

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING  
December 19, 2019

Called to order by President Tania Anderson.

**Attendance:**

Don Bender  
Jack Paulson  
Tim Kratz  
Ann Ciske  
Angie Chappell  
Halley Harms  
Robin Kvalo- Absent with notification  
Tania Anderson  
Pastor Jen Johnson

**Guests:**

Jerry Saalsaa, Treasurer – presentation of the budget

**Motion by Tim Kratz, second by Jack Paulson to approve the proposed 2020 budget. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Don Bender second by Ann Ciske to approve the agenda. Motion Carried.**

**Motion by Ann Ciske, second by Tim Kratz to approve the minutes of the October meeting. Motion Carried.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

- Council nominations – Ruth Price, Geoff Gilbert
- Retractions- Barb Rothwell

**Motion by Ann Ciske, second by Halley Harms to accept the Nominations of Ruth Price and Geoff Gilbert, and the retraction of Barb Rothwell to council. Motion Carried.**

**PASTOR'S REPORT**

**Renewal:**

The Team will be meeting with parents of confirmation students in early January, for a Q&A time. They're also looking at the Constitution and By-Laws with an eye toward stewardship of resources regarding committees. Also gleaning information that is still relevant from the Congregational Resource Team report from a few years back. The result will be an action plan recommendation from the Team to the congregation.

**Stewardship:**

The pledge cards are still available. Total pledge amount, minus mortgage offering is about \$88k/year. Next step is to look at spiritual gifts, and I propose we do this in conjunction with the Renewal Team.

**Christian Education and Faith Formation:**

I give thanks for the Confirmation Mentors!!!!!!

Adult Bible/book study continues on Tuesday mornings at 11:00. We're moving right along in our book, A People's History of Christianity: Christian Origins.

There are currently 3 people participating in new member classes that will be joining the congregation in January. I anticipate more people to join than are actually attending classes.

**Wider Church:**

I continue to lead Synod chapel once a month in Madison.

**Professional Education:**

January 13-15, 2020 is the Faithful Innovation Learning Community Leadership Training event that is led by Luther Seminary. We are coming together in Phoenix, AZ (not Minneapolis as previously thought) for the training. I will be flying from Madison on the afternoon of the 12<sup>th</sup> and returning to Madison the afternoon of the 16<sup>th</sup>. The Synod is covering costs, mostly through a grant secured by Rev. Walter Baires. All of the Renewal Pastors from the Synod are attending, as part of Renewal Ministry. **Action item: Rev. Baires has asked if our congregations are able to chip in \$200 toward our expenses. I request \$200 to be sent to the Synod, on my behalf, as part of Continuing Education.**

**Motion by Tim Kratz, second by Jack Paulson to approve \$200.00 to be sent to the Synod. Monies to be taken from continuing education. Motion Carried.**

**Administration:**

Janice, Julie, and I meet every two weeks for our staff meeting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCE:**

Annual Meeting will be February 2, 2020.

In attendance: Janice, Pr. Jen, Jerry, Don

New Business: Barb Rothwell has resigned from the Finance Committee effective November 3rd.

Updated Financials: Janice

Jerry need one clarification with the numbers on the P&L/Balance Sheet that Janice will be looking into.

Janice transferred \$1500 from the craft fair into the loan certificate fund; we had a \$3,000 mortgage donation this year that was also deposited into the loan certificate fund.

Benevolence/Donations:

Recommendation to pay the balance of the benevolence of \$687.00, and \$250.00 to River haven and PACAP.

We also recommend that we give \$500 (\$250 each, if the funds are available) to the PACAP Program/Clergy Relief Fund and River Haven knowing that we will be receiving money from the Gifts of Bethlehem program soon.

**Motion by Anne Ciske, second by Tim Kratz to approve the recommendation of paying the benevolence balance of \$687.00, and \$250.00 each to River haven and PACAP. Motion Carried.**

Social Security Issue/Pr. Jen's contract review:

We recommend that council approve the creation of an ADD-PAY program for Pr. Jen. Because Pr. Jen opted out from receiving health insurance, we would distribute a set amount (\$5,000 annually, to be included in the proposed 2020 budget) under the category ADD-PAY. This is seen as additional pay given by the company to the employee in place of a health insurance benefit. If Pastor needs to add health insurance in the future, we would cancel the ADD-PAY. We will create a waiver and have Pr. Jen sign it for our records to make it official.

**Motion by Halley Harms, second by Tim Kratz to approve the ADD-PAY recommendation of \$5,000. Motion Carried.**

\*12/18 Meeting: Jerry, Pr Jen, Tania

The contracted amount paid to Pr. Jen annually to cover social security (\$5058) should be categorized as taxable income. This has not been done, but will be changed adjusted for 2020.

Loan Certificates:

An 2017 error in accounting on one of the Crawford's loan certificates in the amount of \$3,000 has been found. The has resulted in incorrect interest payments made in 2019. Janice will talk to the Crawford's and correct the financials. Also, we will be looking into a special situation with the Rehdantz loan certificates.

