

Trinity Lutheran Church
Church Council meeting, Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Non-traditional Council meeting (retreat) held in the youth room with special guests from the Fox Valley Islamic Society: Mamadou Coulibaly, Mohammad Rashid, and Roxana Rashid.

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by President Jeff Riddle.

Attendees: Jeff Riddle, Tim Gauerke, Becky Liegl, Pastor Bryan, Pastor Andy, Pastor Dione, Charlene Kuenzi, Mark Harrington, Don Morgan, Mike Claussen, and Mya Berzsenyi

Prayer: Pastor Andy

Devotions: None given.

Secretary's Report: The report was distributed and reviewed. Motion to approve the secretary's report by Charlene Kuenzi, seconded by Mike Claussen, motion approved.

Treasurer's Report: The report was distributed and reviewed. Motion to approve the treasurer's report by Tim Gauerke, seconded by Mike Claussen, motion approved.

Pastors Reports

Pastor Bryan

The month of January included a first in our ministries at Trinity Lutheran Church.

For the first time in 30 plus years, one of our December Christmas programs was cancelled due to inclement weather. As a result, our congregation once again celebrated the birth of the Christ child on January 14th and 15th, with our youth leading us in song and the retelling of the Christmas story.

January also included many ministry events that normally take place in the life of our church: our annual meeting and review of our annual report; the election of our new council members and our first council meeting of the new year; youth activities and confirmation meeting after the long Christmas break; and the beginning of the season of Epiphany.

My work included hospital visitations and home visits, along with regular assisting and preaching at our worship services. Inclement weather disrupted our normal Confirmation schedule, but the upcoming month of February will see us meeting regularly.

I also took part in our planning for our Sunday study group, Lent, and the study and devotional opportunities that Trinity will offer during this time.

Our pastoral staff as a whole provided care for the family and friends of seven people connected with our congregation who passed away in January, and the family of one member whose committal service was held in Appleton.

At the time of this writing in February, our staff has provided care for the family and friends of four more people connected with our congregation who have passed away.

Our staff has worked together to serve these families in need. I'd be remiss not to acknowledge their faithfulness and hard work in attending to their regular tasks and the pressing needs that each day presented.

Pastor Andy

Feb. 28, 2017

February has been eventful enough in terms of actual events, but the most momentous moment of this past month might have been the Family & Youth Team meeting on Feb. 20, as it was **Tim Gauerke's** final meeting on the team. Tim has poured his heart into youth programs for more than a decade since he began as one of the founding members of the committee, originally called the Youth Ministry Planning Team. In that time, he helped both my predecessor, Nate Liedtke, and me get rolling as youth-focused pastors. I don't think anyone could argue that Tim's volunteer leadership has made a greater impact than that of anyone else when it comes to Trinity's youth ministry in the past six-plus years that I've been here. I couldn't be more grateful to him. Thankfully, Tim will continue to provide occasional leadership for youth events, most immediately the coming summer's Faith Ventures trip to Milwaukee, but it only makes sense that he focuses his attention on other ministries, like stewardship, that could benefit from his creativity in his forthcoming terms as congregation vice president and vice president.

The timing of Tim's progression is all the more fortunate with Kim Miller continuing to take the reins of more youth activities. This past month, Kim has continued to do marvelous work, now also coordinating Trinity's participation in the Junior Youth Gathering and assisting with the Christianity & Sexuality class Feb. 11 (and producing a new and top-notch take-home video version). JYG, the annual synod gathering of middle-schoolers, Feb. 18-19 in Appleton, went off without a hitch for our 23 students from the latest class of sixth-graders who since 2014 have been expected to attend JYG in their first year of confirmation, along with four seventh-graders who came voluntarily and a fourth-grader who came with the rest of her family. Thanks again to the Knoepfel SafeGuarding Youth fund, Kim and I had an outstanding crew of 13 additional accompanying adults: **Jeff Riddle, Becky and Jason Liegl, Dave and Laurel Leder, Katy Johnson, Amy Spadoni, Julie Bogard, Mel O'Keefe, Heidi Fischer, Lee Newsome, Jake Kuenzi, and Jake Foss.** The two Jakes were the latest additions to the young adults we've sought to empower for youth ministry through chaperoning JYG, and both did a fine job. A high point came at the end of the gathering, when Trinity won the award for most care-kit items donated for foster families, thanks especially to the eighth-graders who brought in a wealth of items with group-leader **Patsy Hunter's** encouragement.

