



Luther Place Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
April 16th, 23rd and May 7th 2020
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

For the duration of this season of physical distancing, Council Meetings are being convened over Zoom weekly, with a new starting time at 6 pm. Minutes will be aggregated topically for four meetings over a month period.

Beginning on Thursday, May 7th Council will meet two times a month, the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 6 pm.

April 16 Present: Amanda Lindamood, Justin Fitch, Mike Wendt, Einar Olsen, Kate Wulff, Tara Hogan, Caroline Eayrs, Pastor Karen Brau, Emma Northcott, Doug Walter, Tom Randall, Jay Forth, Sarah Johnson, Joan Hay, Cathi Jones, Einar Olsen

Apologies: none

This meeting was called to order at 6 pm by Tara. March 19 Minutes were approved through unanimous consent, as well as the agenda for tonight.

April 23 Present: Amanda Lindamood, Justin Fitch, Mike Wendt, Einar Olsen, Kate Wulff, Tara Hogan, Caroline Eayrs, Pastor Karen Brau, Emma Northcott, Doug Walter, Tom Randall, Jay Forth, Sarah Johnson, Joan Hay, Cathi Jones

Apologies: Einar Olsen

This meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm by Tara. The agenda was approved using unanimous consent.

May 7 Present: Amanda Lindamood, Justin Fitch, Mike Wendt, Einar Olsen, Kate Wulff, Tara Hogan, Caroline Eayrs, Pastor Karen Brau, Emma Northcott, Doug Walter, Tom Randall

Apologies: Jay Forth, Joan Hay, Sarah Johnson, Cathi Jones

This meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Tara. The agenda was approved using unanimous consent.

Congregational Meeting

All committees are asked to provide solely written reports, in order to redirect Council Meeting time to essential areas of responsibility for the Congregation at this time.

A disclaimer was made that we would be using an adjusted meeting format, as shared prior. It was reiterated that this was a rather unique year for council, with a focus of slowing down, and a rocky and late start. For the remaining three meetings of this council term, there is a desire to build on recent momentum and integrate it, which has informed this agenda and the connections identified for the remaining roles of this council year.

In the context of an unprecedented global pandemic, Council is seeking to be responsive to an evolving context of leadership, with a greater emphasis on shared leadership, and cooperative systems. This doesn't change the overarching function, priorities or responsibilities of council, but it does necessitate continued attention and adjustments, including meeting more frequently. It was affirmed that greater participation and commitment will be needed from Council along with regular attendance from staff in Council meetings, as well as meaningful check ins with each other and the full congregation on a regular and coordinated basis.

Within our scan of safety concerns, this is an incomplete start, and emerging questions and examples have changed. A conversation was opened on guiding principles and terminology as a loose starting point, with consensus that each of these terms need expansion and edits to be utilized.

Security, Safety, & Hospitality:

Introduction and Definitions

This conversation started with questions:

- What do we do about Saturday / Sunday morning?
- Are our staff safe?
- Do we need security guards?

Your vignettes reinforced a need for common terminology.

Now we need to pivot – but the language still applies.

Security (physical)

- Security refers to the protection of individuals, organizations, and properties against external threats that are likely to cause harm.

Safety (emotional)

- Safety is the *feeling* of being protected from the factors that cause harm.

Hospitality

- Hospitality is the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers.

Operations Update

Employment / Personnel

Paused in hiring of Director of Faith Formation and Community Connections.

Building Use

Moved to cleaning the building two days a week.

Conversations with Terrific regarding the evolution of their services.

