

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
August 20, 2020
Meeting held via Zoom due to COVID-19

Called to order by Robin Kvalo at 6:37 pm.

Attendance:

Jack Paulson-Zoom
Halley Harms-Zoom
Robin Kvalo-Zoom
Pastor Jen Johnson-Zoom
Ruth Price- absent
Kory Anderson- Zoom
Geoff Gilbert-Zoom
Don Bender- Zoom
Julie Saalsaa - Zoom
Ann Ciske- Zoom

Prayer by Pastor Jen

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**Motion by Jack Paulson, second by Kory Anderson to approve the proposed agenda.
Motion Carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE July MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Don Bender, second by Halley Harms to approve the July meeting minutes as submitted. Motion Carried.

Pastor's Report

Funerals: Committing Bob Rehdantz's ashes August 30, 11:30 am
Memorial for George Stewart TBD at Pflanz (maybe 9/12)

Bishop Election: Date for Assembly and election on August 29th via Zoom.
Geoff Gilbert and Ann Ciske are delegates.

Worship: Continues for now live-stream or recorded for Sundays at 9:00 and
Drive-up at 10:00, and Wednesdays at 5:30 for Drive-up. 88.3 WBLC!

COVID-19 Task Force: Group meets via Zoom.

Renewal: Synod Renewal Team is producing an evaluation procedure for the
renewal congregations in the synod. Rev. Baires will meet with us via Zoom, on
8/26/2020 at 6:30. All council members are invited to participate. Our renewal
team has not formally met, but 2 out of the 3 remaining members are active in
other ministries and are seeking to implement activities that nurture relationships
within the church family (our biggest challenge during the pandemic, in my
opinion).

Administrative: Office staff are working from church when able, following safety procedures. Encouraging Julie to take time off, too. Julie will be out of the office August 31 and September 1st.

Self-Care: Next scheduled time off is November 10 – November 15.

Brenda and I finally got a State Park pass.

We are cooking some nummy food in our Instant Pot. Good and healthy!

Thank you, EVERYONE for your continued presence and service. I appreciate you!

Pastor Jen Johnson

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee Report

1. Financial Update

Update: Finances/offerings were better in July (please review the financial statements). We are grateful for everyone's continued support of BLC.

Payment Protection Program (PPP), SBA loan funds: The paperwork was submitted. The banks will not be accepting the loan forgiveness applications until August 10th. Jerry is monitoring the situation and will share his updates with us as he has them.

2. Loan Certificate Fund

Denise closed the loan certificate fund and transferred the balance into the checking account.

3. Brat Sale

The proceeds from the Bob Rehdantz Memorial Brat Fry will go toward our general expenses.

4. Financial Controls Manual

Check Signers: The bank has approved Robin Kvalo, Don Bender and Denise Derey as signers for our accounts. Denise was approved in June by the Finance committee to become a check signer with oversight by John Denhartigh in the position of Accounts Payable Oversight. Jerry will be meeting with John D. to discuss the oversight process in the near future.

The Finance Committee recognizes that the **Financial Controls Manual** at the **BLC Constitution & Bylaws** need to be updated. Janice, Denise and Tania met via Zoom to discuss the proposed changes to the Financial Controls Manual based upon the current financial staff/volunteer positions. In the committee meeting tonight, we discussed those changes and proposed a few additional changes. We recommend that we add a process for cash advances (see Financial Controls Manual & Cash Advance Requisition Form)

ACTION ITEM: We ask the council to review and approve the proposed changes to the Financial Controls Manual.

Motion by Halley Harms second by Don Bender to approve the proposed changes in the financial controls manual. Motion Carried.

5. Bylaws

In consideration of the current financial staff/volunteer positions, we are proposing a few minor changes to Item #'s 4-7 in Section III of the BLC Bylaws.

ACTION ITEM: We ask the council to review and approve the proposed changes to the Constitution & Bylaws of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

Motion by Ann Ciske second by Jack Paulson to approve the proposed changes to the constitution and bylaws of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Motion Carried

Thank you again to all of our members for their generous contributions!!

