

Pathways Constituency Meeting
May 1, 2022
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Crookston, MN

Meeting called to order at 3:07
31 people present in person
6 People on Zoom
Facebook livestreamed

Chris A addressed the gathering with basic meeting info and introduced Eric as the new Chair and handed over the floor

Eric welcomed the group and introduced himself and offered opening devotions and prayer.

Chris L and Chris A offered a “how we got here” timeline. Much of the information can be found on the handout given at the meeting, the same one offered at the Annual Meeting. A special thanks for Trinity and the relationship that has been throughout the years.

In order to facilitate ease of conversation, the four different parcels have been labeled as such, from left to right on the map
Parcel 1 is the main camp, about 80 acres, all the buildings
Parcel 2 67 acres ropes course
Parcel 3 North end of Stocking 40 acres
Parcel 4 160 acres northeast of the other 3 parcel

Chris A shared about the Trinity vote. At a congregational meeting on April 3rd Trinity voted whether or not to sell the land to Pathways. Trinity voted 102-11 in favor of the motion to sell to Pathways at the proposed price and timeline.

Chris L talked about the process of creating the bid for the land. It is a leap of faith for both parties but one that relies on trusting that there is a place for campers to meet Jesus and encounter God in unique places.

The formal motion was presented:

- To purchase Camp Emmaus property parcels 1-4 to Pathways Bible Camp for \$200,000 with a Covenant of Commitment that states: “We commit to fulfilling a \$500,000 pledge to support Trinity’s ministry through its capital campaign to be completed within 5 years of the point of sale. If Pathways does not fulfill this

pledge, we commit in good faith to deeding the Bible camp back to Trinity. Pathways does retain full rights over the decisions of Camp Emmaus' future from the point of sale. Should Pathways decide to sell the Emmaus property before the pledge is fulfilled, Pathways will use proceeds of this sale to complete its pledge to Trinity.”

The point of sale will be Dec 31st of this year. This will help Pathways get a headstart on the capital campaign. The 200k offers the ability to receive the deed without having to pay the entire amount up front or waiting until the end for the deed. Receiving the deed allows Pathways to make decisions about the use and potential sale of the land without any input from Trinity.

Eric brought the motion to the floor and opened up discussion
The Board made the motion, Joel Vohees Calvary Park Rapids seconded

Discussion:

What are Pathways plans for Camp Emmaus if the land is purchased?

Chris A Housing improvements are high on the list

Working with consultants to create a site plan

As far as selling property, we don't want to unless we need to

This is a great opportunity to secure the land and finally answer the question of ownership that has held Pathways back

Are Parcel 1 and 2 the main use parcels?

Yes. The majority of 1 is the main use. Parcel 2 is ropes and camp sites. 3 and 4 are used for out camping but are not in heavy use otherwise.

Who owns the camp?

Trinity Lutheran owns the land. Pathways is made up of the congregations of conferences 1-7

Who owns the improvements made to the property?

Trinity owns the buildings and any improvements made to the property. An example is the dining hall agreement.

Are there documents that document the agreement around the dining hall?

Yes.

Chris L made note that the assessment of the land came in around 2mil. The reason we can buy it for 700k is recognizing that Trinity wants the area to remain a camp but they also recognize that there was labor put into the buildings and land improvement by Pathways throughout the years and that should be taken into account.

What is the zoning of the parcels?

Much of it is woods, some farmland. A bit of lowland and swamp area
Lake Morgan is a private lake. Stocking Lake is a commercial lake. Currently the shoreline on Stocking is undeveloped but could be developed.

Eric: Our goal is to offer good and faithful ministry to kids and families. We are aware of the needs on the list. As a board we are looking for the agency to fix the problems and build without needing to jump through hoops or create further issues down the line.

Of the initial 200k, does Pathways have the capacity to make the payment right now?
No. But we have had 3 good years of budget surpluses. While we cannot write the check outright right now, we do have a small surplus and we will enter in a capital campaign.

Mark Olson speaking in favor of the motion

Two years ago with Clay there was a discussion with Dave Hunstad. This has been an ongoing issue for many many years. Dave is quoted as saying, "The ownership issue has been a black cloud hanging over Pathways for years". There are those who remember a "handshake deal" but there is no documentation, nothing in writing. By voting on this today, we can end the dark cloud and give ourselves the freedom to do what we will. Grateful to come to this.

Pastor Dan thanks Trinity for giving us the latitude to have this conversation.

Eric echoed that on behalf of the board.