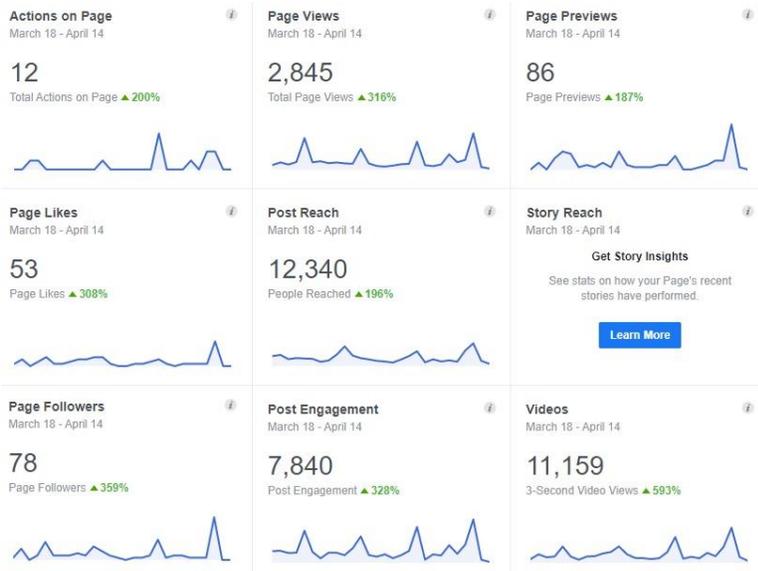
See chart below highlighting Communications and Faith Formation

Enews coming out on Fridays

Calendars aggregating faith formation programming dispersed weekly with recorded links

Saturday School, Bedtime Stories, Liturgy at Home, Tuesday Tunes, Adult Spiritual Formation, Compline and Communications and Faith Formations meetings happening weekly

Retreat Planning team meeting biweekly.



Worship & Faith Formation

Holy Week 2020

- No A/V glitches since Palm Sunday
 - iRig purchased and set up by Mike
- Good Friday video & bulletin shared on Zoom with great quality
- Easter Vigil sermon projected by Rev. Carter-Peterson
- Analyzing additional metrics around viewers and reach for each service

Compline with Pastor Karen returned last night, focusing on “Alleluias & Laments”

Now held Wednesday-Saturday

Devotions likely written by staff through the rest of April

Compline community to write devotions in May?

Sara B and Pastor Karen are organizing this

Adult Spiritual Formation will be led by Pastor Karen on April 19 and 26

A recorded sing-a-long with Eric Maring will take place this Sunday

“Saturday School” with Amanda and Sunday evening bedtime stories with Chelsey continue

Tuesday Tunes at 9PM with Justin will begin on April 21st

The LP community will be invited on social media/eNews to send in hymn tunes/song requests to be played live by Justin on Tuesday evenings.

An invitation for bidding prayer during some of the pieces, sing-a-long during some, and “sit back and enjoy” during others.

Live Stream

- Switcher Studio sent an email to its subscribers saying that there were issues with Facebook Live on Sunday, so it wasn't just us.
- SlingStudio has been purchased and arrived yesterday
 - This should allow us to easily insert pre-recorded videos, such as members reading the lessons, into a live-stream
 - One time purchase instead of a monthly subscription
 - Compatible with much more technology (video cameras, DSLR cameras, Android phones)
- Tuesday Tunes kicked off this week with a good audience

Communications Team

- Working on making Sunday mornings more interactive
- Designing a way to curate content from the community (a creative call and response for the week)

Community Care / Connections

Community Care / Organizing

Dianne Russell has proposed a call for this coming weekend to evaluate the calling campaign and discuss key takeaways and next steps.

67 congregants reached, 70 voicemails.

Fiscal Impact

On April 16th, the March Financials were approved unanimously.

It was named that at present, congregational giving is down 5,000.

42,000 in the pastor’s discretionary fund currently, all from members in the last month. Will be put towards neighborhood and congregational members’ immediate needs.

Reassessing Council Roles for the Foreseeable Future

Council Goals—Stewardship and Safety

Meet more frequently (possible weekly / biweekly phone calls) to stay up to date and connected

Assist in calling / contacting congregants to check-in on needs

Increased emphasis on listening and supporting each other

Re-evaluating/Reordering Council Priorities

Grant/Lee pew markers

Secession planning for all teams/committees

Nominees for new council term

Annual meeting/report

Congregational retreat

Security, Safety, & Hospitality

Class of 2020	Class of 2021	Class of 2022
Tara Hogan* served 3+1	Jay Forth	Caroline Eayrs
Einar Olsen+ served 3	Tom Randall	Joan Hay
Michael Wendt*+ served 3	Doug Walter	Cathi Jones
Kate Wulff* served 3+2	VACANCY	Amanda Lindamood*
VACANCY	VACANCY	Emma Northcott

