

**Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 19, 2021 Zoom Conference**

Call to Order: Zachary Arbore **Time:** 6:33 pm

Opening Prayer: Pastor Paula Schmitt led the council in prayer

Roll Call & Action on Absentees:

Present at the meeting were Zachary Arbore, Amanda Cole, Meri Beth Elder, Herb Harris, Kathe Houck, Donna Jeffries, Mark Jones, Michael Macey, Karen Mowry, Rick Neish, Dana Shannon, and Pastor Paula Schmitt. Christine Weller was also in attendance.

Motion to accept Kennette Grohal and Jodi Kronenwetter as excused: Herb Harris. Second: Meri Beth Elder. Motion carried.

Adoption of Agenda:

An addition to the agenda was requested by Return to Worship regarding the Car Hop (Jim Stemmler).

Motion to accept the agenda as presented with the changes noted above: Herb Harris. Second: Mark Jones. Motion carried.

Consideration of Council Minutes:

Kathe Houck noted that under the Finance Committee change from "interest" to "internet".

Motion to accept Council Minutes and Changes: Amanda Cole. Second: Pastor Paula. Motion carried.

Communications: A letter from Bishop Kusserow to be discussed under Return to Worship.

Treasurers Report:

Rick Neish explained and answered questions regarding the details of the December 2020 Treasurers Report.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report: Meri Beth Elder. Second: Karen Mowry. Motion carried.

Ministry Report:

The Executive Committee gave a lot of thought regarding the committee assignments. Zachary Arbore requested that each of the Committee Chairs locate the meeting dates and speak with the outgoing chair for the transition. Michael Macey asked about where/how to hold upcoming meetings. Zachary Arbore suggested to continue meeting electronically via Zoom or email.

Committee Chairs

Finance: Mark Jones

Christian Education: Jodi Kronenwetter

Evangelism: Karen Mowry (Dana Shannon, Multi-Media)

Children Youth and Family Ministry (CYFM): Kennette Grohal

Fellowship: Michael Macey
Stewardship: Amanda Cole
Property: Herb Harris
Social Ministry: Donna Jeffery
Return to Worship (RTW): Meri Beth Elder
Constitution & By-Laws: Meri Beth Elder
Worship & Music: Meri Beth Elder

Executive Committee:

Pastor Paula Schmitt received a request through the Trinity website asking whether or not we would hold a same gender wedding at Trinity. Pastor Paula asked to not make a decision during the meeting but asked members to pray if this should happen at Trinity and table until the February meeting.

Kathe Houck discussed that the Executive Committee had an idea to hold an orientation meeting for new Council members on February 2, 2021 on Zoom at 7:00 pm. This meeting is outside of our regular business meeting. Pastor Asplin, assistant to Bishop Kusserow, will join the conversation to explain how Pastor Paula was called to our church. Mutual Ministry will also be joining the meeting.

Motions:

Constitution & Bylaws:

Motion to table the movement of standing committees to continuing resolutions in the constitution and bylaws section to examine further. Also, to charge the standing committees and their new chairs and examine their own committee duties:

Executive Committee:

Motion to postpone the annual ministry meeting from March to a date to be determined. Motion carried.

Finance Committee:

Motion to authorize funding for committee expenses: Herb Harris. Second: Meri Beth Elder

Mutual Ministry:

Motion to appoint Gail Hugo to serve on the Mutual Ministry Committee for a three year term. Motion carried.

Return to Worship:

Motion: Recommendation to plan to return to worship, February 7, 2021, all services with masks, distancing, sign in sheets and no singing IF we are able to secure adequate

ushers and Eucharistic ministers to maintain the safety of all staff and congregants.
Motion declined 7-3.

Motion: Send back to committee for deliberation: Amanda Cole. Second: Mark Jones.
Motion carries.

Special Gifts:

Motion: The office to purchase Pastoral Care Software. Motion carries.

Motion: Appointment of Jim Burica to serve on the Special Gifts Committee for a three-year term, replacing Ashley Varner whose three year term has expired this month. Motion carries.

Return to Worship:

The Car Hop scheduled for June 6, 2021 is requesting permission to begin planning for the event. The consensus is for Jim Stemmler to proceed, but to develop COVID-19 plans as well.

Motion to permit planning the Car Hop with the understanding that plans additional plans for COVID-19 measures. Motion carries.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: None

Motion to Adjourn: Mark Jones. Second: Amanda Cole. 8:31 pm.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:00 pm – Zoom Conferencing

Mission Statement: Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Latrobe, is to be a growing community of disciples of Jesus Christ, called by the Holy Spirit to share the Good News of God's love with all.

