

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
August 19, 2021
Meeting held in hybrid format due to COVID-19

Called to order by Ann Ciske at 6:43 pm.

Attendance:

Jack Paulson-Zoom

Halley Harms-In Person

Ruth Price-In Person

Kory Anderson- In Person

Geoff Gilbert-In Person

Don Bender-Zoom

Ann Ciske-Zoom

Kerry Melby - In Person

Prayer by Geoff Gilbert

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Kory Anderson, second by Kerry Melby to approve the proposed agenda with the addition of an added new business matter regarding the safe handling of food. Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF THE July MEETING MINUTES

Changes made under new business. Ann Ciske will not be staying on Council in 2022.

Motion by Geoff Gilbert, second by Don Bender to approve the July meeting minutes with the change above. Motion Carried.

Office Report

I thought I would give the Council a report on what is going on in the office since there is no “pastor’s report”.

Janice and Dan Pulsfus have been staying in touch with our homebound members and those in nursing homes either with phone calls or visits.

Dan Pulsfus has agreed to stay on until September 26th. There are a few days I need to fill in when he is not available.

I have been preparing for the new pastor’s arrival.

- Working with Ann Ciske and the Synod to make sure we are following the Synod procedures for the new pastor.
 - A computer was purchased (a donation from a member family).
 - Walls in the office were patched up from nail holes and paint is being reapplied. We may need to repaint a couple walls if the paint is too old and doesn’t cover well.
 - Making sure she will have all pertinent information she needs – creating files and making copies of information
 - I would like to plan a luncheon for all the pastors in Portage at some point for her to meet them. Thought it would also benefit the new Methodist pastor. I will organize that after she starts with her input.
 - We will invite her family to join us for worship and refreshments on her first Sunday. •
- Jerry Saalsaa will be helping me make sure that payroll is set up appropriately for retirement deductions and also add a way to track used vacation time.
- Once everything is official I will contact the newspapers with a press release, which will be run past the Council for approval.

All Committee Night was held on Monday, August 9th. Each committee gave an update and then we went over the calendar from August to December. We had a good showing of approximately 14 people and a representative of every committee!

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Financial Update

1. Income is \$21,767 in July down from last year, but last year income increased because of loan certificate donations. Expenses: \$28090 while is mostly due to the purchase of a lawn mower. This represents a \$6257 loss for the month, but over all we have a year-to-date gain of \$8505. No real issues.
2. Motion to approve financial update by Don Bender, Seconded by Jerry Saalsaa.
3. Motion approved

Old Business

1. Council Update

- a. New pastor approved by council and most council members plan to stay

2. Adopt-a-Bill

- a. Total raised \$365.29
- b. We decided program will end September 30, 2021

3. Property Expenses: Lawn Mower

- a. Lawn mower was purchased by Del Molden for \$9100
- b. Breakdown of where money came to purchase mower:
 - i. Money left from Channel project fund (which is done): \$1702
 - ii. Donations given to help with purchase: \$2775
 - iii. Money from trust account: \$3213
 - iv. Money taken from general funds \$1410

TOTAL \$9100

4. Pastor Payroll Closeout

- a. In closing out Pastor payroll and calculating the new pastor's pay, Jerry reviewed Portico payments. He found an error that had been made in the pastors pay when it was set up initially. Pastor Jen filled out forms to have more money added to her FSA and retirement every month. This never was then taken out of her paycheck. The result was an overpayment of about \$7000 per year to Pastor Jen. At this point there is no way to undo this, but we have recommendations for moving forward
 - i. Recommendation #1: Need to balance Portico and Payroll each month to ensure they are accurate.
 - ii. Recommendation #2: When new Pastor comes on board need to walk through this payroll and Portico set-up with Jerry, Janice, Julie and new Pastor.

5. Benevolence

- a. Benevolence was paid through June. \$600 (1/2 our budgeted amount) and \$180 to World Hunger

New Business

1. New Pastor Pay

- a. Jerry has calculated the payroll and benefit cost for new Pastor and has sent it to

council and Synod for approval

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- b. We will have some additional expenses for new pastor, including continuing education and professional supplies.
- c. Overall, he anticipates we will have a cost savings of about \$6000/year.