Key:

Pink= Seats up for election

* = 2020 Executive Committee

+ = Eligible to fill a 1- or 2-year vacancy one time

Discussion regarding Annual Meeting and Elections

Hold Congregational Election Meeting in May

Pros/Cons:

- Some congregation members will not be able to participate in election meeting
- Sets precedent for virtual meetings

Steps Needed:

- Council/nominating team identify candidates
- Council vote to nominate slate to present to congregation
- Notify congregation of meeting by announcing in worship the 2 previous Sundays and by written notice within 10 days of meeting
- Research/test virtual meeting/voting system
- Provide training for members to learn to use virtual meeting/voting platform

Defer/Delay Congregational Meeting Now in Favor of In-Person Meeting Later

- Pros/Cons:
 - Inconsistent with bylaws requiring election meeting in May
 - We do not know yet when we will be able to meet in-person
 - Current council members will hold over to new election (unless they resign)

Prompts

What needs to be clarified for you about Council elections? What is your reaction?

How was your Holy Week / Easter? Was there something that was meaningful? Was there something that you missed?

How can you be involved in these next steps for transition?

Do you know someone who might be interested in serving on council?

Are you open to serving on the executive committee next term?

Council Election/Nominations

Council identifies any skills or gifts for ideal candidates

Council appoints Nomination Committee (comprised of 2 outgoing council members + 1 at-large congregation member)

Nominations committee identifies potential candidates

Council votes to recommend slate of nominees

Annual Report

Council identifies content to be included in team reports (names of members, activities in last year, highlights, etc.)

Council lead works with Director of Operations to set timeline for submissions and editing

Council lead requests team reports from leaders

Senior Pastor & President provide letters

Leaders submit written reports

Director of Operations compiles and edits report

Annual report distributed (electronic + limited paper copies)

Notice of Meeting

Notice of annual meeting provided to members:

Announced the prior 2 Sundays during worship

Notice in e-news

Church office mails letter to households with no e-mail address on file

Written materials sent ahead of meeting:

Meeting minutes from last congregational meeting

Agenda

Any other material to be discussed at meeting

Remote Meeting Preparation

Identify appropriate platform and voting system

Identify method of taking attendance

Identify method to accept nominations from the floor

Test system

Offer written instruction and training(s) to congregation members

Day of Meeting

Take attendance

“Tech support” offered

President chairs meeting

Secretary takes notes

Vote to accept minutes from January 2020 congregational budget meeting

Treasurer offers financial update

Nominations committee representative offers slate of nominees

Opportunity for nominations from the floor

Vote to elect council members

Any other business?

Other Lay Leadership Transition:

Team/committee membership and commitments run June-May;

Ask team members to affirmatively decide whether to continue as team members;

Determine whether new members are needed; what skills/qualities are needed; recruit;

Relevant operating documents, meeting minutes & notes, etc., are identified and stored for transition

Identify what on-boarding is needed for new members

On Thursday, April 23rd council passed a continuing resolution to hold the Annual Meeting virtually, which on May 7th was confirmed for May 7th. The entire resolution was shared with the congregation through the enews, and is included at the end of these notes.

Retreat Update

Retreat Day from Home: Journeying with Ruth and Naomi

You are invited to a congregational retreat from home on June 6, 10:00 AM to 4:45 PM (there will be a break from 12:00 to 2:00). We will engage the story of Ruth and Naomi as we consider three emerging

themes of our life together as a congregation: place-based ministry, hospitality, and intergenerationality. Stay tuned for more details.

Worship and Communications

Justin is making a how to guide for live streaming worship, to use to train individuals and gather institutional knowledge. Focus now on participation and increased interaction. Pentecost will include a collage of members wearing red, and a community choir video. This Sunday for the Prayers of the People on Mother's Day will be offered by eight to ten women and caregivers. Our programming continues to be well received and well attended; first time live attendance was down on a Sunday morning during worship. Reminder to be invitational, trust our message and community containers, and to balance the constancy and experimentation.

