

Trinity Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting, Tuesday, July 24, 2018

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Tim Gauerke

Attendees:

Pastor Andy X	Tim Gauerke X	Mark Harrington X	Neil Dunday X
Pastor Bryan X	Becky Liegl X	Ruth Trinrud	Fred Kuenzi X
Pastor Dione X	Yvonne Robbers X	Don Morgan X	John Kunzman X
		Seth Rowland X	Diane Opperman
		Mya Berzsenyi	Nancy Johnson X
X = Attended Meeting			

Prayer: Pastor Dione

Devotions: Tim Gauerke

Future Devotions: Aug. - Diane, Sept. and Oct. - Yvonne

Secretary's Report	<p>Report was distributed and reviewed. Motion to approve by Tim Gauerke, seconded by Fred Kuenzi, all approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This amendment will be made in regards to June's Secretary Report. There has been ongoing conversation among council members suggesting a deep dive be done with the budget to see if there are any cost savings. In June, the motion was made for this to be approved by the council. Motioned approved by Don Morgan, and seconded by Mark Harrington. Moving forward, this will be known as the Task Force Budget, and those willing to be on the task force will be Don Morgan and Mark Harrington.
Treasurer's Report	<p>Report was distributed by Nancy Johnson. No questions or concerns.</p>

Pastor's Reports:

► **Pastor Bryan:**

My month was filled with parish ministry, but the parish where it happened was not Trinity Lutheran Church.

As part of our partnership relationship with the Saron Parish in the city of Phokeng, Terry Nellis, Deb Ostrander, and I were hosted by our brothers and sisters in the Bafokeng nation within the country of South Africa.

I am happy and awed by the fact that the people of our congregation and we visitors are loved by these brothers and sisters of ours who live 9,000 miles away. The reason why they love us and why we love them is because of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

While we may have different ancestors, cultures, and mother languages, we share the good news of Jesus and the stories of our faith in the Bible. We sing about and pray to the same Lord. We are all made children of God in the sacrament of Holy Baptism, and we all receive the body and blood of Jesus in his holy supper.

We are separated by a great distance, but we are joined together by our faith, and we have and will continue to have opportunities to meet face to face.

Members of the Saron Parish and other partner parishes of the East Central Synod will have an opportunity to visit us in 2020. In 2022, the churches of our East Central Synod are again planning to visit their partner churches. Individual churches and their members on both sides of the ocean will continue to communicate with each other, pray for each other, and visit each other on their own. In this capacity, Trinity may be hosting a member of the Saron Parish as early as next Christmas.

Two weeks were barely enough time to scratch the surface of understanding the lives, stories, and spirituality of our brothers and sisters in the Saron Parish, but we do understand quite clearly and are thankful to report that we are loved, and that our family in Christ extends far beyond city limits, borders, cultures, and ancestors.

In Jesus, we are one people.

Thanks be to God!

► **Pastor Andy:**

Our youth trip to Houston that began a month ago today was of our best Faith Ventures trips yet. Our 22 teenage travelers had a tremendous time at the strongest and most inspired ELCA Youth Gathering that I have experienced. The organization of the event was astoundingly smooth, and the speakers and musicians were deeply relevant and relatable to 30,000-plus young people and accompanying adults. As you likely heard me say if you attended one of the presentations in worship this past weekend, you can certainly be proud of our participating high-schoolers, and I'm grateful to my fellow trip leaders—especially **Susan Elandt** in her third tour of duty as Trinity's Youth Gathering trip coordinator, as well as **McKenna Meza**, **Dean Sondrol**, and Pastor Dione, who so thankfully was able to jump in on short notice. And, although Youth Coordinator Kim Miller was unable to join us on the trip, her masterful facilitation of the entire journey before the journey was a gift.

Now I'm gearing up for another journey—the fifth annual Young Adults Service Trip. **Bill Frank** and I will accompany young-adult travelers **Jake Foss**, **Maddy Frank**, **Alex Gotto**, **Jake Pankratz**, and **Alana Radley** on the July 29-Aug. 5 trip to eastern Kentucky, where we will serve in partnership with St. Vincent Mission as our young adults also did on our 2016 outing. Please keep us in your prayers!

