



Luther Place Congregational Council Minutes
July 11, 2019
Luther Place, All Saints Room

Present: Tara Hogan, Kate Wulff, Pastor Karen Brau, Elizabeth Ellis, Doug Walter, Jay Forth, Joan Hay, Emma Northcott, Amanda Lindamood

Apologies: Michael Wendt, Einar Olsen, Caroline Eayrs, Cathi Jones, Tom Randall

The meeting was called to order at 6:39 pm by Tara.

Devotion/Spiritual Practice

Jay brought "Wild Geese" by Mary Oliver, opening a discussion on grace, and living graciously, and remembering to think of the world in a very gracious and beautiful way. We read the poem collectively.

We took a pause to introduce ourselves, sharing names and length of time involved at Luther Place.

Agenda

A motion was made by Tara to approve the agenda for the meeting. The motion was seconded by Jay and passed unanimously.

Minutes

The minutes were distributed electronically via our google group prior to the meeting.

A motion was made by Kate to accept the May 2019 Council Meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth and passed unanimously.

Congregational Meeting

The meeting is July 11. Tara asked for the meeting to start with elections of the Executive Committee. The current agenda includes elections of Trustees and the 2019-20 Executive Committee, the Pastor's Report, a review of Council Commitments, signups for devotions, offering counting, Building and Worship Safety Discussion, Participation in the Emmaus Collective, and assignment of 2019-20 Teams and Liaisons.

Election of Executive Committee

A slate of Tara Hogan as President, Kate Wulff as Treasurer, Amanda Lindamood as Secretary and Mike Wendt as Vice President were elected to the Executive Committee.

Election of Trustees

Joan Hay and Cathi Jones were elected as two new Trustees of the Congregation.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Karen shared the why and the gifts of running for Bishop and not winning, and how she framed her run and platform. She ran because she was asked to, people came to her with a sense that she would be a strong

Bishop. She used that period as a listening practice, intentionally participating in the Spirit's movement. In running, she committed that she would be herself, and articulate her authenticity as a leader, with a prayer that Luther Place had a connected move as well. A group of long and newer community perspectives shaped her preparation. *What do you see as the biggest challenge to the Synod in the next six years and what would you do*—that was the central question asked of candidates.

Talking explicitly about race emerged as a key aspect of how to present her leadership to the ELCA, and specifically in light of the challenges facing the Synod.

What she got from all of this was a platform of four key things:

- 1) Need to money for all rostered leaders to have a funded Spiritual Director
- 2) Leadership development of lay people, particularly with young people
- 3) Have a community organizer on staff at the Synod
- 4) Specific stuff around racial equity, examining how decision making occurs—who is advantaged, who is not advantaged, and who is not at the table that needs to be

She said clearly that our witness to the Gospel is not full if we are not a multicultural witness. She is happy to be here, because we are in such a fascinating place. This discernment process followed her sabbatical, clarifying who she is as a leader, and equipping her to be present in our current congregational moment.

The moment we are in requires her gifts of gentleness, clarity, and crispness as a leader.

We pray and ask-- how do we move in the world as its changed?
We've done some really hard work here to be clear on our context and sense of call.
We've moved through hard things, and God requires that of congregations in these times.

A question she asked in preparation was, *who do you listen to?*

*We watched a sermon together: <https://youtu.be/jGxSZZ29-KE>

The following are some notes taken from the video played.

--by a lay leader and not a rostered leader, Vice President Felecia Boone

What is it that calls us to dismiss the humanity of the other when we are called to the same work?

The church is not dying but changing, and it has a choice.

Look at your decision making and ask,

Who is advantaged by this decision?

Who is disadvantaged by this decision?

Who is not at the table who should be?

Theme: In This Together, What the World Needs Now is All of Us

Listening makes us more whole, healthier and more holy.

Diversity only matters when there's a difference that matters.

One third of Bishops don't think racial equity is a topic to discuss, another third doesn't know where to begin, and the final third are all in. We have to figure out how to travel in the same direction.

If we are to survive, we have work to do. On individual (deliberate acts), institutional (policies and practices, unconscious), and structural (combination of those first two built over time) to fight racism on these three levels. Let us move from diversity and inclusion to equity.

What keeps us from learning the stories of people we don't know?

Is your heart prepared?

Is your soul prepared?

Is your discipleship prepared?

We who are Black, Brown and Indigenous are still fighting to have our gifts recognized as clean and not profane. What keeps us seeing distinction, and creating barriers out of those distinctions. How do we move out of our fear of loss, and enter into our spiritual maturity, love, and prophetic listening?

Art Smart Summer Camp Update (within the Pastor's Report)

Co-organized by Deacon Katie and Pastor Karen, with the newly created position of Camp Manager.

Reached out to a new pool of campers, Olga did a lot of recruitment work, sense that this ministry is deeply important. A small staff and a group of teenage volunteers are running camp, it's really beautiful.

10 requests for home Pastoral Visits, and a parent coffee planned for next Friday with translation.

Summer Camp Sunday is August 4th, Soul Fiesta happens that afternoon. Sarah Johnson is the ring leader day of, and volunteers are welcomed.