Artsmart

*new to the list beginning 5/7

In conversation with parents of former campers to conduct needs assessment, in collaboration with the parent coordinator. Some kind of hybrid model will be devised mixing feeding families, at home projects, books, art supplies and devotions using the theme of God's Creation, being sensitive to the stress families are under, particularly under food and income insecurity. Opportunities to partner with John Wesley, considering tiered approach, and opportunities to support efforts sooner than this summer, offering assistance sooner. All efforts will be filtered through Olga Salazar to make sure we are aligned with the communities needs. Artsmart will be added to our list of essential operations.

Church 2.0

*new to essential operations beginning 5/7

How do we envision holding conversations across committees and interests on what "church will look like" as we move forward?

Issues include hospitality, safety, stewardship, and engagement
Words are important! Alternatives to "re-opening the church"

Not elaborated on yet, but will be a conversation we pursue and strategize around moving forward.
Want to intentionally link them within one integrated approach.

We are looking at how to structure teams and committees to be able to respond holistically within this framework of emerging ways of being church and responding to community needs. With the support of Bishop Leila, we are being agitated to discern with urgency the call to be church in this time, as clergy, lay leaders and within our faith lives. We are encouraging a slow walk and layered discernment.

Important to us is to have clear and integrated understandings and plans for implementation.

Elections

What qualities are important in potential Council members?

Who specifically might be moved to serve?

Request for all individuals staying on council to email Tara by this weekend to respond to the question about openness to serve on the executive team next year, with the goal to discuss more fully in our next meeting, alongside questions of nominations for new council members. Using mutual invitation, we will discuss the above two questions and focus on important qualities for the next iteration.

Spiritual maturity, willingness to be creative and open, ability to be flexible, experience with Luther Place, some history with the congregation, ability to adapt to change, excited to be a leader—willing and wanting, participatory, ability to talk and the ability to listen—having those almost at an equal. Ability to offer time, an appreciation of the time commitment and care needed to attend to these complexities, along with the capacity to attend to the complexities, energy to be engaged, diversity—age, race and class in particular, tech savvy, caregiving, rooted in community care skills and accountable relationships, attitude of continuous improvement, listening, organized, varied community foot holes with Luther Place. Time and patience. All forms of diversity, especially in community connections. Religious diversity. Looking at who is energetic already, putting effort into our community now as well. Strong spirit of volunteering. Passion for some area or function of the church. Faithfulness to God, community and oneself, a way to use that generatively. Nimbleness, willingness to experiment. Someone who has a sense of connection, and an ability to bring others along in their connection and discipleship as well. Connected to the impact of gentrification and equity measures.

Transition Planning

*We've talked about council responsibilities and team transition items, and add to that list items related to the annual meeting and annual report.

Notice of Meeting

Notice of annual meeting provided to members:

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Written materials sent ahead of meeting:

Meeting minutes from last congregational meeting

Agenda

Any other material to be discussed at meeting

Remote Meeting Preparation

Identify appropriate platform and voting system

Identify method of taking attendance

Identify method to accept nominations from the floor

Test system

Offer written instruction and training(s) to congregation members

Day of Meeting

Take attendance

"Tech support" offered

President chairs meeting

Secretary takes notes

Vote to accept minutes from January 2020 congregational budget meeting
Treasurer offers financial update
Nominations committee representative offers slate of nominees
Opportunity for nominations from the floor
Vote to elect council members
Any other business?

Other Lay Leadership Transition:

Team/committee membership and commitments run June-May;
Ask team members to affirmatively decide whether to continue as team members;
Determine whether new members are needed; what skills/qualities are needed; recruit;
Relevant operating documents, meeting minutes & notes, etc., are identified and stored for transition
Identify what on-boarding is needed for new members

Annual Meeting → Confirmed for **Sunday, June 28**

*determine a time at a later meeting as we determine platforms involved

Commitments for participation in transition steps can be emailed directly to Tara, and a full chart will be shared in preparation of our April 21st meeting.

Meeting at 5/7 concluded at 6:54 pm.

Closing Reflection/Prayer

The meeting was adjourned, concluding with the reciting of the Lord's Prayer.