Joel: Questions have been raised about who owns the buildings. Doesn't really matter because even if we did own them and didn't buy the land we don't really have the ability to move the buildings anyway.

How many confirmed members/congregations are in the Pathways constituency?

Chris A Don't know the exact number of members but relationships have been built over the last three years. 160 member congregations.

Chris L pointed out the many years of staff who have relationships and all the others who have a story rooted at Pathways that have already expressed support of this and will support it but aren't technically counted as part of the constituency.

Pastor Steve Park Rapids former counselor in the 70's

The old system of congregations giving for this ministry is very limited. Will we be able to approach/allow individuals to give or will it be restricted to member congregations? If only the congregations, it probably won't work.

Chris: Both/And. Member congregations and beyond. Approach not only individuals but community partners as well

Mark: capital campaign will draw on all options but can't happen until this is resolved

Eric: strategic plan will also begin in earnest once this is resolved

What is the appraisal value?

There hasn't been an official appraisal. A group came out with their own realtor in 2020.

Total taxable value is 2.1mil

Approx

190k for parcel 4

500k 2&3

1mil original 80 acres

Being that there is the commitment to paying it off the land, can improvements happen during the campaign or will we need to wait until after the land is fully paid for?

Can't answer in full as the strategic plan needs to happen but it will ideally be happening together. Things like the cabins need improvement

One of the things to think about is the development of adult ministry considering the decline of youth campers. We might be better off with just a focus on one camp instead of splitting our resources between two.

Chris L: This is a big part of the strategic plan. 1 vs 2 camps. There are a lot of avenues to pull off the purchase. If our future is one camp, and that camp is Minne-Wa-Kan, then we have the agency to sell Emmaus if we want. Or if it is one camp then we can reimagine Minne-Wa-Kan and keep emmaus. But we need to buy Emmaus to have that chance. As the board and negotiating team we have felt the Spirit stirring and moving and inviting us to new and exciting ways of being.

Joel V: Minne-Wa-Kan is under contract through 2025, if you don't have a place for the campers to go, do you risk losing the campers you have? It's a good price, and worth buying because even if you sell, it gives good money to do ministry with Minne-Wa-Kan.

Mark: We aren't here for strategic planning but it's good to think about what an interdenominational camp might be and leveraging our future.

How many campers are registered now?

Jen Finch: As of Friday afternoon 296 individual, 306 signed up so about 10 are coming more than once

Is there documentation of the environmental impact for the property?

We don't believe there is.

Who would have deed to the property?

Pathways would.

Will there be codes that kick in on transfer of deed?

Chris L from the conversations he has had, there is potential for the state to come look at things like the septic system. But other conversations don't believe it isn't a concern. In general it remains to be seen

Simon: when Trinity looked into it, there could be some issues, but to be honest no one will know until it happens. Trinity wants it to happen as much as Pathways wants it to happen.

Is there a specific lawyer or realtor we are working with?

At this point no. There isn't a specific contract but there will be

What is the total purchase price?

200k with a 500k pledge to be fulfilled by the end of 2027. Total of 700k

It was noted that there might be 160 member congregations but Al Judson said there were only 62 congregations currently financially supporting it. It's risky. (Not said by Al)

Yes it is risky but what are the other options?

Eric: Yes, we will be calling people and having conversations. It will be key not only for raising the money but for the ministry to be what our congregations need.

How much staff does it take to run camp for the summer or other retreats?

Realistically we want as large a staff as we can get so we can offer as much programming as we want. Minimum 4-5 for a retreat in the summer and 12-15 for a summer week.

Are you able to staff for support of children of disabilities or elders with disabilities?

We do the best we can to walk with them

Call the question Pastor Dan
Pastor Steve seconded
Voice vote passed

Ballots passed out at 4:09
Motion put back up on the screen and read aloud

24-2 in favor of the motion. Motion passes

Chris A Potential next steps

Will be forming a capital campaign. Need your help to find those people
Strategic plan process. Be on the lookout for camp reps to get your thoughts on camp.

Wrapping up this Fall

Campus and Facility plan. Working with professionals

Still have room on our summer staff and have opportunities for even partial summer commitments

Camper registration is still open. Plenty of scholarship money available from Pathways directly in addition to any churches. Financial commitment shouldn't be a barrier.

Come to camp! Schedule a time to visit or drop by for the day. These are your camps and you are always welcome to visit.

Spread the word about the excitement and the next steps

Thank you. Thank you for those who are in person and those online. Please take this back to your congregations and share the excitement.

Eric closed with prayer

Meeting adjourned 4:21