The weeks since returning from Houston were extraordinarily busy, with both my supervisor (Pastor Bryan) and the staff member I supervise (Kim) out of the office for several weeks. But, with no small amount of volunteer help, we carried on a couple of key July traditions with great success. Our latest week of Day Camp on July 9-12 was a great time for 21 grade-schoolers. It's an annual opportunity for local kids, but this Day Camp was different because of its shorter, half-day schedule (to complement the expansion of summer school in the Waupaca School District) and its in-house facilitation, as Crossways Camping Ministries' counselors weren't available to help on our chosen week this year. I'm grateful beyond words to **Patsy Hunter**, who returned from retirement as our Day Camp coordinator, along with **Carolyn Niemuth** and a great team of fellow leaders: **Caitlyn Ollmann**, **Kayla Cain**, **Maggie Ollmann**, **Cadie Ash**, **Lylli Sondrol**, **Art Bolen**, **Molly**

Reinke, Mark Reinke, Becca Mortensen, Sarah Highlander, Katy Johnson, Morgan Johnson, Mary Krueger, and Mary Hotvedt for providing lots of lessons, snacks, transportation, games, and all-around fun that helped our kids to learn about God's love. And, with lots of help from Cub Scout Pack 3634 and its new Cubmaster, **Izzy Chouinard**, our annual effort at the July 4th parade through downtown Waupaca pulled together 507 pounds of food and \$612.83 for the Waupaca Area Food Pantry, bringing the six-year parade total to 3,366 pounds of food and \$3,215.81 since President **Tim Gauerke** dreamed up this awesome idea. (We did OK while Kim and Pastor Bryan were out, but I thank God to have them both back now!)

With that, the most significant part of my monthly report will be the highly anticipated report from Trinity's Family Task Force. Chairwoman **Heidi Fischer** and fellow Task Force member **Neil Dunday** will present the report, which, with its significant recommendations, is the culmination of extensive efforts that Heidi, Neil, Sarah Highlander, **Yvonne Robbers**, and **Nicole Sherf** made to seek and analyze input from families of young people in our congregation. The Task Force members' activity was limited to several weeks this summer, but I strongly believe that their output will benefit Trinity's families for many years to come. I'm grateful to God for their great work!

► **Pastor Dione:**

*"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God."
Ephesians 2:8*

I begin my council report this month with the same scripture reading as last, as I ended last month by attending the ELCA Youth Gathering and began this month by returning home from it, fresh with enthusiasm and excitement for the youth in our congregation and throughout the church. The Youth Gathering was truly a joy to be a part of. Our high schoolers represented themselves, our congregation, and the Church incredibly well. Seeing their enthusiasm for the connection between inclusion and grace with the life of the church reminded me and further reinforced the hope that exists in the truth and power of the grace of God lived out in community.

We expanded our Trinity community with the Baptism of Anthony and Julia Krueger on the same day when their parents, Paul and Mary Krueger, joined the congregation through the rite for Affirmation of Baptism. I have been collecting other names from people who have expressed interest in joining the congregation as well, so I'm looking to hold a late-summer new member class rather than waiting until the fall for our next one. Longer range, I am considering switching toward a new member class model that is driven by interest in joining rather than a scheduled time on the calendar. This would likely mean smaller new member classes more often.

I have been heavily involved in helping to plan for our special summer services including Polka Worship weekend (July 28-29) and Worship in the Park (August 19). Retired Pastor Gene Gauerke is going to be preaching during our polka services in honor of Trinity's 75th anniversary. Lori, Wanda, and I have been working with Gene to make this Polka Worship service possible, and I think it is going to be a fun time. I'm also looking forward to Worship in the Park, so that we can get all of our worship service attendees together in one place for a relaxed worship service and a potluck fellowship time afterward.

Though it is hard to believe, the summer is passing us by quickly and soon confirmation will be starting back up again. I have been working on getting things ready for my confirmation class by updating schedules and

assignments and have worked with Kim Miller for some more organizational planning. It's sure to be another good year.

Throughout this month, I continued and then finished an online book study on Brene Brown's book, *Braving the Wilderness*. This was the first time I had facilitated an online study. It went well overall, and I learned some ideas for how to make this format work better in the future. The response was largely positive, and I do plan to do another one in a similar format.

In the greater community, I am working on preparations for the Fox Valley Islamic Society's 19th annual Interfaith Gathering in Neenah on August 5, as I have been invited to be one of the guest speakers and panel discussion participants. I am incredibly humbled by the invitation to speak at this kind of event. I hope that there will be a good turnout from Trinity so folks can gain understanding and build relationships with our interfaith neighbors.

God has surely made all these things possible and all the other ministries carried out in Christ's name by the gift of grace alone - and what a gift it is!

