

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Council

Feb. 9, 2010

Members Present:

Dan T, President
Brendan R, Vice President
John D, Secretary
Chuck P, Finance
Laurie S, Youth Ministry
Gary S, Property
Bridget S, Christian Education
Jamie P, Worship and Music
Mary C, Social Concerns
Tom E, Management
Lindsay A, Ex Officio
Pastor Deanna Wildermuth, Sr. Pastor, Ex Officio
Pastor Sue Wanwig, Visitation Pastor, Ex Officio

Staff Present:

Kathy Fisher, Director of Youth & Family Ministry

Members Absent:

Jeff D, Evangelism

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by president Dan T at 7:05 PM

Devotions

Pastor Wildermuth, substituting for Jeff D, led the council in Responsive Prayer from page 324 of the new "Cranberry Hymnal".

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the January council meeting were approved as written.

Pastors' Reports:

Pastor Sue Wanwig presented a thorough review of the Feb. 2, 2010 Mercer Island Council meeting debate over Tent City, which resulted in passage of an ordinance to govern future hosting of Tent City on Mercer Island. Pastor Wanwig described some of the concerns the Mercer Island Clergy association continues to have with the ordinance, which the Association shared with the City Council. Pastor Sue, in addition to her ministry to our home-bound members, continues with the Maritime Ministry. She announced an upcoming salmon bake with Sea Shanties and a silent auction at Lynwood Trinity to support the mission.

Pastor Wildermuth's report focused on the plans for Lent and Easter, as well as the introduction of the new Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW or Cranberry) hymnal. She reported that approximately \$2,800 had been raised. She also reported that the parents of some recently baptized children will be received into membership in the near future, thereby joining their children in HTLC membership. She will also be holding a "Lutheran Basics" class for members and those who may be interested in membership. She also requested guidance regarding the many requests for contributions that are received in the church office. The sense of the Council was that she should apply appropriate judgment and refer those that require more consideration to the appropriate committee.

Pastor Deanna shared an announcement from the Synod reporting a necessary cut of 15% in the general Synod budget.

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BUSINESS

Treasurer's Report

Chuck P provided an overview of our financial situation, reporting that giving was slightly over budget in January, and reviewed how the changes approved at the January Congregational Meeting affected the financial reports. Chuck also suggested that a condensed version of his reports be provided to the council at subsequent meetings to facilitate clarity and reduce paper usage. Those requiring additional information could obtain it readily from Kirsten or from Chuck. As an aside, Chuck suggested that we provide the members with the opportunity to subscribe to "The Lutheran" magazine.

Strategic and Financial Planning

Tom E presented a report that the Management Committee recommends that the Council begin a planning process before making any decisions about the recent bequest from the Retherford family, i.e. setting goals and planning how to achieve those goals. "It's not about finance, it's about our MISSION". It was agreed that the President and Pastor Wildermuth will initiate the process by selecting a task force to lead this process. The council passed a resolution authorizing the Treasurer, in cooperation with the Management Committee, to invest the bequest for a period of 6 to 9 months.

President T then proposed that the \$46,000 "Pastoral Housing Fund" be considered as working capital where the funds could be used for cash flow purposes, but would have to be repaid. A motion was made to accept that proposal, was seconded, and following brief discussion, was passed without dissent.

It has been our practice to allocate a portion of the pastors' pay as a "Pastoral Housing Allowance". This is standard procedure and permits the pastors to avail themselves of an I. R.S. tax advantage. A motion was made to designate 100% of Pastor Wanwig's compensation (up to \$20,000), and up to \$26,000 of Pastor Wildermuth's compensation, as said pastoral housing allowance. The motion was seconded and, there being no discussion, was passed unanimously.

Dan then initiated discussion of designing a process to remove inactive members from our membership roll, as required by our Constitution. This would involve preparing a bylaw defining the process, for adoption by the congregation. Pastor Wildermuth noted that there are fixed costs to the church based on the size of the membership roll. As we have many more people on our roll than are currently active, an examination to remove inactive members from the membership roll would be beneficial. Following some discussion, President Thieme agreed to draft a bylaw for consideration by the council.

Chuck P made a motion that the proposed changes to the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions be presented to the congregation for vote at the May 15th Congregational meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

President-Elect Brendan R presented the results of a review of the HTLC Constitution and Bylaws. He identified a number of changes that are required to be made for our Constitution to be in conformity with amendments made to the national model in August 2009. The Council resolved to present these mandatory changes to the congregation for approval at the May 2010 Congregational meeting. President Thieme asked the council members to review the documents for any other changes that may be required or be appropriate. It was noted that the Endowment Fund Committee is in the process of reviewing its charter and may recommend some changes to the congregation, but the timing of such recommendations was not certain.

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COMMITTEE UPDATES

Stewardship

Leslie B presented the minutes from the most recent Stewardship Committee meeting (copy attached to the office copy of this report) which featured current business items and a timeline for work over the next five months. Leslie also indicated a longer list of members willing to lector or be worship assistants would be helpful.

Congregational Life

Lynn T provided a brief report about Congregational Life's activities which including reports of apparent easy non-members access to HTLC property. This resulted in a discussion of some security issues regarding HTLC property.

Worship and Music

James P reported that the congregation had purchased 100 of the new "Cranberry" hymnals to date. The new hymnals would be ordered by 1 March.

Christian Education

Bridget S reported that the "Children's Safety" task force, which is reviewing policies to keep our children safe, had its initial meeting and has assigned tasks to members. Also mentioned were additional concerns and comments relating to building security. A task force report will be available in a few months.

Youth

Kathy F reported that a youth group is going to Holden the weekend of May 16th for three days, and that planning for the 2010 Mystery Mission Trip continues.

Property

Of the chapel have now been fully converted to new storage uses. Work continues on the ladies' bathroom.

Evangelism

Dan, reporting for Jeff D, announced that the Evangelism Committee had completed and distributed the new HTLC Directory and that copies are available in the church office for those who have not yet received theirs. HTLC will have its first garage sale in some time. The big event is scheduled for April 24th in the Fellowship Hall.

Social Concerns

Mary C indicated that the 2010 El Milagro trip will take place in August and that members were already signing up for the 2011 trip in February. She also indicated that gifts of clothing to First Place School were received with much appreciation. It was also reported that the 500 or so cans of "protein" foods collected by the children and members of our congregation were delivered to Mercer Island Youth and Family services. The MIYFS representatives indicated the gifts were very timely, as the cupboards were almost bare.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
John D, secretary