Christian Education Committee Report

Sunday School will begin September 12th.

Confirmation will begin September 15th.

Online registration will be available.

The pizza fundraiser for the mission trip youth was a huge success. Thank you to all who purchased pizzas.

Worship & Music Committee Report

No report received

Property Committee Report

Monitoring of utility billing and usage continues. Electric bill and usage for the last period were up due to very hot weather.

The new lawn mower was delivered and is being broken in. Additional space is needed to store it. Del Molden will donate his time and the materials to build an addition to the existing shed. I have attached his sketch showing the south elevation of the addition. A zoning permit and building permit will be needed for the shed addition. Kory will work with Del on obtaining the permit.

A motion by Halley Harms second by Kory Anderson to approve the addition to the existing shed and a second addition for recreation equipment storage and moving of the basketball court or purchasing a portable basketball as soon as possible. Motion Carried.

Future plans include reseeding and fertilizing the culvert area and converting lighting in the Sanctuary and canopy to LEDs as needed.

Local & Global Committee Report

- met on all committee night August 9th
- continue to work on mission packets: still need notebooks, lightweight towels, pens, and rounded scissors
- volunteers are needed to help Ann make a video about the history of Bethlehem and opportunities to serve
- Looking for a student to interview Cloe Rehdantz for oral history

- Kerry Melby is checking out working at the High School food pantry (The Market) and see if more volunteers are needed
- God's Work Our Hands date to be set for October
- Megan Jahoda is going to have students at the Lock Out meet early to do the highway cleanup on Sept. 11
- Food Drives: Wyocena Food Pantry collection for the month of October
Portage Food Pantry for the Month of November

Stewardship/Evangelism

With a new Pastor coming in, I think any actual stewardship campaign should wait until she is settled and can participate fully. In the meantime, we should still do the stewardship letter and pledge forms so the finance committee can get some more current information.

Ruth

COVID-19 Task Force

We met on August 10th to discuss the new CDC guidelines. In attendance: Del Molden, Janice Petersen, Kerry Melby, Melissa Bradbury, Julie Saalsaa, Larry Sween, Ann Ciske

We will follow the guidelines the Portage School District has put into place, which is based on the CDC's guidelines. This will provide flexibility to make changes based on community spread, and eligibility for vaccination.

We will strongly encourage all people to wear masks indoors. For the youth the following will be used as a guideline. Colors are based on the CDC definitions:

Red/

- Orange/Substantial - Masks Mandatory for Sunday School and Confirmation children & Masks Recommended/Optional for High School
Red/High-masks mandatory for all youth and adults
- Yellow/Moderate - Masks Mandatory for Sunday School children & Masks Recommended/Optional for Confirmation and High School kids
- Blue/Low - Masks Recommended/Optional for all aged children
- Masks are not required outdoors. We encourage outdoor activities as much as possible. • Singing and food will still be allowed.

Motion by Kory Anderson, second by Geoff Gilbert to approve the committee resorts as presented. Motion Carried.

Old Business

- Offering options - will revisit this in September

New Business

- Shed for Mower- discussed and motion made under property committee report

- Trivia Basket

Kerry Melby-popcorn

Ann-Culvers

Don-Pig

Geoff-Festival

Kory- Neil's

Ruth-Tamarack

Jack- Upper Crust

Halley- Jack's Tap

- Portico overpayment

A motion by Don Bender, second Kory Anderson that the finance committee along with the council president will send Pastor Jen a letter informing her of this overpayment and how it occurred. The letter will be asking how she would like to proceed with this matter.

Safe Food Handling: Kerry Melby and Geoff Gilbert along with Janice will look for guidelines for safe food handling at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

A motion by Don Bender second by Goeff Gilbert to adjourn the meeting at 7:43. Motion Carried.

Lord's Prayer