Mortgage Refinancing:

We will be getting quotes to see what our options are to refinance through the ELCA Mission Investment Fund and Thrivent, and include the loan certificate fund liability (\$201,000) in order to dissolve the fund. If approved, the recommendation may be to combine the liability debt into the mortgage refinancing. Don had the suggestion of not rolling the loan certificate liability into the mortgage refinance, but instead take out a line of credit with the bank so we are not paying interest twice. We will discuss this more in the future.

Membership Status:

Who is a member at BLC? We need to consider reviewing the constitution and bylaws in 2020 as we disagree with what is written.

Envelopes:

After a group discussion about who will receive envelopes, in order to save on waste, the confirmed youth will be assigned a number, but will not be given envelopes. We are also looking into a stewardship plan/presentation plan created to engage the youth. In the past, Thrivent representatives have provided presentations.

Budget:

Committees need to review and submit their revised budget numbers by December 13th. Janice/Jerry will update the proposed budget to be reviewed at the next council meeting on the 19th.

*Note: We need to find the original tax letter for when the church was established; to be submitted with the refinancing applications.*

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

### **Sunday School**

The Christmas program combined with the Gifts of Bethlehem was a great success. Jeanette received a lot of feedback that this was the best program they've ever done. They are hoping to keep their current numbers up. They often decline after the Christmas program.

### **Confirmation**

Confirmation students collected and wrapped gifts for residents at Tivoli on December 11th as well as made cards. They will be going along with other congregation members to Tivoli to carol and visit with the residents on December 18th from 6:30-7:30. All are invited to attend. They will be dropping off all the donations they collected. Confirmation will be on a break for the next two weeks over the holidays.

### **Youth Group**

Megan is hoping to put together a youth led service in February to highlight their trip to the Dominican Republic.

## **WORSHIP AND MUSIC:**

Members Present: Dan K, Kris, Carla, Nancy, Pam, Ginny, Pastor Jen, Brenda

Absent: Robin

Devotions: None

Pastor's Report: New member's class to start. Have approx. 15 people. Exploring a video on YouTube on How to acolyte.

Old Business: None

New Business: Discussed the new bulletin format. Julie to give a presentation on the cost savings for the present format. Discussed putting the lyrics of the choir song on the screen so the congregation can follow the lyrics. Kris will type out the lyrics and give to Julie. Passing of the peace will return to after the prayers as most folks did not like it at the end of the service. Discussed the advent services-lighting of the advent candle to be after the prayer of the day. Congregation will sing Light one Candle Hymn 240 and add a verse each week. Will not be doing a Blue service as previously stated in last month's chimes. Discussed the Gifts of Bethlehem service as there are few people signed up to perform this year. Decision to recommend that we use the 9 am worship time for the Gifts of Bethlehem instead of a separate service. Will recommend this to the folks in the all committee meeting. A lot of confusion concerning this service. Will there be a soup and sandwich after the service? Discussed decorating for the holiday. Christmas tree will be in the corner this year by the organ. Decorating will be Dec 7 starting at 9 am. Other two trees in the fellowship hall. Carla informed the committee that she had been approached by some youth concerning a band for Xmas eve. She will contact one of them and agree to provide the music and direct the band. Dan brought up that two additional microphones with boom stands are needed. He recommended a company that has tech support and a 2yr warranty. Cheaper to buy a package rather than each separate component. Cost is \$135 each package.

Committee adjourned and went to the all committee meeting except Kris, Carla, Dan and Mark. Mark presented a Maundy Thurs service called Follow where Jesus Walked which includes a

dinner followed by tour guides who take people around the church to different rooms in which there are people portraying events in Jesus Day. One of the rooms would be the sacristy where there would be communion. Agreed that this sounded like a great idea and would have to get the OK from the council and get going on it in January.

Adjourned to the all committee meeting.

Next meeting December 9 if needed.

All Committee Meeting:

Discussion about the gifts of Bethlehem service. Decision agreed upon that it will be the Sunday school program with the addition of the praise team and the people who volunteered to perform. There will be a soup and sandwich lunch following the service as well as gift baskets to bid on.

Brenda brought up the need for new cloths for the altar. She will do some more research and bring it back to the committee.

Next year's budget was handed out to the various committees. It needs to be turned in by Dec 13.

Youth and congregation to go caroling at Tivoli on Dec 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **PROPERTY:**

A security light was placed on the shed to help prevent further mishaps. In the war on mice there is one reported casualty and a further update is expected today.

### **LOCAL & GLOBAL**

Rolled bandages were delivered to Global Health Missions in Fridley, MN All extra supplies from mission kits will be delivered in January to make room in the Fellowship Hall closet. Dec 6-7 a few members baked Our Daily Bread to be used when anyone visits Nursing Homes or shut-ins.

**Motion by Don Bender, second by Jack Paulson to approve the Committee Reports.**

**Motion Carried.**

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Parish Secretary will collect committee reports and create agenda for council meetings moving forward.
2. Staff reviews for 2020- Discussion was that this is needed and Tania will prepare forms and consult with the synod about Pastor reviews.

**Motion by Don Bender, second by Tim Kratz to adjourn. Motion Carried.**

Next Finance Meeting is January 7, 2020

Next Council will meet on January 16, 2020 at 6:30 PM

All Committee night is February 10, 2020