Vision Statement: We, the people of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Latrobe, Pennsylvania, by the grace of God, pledge ourselves to be:

*Vibrant in worship,
Inviting all God's children to discipleship,
Stewards offering ourselves for mission and ministry,
Intentionally serving those in need,
Open to spiritual growth,
Nurturing leaders for the new century.*

Vision 20/20 - Our focus is on...

- **Hospitality ...**
'Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.' Romans 12:13
- **Growing Deep and Wide in Our Spiritual Life ...**
'But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.' 1 Peter: 2: 9
- **Communication Outreach / Marketing ...**
'And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' Acts 1:8
- **Leadership: Nurturing / Mentoring / Raising Up**
'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.' Luke 10:2

Pastoral Acts 1/1/2021-1/31/2021

Transfers

Baptisms

Marriages

Deaths

Ruth Y. Metcalf + January 11, 2021
Paul A. Berenbrok + January 16, 2021



****Christian Education/Children's Ministry Meeting**

Monday, January 18, 2021 7:15 PM**

AGENDA

In attendance: Pastor Paula, Kelly Stanko, Kathy Ferlin, Margaret Conrad,
Christine Weller, Kelsey Stemple, Jodi Kronenwetter

1. Sunday School 2020-2021

--"One Anothering"

Margaret C. and Kathy F. to work on activities around kindness theme;
Email and/or mail out to Sunday School students/families

Book Club for Parents of Sunday School-Aged Children
"One Anothering" by Simon Schrock

--Use Sparkhouse Digital until in-person classes return
Use "One Anothering" ideas instead

--Do we need a Nursery teacher/helper???
Jodi K. to contact Amy Benning about helping in the Nursery Class when we resume

--Young Adult Class/Group
Check with Mike Macey and Ted Benning about interest/ideas for a leader

2. January Ideas

- Winter Scavenger Hunt/Nature Walk?
(Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve or on their own??)
Scheduled for Saturday, February 6
10-12 PM
Winter Adventure Hunt @ Winnie Palmer
Drive over to visit residents @ Brookdale Senior Living
Greet/wave to residents from outside
Light snacks to be served
Call Church Office by Feb. 4 to sign up

3. February Ideas/Lent

Sparkhouse Digital—Lent, Holy Week, & Easter Digital Activity Kits! Download, assemble, and distribute your activity kits to the kids, youth, and families in your congregation for Lent. There will be a kit in each age group with age-appropriate activities, crafts, and resources. Use to make Lent-At-Home Kits

- Lent Devotional App for Youth

Kelsey S. shared information about "Lent-stagram".

Will be used to distribute to 13-22 year old members

- February 16: Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Drive Thru 5-6:30 PM
Pass out Family Lent Packages??
Christian Ed. Committee Member(s) to pass out Lent-At-Home Kits during Drive Thru
- February 17: Ash Wednesday/Lent begins
- February 27: Virtual QUAKE (A way to kickstart something for Grades 6-12??)
Wait a few weeks to see what COVID #'s are, revisit for possibility of bringing a small group into church to participate

4. Easter Season

- Easter Pageant?

Date:

(Walkthrough? Stations?)

To discuss at Feb. meeting

- Egg Hunt

Date:

(Scavenger Hunt to church members' homes? Socially-distanced, small groups on church grounds?)

To discuss at Feb. meeting

--Good Friday Day Camp: Friday, April 2
To discuss at Feb. meeting

5. Looking Ahead

--May/End of Sunday School

--VBS

Jodi K. to contact Pam Yuhaniak from POP to check to see if they want to work together again this year

Pam would like to work on VBS with Trinity; Currently exploring programs

Grow Curriculum ("I Wonder...")

Sparkhouse ("Renew"/ "Good Stewards Together"/ "Journey Together")

Bolt (80's Theme)

Comparison chart of other programs (Lifeway, Cokesbury, etc.)

6. Old Business

7. New Business

Margaret C. shared possible ideas for summer:

--"Thanksgiving" in June?

--"Christmas in July" (Pageant)

--"Happy New Year" (Back-To-School; Blessing of Backpacks) in August

Christine W. shared the following information:

--Dana Shannon has friends that are in a Christian band. She may invite them to perform a concert this summer for Trinity?

--Prayer beads will be handed out with Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinners

--There is a Thrivent educational video soon to be released that focuses on kids and money

--Shepherd Shop could use help from youth (organize/hang clothes)

--Kids needed to decorate Easter bags & make cards for shut-ins

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, February 24, 2021

Constitution & Bylaws

Required Council Actions

At the November 2020 Council Meeting, Council requested two revisions be made to the Constitution. First, that Council members be allowed to serve 2 full consecutive 3-year terms of office plus the balance of any remaining term to which they were appointed rather than a single 3-year term plus the balance of any remaining term to which they were appointed. Second, that Council shall have the constitutional authorization to spend up to \$40,000 on a non-budgeted item, rather than the current \$20,000.

