

## Trinity Congregation Council Minutes

### November 18, 2025

**Present:** Erik Dovre, Robin Drout, Karla Halloin, Greg Helgeson, Dawn Marcott, Mary Schoenknecht, Denyse Schroeder, John Schroedl, Gail Schulner, Jacqueline Strayer, Michelle Zumwalt, Craig Olsen, Pastor Patrick Patterson, Pastor Tom Westcott

**Absent:** Kevin Brown, Lynn Buske, Henry Butler, Natalie Hanson

- 1. Call to Order:** President Karla Halloin called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
- 2. Devotion:** Michelle Zumwalt provided an opening prayer and devotion from James, Chapter 1.
- 3. Approval of October Council Minutes:** The October Council minutes were approved as written.
- 4. Approval of October Financial Report:** Craig Olsen reviewed the October financial results. Expenses exceeded income for the month by about \$8,900. The fiscal year-to-date deficit is about \$46,000, which compares to a deficit of about \$58,000 last year at this time. Income fiscal year-to-date is down slightly from last year (about \$12,000), while expenses are down about \$24,000 from last year. The decrease in expenses is largely due to staffing being down 1.5 FTE from last year. The Council discussed whether there are any trends related to our income of which we should be aware, but no firm conclusions were drawn. The October financial report was approved as presented.
  - a. End of the Year Appeal:** Similar to last year we need to make the congregation aware of our financial position as we approach the end of the calendar year. The best estimate is that we need to turn our current \$46,000 deficit into a \$60,000 surplus as we enter the new calendar year for income to equal expenses by the end of June. Last year's personal reflections by Council members at the Sunday services were well received. It was decided that we should proceed with these again at the Sunday Advent services. A list of volunteers to make the presentations was assembled.

#### **5. Pastors Reports:**

Pastor Patrick supplemented his written report with the following:

- Pat Garber, our Visitation Ministry Director, will be having surgery later this week and will be in recovery for about a month. Prayers for her will be appreciated. Visitation activities while Pat is on leave have been reviewed and appropriate coverage has been arranged.
- There are two empty positions on the Nominating Committee that need to be filled by Council-appointment before the committee begins its work next April. Pat Mertens has agreed to serve on the committee in her role as an outgoing Council member. It was moved, seconded, and approved that Pat be appointed to the Nominating Committee to

nominate candidates for the next Annual Meeting. We are still in need of one additional congregation member to serve on the committee. Contact Pastor Patrick with suggestions.

Pastor Tom supplemented his written report with the following:

- An online form has been established for submitting newsletter, website, and social media update requests to Kailyn Dewey, our Digital Communications Lead. The form will help to organize her efforts to keep our online communications up-to-date. Also, the deadline for monthly newsletter submittals has been changed back to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the issue.

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

**7. Old Business**

- Rental Property:** Karla Halloin reported that renovation and repair work for Trinity's rental property at 1402 E. Lexington Blvd is complete and the house is being actively marketed for rental.
- Photo Directory Update:** The committee overseeing the photo directory effort has a final check list of items to complete from Universal Church Directories. Katie Conner is assisting with production by providing layout work for the introductory pages of the directory. The committee anticipates one final meeting to review proofs of the directory. The directory is expected to be issued in January.

**8. New Business**

- Advent/Christmas at Trinity:** A mailer has gone out to the congregation detailing Advent and Christmas activities at Trinity. The first Sunday of Advent is November 30. Wednesday night services will be held the first three Wednesdays of Advent. The fourth Sunday of Advent (December 21) will have the Cantata at both services. As in past years, Christmas Eve will have services at 11:00 a.m., 4:00 p.m., and 8:00 p.m. A single, Lessons and Carols worship service will be held on the Sunday after Christmas (December 28). A variety of other activities are planned during the season, including return of the old Advent workshop – now called Advent Fun Fest.
- Pastor Tom Sabbatical:** Pastor Tom presented a written proposal for his sabbatical planned for mid-May through mid-August next year. Among other topics, the proposal includes his theme, expected outcomes, focus areas, ways for the congregation to participate, and a tentative timeline. After discussion it was moved and seconded that Pastor Tom's sabbatical for next year be approved as proposed. The motion was approved.
- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hmong in Eau Claire:** Next April will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kay Moua family arriving in Eau Claire. They were the first Hmong family to arrive in the community and were sponsored by Trinity. Mary Schoenknecht asked approval to organize

a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration that would include guest speakers at Sunday services, displays, and food. Pastor Patrick indicated that this would be a great idea. April 12 is the Sunday nearest the anniversary and would work well for this event.

**9. Closing Prayer:** Michelle Zumwalt provided a closing prayer.

**10. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Robin Drout  
Secretary