

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
April 15th, 2021
Meeting held via Zoom due to COVID-19

Called to order by Pastor Jen at 6:20pm.

Attendance:

Jack Paulson-Zoom

Halley Harms-Zoom

Pastor Jen Johnson-Zoom

Ruth Price-Zoom

Kory Anderson- Zoom

Geoff Gilbert-Zoom

Don Bender-Zoom

Ann Ciske- absent with notification

Kerry Melby - zoom

Prayer by Pastor Jen

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Kory Anderson, second by Kerry Melby to approve the proposed agenda.

Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Geoff Gilbert, second by Jack Paulson to approve the March meeting minutes as submitted. Motion Carried.

Pastor's Report

I'm not sure as to what I should be reporting at this point in our ministry together. You have your Ministry Site Profile available for possible candidates. I have my Rostered Minister's Profile available for the next Call. In between these two is what remains of our time together. While we may have plans for this time, God will ultimately guide and provide. We continue; worshiping, learning, serving, loving, growing. Our task, if that is the correct word, is for all of us to listen to God and to one another. This is true for the present time and remains true into the future.

Pr. Jen

We discussed things as a council we would like to see in the Pastor's report going forward. It was recommended that the Pastor share what she is doing for self-care included in her narrative of how she's been serving the church.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Janice Petersen.

Financial Update

1. Revenue total: \$17,611 /Expenditures total: \$19,894
2. Transfer of \$4500 from savings was necessary to cover bills.

Old Business

1. Council Update

- a. Check signers Jack Paulsen and Ann Ciske. Denise will contact them to set up with bank. She will also need a copy of council minutes approving check signers for the bank.

2. Audit

- a. Jerry Saalsaa is setting this up for late April.
- b. He has some people confirmed and waiting for one more response.

New Business

1. Funds raised for special projects.

- a. Concern raised by Denise Derey and Janice Petersen about several closely spaced fundraising events. This concern is not new and has come up in past. When we have many fundraising events, some members decrease their giving to the regular fund to support the special event.
- b. A point was also expressed about using "Easter" envelopes for a special fundraising event. Many people only contribute at Easter and Christmas, so may have thought this was their general Easter offering.
- c. These fundraising events were successful and proved to be a good idea.
- d. The council and the church need to keep in mind when scheduling fund raising efforts that some need to be for the church itself (mission and ministry of BLC) or consider events that have a duo purpose: "for a special event and the Mission and Ministry of Bethlehem."
- e. Congregation members love to give to the youth and special projects, and we need to continue this practice, just think about communication and balance.

2. \$200 Music donation

- a. Church received \$200 donation for music.
- b. Pr Jen said that the money was not otherwise designated.
- c. Janice will talk with Melissa Bradbury and Carla Gerhardt as there was other stuff they wanted for the music/live stream/video.

3. Lower Building Fund Donations

- a. Jerry pointed out that our donations specifically for our building fund have diminished.
- b. While we have saved money with the refinance, he is still concerned that this is decreasing does not want it neglected.
- c. He suggests that the council consider a Stewardship push to encourage regular donations for this purpose, as well as general fund.

Christian Education Committee Report

Sunday School

Children continue to receive Sunday School in a bag monthly.

We are planning an end of year celebration on May 16th after service. This is a family celebration and all are welcome!

Confirmation

Classes resumed in-person on April 7th. We are using a Ministry to Youth 4 week curriculum of “Among Us” following along with the New Testament we are studying. Our last day of class will be held May 19th with a bonfire and inviting the current 5th graders to join us.

The confirmation youth decorated and filled 100 bags for the Easter Breakfast. Thank you to all who came and purchased a breakfast to go bag! The youth raised just over \$400 to put towards an outdoor movie set-up and camperships.

Youth Group

We will begin planning a high school graduation celebration for our seniors this year on May 16th. We have 11 graduates in the congregation! We will be asking them to each submit a picture and short bio to share with the congregation. Pastor will give them a special blessing at the service.

Worship & Music Committee Report

No report received.

Property Committee Report

Utility usage and billing continues to be monitored and is in line with season expectations. The electric bill is running higher than normal due to Covid concerns which require the air handler fans to be run much more often. Floodlight bulbs in the Sanctuary will hopefully be replaced this week and the shade in the west window will be repaired. Weather permitting, an oak tree which is down on the south lot line will be cut up and moved out of the field.

Local & Global Committee Report

Local and Global will meet on Tuesday April 13 at 6:30 via Zoom to plan activities. We are looking for more people to join us and share some of their ideas.

