

**Trinity Lutheran Congregation
Minutes from Council Meeting
February 3, 2009**

Present: Judy Tiede, Mark Boeyink, Margaret Stevenson, Eunice Eckerly, Jeanne Mugge, Peter Miller, Katie Dudzik, Diane Steen-Hinderlie, Ward Edwards, Nancy Homans, Elizabeth Flomo, Craig Nelson, Pastor Alem, Carolyn Schurr

The two new members of the Council, Peter Miller and Carolyn Schurr were welcomed.

Jeanne and Margaret's recent retirements from Fairview were recognized with the treat of chocolate cake.

Devotions: Pastor Jane opened the Council with devotions on the second text for next Sunday, and led in discussion and prayer.

December Council Minutes: The minutes were approved as written.

Committee Reports:

Finance: No report

Nominating Committee: Craig Nelson presented several items for consideration that came out of the work of the nominating committee this year.

- What slot is available for a youth member to become a voting member of the council? Possibilities include creating a new slot (requiring a constitutional change perhaps), waiting for a Member-at-Large slot to become open, or inviting a youth to come as a visitor initially. Mark made a motion, seconded by Eunice, that the next Member-at-Large seat to become available be prioritized to fill the seat with a confirmation-age youth. Motion carried. The youth are to discuss this with Elizabeth.
- One or more Members-at-Large of the Council are filled by members who rarely or never attend Council meetings. Discussion revolved around the need to remind and inform of the expectations of being on Council. Pastor Alem indicated one slate on the Council is held by a person who is going to another church. A suggestion was made that a letter be sent to formally confirm his removal from the Council.
- Natalina Giuseppe has indicated that she can no longer fill the position of Worship Vice-Chair. Council will plan to appoint a new person to this slot at the March meeting of Council. Trinity Congregation will be informed of the opening. Anyone interested should contact Eunice.
- At one time the Trustee terms were staggered. Presently the election slate indicated that all Trustee terms end in the same year – 2012. Since it would be hard to fill all 3 slots the same year, it was suggested that past election slates be looked at to see if there was a mistake. The terms need to be slowly adjusted so that they are once again staggered.
- Most positions on the Council are slated for 3-year terms. The nominating Committee feels this long of a commitment turns off some prospective nominees. It was felt that this item would not be a priority for a constitutional change but that the Council has been and can continue to be flexible to special needs and concerns of Council members.

A special note of thanks was given to the nominating committee – Craig Nelson, Grace Sulerud and Elizabeth Flomo – for their thorough efforts and reporting.

Pastor Alem expressed a concern for the Ethiopian members of the congregation who find our selection of Council nominees very different from what they are accustomed to, and feel the Council positions are not treated seriously. They are accustomed to having a time of prayerful consideration, accepting a position as a real Call and then having the Council formalized at a worship service. It was pointed out that discernment the congregation may be unaware of does happen, but that it would be helpful to have Pastor Alem be a consultant to the Nominating Committee next year.

Staff Reports

Pastor Jane:

- A brief update on Mission Partners referred to the fun winter-time gathering with Mt. Olivet. In spite of a date that was not the best, everyone was pleased to have had a second opportunity during the year to gather.
- Mt. Olivet has offered to send a crew that formally worked on Habitat houses to fix up the rental unit of Katie Schaden's home, providing both the work and materials. In consultation with Mt. Olivet folk, Trinity members could be invited to join in on the work.
- A Faith in the Church gathering is being held February 17 under the title "Servant Church Arises". This will be part of the MN Without Poverty in 20/20.
- NRP Director, Abdirizak Mahboub, met with Pastor Jane for discussions on possible ways for Trinity and a couple Mosques to integrate their youth groups in some way.
- David Wee, who has recently begun coming to Trinity adult forums and worship, has joined the choir and indicates that he wishes to become a member of Trinity.
- On Thursday nights during Lent, there will again be a light meal followed by a short Bible Study and Eucharist at the Trinity Office area.
- Initial discussion has been held with Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Maple Grove about becoming a mission partner with Trinity. They have given \$10,000 to Trinity Congregation.
- Staff Updates:
Sandy will be gone from the office February 4 – April 6. Margaret Stevenson will sub for her.
Pastor Jane will be gone from February 19 – March 2 when she and Bob go to Europe to visit their sons.
Diane Steen-Hinderlie will retire in June of this year from her work with Trinity.

