

Trinity Congregation Council Minutes **April 21, 2026**

Present: Kevin Brown, Lynn Buske, Erik Dovre, Robin Drout, Karla Halloin, Greg Helgeson, Heather Kapanke, Dawn Marcott, Mary Schoenknecht, John Schroedl, Jacqueline Strayer (5:35 p.m.), Michelle Zumwalt, Craig Olsen, Pastor Tom Westcott

Absent: Henry Butler, Denyse Schroeder, Gail Schulner, Pastor Patrick Patterson

1. **Call to Order:** President Karla Halloin called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.
2. **Devotion:** Greg Helgeson provided a devotion based on the Road to Emmaus.
3. **Approval of March Council Minutes:** The March Council minutes were approved as written.
4. **Approval of March Financial Report:** Craig Olsen reviewed the March financial results. Expenses exceeded income by approximately \$23,000, but fiscal year-to-date income is still ahead of expenses by approximately \$56,000. Expenses for March were slightly higher than in recent months, but this appears to be the result of some one-time expenses. The March financial report was approved as presented.

5. Pastors Reports:

Pastor Tom highlighted several items from his written report:

- He is intentionally attending spring events to support our youth. Let him know if there are activities he can add to his schedule.
- He is continuing to work on updates to the building safety plan. He anticipates that we will revise procedures one step at a time as needed.
- We will not be hosting a UWEC social work intern this summer or fall, but we are working with various social service groups on other possible partnerships.
- All 2026-2027 staff positions for Noah's Ark and Come and Play have been filled.
- He begins his sabbatical on May 18, so this is his last Council meeting until he returns in the fall. He is preparing Bible study materials related to the theme of his sabbatical for use by individuals and small groups while he is gone. The Council wished him and his family well during his absence.

In Pastor Patrick's absence, Karla Halloin highlighted one item from his written report:

- The projection and sound systems in the Worship Center date back to the 2004 building renovation. Both systems have technical issues and are now in need of replacement. Pastor Patrick has asked Sue Jensen, our Worship and Music Coordinator, to start gathering information and recommendations on how best to upgrade our worship technology systems.

There were no other questions or comments on the written pastor reports for the month.

6. **Staff and Committee Reports:** There were no questions or comments on the written staff and committee reports for the month.

7. Old Business

- a. **Rental Property:** Karla Halloin reported that Trinity's rental property on Lexington Blvd has a new tenant as of April 1. The tenant noted some minor issues with the washer, dishwasher, and a toilet when they moved in, but these have now all been addressed. We have not yet reinstalled the living room radiator that leaked this last winter. Reinstallation, when and if needed, will be coordinated with the tenant before the next heating season.

We have paid 1/2 of the invoice from ServPro (our rental home vendor) for cleanup at the property from the water leaks that occurred in January. We have proposed to ServPro that they pay the other half of the cost as the second leak that occurred appears to be a result of their work at the site. They have not responded, but we are going to consider the bill settled.

- b. **Photo Directory Update:** Mary Schoenknecht reported that we have approved and returned the directory proof book to Universal Church Directories. We don't have a specific delivery date for the directories, but it is anticipated that they will be delivered in May. We also expect to receive the electronic photo files for use with our Shelby Next church app.
- c. **Palm Sunday Path Update:** Lynn Buske has a follow-up meeting this week with the group that organized the Palm Sunday Path event that was held in the Trinity parking lot on the afternoon of Palm Sunday. Lynn anticipates that the group will discuss what future faith-based events it may undertake.
- d. **Stewardship Pledge Drive Update:** See Pastor Patrick's written report.
- e. **FriendFest Planning:** Robin Drout indicated that the Publicity Committee for next fall's FriendFest will be putting together a list of what it needs to know in order to begin publicity. It will share that list at next month's Council meeting. Karla Halloin reaffirmed our plans to simplify the food for the event: no beer; main food items of hot dogs, chips, and ice cream, and possibly pizza.
- f. **Eau Claire Day Resource Center:** Karla Halloin shared that she was recently able to attend the new Day Resource Center's open house. The center is located just off Gibson Street in downtown Eau Claire and is operated by Western Dairyland and Hope Gospel Mission. It provides a year-round daytime shelter for those in need and includes a number of facilities and services. (Follow-up note: See www.onebetterway.org for more information.)
- g. **50th Anniversary Celebration of Hmong in Eau Claire:** Mary Schoenknecht reported on the success for our 50th anniversary celebration at the worship services on April 12. She also shared about the 50th anniversary documentary film presented at the Pablo Center of April 16 and the article in the current issue of Volume One's community magazine.

8. New Business

a. **Vision Statement: A Movement to Care for Children and Families with as Outward**

Focus: Pastor Tom reviewed the third movement of Trinity's Vision Statement which focuses on caregivers across the generations, including those for children and families, spouses, parents, and neighbors.

- We have offered various programs related to this movement, including those on how parents can manage screentime for children and caring for spouses with dementia. Programs will continue to be offered in the future as needs arise.
- We also conducted a detailed feasibility study on opening a faith-based daycare at Trinity that would offer staff a living wage. The study concluded that several hurdles exist to opening such a daycare: (1) operation of a daycare would require a subsidy of at least \$60,000 by Trinity during the first year, (2) daycare operation would require dedicated kitchen facilities, either limiting use of our current kitchen during daycare hours or requiring constructing a second kitchen, and (3) there is currently not a critical mass of supporters for including a daycare as part of Trinity's mission. This topic can be revisited in the future as needs and conditions change.

b. Budget Process: Karla Halloin indicated that we are beginning the budget process for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Pastor Patrick has asked department heads to review their budgets. The Personnel Committee will be asked to make a recommendation concerning adjustments to salaries and benefits for next year. The Executive Committee will review a first draft of the budget and bring it to Council for discussion at our May meeting

c. Council Candidates (Kevin Brown moving): Kevin Brown has announced that he will be moving to Door County in June and so May will be his last Council meeting. Karla Halloin indicated that because we are only a few months away from the next Annual Meeting in August, we will not make an appointment to fill Kevin's position. There are three Council terms that are ending in August (Kevin Brown, Karla Halloin, and John Schroedl). The Nominating Committee will be seeking three candidates for the Annual Meeting ballot. It would be appropriate and useful for the Council to suggest any potential candidates to the Nominating Committee. Anyone with a suggested nominee should let Karla know.

d. Annual Report Deadline: The deadline for submitting annual report content to Dawn Paul is July 15.

e. Pride in the Park: Lynn Buske indicated that in the past Trinity has helped to staff a booth at Pride in the Park, which will be held on June 13 this year. She asked if there were any volunteers to help with staffing. Greg Helgeson indicated he could help. Dawn Marcott indicated she could help with anything needed prior to the event.

9. Closing Prayer: Greg Helgeson provided a closing prayer.

10. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Robin Drout
Secretary