

Trinity Lutheran Church

Church Council meeting, Tuesday, March 22nd 2016

Trinity Lutheran Church: Called to order 7:00pm

Attendees: Tom Johnson, Jeff Riddle, Pastor Bryan, Pastor Andy, Nancy Johnson, Charlene Kuenzi, Nancy Ross, Mike Claussen, Don Holtebeck, Mya Berzsenyi

Prayer: Pastor Andy

Devotions: Jeff Riddle

Secretary's Report: Read and reviewed without omissions or additions. Moved by Don H. 2nd by Nancy R. Approved.

Treasurer's Report: Nancy returned from vacation Monday evening and will have her report submitted in the next day or two. She had time to review the expenses and offerings briefly and reported preliminarily the numbers look good and we appear at first glance to be in the black.

Nancy also gave us a report on the Richard Clapp Estate. Please see the revised spread sheet for reference to the specific designation and dollar amounts of the funds. It was a recommendation of the Executive committee to approve the designation of the funds. Discussion was held on the Benevolence distribution. Suggestions for specific programs was requested by Tom J. Suggestions included the food pantry, the backpack for kids program and supporting Special needs children's activities i.e.... Special Olympics whose funding has been curtailed in recent years. Motion made by Charlene K. to approve, 2nd by Don H. Approved.

Pastors Reports: Shared and presented by PB and PA who were present at the meeting.

Pastor Bryan Report for March

February began for me with 3 days of continuing education at Luther Seminary. In preparation for the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, the Winter Convocation featured speakers and seminars covering the pastoral theology and practices of Martin Luther.

I was able to meet with various ministry committees of our congregation: Personnel, Technology, Worship & Music, and Mission & Stewardship. I was also able to meet with our monthly men's breakfast Bible study, and was able to attend our Spectacular Concert. I visited two of our local benevolences, the Breadbasket and Foundations for Living, and was able to have a meet and greet meeting over coffee with one of the pastors at Shepherd of the Lakes.

February saw us beginning the season of Lent, where I was able to be one of our small group Bible study leaders. I will be leading our Wednesday worship services throughout Lent and preaching a sermon series on Jesus last words on the cross. Along with my regular worship duties, I helped plan and lead the funeral for Jan Wykel.

My work and encounters with congregation members were many and varied. I had one home visit; five home/nursing home communion visits; one work visit; four hospital/nursing home visits; one meal with a family; and I accompanied four of our parishioners to the Iola Winterfest.

I am continuing to teach 7th grade confirmation and am enjoying it. I hope that the feeling among the students is mutual.

Pastor Andy Report for March

March 22, 2016

Since I'm now the "old pastor" here at Trinity, I'll note that this latest phase of transition since Pastor Jennifer's departure has been pretty easily the busiest point to date for our congregation's pastors. To diagram the pastoral workload from Pastor Chuck's retirement in May 2014 until now, we've been steadily climbing to this all-time high, with the exception of the three months when both Pastor Bryan and Pastor Jennifer were here with me when things were blessedly normal. I can't wait for us to get past this busy Holy Week and Easter, and I'd really appreciate some interim help from our synod. As for the particulars of the past month:

- We experienced a much-needed resurgence in our high-schoolers' attendance at last week's Bible study. Since January, the turnout at Crossover mysteriously dropped to between three and 12 people, until Lina Mohr, **Kim Miller**, and I arrived at the conclusion after the March 9 Bible study that we needed to ask the kids what had happened. Thankfully, they answered with 15 anonymous online responses, which helped open our eyes to a number of things. For one, the teens really missed **Tim Gauerke**, who wrapped up most of his involvements after four years with Crossover last May, and they missed the activities that Tim was always so good at organizing. We also realized that we probably put the kids through too much transition, not only with Tim stepping back but also with Terry Martin coming and going as interim youth coordinator and Heidi Fischer also taking a step back while Lina stepped up as youth coordinator. And we really didn't set up Lina for success in the way we threw her into the central role of the primary Bible-study leader. Thankfully, both Tim and Heidi jumped back in for the March 16 Bible study, and, thanks also in some degree to a bribe of free DQ Blizzards, a classic turnout of almost 30 kids showed up to stuff eggs for this past Sunday's Easter Egg Hunt. With Heidi and Tim planning to help us round out the year, our game plan moving forward (based on my own experience of not really finding my niche as a youth minister until **Susan Elandt** led the 2012 youth trip and allowed me simply to focus on relationship-building) is to give Lina a chance just to hang out with the kids while the rest of us run the Bible studies. (By the way, Lina has been dealing with some health struggles lately, and your prayers would be appreciated.) I couldn't be more thankful to Kim, Tim, and Heidi as volunteers for their continued commitment to our high-schoolers. We'll see what next week's Bible study will bring, but it certainly feels like our momentum has returned.
- Just prior to that upswing in the high-schoolers' involvement, the second-annual BROvernighter drew four high-school guys for the March 11-12 event (down only one participant from the five we had last year). It was a great event despite the small turnout, and I'm thankful to **George Neubauer** and **Bill Frank** for their help, as well as to Pastor Bryan for making an appearance at our offsite campfire (until the teenage guys finally convinced us to snuff out the fire on an absolutely gorgeous night because they wanted to go back to the church and play video games). Our service project was painting the new Global Mission Wishing Well, and the event ended with a tremendous tour of Niemuth's Steak & Chop Shop. Unfortunately, a lack of interest led the third-annual Girls' Night INN to be canceled, allowing the guys to catch up (which, I'll admit, guys usually need to do) in the annual event count.
- Faith Ventures had a big month. The silent auction that ended Sunday amounted to a tentative total of \$2,835, which is fantastic. Our travelers also assisted with Waupaca Middle School's Candles and Cabaret spaghetti dinner for the fifth straight year on March 17, thanks to the gracious music department there, and it looks like we'll end up with \$400, which is great, too.
- The aforementioned Easter Egg Hunt was a success on Sunday, thanks especially to Lina's leadership as well as the infrastructure set for us by the **Sondrol family**, who took a vacation from the event itself after the better part of two decades while taking a literal vacation abroad.
- A brief word from Trinity's health ministries: **Linda Holtebeck** hosted our first Cancer Support Group meeting on March 17. Only one person joined Linda and me for the evening, but it's worth noting that our Grief Support Ministry, which still averages 10-plus people each month under leaders **Steve Hackett** and **Ann Rasmussen**, had only two participants attend its first meeting in 2011. I can only expect similar growth from Linda and **Alan Kjelland's** new group.
- The confirmation year somehow is already nearing its end; my eighth-graders only have one more lesson before shifting their focus entirely to their April 23-24 youth-led worship weekend. The big event for them and for the larger congregation in the coming month will be the presentation by featured speaker Tiger McLuen on Wednesday, March 13, at 7:15 p.m. Tiger is an unparalleled fountain of knowledge when it comes to youth ministry. I've probably learned more from him than from anyone else on the subject, and I'm thrilled that he'll be here to speak to our middle-schoolers, their prayer partners, and anyone else wishing to attend as he speaks about respect. Tiger will also address our high-schoolers immediately afterward at Crossover that night.
- Speaking of featured presenters, I'm grateful to two of Trinity's young adults, **Carla Ikert** and Council Vice President **Jeff Riddle**, for their inspired turns as guest preachers on the weekends of March 5-6 and March 19-20.
- And speaking of young adults, the annual Young Adults trip isn't losing any momentum. Nine current college students are committed to the June 4-11 trip to build houses in Kentucky, along with **Mike Psenicka**, **Terry Nellis**, and me. And the lineup is an absolutely stunning all-star team from past high-school trips. I couldn't be more excited.
- And I couldn't be any more excited to share this big news: Not only has **Parker Kantos** officially determined to attend Luther Seminary next year *and* join us for the young adults' trip to Kentucky, but he also asked if he could be our other intern this summer! I'm not sure that I've ever responded to a question with a more obvious "Yes!" Upon graduating from Waynesburg University on May 1, the final day before my sabbatical, Parker will promptly join us later that week. At the end of May, he'll be joined by Maddy Frank, who was already in place as an intern, and the two of them will be an outstanding duo to help with youth and—in Parker's case—other ministries while I'm out.

- I spoke with the Family & Youth Team about priorities we need to address before my May 2-Aug. 15 sabbatical, and I'll add one more note to you as a church council. Although I won't formally make a suggestion, I'll simply say that, if you as a council in the months while I'm out were to begin (or, really, resume) a conversation about changing the council structure and/or schedule to meet less frequently, I wouldn't be at all heartbroken. Though I'll note with pride that all my fellow members of the Family & Youth Team and Health Committee who are on Council are here tonight, the small turnout at tonight's meeting—even smaller than usual—to me begs the question of whether in the midst of your demanding lives we need to meet every month.

Council Reports:

Buildings and Grounds: Don reported the new safe has been installed and is operational. Don reported the transition from the old 4ft florescent light bulbs to new LED bulbs is almost 100% complete. The cost is right around \$2,800.00 dollars. We will recoup these costs in electrical savings in approx. 15 months. Exploration of new parking lot lighting is the works with substantial savings expected as the final details are put together. Don Reported Terry Martin the Architect is working on the Tiny Treasure entrance drawings.

Personnel: Tom J. reported that the committee is discussing options to keep Angie Decker on staff in her part time capacity. Tom read a Thank you card from PA for his thankfulness and continued support from the congregation as his sabbatical nears.

Health: Jeff R. reported the committee is working on updating their continuing resolutions. The CPR class is done and went well.

Membership & Evangelism: Tom J. reported the committee is working on a twofold approach to integrating new members into the church body.

Mission Stewardship: No report

Parish education: No report

Worship & Music: Charlene K. reported the committee is working on a document to address the procedure for assimilating special need members into specific groups.

Family & Youth Team: PA reported the committee met to address any last thoughts or concerns that may need to be addressed before his sabbatical. All areas appear to be covered. PA invited all members to Mark their calendars for April 13th when Speaker Tiger M. will be the guest speaker for the Wednesday night program. All are encouraged to attend. Tom Johnson also noted three times that was his birthday.

TLW: No report

Information & Technology: PB reported work is ongoing to move data out externally to free up space on the local servers.

Future planning: No Report

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Adjournment: Motion by Don H. 2nd by Mike C. Approved

Respectfully submitted, Tim Gauerke, Secretary

Devotions for April: Nancy Ross