Elsewhere in confirmation, Kim arranged for Debbie Kline from Lutheran Social Services to be our penultimate presenter on Feb. 22; Debbie had visible impact with her talk on the topic of broken relationships. Kim, Pastor Bryan, Pastor Dione, **Susan Elandt**, and I picked up a wealth of perspectives on youth ministry at Youth Leadership's one-day Recharge event in my Green Bay-area hometown of Howard on Feb. 25.

I have continued to focus the majority of my time on pastoral care, especially for families of our youth in what has continued to be a year filled with challenges, even as the pace of funerals has thankfully slowed at least a little. Still with no shortage of demands for my time, I have handed over my longtime liaison role with the Health Committee to Pastor Dione; both of us attended the February meeting, and Pastor Dione quickly demonstrated her good fit for the committee.

Pastor Dione: Council Report for February 28, 2017

It has been a full month with no shortage of opportunities to see the Holy Spirit in action – from worship, to home visits, to spending time with confirmation students at the Junior Youth Gathering, to sharing and enjoying talents at the Trinity spectacular, to presiding at funerals and more. Throughout it all, God continues to remind us that we are at our best when we are in community.

A number of our ministries have found themselves in times of transition and regrouping. I have been involved in helping the groups and people walk through discernment processes on future direction. Sometimes those discussions have led us to trustingly embrace the Christian form of death and resurrection and times of Sabbath rest. In January the TLW board decided to take a year sabbatical. This month, I had a debriefing session with the (former) TLW exec board to finalize details of what that looks like. Membership and Evangelism has also decided to take a break from meeting as well. During this time of rest, we'll be visioning new ideas for what a membership and evangelism committee might look like and testing out some new models of membership and community engagement.

I have also been working with the elders over the past several months to update hear their feedback on what has been going well and what things could be improved. I sent out a survey to gather feedback and have been working on updating the stated expectations and ministry focus of that program, which was well received and we got great feedback. I also called elders whose terms were coming to an end to invite them to either continue on or take a break as their term allowed for. Now that those calls are done, I'm in the process of inviting more people to become elders, particularly focusing on the worship aspect those duties in the immediate future and with membership mentorship and engagement in the longer-term plan.

Responding to interests that have been discussed in one on one conversations, we will be starting up two interest groups in March – Global Mission and Social Concern & Outreach. It is still yet to be determined what form those will take, but stay tuned!

As we continue to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the protestant reformation, we hosted a screening of Rick Steves' *Luther and the Reformation* on February 10th and 26th. I, along with Pastors Andy and Bryan, researched various studies for our coming Lenten small groups with a particular focus on Lutheranism. We decided on three different studies to offer variety to the congregation, which we are looking forward to facilitating.

I've continued to stay involved in the surrounding community both to find out ways to get involved outside the walls of the church and so that I can be a representative of Trinity in the community. On February 2nd, I attended the Interfaith Harmony Week Celebration in the Fox Valley. I also attended the ESTHER interfaith immigration task force meeting on February 14th to learn more about immigration dynamics in the local community and how faith communities are supporting our immigrant neighbors. I've also continued to stay involved in the Synod's Racial Justice Task Force and Global Mission Team.

Over the past month, I presided at three funerals and made 16 pastoral visits.

In Christ,
Pastor Dione.

Council Reports

Buildings and Grounds: None given.

Personnel: None given.

Health: None given.

Membership & Evangelism: None given.

Mission Stewardship: None given.

Parish education: None given.

Worship & Music: None given.

Family & Youth Team: None given.

TLW: None given.

Information & Technology: None given.

Future planning: None given.

Old Business: None given.

New Business: None given but information about the EPIC (Equipping People in Congregations) 2017 Conference.

Adjournment: Motion by Mike Claussen, 2nd by Tim Gaurke to adjourn. Motion Approved (8:05 pm)

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Liegl, Secretary