In addition, the SWPA Synod Committee on Constitutions and Bylaws chaired by Pastor Bill Hauser has recommended the following revisions to our bylaws:

"We would strongly recommend that the duties of the committees be placed in the continuing resolutions rather than the bylaws (B12.15.02), so should the Congregation Council decide to change those responsibilities within any committee, they can do so without having to call a congregation meeting for that purpose. (C18.02.) You will note that the alternate of having the congregation change those duties is still an option."

I agree with our Synod's recommendation for revising our bylaws and recommend Council do the same. I also suggest that Council take the opportunity to review the duties of the standing committees to the Congregation Council. Once the bylaw revisions to B12.15.02, are approved by Council and the Congregation, I will codify the duties of the standing committees in the continuing resolutions for consideration by the Council.

Therefore, Council now needs to approve the following wording changes to the constitution & bylaws for consideration by the congregation at the next meeting of the congregation (should be the Annual Ministry meeting, normally to be held during the first quarter of the calendar year at a time and place determined by the Congregation Council):

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall be elected by written ballot at a legally called meeting of this congregation for the election of the Congregation Council members as specified in the bylaws. The term of office for adult (defined as having obtained 18 years of age or legally emancipated at the time of their election) members shall be for three years or until their successors are elected by this congregation, with the term of office beginning at the next scheduled meeting of the Congregation Council. Their tenure shall be so arranged that one-third of the terms expire annually. Adult members shall be eligible to serve no more than ~~one~~two full terms plus the remaining year of a previously vacated position to which they were initially elected as a successor member (C12.03.) of the Congregation Council, unless one year has elapsed before reelection. The term of office for youth representatives shall be for one year or until their successors are elected by this congregation, with the term of office beginning at the next scheduled meeting of the Congregation Council. Youth representatives of the Congregation Council shall be eligible to serve no more than three full terms. Should a youth representative obtain legal age (18 years old) or

become emancipated during their tenure on the Congregation Council, he or she shall be eligible for election to the Congregation Council as an adult member, providing they have not served more than one consecutive term as a youth representative. Otherwise, one year must elapse to become eligible for reelection as an adult member. Newly elected Congregation Council members shall be installed at a worship service prior to or following the date they assume office.

and;

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to no more than \$240,000.00 for items not included in the budget.

and bylaw;

B12.15.02. Standing committees ~~of and their duties to~~ the Congregation Council shall consist of the following:

- a. Children, Youth & Family Ministry -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- b. Constitution & Bylaws -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- c. Christian Education -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- d. Evangelism -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- e. Fellowship -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- f. Finance -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- g. Personnel -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- h. Property -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- i. Social Ministry -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- j. Stewardship -- delete listed duties in the bylaws
- k. Worship & Music -- delete listed duties in the bylaws

The duties of the standing committees of the Congregation Council shall be specified in the continuing resolutions of the Congregation Council.

Executive Committee Meeting

EC Members: FYI as discussed last night

Motion: At the request of and after consultation with the Evangelism Committee (Chair, Karen Mowry), Special Gifts is in favor of and recommends to Council for continuing Trinity's support of two Missionaries in 2021 at the level of \$1,000 for each of the two Missionaries with funding 1st to be obtained from a Congregational appeal with the remainder, if needed, to be supported by appropriate Dedicated and / or Endowed Investments. The covenant to be signed by Pastor Schmitt & the Evangelism Committee as per norm.

Additional Discussion: We have several members who give regularly to the missionaries. And as per the motion above, the Evangelism Committee will advertise in the Trinity News which is expected to also bring in donations. At the present time the Treasurer believes any shortfall in Congregational Giving can be covered from Dedicated funds already provided without the need to use any Investment Assets.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The property committee last met in October of 2020, At that time it was decided, due the covid restrictions and limited building usage, not to have regular monthly meetings until everyone was on a more normal schedule.

An email was sent to committee members asking if they had any comments about the committee job description in the constitution. As of Feb. 11, there has not been any feedback, however there some points that need clarification.

In the spring, there will be an outdoor cleanup day. More information will be coming later. Depending on covid restrictions, the hallway in the office area will be painted to cover up the areas where the bulletin boards were hung.

Due to limited building usage and limited funding, there are no plans for future projects.

