

Trinity Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting, Tuesday January 19th

Trinity Lutheran Church: Called to order 19:05

Attendees: Tom Johnson, Stephen Johnson, Pastor Andy, Pastor Jennifer, Nancy Johnson, Jeff Riddle, Pastor Bryan, Debby Kinison, Charlene Kuenzi, Nancy Ross, Marshall Lysne, Maurie Staube, Dave Peterson, Mike Claussen, Diane Opperman, Mya Berzsényi, Ruth Trinrud, Mark Harrington,

Devotions: Presented by Jeff Riddle

Secretary's Report: Read and reviewed without any omissions or additions. Moved by Dave P., 2nd by Tom J, approved.

Treasurer's Report: Very close to being in the red, but are only slightly over by one thousand for the year. The general account is also over one million dollars for the first time in quite a while. We also created new accounts and have more money set aside because of 2 large endowments from past Trinity members, which already have plans set in motion for their utilization. Charlene K. moved, Tom J. 2nd, approved.

Pastor's Reports: Shared and presented by PA, PJ, and PB who were also present at the meeting.

PASTOR BRYAN

It goes without saying, but December was a busy month for me, full of community activities, church concerts, school events, and the normal duties of pastoral care, preaching, and teaching.

Of special note: our church welcomed Bishop Gerry Mansholt into our midst on December 6th. My formal installation was held during worship that Sunday, and it was followed by a reception and potluck dinner. Thank you to all who helped make worship and the following reception a great event for all who took part in them.

Attending the Rotary Christmas party, the high school Madrigal supper, and a community gathering to benefit Foundations for Living, were highlights of my involvement in community activities during this holiday season. Attending our Tomorrow River Conference pastors' meeting in Lola was a great way for me to meet more of our area Lutheran pastors, and learn about how other congregations are serving the people of our area.

I have provided pastoral care to our members and those connected to congregation in our local hospital and through phone contacts. I also conducted a funeral service at Bethany Home, and brought communion to our shut-in members assigned to my care this month.

I have also had my first taste of what worship is like during Advent and Christmas at Trinity: great concerts, great programs, great music, and many opportunities to hear and share the Christmas good news. I was also able to experience our staff going into holiday overdrive, conducting practices, producing materials at triple and quadruple the demands of a normal week, and going about their service with great attitudes and good holiday cheer.

And yes, teaching 7th Grade Confirmation is still fun.

I expect January to be full of opportunities to become better acquainted with and integrated into our different ministry committees (I'm writing this in January, and have begun meeting with different committees already at this time.) And I'm looking forward to the months ahead.

