

Holy Trinity Church Conference via Zoom December 6, 2020

Present: Chad Gilbertson, Rene Meyer, Carol Ottoson, Lynnette Dobberpuhl, Don Oram, Marie Moser, Mike Huss, Sharon Dougherty, Tina Chant, Karen Nau, Darla Bauchle, John Bauchle, Sheila Posthumus, Kay Petterson, Liz Weninger

Called to order by Pastor Chad, authorized by letter from Cynthia Williams, District Superintendent.

Opening Remarks: In Isaiah 43 we read “I am he who created you. Do not fear for I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.” These words were written in uncertain, chaotic times. The Israelites were in exile, their social groups were dissolved, they had no land or home and were separated from their temple which represented the very presence of God. In their thinking, they were separated from God. That is the context into which Jeremiah was speaking, “Do not be afraid, I will be with you.” If God is there with the people, the people should not be afraid. **Question:** *When in the last nine months have you felt fear?* **Responses:** *when friends, family members and our own selves were diagnosed with Covid, when children and grandchildren were threatened by wildfires, learning to be safe in a pandemic, when we have thought about long term consequences to students who have dropped out of their distance learning opportunities, living in a community close to long term care units with staff and residents getting Covid, the economic impact of the closures and pandemic on businesses, individuals and our church.* It is into fears such as these that God speaks: Do not be afraid, I am with you. Later in verses 18-19 we read, “Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” All of this 43rd chapter is what scholars call the First Servant Song, which is a song of the people but also we often use these passages to point to the coming of the Messiah. God calls Israel, the people, to bring light to all nations, especially nations groping in the darkness, in ignorance. The past nine months have felt like a wilderness, an unfamiliar place. Many of us have been in an exile from families, friends, workplaces and church. In the midst of this God has been doing a good thing. **Question:** *Where have you seen God in this time?* **Responses:** *People are more mindful of their neighbors in the absence of their other communities. People are sharing in new ways. People are learning new ways to connect, electronically, many of which will be beneficial post-pandemic. Some of the kids have been pushed to do more and have really stepped up. Families feeling more connected and grounded, slowed down.* In the midst of all we have experienced, are experiencing, and is yet to come (looking hopefully toward, but with questions about vaccines, and more effective treatments) the people of God continue to rely on the messages and promises of God, keeping our eyes, ears and hearts open to these messages.

Agenda

Pastoral Compensation: presented by Don Oram, chair of SPRC

SPRC thanks the Holy Trinity staff for adapting, being flexible and making worship and Sunday school available online. \$62, 078 was the salary for 2020 and remains the proposed salary for 2021. The Housing allowance, health care portion arrived at by formula from the Annual

Conference, brings the compensation to \$87,828, with a pension and disability (also by formula) bringing total salary and benefits to \$102,974.40. Additional expenses which may be reimbursed to the pastor include continuing education, mileage, and other professional expenses budgeted at \$5,000 for a total budget for Pastoral Support at 107,974.40. No motion or second was required for a report made by SPRC. A vote was taken to approve with all present in favor, no opposed or abstaining.

Active/Inactive Member Report:

Attendance and giving are the indicators for people to be considered active. If people are observed at events and worship or have given, or giving was made on their behalf they are considered active. Throughout most of 2020, we were unable to verify all who have attended online worship so have not added anyone to the inactive list. Likewise we have not added anyone to the “two years inactive” list, for the same reasons. We have not removed anyone who hasn’t asked to be removed. People who were on the two year inactive list were recommended for continuance on the membership roll for the ensuing year. Pastor Chad asked us to consider the two or more years inactive and call out anyone who should be restored to active status. Hearing none, Carol Ottoson moved to receive inactive member report, seconded by Don Oram, Discussion made (appreciate the hiatus on inactive). Vote taken with all in favor, none opposed or abstained.

Leadership Report:

At the top of the report are the Core team, Trustees and SPRC, asterisks indicate a new member, TBA indicates new members are still being sought. There are some people who have yet to respond to an invitation to be on SPRT, but nominations would still be welcome. The bottom half of the page indicate coordinators or ministry leaders. Some leaders may wish to leave leadership, but have yet to request this. Some ministry efforts have been used less in 2020, but we are hopeful we will be able to resume sometime in 2021. Liz Weninger moved to receive report, Mike Huss seconded. No discussion. All were in favor, none opposed or abstained.

There were no new items, questions or comments from the group.

Closing Question from Pastor Chad: *What other new things might we imagine as a church in the season that is ahead of us? God is doing a new thing, what might we do that is new?*

- *Christmas Eve service in a barn is something we have done in the past, maybe not this year but next year.*
- *Purchase cinnamon rolls and offer people driving by Holy Trinity rolls and coffee.*
- *Card and note writing initiative to police, health care facility workers, etc.*
- *Support students, educators and families as we are able to regather either through Scott County initiative or our own.*
- *New apartments (not strictly senior housing) coming in to the downtown, be welcoming to them.*

As we continue with online worship and ministry, and look to our future regathering, we would be wise to consider our community a two-campus church, one online and one in-person. We have the equipment and are getting ready to add live-streaming to our worship options. This will help us remain in tune with our growing virtual audience while still caring for our in-person community.

Lynnette Dobberpuhl moved to adjourn, Rene Meyer seconded, all approved.

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