Pastor Alem:

- Mekane Yesus celebrated the retirement of a member who is planning to go to Ethiopia for a 6 month visit and do mission work.
- Pastor Alem's Department at Fairview is now providing the Wed. night suppers for the 4th Wed. of the month.
- In December a meeting of the Ethiopian Lutheran Churches was held at the Oromo Lutheran Church to encourage each other. Special note was taken of a Christian Somali woman who has been gathering together a group of women in Golden Valley.

- The Radio Ministry is now produced in 6 languages and the Web site includes Mekane Yesus information. Presently, all programs are being produced via the Internet rather than broadcast via radio since the radio station was sold.
- The Mekane Yesus group now has 10-15 worshipping on Sunday mornings and around 10 attending Wed. evening services. They are hoping to have their own minister and sources for money to support one are being sought. The Mekane Yesus youth have been studying the Bible with an engaging student leader.

Jeanne Mugge

- Discussions are being held with Faith in the City. They have been active in the Phillips Neighborhood and would like to get involved in the Cedar Riverside Area. They hope to reach out to Trinity and the neighborhood. Jeanne met with a neighborhood group today. A social work student from Augsburg may be able to be part of a support group which Jeanne would oversee.
- Jeanne has applied to take a Clinical Pastoral education course at Fairview for 10 months. If accepted she would hope for a grant. One class would be held several times on Tues. evening which would mean that she would miss those council meetings.

Katie Dudzik

- More are coming in the afternoons, about 9 without homework and 15-20 who come for homework help.
- They are starting a scheduled activity to be held each day with the help of an Augsburg student.
- A yoga class for Somali women is being led by Katie's housemate and is being held in the Trinity Upper Room.
- The One on One program at Cedar Riverside gives additional mentoring/tutoring.
- Katie attended the Dania Hall meeting last week.
- Katie's involvement with CHANCE (Connected to Humphrey Institute) has been fluctuating. Further tours visiting places like the Somali Mall are being planned.

Elizabeth Flomo

- The annual Shoreview swimming party for the youth took place.
- Elizabeth had a very good time in New Orleans attending the Youth Ministry Conference. She especially appreciated the gathering and discussion with the Association of Lutheran colleges and plans to do a session on Lutheran Colleges with Trinity youth. She also hopes to try out some of the ideas she gained regarding Cross-generational education. In addition, she was able to check out some things for when the Trinity youth go to New Orleans.
- The fund-raising for the trip to the convention in New Orleans is going well. \$7,000 has been raised and there is the anticipation that each person going will contribute \$120. That leaves \$2,500 for continued fund-raising. The youth plan to have another plant sale, do car washes, bag groceries and work at the Mall.
- The youth are working on a skit about life as immigrant youth and plan to use English, Amharic and Tigrinya when presenting it. (Parents have given their permission to be some of the objects in the skit!)
- Three Somali woman came to the Trinity offices asking Elizabeth, "Is this a church?" They are in nurses' training, taking a course at St Kate's and wanted help in reading the

Bible. Elizabeth met with them in a very fun and fruitful time for everyone. Katie reported that they returned a 2nd time for some reading help.

New Business:

Nancy and Mark – Planning for the Future

Nancy gave some explanation/background on the concern that Trinity is spending down its endowment and the need to consider “Where do we go from here?” which led to the involvement of Mark Johnson, a Lutheran lay person/business man who has offered his services to the Synod. His expertise is to help us learn how to bring together resources for the work we do and stressed the need for the Trinity Congregation to be clear about its goals, purposes and values before asking/presenting to others. It was stressed that this is a way of growing and of how to reach goals intentionally.

Mark continued with a look at the survey sheets which were sent to each member of the congregation as an effort to put things on the table and get a reaction and dialogue going. The ensuing discussion centered around taking time and getting more of the congregation involved in the discussion, and ways in which that might be done.

The meeting adjourned.

Pastor Alem closed with prayer.

Carolyn Schurr, Secretary