreamed outdoor drive-in service for Easter Sunday. In case of rain, we will move that service indoors and it will be available for livestream only (no in-person worship if indoors). Pray for great weather!
- Pete Erickson is producing our traditional Good Friday 10am Family Service in a video format. Thank you, Pete!

Covid-19 Response Team Update:

- Hennepin County numbers are staying low at 17 cases per 10,000, which puts us in Phase 4 of re-opening.
- The first in-person worship service is this Sunday at 8:30am.
- Working with Boy Scouts of America on April 24th Pinewood Derby event.
- Currently planning for in-person worship once a month.
- Confirmation groups will be begin meeting in-person on Wednesday evening.

Old Business:

- **Pastor Arthur Review:** Still pending

- **Confidentiality Agreement:**
 - Motion by Dave Dickson with second by Melinda Chau to approve the updated confidentiality agreement. Motion carried and approved.
- **Synod Tool Kit March 13th:**
 - The Synod Tool Kit workshop is this coming Sunday, and it is not too late to register. If interested, Steve Jorschumb can forward the information.

New Business:

- **ELC Board vote on 2 candidates**
 - Motion by Dave Dickson with second by Janice Milford to approve the Angie Larson and Danny Johnson for the ELC Board. Motion carried and approved.
- **In-person Worship Service March 14th 8:30**
 - E-mail or call church to register for the in-person worship service.
- **Easter Service**
 - Planning an outdoor drive-in service on April 4th, similar to what we've done before. Service will also be live-streamed.
- **Council Retreat**
 - Last year's retreat was cancelled. We still have a deposit on hold at the Arc Retreat Center that we can use whenever we are ready to reschedule.
 - There is a possibility to make it part of the discernment process, but it is too early to know the timing. It would be better to hold this discussion in person, so keeping this option open.
- **Pastor Eva Housing Allowance**
 - Motion by Becky Woll with second by Dave Dickson to approve \$40,000 of Pastor Eva's salary to be designated as housing allowance. Motion carried and approved.

Next Meeting Date: April 13, 2021

Devotions: Melinda Chau

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn by Becky Woll with second by Gretchen Schroeder. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.