

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Agenda**  
**Minutes June 15, 2023**  
**6:30 pm**

Geoff: Present Kory: Absent with Permission Kerry: Present Tina: Present Jaimie: Present Lisa: Present Brian: Present Mark: Present Braxton Druckery – Youth Representative -absent with permission
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Dwelling in the Word Lisa Cook

Call to Order 6:51

Prayer

Approval of the Agenda

**Motion to approve the agenda with the addition of alcohol policy, raise right and Taste of Portage made by Jaimie Rudolph second by Brian Conner motion carried**

Approval of Last Month's Minutes

**Motion to approve agenda with change to Jaimie Rudolph for Dwelling by Brian Conner second by Geoff Gilbert motion carried**

Pastor Report

Parish Associate Report

Committee Reports

A. Finance **Some discussion around how to advise members on giving numbers and that we are behind.**

B. Stewardship

C. Property

Approval of Committee Reports

**Motion to approve Committee reports by Tina Thomas to approve committee reports second by Lisa Cook motion carried**

Old Business

Pew Cushion Update they will be in mid-July

Land Rental Agreement Update

Synod Assembly Recap

Kaylin Concert Update **This is a go for August 7<sup>th</sup>. We will need to start marketing.**

Alcohol Policy **Discussion on if the church should allow, need to find out liability etc. and we will discuss further.**

Raise Right **Tina will discuss with Carla as if members by direct they pay shipping of \$10.50**

Taste of Portage **We received the approval to sell pie. They advise about 800 people. We need to get the word out as we are hoping for as many donated pies as possible. That we be about 120 pies.**

New Business

Fair Worship Service – July 30<sup>th</sup> @ 11 am – **Motion made by Tina Thomas and second by Brian Conner to have worship at the fair as our only service on Sunday.**

Synod Stewardship Event Host – Saturday, September 16 **Motion made by Lisa Cook and second by Tina Thomas to have BLC host the event on 09/16, motion carried**

Strategic Planning (cont.)- Carol will not be leading the session but we will still be working on it. **Much discussion around objectives and how to word things. Discussion about not wanting to fatigue an already fatigued volunteer pool. Kerry is going to type up an outline for our goals. We will put a timeline in July Chimes regarding strategic planning and where we are at.**

Adjourn

**Motion by Tina Thomas to adjourn at 8:40 pm and second by Geoff Gilbert, motion carried**

Lord's Prayer

### Pastor's Report

Here is what I have been up to this month!

We had a wonderful end of the school year celebration on May 21<sup>st</sup> with a senior recognition, a few songs performed by the Sunday School students, along with the plant sale, a potluck, and activities after worship. Thank you to all that made the day a success! We also celebrated Pentecost on the last Sunday in May.

Tania and I met with the rest of the confirmation mentors last week to debrief the year and talk about plans for next year. I am so grateful for these mentors and their steadfast presence with these students. We could use some more mentors as we add another class this fall so if you or someone you know might be interested in being a mentor, please let me know!

I presided at Dick Olson's funeral on May 18<sup>th</sup> and have made a few pastoral care visits this month, including a hospital visit for Cloe's daughter Christie who passed away before I arrived at the hospital on May 28<sup>th</sup>. There will be a private family service this Saturday followed by a meal in Christie's honor at the church. All are invited to join the family for the meal. I also made a lot of phone calls offering pastoral care this month as we have had a lot of people navigating health issues recently.

I attended Synod Assembly on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> along with Tina and Geoff. There is a brief summary page included in the materials for this month's meeting. One of the resolutions that was passed at Synod Assembly was around Care of Creation and in that resolution, it is requiring congregations to submit a Care of Creation plan to the Synod Creation Care Team by the end of the year. **I would like to recommend a small task force develop this plan.** It does not need to be long (a few sentences to at most a page) outlining our plan and/or what we might already be doing. Also, I know of a person who would be willing to assist us with this process if needed.

I met with the Synod Stewardship Team this month as we are planning a Synod Fall Stewardship Kick Off Event for Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. We would like to host this event in 3 locations across the synod to make it more accessible for more churches. **I am asking the council to approve being a host site for this event, which would be for a couple of hours in the morning.**

Meetings include Worship & Music, Finance (via email), Synod Conference, weekly text study, biweekly staff meetings, my first call group, and my weekly colleague group. I also met with leaders of our congregation at different times this month. Additionally, I met with the pastors of the Presbyterian and Methodists churches in Portage to start planning the Worship at the Fair Service on Sunday, July

30<sup>th</sup>. Our Praise Team will be part of leading the music and Carla and I are going to plan the service. Pastor Dave will preach that day. **I would like the council to approve making the Worship at the Fair service the only service we have for worship that day, therefore we would not have worship at BLC but rather at the fairgrounds at 11 am.**

Looking ahead, I will be on vacation June 22-July 10 and will be back to work on July 11<sup>th</sup>. I will be traveling to the Holy Land during this time so your prayers for safe travels are much appreciated!

