

Trinity Congregation Council Minutes

June 16, 2026

Present: Lynn Buske, Erik Dovre, Robin Drout, Karla Halloin, Heather Kapanke, Dawn Marcott, Mary Schoenknecht, Denyse Schroeder, John Schroedl, Gail Schulner, Jacqueline Strayer, Michelle Zumwalt, Craig Olsen, Pastor Patrick Patterson

Absent: Henry Butler, Greg Helgeson, Pastor Tom Westcott (on sabbatical)

- 1. Call to Order:** President Karla Halloin called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.
- 2. Devotion:** John Schroedl provided a devotion from Psalm 46.
- 3. Approval of April and May Council Minutes:** The April and May Council minutes were approved as written.
- 4. Approval of April and May Financial Report:** Craig Olsen reviewed the April and May financial results. While income in April was approximately \$15,000 less than expenses, income in May was approximately \$8000 more than expenses. Neither month included any unusual expenses. Our fiscal year-to-date income now exceeds expenses by approximately \$49,000. Barring something unusual, we should end the fiscal year on June 30 with a slight surplus. The April and May financial reports were approved as presented.
- 5. Pastors Reports:**

Pastor Patrick supplemented his written report with the following:

 - He pointed out that Tyler Hahn, our new Communications Coordinator, began work last week. Tyler has experience in communications and public relations and has quickly become oriented to his areas of responsibility.
 - His report also includes preliminary information on a proposed worship center capital project to replace outdated audio and video equipment. The current equipment was installed in 2004 at the time of the worship center remodeling. While it is generally functioning, there are elements of the system that are beginning to fail. Because of the age of the technology, repairs are often difficult. The Council agreed to discuss this topic further at next month's meeting with the idea of conducting a capital campaign this fall.
 - Mary Schoenknecht asked about a potential visit from Patrick and Jacqueline Bencke, missionaries we support in Japan. Pastor Patrick confirmed that the Benckes will visit Trinity on Sunday, August 11, and will participate in an interview-style sermon with him.
- 6. Staff and Committee Reports:**
 - Kate Conner's report outlined a number of proposed fundraisers for the 2026-2027 year in support of attendees for the 2027 Youth Gathering in Minneapolis. There was concern expressed by some Council members for the number of fundraisers (for youth and other Trinity activities) that would occur next year. Pastor Patrick will pass along several comments and questions for Katie and the Council will discuss this further next month.

- Kim Dewey's report mentioned farewells to three staff members for Noah's Ark and ECE who are leaving. Pastor Patrick confirmed that replacement staff has been hired for all positions for next year.

There were no other questions or comments on the written staff and committee reports for the month.

7. Old Business

- a. **Budget Draft:** An updated draft of the budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year was discussed. Dawn Paul has been reviewing budget categories to make sure that the proposed amounts match with actual income and expenses for the past years. She made several minor adjustments (totaling \$5000) in the latest draft. The 3% cost-of-living increase to staff salaries recommended by the Personnel Committee is included in the budget. Overall, the proposed budget for 2026-2027 is approximately \$41,000 less than the current year's budget. This is primarily due to changes in staffing. The Executive Committee has recommended approval of the budget by the Council. A motion was made and seconded to approve the budget and recommend its approval by the Congregation at the annual meeting in August. The motion was approved.
- b. **FriendFest Planning:** Robin Drout reviewed a handout showing the status of various decisions needing to be made concerning FriendFest, to be held on Sunday, September 13. Council discussion included the following:
 - There will be a single FriendFest Worship service that Sunday at 10:00 a.m. (no 8:15 a.m. or 9:45 a.m. services). FriendFest will run from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The dessert auction will begin at 11:30 a.m. and is intended to last about ½ hour.
 - A freewill offering will be accepted from attendees, but there will be no other food or activity cost.
 - We will make the same arrangements for a tent, tables, and chairs as last year. Pastor Patrick will talk to Dawn Paul about arranging the needed contract with A-1 Rental and making payment as required. Budget for this is \$1800.
 - Food is anticipated to be hot dogs and brats, chips, ice cream, water, and lemonade. The Food Committee will have a final proposal to share next month. Budget for food and drink is \$700.
 - Wisconsin Fun Factory has offered us the same discount as last year for kid activities (bubble bash, jungle toddler obstacle course, and dual carnival tents with four games). Total cost (and budgeted amount) of \$1000. Greg Helgeson will coordinate with Dawn Paul to make sure the needed contract is signed and down payment is made. The Activities Committee is also planning music by Paul Bonstrom under the tent, pickleball, gaga ball, and cornhole. Karla Halloin reported that Sue Marczinke has the name of an auctioneer who might help with the dessert auction. The committee will contact Sue to coordinate.
 - We will continue efforts we started last year to compost waste when possible. Lynn Buske will contact Pat Mertens to review what could reasonably be accomplished.

8. New Business

- a. **Vision Statement: A Movement to Create Ways of Being Church with Expanded Digital Ministry:** Pastor Patrick reviewed the fourth movement of Trinity's Vision Statement which focuses on digital ministry. This movement was first implemented as we were coming out of COVID and we were still learning what worked and what didn't. Ideas for digital small groups and a pastor to lead this effort have not been implemented. Our recent hiring of a communications coordinator (Tyler Hahn) does provide us with a chance to re-focus on our digital ministry. Tyler is working on a communications plan for Trinity as part of this effort.
- b. **Personnel Policy Manual Revisions:** At its meeting in May, the Personnel Committee reviewed and approved proposed revisions to the Trinity Personnel Policy Manual. The revisions are structural in nature only (no policy changes) and have been proposed in order to clarify and make the Manual easier to use. (The Personnel Committee does have plans to reviewed some policy issues in the near future, but this will be handled separately.) A copy of the changes currently proposed was included in the May Council packet. The Executive Committee has reviewed the proposed changes and recommends approval by the Council. A motion was made and seconded to approve the revisions to the Personnel Policy Manual as recommended by the Personnel Committee. The motion was approved.

9. **Closing Prayer:** John Schroedl provided a closing prayer.

10. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Robin Drout
Secretary