Respectfully,
Pr. Bryan Robertson

PASTOR ANDY: Jan. 19, 2016

- We've had two very eventful months, but let me start with the big news from today. I want to express my gratitude for Pastor Jennifer DeNetz's ministry here at Trinity over the past 10 years, the last five of which I was blessed to spend serving with her. Pastor Jennifer's impact, especially in the past two years of our transition between lead pastors, will be felt for a long time. The character and grace that she displayed during the past year since the narrow vote not to call her as lead pastor is particularly remarkable. Her departure will surely be saddening for our congregation. As my son, Ben, said when I told him that Pastor Jennifer would be leaving, "That's bad news!" But we can also rejoice that she will be moving forward to lead another large and vibrant congregation at Prince of Peace in Appleton. I prayerfully wish Pastor Jennifer all the best, and I look forward to another transition, knowing how she helped us make it through the previous one. Pastor Bryan has already been a fantastic leader in the past months, and I know we're in good hands. I also want to note, as the question has already presented itself, that I have absolutely no hopes or plans to leave Trinity anytime soon. (Of course, the sabbatical leave that you as a Council graciously granted me for this coming May-August complicates things, but it also acts as a guarantee to any members who are fearful of further transition that you have me for at least an additional year through the summer of 2017, per the sabbatical terms.)
- As we begin to consider who will succeed Pastor Jennifer in teaching the sixth-grade confirmation class for the remainder of the year, we also celebrate the completion of the first phase of speakers in what has seemingly been our best-yet year of presentations to confirmation students and their prayer partners since beginning the series in 2013. Thanks to a great idea from **Kim Miller**, Jan. 6's technology-focused "E-piphany" presentation by Diane Doersch, the Green Bay School District's chief technology and information officer, was a huge hit that engaged teens and grandparents alike. Professional, traveling speakers will offer the final two presentations. Speaker/artist Eric Samuel Timm is speaking at Waupaca schools next week Wednesday, Jan. 27, with a public, faith-based message that will follow that day at 7 p.m. at the Waupaca High School Performing Arts Center, which our confirmation students will attend. This is thanks to our resumed partnership with youth ministers from Victory, First Assembly of God, and Shepherd of the Lakes churches, altogether helping the schools to make Eric's motivational appearances possible.
- The coming month will be a busy one for our middle-school ministries. Gearing up for Jan. 29-30, Lina Mohr is coordinating her first Middle School Lock-In as a staff member, with help from plenty of Family & Youth Team members and others. Lina is also putting the finishing touches on a huge lineup of 18 adults accompanying the 33 middle-schoolers registered for the annual Junior Youth Gathering on Feb. 20-21 in Neenah. As part of a progression toward safer youth-ministry practices and in line with the first Youth Safety Manual that Trinity assembled this past summer, we are doubling the number of adults rooming with kids, two adults in each room, which would have been inordinately expensive if it weren't for the new Safeguarding Youth fund that was recently established through the generous estate gift from the Knoepfel family. The fund also allows us to conduct national background checks on these and other volunteers and eventually will provide for presentations on youth-safety topics. In this early case, the fund (and a \$250 contribution from Thrivent Financial) also helps us develop adult volunteers for youth ministry, including parents, grandparents, and even several young adults.
- The journey before the journey to Nashville for the 30 of us on board for the coming summer's Faith Ventures high-school trip has continued with no small amount of success, courtesy of coordinators **Yvonne Robbers** and Kim Miller. A particularly busy weekend of Dec. 5-6 grossed \$709 at Spencer Lake Christian Center's Taste of Christmas event and \$982 at our inaugural holiday dinner. As sales continue, our next big event will be assisting with Feb. 14's Trinity Spectacular Concert, which, thanks to the Worship and Music folks, will once again benefit Faith Ventures. That same weekend, we'll begin the annual silent auction, which this year will feature a very nice 2015-team-signed football donated by the Green Bay Packers, thanks to a great idea by Yvonne to reach out to the green and gold.

- With both Lina and Pastor Bryan coming on board at a providential time, I've been able to shift much more of my time to pastoral care for youth and their families, with the number of serious needs simply exploding since late October. Having a staff member dedicated solely to youth programming has finally allowed me to focus squarely on people rather than programs, which Lina has nevertheless helped to develop. Pastor Bryan, for his part, has been an amazing resource and source of support when it comes to his knowledge of caring for youth amid these many complicated circumstances; he has assisted directly in many of these matters and provided some deeply valued insight.
- One of the highlights of the past two months was accompanying **Parker Kantos** on a tour of Luther Seminary on New Year's Eve, when both our families happened to be passing through the Twin Cities. It was great to be able to show one of Trinity's brightest young ministers the place where I studied as he continues to consider seminary. Parker has now been accepted to Luther, Princeton, and Pittsburgh seminaries, which is credit to his immense potential for ministry.
- A week later, on Jan. 9, I was back in the Twin Cities with **Mike Claussen** and **Julie Neubauer** for this year's traveling Recharge youth-ministry conference, organized by Tiger McLuen, who will be speaking at Trinity in April. Tiger's Youth Leadership organization is also hosting an event in Green Bay on Feb. 20 (a day I'll be at the Neenah youth gathering), which Pastor Bryan, **Susan Elandt**, Yvonne Robbers, and **Tim Gauerke** will attend. I learned a lot at the Minneapolis-area event this year, and I'm looking forward to yet another trip to Viking country on Feb. 1-3 for Luther Seminary's annual Mid-Winter Convocation. My third continuing-education event of the young year will be Feb. 29-March 2, a retreat in Marathon City, kicking off a health-focused program for church leaders that I'll be doing throughout the coming year.
- The past two months have also been eventful for my family. My wife, **Tracy**, is now the director of the Waupaca Historical Society, while also continuing to serve as the Waupaca Area Public Library's Exhibit Room coordinator. The greater flexibility I've been given recently has helped to make this possible for my family, and it's another substantial benefit of having Lina on board; I can't thank the congregation enough for creating her position.
- Finally, a word of thanks to the departing members of the Council for your service to Trinity. And a particular note of gratitude to President Steve Johnson, whose inspired leadership during these past few years, like Pastor Jennifer's, has been simply crucial and cannot be overstated. Steve has not only been a great Council officer, but he's also been a godsend as a source of support for us as pastors.