Adjourn: 7:00 pm

Next Finance Committee Meeting: Tuesday, September 8th, 6:30pm

Christian Education Committee Report

Teachers, Mentors and Pastor Jen met Sunday 8/16 to discuss further our plans for Christian Ed this fall. We will be meeting again on August 23rd to finalize plans. Sunday school and Confirmation will be meeting in separate breakout rooms to layout the best format for each group.

A survey was sent to parents of Sunday School and Confirmation Age children to ask on their comfort level of attending classes with proper safety precautions and how they felt the content was during the spring. After going over the results we feel that using Zoom is not the best direction to take. It became difficult for several of us with poor connection. With many students attending school virtually or in a hybrid format a large portion of their day will be on a computer we don't want to add to that. Julie will be sending out an electronic registration form to families as well as posting it on the website and Facebook page. Programming will begin on September 16th.

Confirmation:

Confirmation is hoping to have 3-4 weeks of face to face contact utilizing the outdoor spaces around BLC. We feel this is important to re-build the relationships we started with the kids. Once indoor classes are necessary due to weather we discussed the possibility of rotating grade levels to limit the number of individuals in the building at a time. There is some concern that parents with multiple siblings involved in confirmation would have to bring students on different weeks. We want to have lessons/activities available in different formats to meet the needs of each family's comfort levels. Ideally, Pastor Jen would record lessons on the YouTube Channel for youth to watch and then an activity/reflection would accompany this. Confirmation will continue to be held on Reformation Sunday which is October 25th this year. A special service in the parking lot will be held.

Sunday School:

The idea of having Pastor Jen do a live "bed-time" story weekly on Wednesdays was brought up in addition to continuing the Sunday School in a bag activities. Jeff Melby will be following up with the families of students that were to receive first communion in the spring. He will contact the church with a date for a special parking lot service for them. It's been past practice for council members to highlight a bible verse for the 4th graders receiving Bibles. Council members should email the verse they'd like highlighted to Julie and she will highlight them. We

would like to get the Spark Story Bible into the hands of all Pre-K through 3rd grade families homes. Bibles cost approximately \$23.00

Stewardship & Evangelism Committee Report

No Report received

Worship & Music Committee Report

No report received

Property Committee Report

No report received

Local & Global Committee Report

Ann Ciske wrote a grant to purchase tablets that members can bring to shut-ins to watch the Sunday service. We have approx. 5 tablets so far with the grant and a donation. This can be our August project. We will need to fundraise or ask for donations for the other tablets.

Local and Global will pair up with Pastor Jen to do the Mission Possible activity in Sept. (Could this be our God's Work Our Hands project?)

The quilt was already made, and will be raffled off at a separate time. They would like to host the basket auction through an online format.

The Bob Rehdantz Memorial Brat Fundraiser will be held Sunday, September 13 at 11:00. All proceeds will go to the Church in the honor of Bob Rehdantz and family.

A motion by Geoff Gilbert second by Ann Ciske to proceed with the basket and quilt auction held in an online format. Motion Carried.

COVID-19 Task Force

COVID-19 TASK FORCE

The group's last meeting was July 28th. In attendance: *Melissa Bradbury, Janice Petersen, Del Molden, Kerry Melby, Jeff Melby, Dan Pulsfus, Ann Ciske, Pastor Jen, Julie Saalsaa. Guest speaker: Rev. Kerri Parker. Larry Sween (joined at 7:38 pm)*

- Some of the most recent activities include the creation of:
 - Communication Plan for Covid-19 Contact Tracing Notice (see attached)
 - Building Use Agreement (see attached)
 - Fellowship Hall Use Cleaning Checklist: posted inside and outside the fellowship hall.

- Signs have been posted throughout the church building reminding people to wear a mask and uphold 6ft physical distancing guidelines. Masks and hand sanitizer are available upon entrance into the office area.

