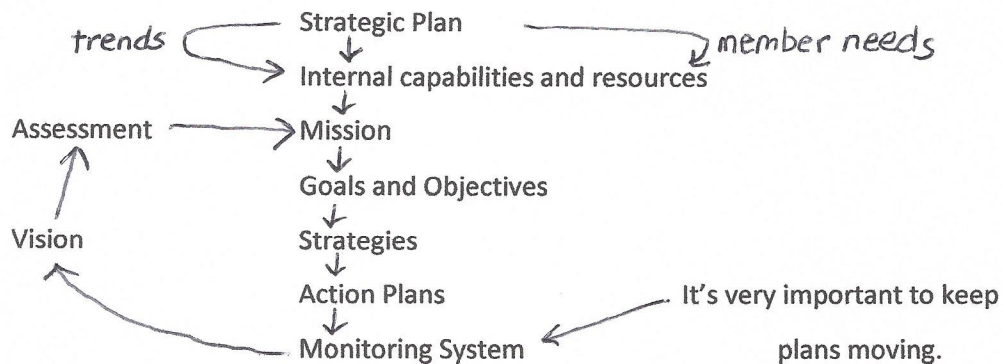


Tree of Life Lutheran Church
Council Meeting/Retreat Minutes
February 18, 2017

The monthly meeting/annual retreat of the Congregational Council was called to order at 9:20am by President Dennis McConnell. Council members present were: Dennis McConnell, President; Susan Blough, Secretary; Linda Baumgartner; Jim Voelz; George Timmins; Lawrence Zuehlke; Bunny Stoutes; Jack Zimmer; Pastor Chris Lake; and Pastor Larry Smith. Absent was Ryan Dockery; Heidi Beckham; Chuck Will; Julie Weeks; Ted Dinklage, Interim Treasurer; and Kirk Helberg.

- A. The Meeting/retreat began with an opening prayer by Pastor Chris. A devotion by Dennis followed which was based on "Our Daily Bread" lesson "Always Loved, Always Valued." God loves us for more than our work; He loves us for who we are. All were welcomed by Dennis.

Strategic Plan Presentation by Jack Zimmer. A vision statement for TOL will be developed today. We will work on developing a strategic plan to determine the direction for TOL. A strategic plan is a process, not an event; as the plan is executed, it will continually be re-evaluated. The plan will keep TOL on track as it will focus on major decisions and directions, not the minutiae, which will be delegated.



Some elements of the strategic plan are already done as a result of the work done by the Vision task force. A Mission Statement states priorities, purposes, goals and is meant to carry TOL to its goal(s). TOL's mission statement is: To invite, inspire, and include all people in Christ's love. The word "all" is a very important word in the mission statement and Council must always keep this in mind as TOL moves forward.

A Vision Statement is an ideal picture of what the church would be if it fulfilled all potential of all organizations and all humans who are part of it. A Vision Statement is a picture of the mountain top of the organization. The benefits of a Vision Statement are to inspire and motivate; foster success and excellence; and provide direction to the goal.

Those present at the retreat broke up into three teams and one and one-half hours later determined TOL's Vision to be: **The entire world knows God's love.**

Council Covenants and Council Policy Book, as currently developed, are attached to these minutes. A Council Policy Book committee was formed consisting of Jack Zimmer, George Timmins, Bunny Stoutes, and Linda Baumgartner.

Regular Council meeting for February followed.

B. Consent Agenda – motion to approve all by George Timmins and seconded by Lawrence Zuehlke.

1. Adopt today's agenda
2. Approve January 11, 2017 minutes
3. First quarter congregational meeting shall be April 23, 2017.
4. Make \$5000.00 donation to Water to Thrive from Seeds, having reached \$300,000 in total donations
5. Make \$2500.00 payment from Seeds toward mortgage principle
6. Loan \$7395.00 from Seeds to youth Lutherhill camp payments to save \$20.00 per camper, a total of \$640.00 savings. This loan will be repaid from garage sale proceeds.
7. Ratify new members: Kay Richards and Beth Parker.
8. A correction will be made to the January 22, 2017 congregational meeting minutes clarifying that a total of \$20,000.00 has been paid toward mortgage principle: \$10,000.00 in 2015 and \$10,000.00 in 2016.

C. Discussion Agenda

1. Old business
 - a. None.
2. New business
 - a. A motion to elect council officers: Jack Zimmer as vice president and Linda Baumgartner as recording secretary was made by Pastor Chris and seconded by George Timmins. Motion carried.
 - b. A motion to update the TOL constitution and bylaws to be in compliance with the revised ELCA model constitution was made by Jim Voelz. Jim Rust will be responsible for reviewing and incorporating the changes into TOL's constitution to be presented to council first and then transmitted to the synod for legal review. Lastly, the updated constitution will be presented to the congregation for approval in the third or fourth quarter 2017 congregational meeting. The motion was seconded by Lawrence Zuehlke and motion carried.
 - c. A motion to transition online giving facility from VANCO only to a combination of VANCO/Realm was made by George Timmins. The use of VANCO/Realm will make record keeping easier and will facilitate the tracking of online giving. The motion was seconded by Jack Zimmer and motion carried.
 - d. Review financial governance, especially the need to have to non-related people count Sunday offerings. Counting teams should not consist of married couples. A married couple could count as one member of a counting team with a third person or another couple being the second member of the counting team; the issue is liability. Five more

counters are needed. Mary Nye and Susie Rust will be asked to write instructions for counters to make the training easier. The issue will be raised with Heidi Beckham and she will decide who will do the recruiting for additional counters. The target for implementation and training is April.

- e. Review Music ministry and salary of Music minister/director.

D. Financial reports

- 1. Giving has been lower in January 2017 than in January 2016. Jack Zimmer, as stewardship chair, will work with Bunny Stoutes and Pastor Chris to address the individual situations of those people who have not given in January and February 2017 and Jack will make calls. If nothing changes and the downward trend continues, staffing reduction may be considered. Reports through January 2017 attached. Motion to accept financial reports made by George Timmins and seconded by Lawrence Zuehlke. The motion carried.
- E. No further strategic planning/vision discussion was needed and no closing remarks were made.
 - F. With no further business, a motion was made to adjourn at 2:30pm by Pastor Chris and was seconded by Jim Voelz. The Lord's Prayer was said by all.

Dennis McConnell, President

Susan Blough, Secretary

Date

Date