The following is the latest status of the TLC house project

- The kitchen cabinets are ordered and the contractor will install them

Flooring and trim are installed

The contractor will finish the bathroom

Volunteers are needed for the following:

- Painting all trim

- Painting upstairs bedrooms

- Painting kitchen, depends on type of wall covering

- Clean the entire house and put furniture and appliances in place in

March, so new residents may move in.

Note to council from Herb Harris.

Council, can you please make a plea for volunteers to help for painting at the TLC house? Ron will help coordinate the project. Those who wish to help can call the office to express interest.

Notes From Return to Worship

January 25, 2021 7:00 pm

Attendance:

Merl Beth Elder	Kennette Grohal	Mark Jones	Karen Mowry
Pastor Paula Schmitt	Herb Harris	Debbie Morely	Amanda Cole
Zach Arbore	Lucinda Nicely	Dana Shannon	Kathe Houck

1. Updates from Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod
<https://www.swpasynod.org/synodnews/covid19>
https://drive.google.com/file/d/12jeAUIMebpcm-T0QNsCTK_3ppHciwkGk/view
Recommendation from Synod is to refrain from worship gatherings until summer 2021.

2. Westmoreland County COVID numbers:
Total Cases: 20,393(01/04/2021) Today: 24,019
Deaths: 443 (01/04/2021) Today: 568
Excelsa: 52 hospitalized, 6 on ventilator, 22% of inpatient census (Down from 40%),753/100k positivity rate (Down from 1460)

3. Lent, Holy Week, Easter Plans "How can we get the congregation back in person safely?"

Discussion about working towards getting staff and congregation vaccinated. Meri Beth Elder has been in discussion with Amy Amond from Giant Eagle pharmacy. The plan is to offer a vaccination clinic at Trinity once the vaccine is available.

4. Open for worship vs. open to the community and other activities
 - a. Funerals, including meals Not at this time
 - b. Weddings Not until after return to worship
 - c. AA Not at this time
 - d. Large Events: ex. The Car Hop May 1, 2021 and after. They can be planned but may not be able to occur. It is recommended that all events be approved by Council and must include safety and contingency plans.
 - e. Other

Mark Jones suggested looking at 04/01/2021 (Holy Week) as a potential reopen for worship date if numbers continue to decrease and there are no further concerning variables that pertain to the health and safety of the congregation.

5. Prepare policies on transition to "open and following state guidelines"
Again, it is recommended that all events be approved by Council and must include safety and contingency plans.

6. Communication to office staff and congregation

A separate mailing will be prepared to send to the congregation. The recommendation to the Executive Committee will be: "Based on Council's decision to remain closed at this time to in person worship, RTW recommends remaining closed to in-person worship until tentatively April 1, 2021. This recommendation will be reviewed by RTW, Executive Council and Church Council during their respective February meetings."

Next meeting: Thursday, February 11, 2021 7:00pm

A note from Stewardship

February Stewardship minutes will be contained in the March Council packet. Thank you.

“Due to the special council meeting that was held on Tuesday February 2nd evening, we had to move the stewardship meeting to next Wednesday the 10th. I don’t think I will have time to complete the minutes that evening and I don’t want to hold you up so can you please note in the council packet that the stewardship committee minutes for this month will be enclosed in next month’s council packet?: Zachary Arbore

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Council
Email Meeting – January 28-29, 2021

An email meeting was requested by Zachary Arbore for the consideration of the following motions:

Motion #1: The Treasurer brings a request from Christian Ed (Jodi) for approval of \$220 of allocated budget for the month of February for: a) Lent-stagram Booklets for Teens/Young Adults (Qty: 100); b) Snacks/Drinks for Winter Adventure Hunt; & c) Lent-At-Home Kit Supplies.

Discussion: The Treasurer has reviewed these items including discussions with Jodi Kroenenwetter; & looks favorably on the motion as: a) the amount is about half of what was originally requested for February which is key in not exceeding our overall budget target; b) item “a” is supported by a good estimate of amounts needed plus economic ordering quantities; b) “b” appears reasonable albeit should not have been advertised prior to an approved budget being determined; & “c” likewise is fully supported.

We are treating this motion as having come from committee (Christine Ed) and therefore, requires no second.

Motion carries with a vote of 9 yay, 0 nay, 3 abstain.

Motion #2: This motion is being brought by Pastor Paula to authorize the Treasurer to allocate up to \$500 per Committee per month, up to a total of \$2,000 per month from the total unallocated Annual Committee Budget amount, for requests made by the associated Committee Council Member, after carefully considering the request with respect to any reductions from the Committee’s original request, availability of any “non-Unified” funding sources, and any analysis performed by the requesting Committee. Second, Kathe Houck.

Motion carries with a vote of 9 yay, 0 nay, 3 abstaining.