- New signs have been posted in the bathrooms with directions on how to properly wash hands

- The FM transmitter drive-in service is up and running. This will allow for people to come to church and feel safe in their cars. No reservation is needed. Members are asked to

bring their own communion elements. Our parking lot will allow for 60 vehicles to be parked in every other space. We will have 2 ushers and a reader for worship volunteers. Communion cards and single-use bulletins will be handed out from a basket with a pole extender.

- Rev. Kerri Parker, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council of Churches (WCC) met with us as our guest speaker. She shared some background information on the Covid-19 situation in Wisconsin and how the WCC supports Wisconsin churches. WCC recommends churches make decisions using these questions:
 - Is it possible? But what is possible isn't always prudent.
 - Is it prudent?
 - Is it pastoral?
- She also gave us WCC's most current recommendations.
 1. In light of uncontrolled community spread of COVID in WI, pause in-person gatherings / step back at least one level in your re-gathering plans
 2. Give clergy, staff and task forces a break: don't plan on re-entry before Oct (don't even re-evaluate until September)
 3. Multi-stream your planning for Advent-Christmas. IF gathering in person is an option, church will be less than full.
- We asked her how do other churches handle numbers for outdoor worship when members are in their cars? She suggested we talk to a church that is currently doing this. Melissa has been in contact with Dekorra Lutheran. We can reach out to them with specific questions. We discussed that the cars should be parked every other parking space to give distance. The maximum number allowed in an outside gathering would only pertain to people gathering outside of their vehicles. If people stayed in their vehicle we could have more.
- Rev. Parker gave us these ideas to help us stay connected:
 - Offering early morning prayer services or opening the church for individual prayer time
 - For those that don't have internet access, pair them up with a buddy who could go to their house to bring online worship to them and watch together.
 - Host car parades to celebrate milestone birthday or anniversary
 - Window visits to those shut-in
 - Care packages on porches
 - Tie-dye Sunday – other churches dyed masks and donated them, they did this on the church lawn with physical distancing
 - Group that sews made masks for others and shipped them out to communities in need
 - Cards to healthcare workers
 - Support for teachers
 - “Mission Impossible” – have tasks in secret mission envelopes and send to members, ask households to have a task, have them get it done in a certain time frame
 - Outdoor prayer stations
 - Faith formation
 - More about the relationships than the content right now

- Showing by doing: the way of Christian life
 - Concentrate on community work
 - Confirmation group could write a chain letter to the church
- Check into technology grants to purchase tablets for shut-ins to use. These would be preloaded with a recorded service for them to watch and then return.
- We need to focus on a shared mission to make sure people feel they have meaning and purpose during this time
- Other ideas that came up after Rev. Parker left the meeting:
 - Ask for donations of old transistor radios we can offer for use during FM transmitter worship so people don't have to run their car engines
 - People can bring pop-up tents for shade to sit under during worship and possibly fellowship = "Fellowship from A Far" or "Pop-up Fellowship"
 - Assign parking spaces for people to sit in when they come to outdoor worship
- We decided we did not need to meet regularly. Pastor Jen and Melissa will stay current on case numbers and we will make adjustments to our plan if needed. We will stay in touch via email as things come up and will call a meeting when necessary. When the time comes to address indoor service. We will need to meet and create guidelines.

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Motion by Ann Ciske, second by Geoff Gilbert to approve the committee reports as submitted. Motion Carried.

New Business

A review of the by-laws will be moved to the September meeting.

Approval to move forward with creating church logo

A motion by Ann Ciske second by Don Bende to move forward with creating a church logo. Motion Carried.

Call Committee Letter- approved as written

Call Committee Congregational Meeting Vote Discussion- This will need to be announced at the August 30th and September 6th worship services along with the corresponding Wednesday services on August 26th and September 2nd. Voting will be held during the September 13th 10:00 Outdoor service.

Motion by second by to adjourn the meeting at pm . Motion Carried.