The next meeting is scheduled for at 6:00 pm via Zoom on May 21st, 2020.

Submitted by: Amanda Lindamood, Secretary, 2019-2020

Continuing Resolution of the Congregational Council of Luther Place Memorial Church

Passed: April 23rd, 2020

WHEREAS on March 19, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the virus COVID-19 a pandemic;

WHEREAS the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia have each enacted stay-at-home orders limiting residents' travel to essential business;

WHEREAS, in response to this public health crisis, the Luther Place congregation and community has ceased worshipping and gathering in person;

WHEREAS loving service and courageous action require that we avoid action that could spread the virus or make others ill;

WHEREAS when it will be safe or secure to return to in-person gatherings will differ for each congregational member or household;

WHEREAS the constitution and bylaws governing this congregation requires an annual congregational meeting to elect new council members, and that meeting is generally held in May or early June;

WHEREAS our constitution prohibits voting by absentee or proxy ballots;

WHEREAS we believe that the Holy Spirit guides our collective work when we gather together in one space, whether physical or remotely;

WHEREAS the ELCA Model Constitution C10.08 provides “This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.”

WHEREAS our congregation’s constitution has not been yet been updated to conform to the ELCA’s Model Constitution;

WHEREAS good and orderly leadership transition take time and effort, and, in light of our current circumstances, we expect to need more time and effort than in previous years;

It is hereby RESOLVED that:

- The council adopts, as an operating procedure, ELCA Model Constitution provision C10.08 concerning remote congregational meetings;
- The council will call an annual election meeting to be held remotely before July 31, 2020, in a manner consistent with Model Constitution provision C10.08;
- Before the annual election meeting, and any subsequent congregational meeting to be held remotely, the council will provide the congregation written instructions and training for use of technology to be used in the annual election meeting;

This continuing resolution shall remain in effect until the earlier of: (1) the congregation’s adoption of Model Constitution Provision C10.08 or (2) the council’s withdrawal of this continuing resolution.

Necessary Steps Towards Congregational Meeting and Lay Leadership Transition:

Council Election/Nominations

1. Council identifies any skills or gifts for ideal candidates
2. Council appoints Nomination Committee (comprised of 2 outgoing council members + 1 at-large congregation member)
3. Nominations committee identifies potential candidates
4. Council votes to recommend slate of nominees

Written Annual Report

1. Council identifies any particular content to be included in a team report
2. Council lead (usually president) works with Director of Operations to set timeline for submissions; editing
3. Teams/committee/ministry leaders are requested to provide written report of activities since last congregational meeting (team member names, highlights of year, etc.)
4. Senior pastor & president provide letters
5. Leaders submit written reports
6. Director of Operations compiles and edits report
7. Annual report made available electronically; limited paper copies are printed (would normally be distributed at the meeting; may decide whether to mail to certain households)

Notice of Meeting

1. Notice of annual meeting provided to members:
 - a. Announced the prior 2 Sundays during worship
 - b. Notice in e-news
 - c. Church office mails letter to households with no e-mail address on file
2. Written materials sent ahead of meeting: (1) Meeting minutes from last congregational meeting; (2) agenda; (3) any other material to be discussed at meeting

Remote Meeting Preparation

1. Identify appropriate platform and voting system
2. Identify method of taking attendance
3. Identify method to accept nominations from the floor
4. Test system
5. Offer written instruction and training(s) to congregation members

Meeting Itself:

1. Take attendance
2. "Tech support" offered
3. President chairs meeting
4. Secretary takes notes
5. Vote to accept minutes from January 2020 congregational budget meeting
6. Treasurer offers financial update
7. Nominations committee representative offers slate of nominees
8. Opportunity for nominations from the floor
9. Vote to elect council members
10. Any other business?

Other Lay Leadership Transition:

1. Team and committee membership and commitments run June-May;
2. Ask team members to affirmatively decide whether to continue as team members;

3. Determine whether new members are needed; what skills/qualities are needed; recruit;
4. Relevant operating documents, meeting minutes & notes, etc., are identified and stored for transition
5. Identify what on-boarding is needed for new members