

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, Lansdale, PA
May 29, 2024 Council Governance Meeting

The May 29th Council Governance meeting was called to order by William Shimer, President, at 6:58 p.m., in Room 264 followed by devotion/prayer by Pastor Fowler.

In Attendance: Sandy Cottrell, Curt Deardorff, David Freudig, Julie Kinzel, Susan Pashos, Jamie Price, William Shimer, Michael Voicheck, Pastor Steiner, and Pastor Fowler. Absent: none. Visitor: Evan Morris and Harry Smyser, each for a portion of the meeting. The agenda was approved, and the Council Covenant was read responsively. The April Council Governance Meeting minutes were previously approved by e-mail.

Jamie Price responded to questions on the financial reports which had been pre-sent. She highlighted that at the end of April, revenue was up (\$536,755 vs. budget of \$529,231) and expenses were down (\$502,394 vs. budget of \$546,839), thus showing an actual net surplus of \$34,361 instead of a projected deficit of \$17,608. Regarding the Matching Gift Challenge, we are at 68% of hitting the maximum goal by end of June.

Dave Freudig continued leading discussion of the topic he previously raised regarding the number of lay Council members, distinguishing elected and appointed members (all of whom may vote, as may one pastor) as described in policy 100.117 v2.0 vs. the Constitution (C.12.02). Council discussed where to go from here and the need to correct the language ambiguity when the next constitution amendment and continuing resolution updates are made next year. He offered to check policy, bylaws, and the constitution for any future proposed changes if necessary. Since there is ambiguity regarding council laity membership in the wording within the Constitution and policy, suggestions for a revision will be worked on out of council session and this topic will be tabled and will be discussed at a future Council meeting when draft wording is presented.

Bill Shimer reported that the Endowment Committee had requested a revision to the recently Council-approved Endowment change. After Council discussed their suggested revision:

Highlight: a motion was made by Bill Shimer and seconded by Jamie Price to approve the following motion: The scholarship category is amended to read as follows: “Scholarships for enrolled Seminary students in a degree program are limited to \$3,000 per year per student for educational expenses such as tuition, textbooks, pastoral clothing and educational software.” - passed

Council discussed a fire drill planned for the 8:30 a.m. service on June 9th and Council’s responsibility during the fire drill.

Harry Smyser was present for the portion of the meeting discussing Balancing Safety & Security with an “Open” Church. He went through the pre-read provided slides, highlighting the task force accomplishments and ongoing work, security spectrum, and current landscape, and answered questions from Council. External doors, concerns/risks, and have/desirables/workable scenarios were discussed. A video camera monitoring system and video cameras have been ordered with a grant, and a panic alarm system. Topics for Council consideration and further discussion are “where does Trinity want to be” in terms of risks vs benefits and the cost implications.

Boy Scout Evan Morris addressed Council with an Eagle Scout project proposal to construct a butterfly garden on site.

Highlight: A motion, made by Sandy Cottrell and seconded by Susan Pashos, to approve the Eagle Scout project – passed.

Sandy Cottrell gave a debrief on the two Luther Hall Task Force Town Hall meetings. There are two more presentations scheduled – one at a staff meeting June 10 and one July 10 at the Shared Leadership Meeting.

Curt Deardorff introduced the topic of having the Mutual Ministry Committee, a specified Council Standing Committee. He described it being restarted and discussed why the previous MM Committee had been inactivated. After discussion a motion was made.

Highlight: a motion, made by Sandy Cottrell and seconded by Curt Deardorff, to approve the reinstatement of Mutual Ministry as a standing committee reporting to Council – passed.

A description of what council expects the Mutual Ministry Committee to do, taking into consideration the description in the constitution (Chapter 13) and continuing resolution C13.04.A21 and with specific distinction from the Human Resource Committee should be prepared. It was acknowledged that members for Mutual Ministry will need to be identified. If needed they can make proposed updates to resolve any overlapping issues in compliance with the Continuing Resolutions.

Bill Shimer reported on the need for a Property Committee for strategic long-term planning for our facility as a standing committee of Council. All Council members were in favor of this new committee, and Bill Shimer and Curt Deardorff will work on a draft description.

Pastor Steiner gave an update on the previously described and planned After School Program. He reported that after talking with a principal of a local elementary school regarding the need for the program, the need for Trinity's program may not be as we first understood. Accordingly, Trinity will not pursue the pilot program for Fall of 2024. With more complete data Trinity may reconsider such an undertaking for 2025.

Pastor Fowler gave an update on the Strategic Design Task Force. The team is progressing and continuing to meet; their next meeting is June 6.

Reflecting on discussions within Shared Leadership on April 24, 2024, Pastor Fowler requested, and Council agreed, to change the start time for Trinity Alive from 9:40 to 9:45. Pastor Fowler reported on the security cameras grant and the problem in getting approval from the State for a change in who we want to install the system. Lansdale Borough has passed inspection of the Loft. However, some in-house tasks still need to be done.

Council recessed into Executive Session.

Coming out of Executive Session, concerns and celebrations were shared and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted
Dianne Kalb, Recording Secretary