In peace,  
Pastor Jaime Benson

### **Parish Associate Report**

#### **Sunday School**

The calendar has been set for next year; classes will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of each month. We may not always have activities on the opposite Sundays; we are still in discussions about this. I would like to add some fellowship activities for the parents while their children attend Sunday school; I need to think about this more. We are still working on a few other details such as what dates the children sing, what day do we give out the 4<sup>th</sup> grade bibles, date for Gifts of Bethlehem, etc. Sunday School will begin again on Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Ecumenical VBS**

VBS week will be July 31<sup>st</sup>-August 4<sup>th</sup>. The theme this year will be “Stellar”.

#### **Confirmation**

Pr. Jaime, the mentors, and I met last week to discuss next year. We have a few changes that we will be working on, and we are currently setting the lesson calendar for next year. We are adding a weekend confirmation retreat at Lutherdale in 2024 and will be doing a little fundraising throughout the year to offset the costs. Confirmation will begin again on Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Youth**

No new updates. Pr. Jaime has the first bonfire with the youth June 14<sup>th</sup>. We may be adding a high school retreat weekend at Lutherdale next January for the students not attending the Dominican Republic trip.

#### **“Feed Your Soul” Summer Farmers Markets:**

So far, we have 13 vendors registered. Members can donate baked goods and produce items for us to sell at the BLC tent at the market. The confirmation class may be selling brats or walking tacos at each of the market dates as a fundraiser for their retreat weekend if we have enough volunteers. We have two banners advertising the event that will be hanging on the Bartels middle school fence and the Rousch elementary fence for the two weeks before each market date. We will also be posting fliers at businesses and on Facebook.

#### **PetFest:**

This had been moved to Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. Planning will begin soon.

#### **Sunday school kick-off event on Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup>**

More information is coming soon.

#### **Family/Casual Worship Nights:**

We are working on an outline for the last Wednesday night of each month to be a casual worship/family night/dinner event, beginning in September. More information coming soon

### **Committee Reports**

#### **FINANCE**

Financial Update:

For May, BLC had \$44,074 of income and \$157,365 year to date. Comparing May 2023 to prior year, we have received \$5k more this year. This is primarily related to two offsetting items. We received \$15,790 in memorial income in May 2023. Some of these are designated for various projects at BLC to support the legacy of a recently lost member of BLC. In May 2022, we received \$8,697 miscellaneous income from insurance funds received to address the lightning strike damage.

We continue to keep an eye on general offerings as they are trending lower than prior year by \$6k year to date.

Total Expenses for May 2023 are \$21,472, almost identical to May of 2022 with no significant variances this month. Year to date, we have \$148,350 in expenses compared to \$109,500 in 2022 through May. This significant variance 2023 year to date is related to replacing a roof top unit and increasing staffing costs. Each of these was planned for 2023.

Net income year to date is \$8,085.

Alternative Revenue opportunities:

Del/Property group updated the agreement with the farmer and rent for the land rental is now \$110/acre with a three-year contract. The property committee is looking into another option via the Conservation Reserve Program which would increase the income to \$200/acre.

## **STEWARDSHIP**

### **PROPERTY**

- ❖ The land rental agreement has been updated to \$110 an acre and the soybeans have already been planted.
- ❖ Del and Steve McNeal went through the air handlers last Friday and all looked good except they replaced a broken belt on one of the units for the sanctuary. Del is recommending that we budget to replace the office unit in 2024. Also, the choir room unit is shut off as the AC part doesn't work anyway.
- ❖ May 22, Stated sprinkler at East drainage ditch, water new trees and shrubs, and check over lawnmower
- ❖ May 30, Pressure washed front entrance concrete and sidewalks (Bird!!!) Ran sprinkler at East drainage ditch and watered trees and shrubs
- ❖ June 1, Picked up Skag lawnmower and delivered to Middleton Power because of a factory recall on the fuel pip leading to the injector
- ❖ June 2, Went to Middleton Power to pick up Skag mower that was updated with special shield to protect fuel pipe
- ❖ June 5, Mad up a watering schedule for the volunteers to water once every week through September
- ❖ June 6, Trained Steve McNeal on how to operate Skag lawnmower.

Del Molden

### **WORSHIP & MUSIC**

- ❖ Items discussed: Pet Fest has been moved to Sept 10.
- ❖ We discussed having another outdoor service during the summer and decided to hold on that for now. No worship on June 28, July 26 and Aug 30 due to the farmer's market and concert following.
- ❖ Carla will do some research to see if we can use one song a service using U tube to see if that will work. Hymn sing on Aug 6. Congregation to pick out 6 hymns to sing.
- ❖ Praise team is singing at the fair July 30. No worship at Bethlehem that day as all encouraged to come to the fair. Carla and Pastor Jamie to pick out the music and share with the other churches.

- ❖ Ingrid Peterson is a lady who has been using our organ to practice when she is in the area at her cottage. She is a member of an ELCA church in Cedarburg and is practicing for a recital. In exchange for allowing her to practice she will play one service for us in the future.
- ❖ Geri Gorman from Redeemer in Rio asked for the music for our Polka service. Carla to share with her and then see if their musicians would be willing to play at Bethlehem for a polka service and possible Octoberfest.
- ❖ We discussed started up a healing Sunday once/month in the fall.
- ❖ Pastor Jamie indicated that we were going to adopt a funeral policy. Tim Kratz has volunteered to help.