April 18 will be Earth Day Clean-up of Highway 33. Families with young children can clean up in the church yard away from the Highway.

Stewardship/Evangelism

Easter offering letter was sent out asking for donations for the youth group, specifically for an outdoor movie screen set up for family summer activities. \$2160 was received so far from this offering. (Note: this does not include the camp scholarship money)

COVID-19 Task Force

The committee met twice since the last council meeting.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Covid-19 Task Force Meeting Minutes March 23, 2021, 6:30 pm, Via Zoom

In attendance: Pr. Jen, Janice Petersen, Ann Ciske, Kerry Melby, Melissa Bradbury, Dan Pulsfus, Del Molden, Larry Sween, Julie Saalsaa, Carla Gerhardt

Opening Prayer

Columbia County Numbers & Local Hospital Capacity

<https://www.co.columbia.wi.us/columbiacounty/Portals/7/Public%20Health/03172021%20COVID%20Weekly%20Update.pdf?ver=2021-03-17-154034-370>

Number continue to decline

Capacity Allowance

- for Worship (current: 40) – **approved to increase capacity to 50 people start March 28th**
- for fellowship hall = 24; 3 in kitchen
- **narthex = 34-36 – TV will need to be moved and set up for any overflow**
- **Note: fans need to be started in the fellowship hall and narthex if in use**

Worship experience

- Seating layout in sanctuary. Layout has stayed the same, the string was just removed and more “this seat is temporarily closed” were placed on the pews.
- masking for Pr. Jen.

- Pr. Jen is removing her mask during her sermon. It has made a difference for people as they are able to hear her better both in person and online.
- Singer
 - *We will begin to allow for a soloist or small group of singers if they are 6 ft apart. They will need to be 20 ft from the rest of the congregation. They do not need to be masked while singing. They will need to use separate microphones. This will begin on Easter. Carla will reach out to some of our singers to see if they interested in singing for Easter and also look for a cantor.*

Events

- Drive through spaghetti dinner – *approved following safety guidelines*
 - Farmers market – *tabled until next meeting – Melissa to get more information*
 - Summer movie series – *approved for outdoors – will need to follow the recommendations for gatherings of at the time*
 - Fashion Show – *Pr. Jen will work with Ruth, with Melissa’s help if needed, to go over details for safety precautions. The final plan will be discussed at our next meeting.*
5. St. Mary’s Wedding in June – *more information is needed before we can approve*
- *Melissa will contact county health nurse to ask about church max capacity*
 - *Julie will contact our insurance company regarding our liability for a large event*
 - *If we move forward and approve – it will need Church Council’s final approval and a contract to be drafted*

Next meeting Tuesday, April 6th at 6:30 pm

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church Covid-19 Task Force Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2021, 6:30 pm, Via Zoom**

In attendance: Larry Sween, Janice Petersen, Ann Ciske, Kerry Melby, Melissa Bradbury, Del Molden, Julie Saalsaa, Pr. Jen

- I. Columbia County Numbers & Local Hospital Capacity
 - <https://www.co.columbia.wi.us/columbiacounty/Portals/7/Public%20Health/03242021%20COVID%20Weekly%20Update.pdf?ver=2021-03-24-125120-603>
 - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/county.htm>

Number seem to be steady.

- II. Current Capacity Allowances

- for Worship (current: 50)
- for fellowship hall = 24; 3 in kitchen
- narthex = 34-36

III. Worship experience

- Singer – Roger Sheimo sang for both Easter services
- Easter feedback. Had 66 people (including volunteers) at 8:30 am service and 50 at 10:30 am.

Both services ran smoothly. People appreciated the music and singing.

IV. Guidelines for those who have been vaccinated.

Purposed policy:

Follow the CDC guidelines for fully vaccinated people for staff and any gatherings at church where all people are fully vaccinated. (see below)

Approved to follow CDC guidelines for fully vaccinated small groups and staff, while continuing to adhere to the capacity allowance of each space.