Church Council Commitments

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(as discussed at a June 2015 meeting + amended/approved at June 2018 meeting)

**original commitments included for reference*

Addition: how are we rooted as a community, able to bring Jesus centered into our leadership and relationship practices? (Proposed by Tara—connected to prayer and one on ones)

Meetings happen on 2nd Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:30 pm; discussed moving them to 3rd Thursday (will determine outcome)

- Minutes and committee reports are due to Council the Monday before each meeting.
- Please notify the Executive Committee a week in advance if you'd like something on the meeting agenda. The agenda for the meeting will be provided electronically in advance of the meeting and you'll have the opportunity at the start of each meeting to ask for a change. (Vice President will send out the agenda)
- Our meetings will begin at 6:30 PM over food. Food will be ordered in advance so we can start on time. You're encouraged to contribute financially to cover the cost of the meal. You can donate via text by texting the dollar amount and "hospitality" to +12028166673
- Our target adjournment time is 8:30 PM.
- We agreed that "what we say at Council, stays at Council." This means we will respect the confidentiality of sensitive topics we discuss. (Make suggestions for note taking guidelines)
- We also agreed to be mindful of how we speak to one another (API = assume positive intent). Opinions are not facts, and we agreed to express ourselves in a way that does not conflate the two ("In my opinion . . ."). Along the same lines, we agreed to speak for ourselves (using "I statements" instead of "we statements.").
- The Executive Committee will ensure there are opportunities during meetings for members to provide feedback.

- We acknowledged that Council members have roles to play on various committees and as counters after 10:30 am worship.
- We affirm that cultivating broad participation of congregation members in ministry teams and committees is essential to a healthy congregation. Therefore, to encourage such participation, shared leadership, and self-care, we agree that council members shall not serve on more than three Council-directed committees or teams. (Proposed suggestion to limit to 2)
- We agreed to meet one-on-one with another member of the Council/staff once a month. (Proposed suggestion for accountability and signup structure) (Proposed suggestion to develop a dance card and distribute at next council meeting)
- We acknowledge that Christ is with us when we are together as a group. When conversations get difficult, we will take a Holy Pause, which will allow us to stop, regroup, and come back together to listen and move forward.
- We agree to limit technology to what is necessary and to step outside if they need to focus on a phone conversation or text. We will stay focused and connected to each other.
- We will practice Culture Checks, which will allow us to take time in the meeting to let each of us express what they appreciate and/or are thankful for. (Proposed suggestion to connect to commitment around how we treat each other, connect to practice at end of meeting, connect to check in at beginning of meeting, unresolved regarding how to use this commitment specifically)

*Proposed Additions:

- Commitments around how meetings are run, and how we want to relate to each other
- Commitment to praying for one another
- Idea to revisit in 3-6 months

Building and Worship Safety Discussion

Staff has begun this conversation, and Council needs to have it. How do we agree that we're going to handle situations that come up on Sunday mornings? Time for us to be in consensus, and be trained up.

Staff has taken a two-day training on mental health first aid.

One bucket is how do we respond to situations that are dangerous?

Second bucket is how do we deescalate situations that are disruptive?

What are our values, and how do we incorporate them into our responses?

Who are the point people, where does authority come from?

Do council need to go through some trainings, like the mental health one?

Areas of safety concerns, situation imagining, which procedures are publicly known, possibility of ICE Raid, rate and scale of responsiveness, etc.

Tara proposes that we form an ad hoc committee, developing priorities and resources, and then make a more informed decision about what we think our policy should be.

Jay and Mike volunteer as a part of that committee, will consider who else.

Participation in Emmaus Collective

Emmanuel collective is an online directory of churches working to address white supremacy in their church culture, looking for pilot churches to join.

Commitments—leadership and voting body must attend a training annually, pay dues, engage in action/direct action of antiracism in surrounding community annually.

First step research them, gather references, learn more of their content.

What is the collective creation part of this?

What is the articulated accountability model?

How do we select the framework, partners, etc.

We will be looking at our decision making through the lens of our equity lenses.

Tara will write up an email, we will review and then discuss response at next Council meeting.

2019-2020 Teams and Liaisons—list reflects signups for the 2019-20 Year

Finance - Kate + Tom (Chair)

Property - Cathi

Personnel – Doug (must be elected, was elected)

Membership – Chelsey runs (doesn't necessarily need Council oversight)

Stewardship -Elizabeth; have a letter drafted to send out

Engagement – link with new members, measure of church vitality—Amanda*

Community Care - Joan

New Connections/Listening – Michael

Protest & Movement – Einar, Jay

Steinbruck Center Liaison--Emma

Youth & Families Liaison - Caroline

Long Range Planning/Deficit Reduction Task Force Liaison—Amanda

Proposed Addition: come up with Council goals for the year, to be displayed on top of every meeting agenda (proposed by Doug)

Within our August meeting, there is a goal to integrate equity lenses into our decision making and create a few doable bullets to advance; connected to Staff model.

Highlighted areas reflect unconfirmed committee assignments and directions.

Finance Reports—Kate

Printed Budget distributed by Kate.

General and Program budgets provided.

Year to date is the most accurate, puts us in the black currently.

Important time of stewardship, letter will circulate at an important time.

Kate moves to accept budget for May and June, Doug seconded, passed unanimously.

Check Out—Culture Check
2 minutes, led by Doug.

Signup sheets were distributed for both Offering Counters each Sunday, as well as monthly Devotions for Council meetings.

Closing Reflection/Prayer

Council recited the Lord's Prayer in closing.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for at 6:30pm in the All Saints Room of Luther Place, to be confirmed for the second or third Thursday in August.

Submitted by: Amanda Lindamood, Secretary, 2019-2020