

## Trinity Congregation Council Minutes March 17, 2026

**Present:** Kevin Brown, Lynn Buske, Erik Dovre (at 5:45 p.m. via Zoom), Robin Drout, Karla Halloin, Greg Helgeson, Heather Kapanke, Dawn Marcott, Mary Schoenknecht, Denyse Schroeder, John Schroedl, Gail Schulner, Jacqueline Strayer, Michelle Zumwalt, Craig Olsen, Pastor Patrick Patterson, Pastor Tom Westcott

**Absent:** Henry Butler

1. **Call to Order:** President Karla Halloin called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.
2. **Devotion:** Robin Drout provided an opening devotion.
3. **Approval of February Council Minutes:** The February Council minutes were approved as written.
4. **Approval of February Financial Report:** Treasurer Craig Olsen reviewed the February financial results. Expenses exceeded income by about \$14,000. Expenses for the month were normal, but income was lower than average. Fiscal year-to-date we still have a surplus of about \$78,000, so we are in better shape than we were last year at this time. The February financial report was approved as presented.
5. **Pastors Reports:**

Pastor Patrick supplemented his written report with the following:

  - He reported on four congregation members that have passed away recently.
  - He and Mary Schoenknecht updated the Council on plans for the worship services on Sunday, April 12, when we will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Hmong family to arrive in Eau Claire. Trinity sponsored this family. The celebration will include guest speakers, food, and displays.

Pastor Tom supplemented his written report with the following:

  - He reported that two vacant Noah's Ark teaching positions for the 2026-2027 year have been filled. Also, he and Kim Dewey are working to fill two vacant Come and Play positions for next year and expect to do so soon.

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. **Introduction of New Council Member:** New Council member Heather Kapanke introduced herself to the group.

## 8. Old Business

- a. **Rental Property:** Karla reported that we are still working to rent the house on Lexington Blvd. There have been more inquiries lately as we get closer to spring, so she is hopefully that we can have it rented by May 1. Pastor Patrick indicated there are still three things to complete related to the water leaks experienced at the property in January: (1) repair or replacement of the radiator that leaked (in process with Bartingale), (2) replacement of carpeting in the basement that was damaged (in process), and (3) settlement of the ServicePro bill for cleanup of the water.
- b. **Photo Directory Update:** Jacque Strayer reported that final proofs for the directory have been shipped to us and we should have them shortly. Once we approve and return the proofs the printed directories should be delivered to Trinity in 4 to 6 weeks. Jacque will also be following up to find out when we will receive the electronic files of the directory portraits for upload into our online church app (Shelby Next).
- c. **Palm Sunday Path:** Pastor Patrick and Lynn Buske reported on planning for the Palm Sunday Path event that will be held in the Trinity parking lot at 3:00 p.m. on Palm Sunday (March 29). This is an inter-faith event being planned by area churches. It is one of eight such events planned in Wisconsin and one of many planned in 15 states to support the concept of “love of neighbor”. Various churches in the area have been invited to participate and Trinity members are welcome to do so. The group is hoping to attract 500 to 1000 people. The event includes speakers, music, and dancing and will last about one hour. Several people to help direct attendees to street parking areas are needed; contact Pastor Patrick or Lynn if you can help.
- d. **Stewardship Pledge Drive:** The stewardship pledge drive mailing was sent out to the congregation last week. The worship services this coming Sunday will include a message related to stewardship. Members are asked to return their pledge cards for the next fiscal year on Palm Sunday (March 29).

## 9. New Business

- a. **Vision Statement: A Movement to Connection with Each Other Through Small Group Ministry:** The second movement of Trinity’s Vision Statement was discussed. The general feeling is that we have partially accomplished this movement, but that we don’t have any way to actually measure this accomplishment. It was commented that if we were really serious about small groups as integral to our ministry that we would need to have a staff position that coordinated small group activities. It was agreed that we should:
  - Continue to communicate the availability of the many ministries, activities, and groups at Trinity (such as is typically done on Rally Sunday in September).
  - Provide an environment in which new small group activities can be planned and offered to the congregation.

**b. FriendFest 2026:** September 13 has been selected as the date for this year’s FriendFest, in combination with Rally Sunday. A 10:00 a.m. combined FriendFest worship service is planned to allow FriendFest itself to begin at 11:00 a.m. (closer to mid-day meal time). This will again be a Council organized event. Each Council member was asked to sign-up to help on one of the FriendFest committees (Food, Games/Activities, Publicity, or Volunteers). A sign-up sheet was circulated and committee volunteers are as follows:

<b>FriendFest 2026 Committees</b>	
<u>Food:</u> Erik Dovre Karla Halloin Heather Kapanke Dawn Marcott Mary Schoenknecht	<u>Games/Activities:</u> Greg Helgeson John Schroedl Gail Schulner
<u>Publicity:</u> Robin Drout Lynn Buske Jacque Strayer	<u>Volunteers:</u> Craig Olsen Denyse Schroeder Michelle Zumwalt

There was a general discussion of feedback received on last year’s FriendFest. The music and the dessert auction were well received. It was suggested that food and beverages be simplified, perhaps by providing hot dogs, chips, and ice cream for a free-will donation rather than having food trucks. Robin pointed out that publicity for FriendFest needs to begin by mid-July, so each committee is asked to plan its decision making accordingly.

**c. World Mission - Jacqueline and Patrick Bencke, Japan:** Jacqueline and Patrick will be back in the U.S. later this year. There is an opportunity to have them visit Trinity in August or September to talk about their mission. We last had a visit from them four years ago. We agreed it would be worth pursuing a visit with them.

**10. Closing Prayer:** Robin Drout provided a closing prayer.

**11. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Robin Drout  
 Secretary