Per the CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

“Fully vaccinated people can:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing
- Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing
- Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic”

“For now, fully vaccinated people should continue to:

- Take precautions in public like wearing a well-fitted mask and physical distancing
- Wear masks, practice physical distancing, and adhere to other prevention measures when visiting with unvaccinated people who are at [increased risk for severe COVID-19](#) disease or who have an unvaccinated household member who is at increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease
- Wear masks, maintain physical distance, and practice other prevention measures when visiting with unvaccinated people from multiple households
- Avoid medium- and large-sized in-person gatherings
- Get tested if experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#)
- Follow guidance issued by individual employers”

V. Events for Review

- St. Mary’s Wedding in June – ***they found a church in Baraboo***
- Fashion Show – ***approved***

Date: May 1st. Time 1 pm

Rehearsal: we need to pick a different day as April 28th will conflict with Confirmation. How about Sunday, April 25th

Rooms to be used: sanctuary will be used for the show. If weather is nice, the garden will be used. Classrooms will be used for changing rooms with maximum of 2 people per room. Fellowship hall will be used for hair and makeup.

Safety precautions: following physical distancing and masks will be worn, fans will be running in all rooms. No food will be served on site. Adhere to the maximum capacity in each space.

People involved: high school youth to be models, reader/host, ticket sales for door sales (try to presell tickets), usher

50 guests

Tickets will be sold for \$10 each.

Note: This was already approved by Council pending our review.

- Card Club – *approved as proposal states and to start whenever Cloe Rehdantz is ready (May 10th)*
 - i. *Meet Mondays.*
 - ii. *Two Groups: 1:30 pm and 6:30 pm*
 - iii. *44 people total between the two groups – max allowed is 24 at once*
 - iv. *No food served*
- Plant sale in May – *Julie to take to Council for approval*
- Farmers market – *Melissa to get more information*
- Outdoor fellowship – *approved following physical distancing and wearing masks*

Per Public Health Madison & Dane County, Emergency Order #15

https://publichealthmdc.com/documents/2021-04-02_Order_15.pdf

“Gatherings. A Gathering is a planned event such as a concert, festival, meeting, training, conference, performance, show, sporting event, or party. Individuals that are members of the same household or living unit do not count towards the Gathering numbers in their own household or living unit.”

b. Gatherings Outside. Numbers must be limited to ensure individuals who are not members of the same household or living unit maintain six (6) feet physical distancing at all times.”

Next meeting Tuesday, April 20th at 6:30 pm

Call Committee

The questions for prospective candidates have been completed and reviewed although some minor "tweaking" may be done. Bishop Joy forwarded two names to the committee for review

but no further action has been taken. Bonnie Dixon is expecting further discussions with the Bishop today and I will update this report as needed before our meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Motion by Don Bender, second by Geoff Gilbert to approve the committee reports as submitted. Motion Carried.

Old Business

- Revisit Goals/Questions:
 - What do you see as out immediate needs (how will we say goodbye to Pastor Jen and any others you come up with)
 - What are our goals for the next 12 months
- Pick up Council binders from the church office if you haven't already done so.

New Business

- Tim Kratz needs to be removed as a signer on the money market accounts. Don is currently a signer. Denise should be added.
- Council pictures – if you don't have a picture on the bulletin board at church, please bring in a 4x6 picture to hang up.
- Blessing of the Council - during worship on May 2nd
- Consider being a Portage Chamber of Commerce Member. Cost is \$160 annually. Given the current budget and reduction in offerings we discussed this would not be beneficial enough for the church to spend those funds at this time.
- Approval for a Plant Sale – Julie would like to organize a casserole sale (already approved by Covid team) on Mother's Day, May 9th and a plant sale after worship service May 16th with proceeds going to mission/ministries of BLC

Motion by Kerry Melby, second by Geoff Gilbert to approve the plant sale after the worship service on May 16th. Motion Carried

- Card Club to resume May 10th – see Covid Task Force Minutes
- Approval for Craft Fair, September 11th
Motion by Halley Harms, second by Kerry Melby to approve the craft fair pending COVID task force recommendations and guidelines.

Motion Carried.

- Approval for Rummage Sale August 7th
Motion by Geoff Gilbert, second by Kory Anderson to approve the rummage sale pending COVID Task force recommendations and guidelines. Motion Carried.
- CASA Building Use
Motion by Halley Harms, second by Jack Paulson to approve building use for CASA's 8 week training following all COVID-19 safety precautions put in place by

the COVID-19 task force and Department of Public Health. The church will charge CASA \$25 per week. Motion Carried.

- Opening Doors ELCA Grant

Halley will begin writing the grant towards the purchase of an outdoor movie projector, screen, speaker and other equipment needed.

**Motion by Kory Anderson second by Geoff Gilbert to adjourn the meeting at 7:46pm .
Motion Carried.**

Next Finance Committee Meeting: May 4th All Committee Night: May 10th Next Council Meeting: May 20th
