



Luther Place Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
November 21st, 2019
Luther Place, All Saints Room

Present: Tara Hogan, Pastor Karen Brau, Emma Northcott, Amanda Lindamood, Michael Wendt, Einar Olsen, Caroline Eayrs, Joan Hay, Kate Wulff, Jay Forth, Doug Walter, Tom Randall, Joan Hay

Apologies: Cathi Jones, Elizabeth Ellis, Jay Forth

The meeting was called to order at 6:41 pm by Tara.

Agenda

A motion was made Tara to approve the agenda for the October 17th meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

Minutes

The minutes were distributed electronically via our google group prior to the meeting for both the October 17th Congregational Council meeting, and the specially held meeting related to personnel.

A motion was made by Tara to accept both sets of Council Meeting minutes. The motion was passed unanimously.

Congregational Meeting

The meeting is November 21st. The Executive Committee met and determined to continue our pilot time with a new agenda sequence for meetings, that was introduced at the August meeting. The current agenda includes the Finance reports, the Devotion, the Pastor's Report, the President's Report, and a review of Council Commitments in a larger discussion format, integrating the seed of a conversation about budget season, and our move to review and revise our process using a lens of racial equity, with three presented focus areas to consider.

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

The focus of reports has been clarified to spotlight key highlights, support requests, and concerns.

This month, all committees were asked to provide solely written reports, with the exception of finance.

Finance - Kate + Tom (Chair)

The finance report was approved with no objections.

Kate stated that all committee budget requests are due by November 29th to the finance team, and the meeting to prepare the 2020 draft budget is scheduled for Wednesday, December 4th. All Council members were invited to participate. The focus of our December meeting will be to approve the budget in preparation

for the Congregational meeting on Sunday, January 26th. It was noted that congregational giving is ahead of where predicted, and that both staff vacancies and the income generated by the Steinbruck Center can be credited with being slightly in the black.

The following motion was introduced by the Organizing & Protest Committee, and passed unanimously by council.

“The Finance Committee is directed to examine budget requests for new and existing ministries on their own merits and consider how they fit in with our current mission and vision. Where possible, the committee should use equity lenses to guide decision making.”

Personnel and Property updates were highlighted within Sarah Johnson’s submitted staff report. A hybrid model is being used to meet the short-term needs of managing the building, including contracting someone on a short-term basis and working with the cleaning company to begin dialoguing about an expanded agreement.

An update was provided regarding the hiring process of the Director of Spiritual Formation and Community Connections, indicating that the team did not move forward with the considered candidate. They made a decision to revisit the job description and reconvene in December. On Sunday a communication will be made during worship by Pastor Karen highlighting the status of the applicant, the process moving forward, and what to expect regarding communication, participation and what’s in place programmatically. This update will also be distributed electronically as a pastoral note, and restated on December 1st during worship.

Emma Northcott provided an update on research conducted by herself and Faith on the Grant and Lee pew markers within our archives. It was restated that this will be brought as an official council conversation at another meeting, with the possibility of a written resolution and potential rededication. If interested, council members were asked to contact Emma directly to get more involved.

Devotion/Spiritual Practice

As a part of the new agenda sequence, the placing of the devotion and check in was moved to the middle of the meeting, following committee updates. There is a new intention to link the devotion with the area of discussion that is the focus for the meeting.

Pastor Karen led a short Breath prayer, a practice used in the recent seven week contemplative practice course used as an opening ritual.

Pastor & President’s Report (combined)

To begin this conversation, Tara distributed a document highlighting the official roles and responsibilities of our Congregational council. It was acknowledged that we are in the process of discerning our priorities for the remaining six months of this council year.

This document referenced the 2009 Visioning Process, and the vision and guiding principles adopted at that period ten years ago. We are discerning how to adjust our vision and principles at this ten-year mark, emphasizing how to imagine the practical. This is proposed as the focus of our council retreat, with an invitation to expand participation to staff and lay leaders.

Our intention is to examine purpose, culture and climate.

The second priority is to identify and respond to emerging areas for council to prioritize.

Three areas are noted.

1) Hospitality, specifically on Saturday & Sunday mornings

Respond to the rise in participants due to the service gap for individuals experiencing homelessness, with an emphasis on budget and training needs, and a trauma informed infrastructure. A conversation across institutions is being explored by Pastor Karen, as well as the convening of interested lay leaders. It was especially acknowledged that within our practices of hospitality, intergenerationality and trauma sensitivity have been our missing links.

2) Teams

Specifically, the need to create healthier more functional Stewardship, Membership and Engagement, Community Care and Property teams.

3) Long Range Planning

To transition it's workplan to a book study of Quietly Courageous, centering the changed context of church and its implication for our planning and sustainability, and discern how to bring forward to the congregation.

Council was asked to affirm this direction, and asked to share, where is God in this and what do you notice.

Two Saturdays are proposed for a Council Retreat, February 1st and 8th from 10-4 pm. A poll will be sent out to lay leaders by Mike to determine best date of the two.

Staff, council, representatives from committees and teams, emerging leaders, and potential council nominations are especially prioritized as participants.

A planning team will be formed with Pastor and Council involvement.

As initial ideas, storytelling on who our neighbors are, how we are operating and what's mission, education on culture, climate and vision, and small group work were emphasized. A desired outcome is shared vocabulary and consensus on places of revisions.

Planning team members include different age representation, one person who participated in the vision process, a representative from the Executive Team, and someone involved in congregational retreat planning.

Closing Reflection/Prayer

Council concluded by sharing something longing for, and something grateful for.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for at 6:30pm at the Parsonage on December 19th, 2019.

Submitted by: Amanda Lindamood, Secretary, 2019-2020