PASTOR JENNIFER

This is my last council report. I have received a call from Prince of Peace in Appleton. In this new call, I will be a co-pastor with Rev. Roger McQuiston. I will send out a formal letter explaining what this means for the congregation. I also wrote about my leaving in the newsletter for this month. Since the vote in December of 2014, I have been discerning my call. At that time, I still felt called to Trinity to help you through the transition to a new lead pastor. Now that Pastor Bryan is here and has gotten acclimated, I feel my call here is finished. The Holy Spirit is calling me to move on to new ministries and a new congregation. I have enjoyed my ministry with you. In this congregation, I have been a part of growing ministries and in the process growing spiritually myself. In my journey with you, there have been up and downs but together we have continued to serve Jesus Christ and make his forgiveness, love and peace known. I am thankful for our ministry together and for your prayers and support that have blessed me in so many ways. God's blessings to you, now and always.

I would also like to share some highlights from the past two months:

- I. Worship- Pastor Bryan installation service, The Choir Cantata, The Sunday School Programs, the Christmas Eve Services
- II. Trinity Lutheran Women- At the meeting on January 10th it was decided by the group present to restructure the board. There will be a Core Team (treasurer-Candy Hansen, secretary-Vicki Groth and team coordinator-Pam Fullmer) and then four Teams to plan events throughout the year. This will lessen the work load for the core team and also involve more women in ministry.
- III. Pastoral Care- It has been privilege to care for this congregation officiating at baptism and funerals and visiting you to bring prayers and Holy Communion.

Council Reports:

Personnel: Dave P. They had frequent meetings this month. Also in the process of re-writing and updating the personnel policy for the church

Buildings and Grounds: They did meet, but no one was formally at the meeting.

Membership and Evangelism: Tom J. Will be starting a new mentoring program for new members and families, as well as creating a new booklet for the new members to have. They are also continuing to look at different options to put on the old billboard. Most of the discussion is how we want to portray ourselves to the community.

Youth and Family: Pastor A and Mike C. Most of the information was already presented in PA's council report. They are also looking forward to the upcoming youth lock in scheduled.

TLW of ELCA: Debby K. Nothing new to report to council

Worship and Music: Char K. The third annual spectacular concert is set for Sunday, Feb 14th at about 2pm. Plenty of good music to share.

Parish Education: Dianne O. They are still in the process of re-writing the by-laws. They want to update them so they can better reflect the mission of what adult education should look like. This is especially a transitioning time since it was previously lead and directed by PJ. More to also be discussed when she leaves.

Mission: Marshall L. They have mapped out a strategy of how to unfold the missions of the church for the next coming months. It is a continued process of how to show our missions to the church and community. It has also been discussed about the recent large endowments to the church and how mission can use the funds appropriately.

Health: PA. Coming soon will be an opportunity for CPR training at the church, but more info to come. Also, for health reasons, Bonnie S. has decided to step down as health chair.

Future Planning: Stephen J. Will be assessing how we will need to fill the vacancy of PJ. There is also a new call committee being formed to facilitate this process.

Old Business: The Saturday morning workers will be terminated, because it was assessed and decided that there is no longer a need for their services. Tom J. Moved, Maurie S. 2nd, approved to end the Saturday morning workers.

New Business: From Pastor Jennifer

Letter of Resignation Tuesday, January 19th

Dear Executive Committee and Church Council,

I have accepted a new call to serve as a co-pastor at Prince of Peace in Appleton, Wisconsin.

My last day of service here as a pastor will be Sunday, February 7th. Thank for these past almost 10 years (March 1st) of ministry together.

Blessings,

Pastor Jennifer DeNetz

Adjournment: Tom J. moved, Charlene . 2nd