Council Reports:

<p><u>Buildings and Grounds: Pastor Bryan</u> Don Morgan, Fred Kuenzi Bill Frank, Deb Kinison, Ken Claussen, Dan Tischendorf</p>	<p>Presenter: Don Morgan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. PA/Communication center, ongoing. We presently have a system that is not accessible. Ideally, this system would have communication with the Fire Department. A rough estimate of \$1569 is needed to fix this issue.2. Miron and roof issues/ice issues, ongoing. Miron is taking responsibility of what needs to be done to correct this issue.3. New bus, ongoing. Kim Miller will be working on getting some advertising completed to put in the newsletter. A very rough estimate of \$50,000 is needed to be raised.4. Fire pull station, ongoing. Initially, this issue was brought up at the March council meeting. We presently have one pull station that is located behind a locked door in the lower level. According to Per Mar and the fire marshal, this does not meet code. Ideally, we need one upstairs, too. The present council has concerns as to how this passed inspection when the new addition was completed - see No. 5.5. Mike Steuerwald, who is in charge of our building and grounds, has been asked to attend the next council meeting to help give a better understanding of the pull station and PA system, and to update council on other maintenance concerns.6. The AC compressor fan blades, motors, and thermostats were inspected by Johnson Controls. So
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	far, a check for approximately \$1,000 has been received for this inspection.
Personnel: Pastor Bryan Ruth Trinrud Rich Rasmussen, Steve Johnson, Jim Stoltenberg, Terri Lick, Penney Frank	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No meeting. 2. PTO policy, ongoing. A request has been made for the personnel committee to present something in writing so it can be voted on.
Health: Pastor Dione John Kunzman Carol Gehrke, Paul Sletten, Julie Hagen-Coenen	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A brief meeting was held in June and no meeting in July. 2. One cane and walker has been donated to the church. 3. As new names are received, they will be added to the home visit list when needed.
Membership & Evangelism: Pastor Dione Yvonne Robbers Rita Harris, Amy Spadoni, Vicki Groth, Molly Reinke	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No meeting until September.
Mission Stewardship: Pastor Bryan Tim Gauerke, Nancy Johnson Marshall Lysne, Dave Leder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 75th anniversary for Trinity is approaching. A marketing campaign has been started. Kim Potts, who has helped with other events, has agreed to help with promotional things including the design.
Parish Education: Pastor Bryan Neil Dunday, Diane Opperman, Suse Opperman, Jean Schwirtz, Carmen Sondrol	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No meeting. Presently, Neil is representing this committee on the Family & Worship Task Force.
Worship & Music: Pastor Bryan Becky Liegl Charlene Kuenzi, Nancy Ross, Wanda Eikenbary, Joni Radley, Pam Lysne, Be Parker, Shana Rogney	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No meeting.
Family & Youth Team: Pastor Andy Seth Rowland, Yvonne Robbers Patsy Hunter, Susan Elandt, Kim Rowland, Nancy Ross, Katy Johnson, Mya Berzsenyi, Kim Miller, Rena Klimke-Klug, Kyle Mannel, Sara Hilander	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heidi Fisher was present to report on the Family and Worship Task Force – report follows minutes. There were three action items. Motions were made for approval. 1. Yvonne Robbers motioned to pass, seconded by Becky Liegl 2. Tim Gauerke motioned to approve, seconded by Yvonne Robbers 3. Becky Liegl motioned to pass, seconded by Yvonne Robbers. All present approved all three action items.
Information & Technology: Pastor Bryan Mark Harrington, Nancy Johnson Greg Lacey-Heartland Rep, Marty Miller, Pastor Dione	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New laptop is needed for the sanctuary. A motion was made to purchase one, and the cost would be approximately \$1500, not to exceed \$2000. The money will be withdrawn from special projects. Don Morgan approved this motion, Mark Harrington 2nd the motion. All present approved.

Future Planning	No report.
Old Business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See building and grounds - numerous ongoing issues. 2. Recently, there has been numerous issues brought forth to the executive committee. Due to no minutes or lack of follow through on issues, it was passed on to council that each committee should be taking some kind of minutes at their meetings so that documentation exists. This allows the ability to circle back on concerns and issues as they arise. President Tim Gauerke reiterated the need for this.
New Business	New members who were received by affirmation of baptism were Paul and Mary Krueger. Motion was passed for approval. Becky Liegl approved, 2 nd by Yvonne Robbers. All present approved.
Adjournment: 8:48 p.m.	Motioned made by Pastor Bryan, and 2 nd by Becky Liegl.
Next meeting: Tuesday, August 28, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.	

Report of the Trinity Family Task Force

July 24, 2018

Good evening.

The Family Task Force consists of members representing various age groups of family members at Trinity, along with members of the Parish Education Committee, Membership & Evangelism Committee, and Family & Youth Team. At its first meeting, the Task Force analyzed and considered data from the 2014 Congregational Town Hall Meetings report by Pastor Beth Macha, a 2015 report to the Family & Youth team from Jean Schwirtz in regard to Sunday School transitions and attendance, and Pastor Andy Behrendt's 2017 sabbatical report. The Task Force's decided overall mission was to focus on attendance in worship, connectivity of families to education and worship, and overall involvement of families in Trinity's ministries.

What we did:

- Produced two surveys: one for families of Sunday School-aged children and one for families of middle- to high-school-aged youth. These were emailed to families and posted on Facebook group pages.
- Became available for questions and comments in between worship services on four Sundays.
- Made personal phone calls and sent direct emails to invite members to complete surveys.
- Analyzed results of 2017-18 year-end evaluations from Confirmation students, peer leaders, small group leaders, and parents.
- Analyzed attendance reports of Wednesday and late Sunday worship services for the past five years.

The results:

- 36 completed surveys from families of Sunday Schoolers.
- 45 completed surveys from families of middle- and high-schoolers.
- As reported in the 2014 Town Hall Meetings, our congregation supports our youth programming—our Task Force found much of the same. There is overall positive feedback about worship, education, and offerings that Trinity provides for its families. Trinity received many affirming comments from members growing in faith, enjoying the variety of worship services and music, and satisfied with programs for children and youth.

Actions for Trinity Committees/Teams:

A member of the Family Task Force will attend the next meetings of the Worship and Music Committee, Family & Youth Team, and Parish Education Committee to present the following:

Worship and Music – To help families by allowing small children to be more engaged, less restless, and better occupied during worship services, the Task Force recommends ...

- A more contemporary style of worship during the late service on Sundays, with generally more upbeat music and/or fewer verses sung.
- Inclusion of Sunday School student singers as part of the late Sunday worship service bimonthly (every other month). This would offer better connection between worship and the Sunday School program. An increase in singing by the Children's Choir at the late Sunday service is also welcomed.
- More mindful usage of screens during sermons. Visuals help to keep children engaged.

Family & Youth Team – The Task Force recommends ...

- Finding volunteer Wednesday night worship assistance to help with the involvement of students during Worship on Wednesday (WOW).
- Finding a volunteer to coordinate a Wednesday night meal program.

Parish Education – The Task Force recommends ...

- Offering an additional, pilot Sunday School period during the latter part of the 8 a.m. Sunday worship service. It would have the same basic outline and weekly schedule as the existing program but would be broken into three age groups (3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds; kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades; and 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades) and require only three teachers. It would be held right after the children's message until the end of the service. There was a significant number of people asking for a Sunday School option of this kind, but the Task Force suggests securing commitments before starting such a program. We feel that a signed commitment of at least five children per age group and three total teachers would be needed *before* dedicating financial support and other resources from the congregation. This commitment would have to be maintained for the pilot program to continue. Family Task Force members would be available for the commitment process.
- Researching new curriculum for grades 3-5, especially focusing on getting the 5th-grade class ready for the Confirmation years.
- Offering more social-media- or web-based adult Bible studies that members can do in-home.

Actions for Church Council:

The Family Task Force recommends votes by Council to ...

1. Switch the existing schedule of the Wednesday night lineup based on survey feedback and Task Force discussion. We recommend: Still starting at 6:15 p.m. Wednesdays, **change the schedule from** (1) Worship, (2) Confirmation, (3) High School Bible Study **to** (1) Confirmation, (2) Worship, (3) High-School Bible Study. Benefits: Possibility of increased attendance by high-schoolers at WOW; likelihood of better student focus during Confirmation and behavior during WOW; increased overall attendance by families at WOW; and more one-on-one time with students for pastors and small-group leaders before heading to worship.
2. Support an onsite meal for families on Wednesday nights. We ask for a three-week trial period in the month of September. This meal would be held from 5:30 or 5:45 to 6:15 p.m. Funding would be needed; freewill offerings could eventually offset costs.
3. Authorize the Parish Education Committee to start an 8 a.m. Sunday School pilot program as described above. (Council vote would acknowledge the need to move forward. Parish Education Committee could work out details of the program once enough commitments by families are secured.)

(All three votes carried by Church Council, July 24, 2018.)

Family Task Force members:

- **Heidi Fischer**, chairperson
- **Neil Dunday**, Parish Education Committee
- **Sarah Highlander**, Family & Youth Team
- **Yvonne Robbers**, Membership & Evangelism Committee and Family & Youth Team
- **Nicole Sherf**
- **Pastor Andy Behrendt**