

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
February 17, 2022
Meeting held in hybrid format due to COVID-19

Called to order by Geoff Gilbert at 6:40pm.

Attendance:

Halley Harms-In Person
Kory Anderson- In Person
Geoff Gilbert-In Person
Kerry Melby- In Person
Jaimie Rudolph-In Person
Tina Thomas- Zoom
Lisa Cook- In Person
Pastor Jamie- In Person

Prayer by Pastor Jaime

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE January MEETING MINUTES **Motion by Kory Anderson second by Kerry Melby to approve the January meeting minutes. Motion Carried.**

Pastor's Report

Greetings, council members!

On January 30th we had our Annual Meeting where three new council members were elected. Welcome to Lisa, Jaimie, and Tina! We are glad to have you join us and I am excited to see where the Spirit leads us in the next year together.

Worship life has been steady the past month after some lower numbers in January due to the weather and cold temperatures. Megan and I met the week leading up to Mission Trip Sunday to finalize the details of the service. We had a wonderful turnout for the Youth-led worship service on Sunday, February 6th. It was great to hear about the experiences they had and to learn more about their trip. Everyone did a great job and thanks to all who helped make the trip a possibility. We were also able to raise over \$1,000 to put towards building a home for a family in need. What a powerful witness to the Spirit working in and through this community to serve our neighbors! Lent is right around the corner and our theme this year is "You Are Here" as we reflect on where we are right now and how the Spirit might be working here. We will have Wednesday worship at 5:30 pm followed by soup suppers every week in Lent.

Additionally at our annual meeting, the congregation approved the budget for the coming year along with the addition of the parish associate position. I met with the Personnel Committee on

February 9th to talk about next steps in the hiring process. Please see the Personnel Committee report for a more detailed update.

Things in the office have been busy with the normal weekly rhythms and having staff out over the past couple weeks. We are doing well however and will be preparing for Lent in the next couple of weeks. Frontier came to change out the phone lines on February 9th so we now are down to just two phone lines and the internet which will cut down our monthly bill somewhat. Everything has been working smoothly since their visit. As I mentioned last month, Peak Systems came to do some fine tuning of our sound system on January 20th and gave us an estimate of some further updates they recommended. We will move forward with these updates as the money has already been donated to cover these improvements. We will plan to schedule a training with them sometime in the hopefully near future.

In confirmation we are continuing to focus on the Old Testament by reading stories about Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Esau, and then moving into Moses and the Israelites. We will not have classes during Lent and we will resume classes after Easter.

I tried to make some home visits to our members in Wyocena and Randolph but both facilities were not recommending visitors at this time due to breakouts of highly contagious illnesses. Due to this, along with rising Covid cases, I was only able to provide pastoral care over the phone. I am hoping that with the numbers going down, I can make more visits this month.

As for meetings and continuing education this past month, I continue to attend my weekly Zoom text studies with my fellow pastor colleagues and I was able to catch up and discuss ministry with one of my colleagues and good friends from my time in Montana as he was passing through. All of the first call pastors in the state and upper peninsula met on Thursday, February 3rd for an Inter-Synod Zoom meeting with our mentors and our bishops. This was a good time to connect with one another and hear about what is happening all over WI. We also had some time with just our bishop to ask questions and catch up which was great. I also attended our Covid Task Force meeting on January 25th, Finance Committee meeting on February 1st, and our biweekly staff meetings. I am grateful for the time and opportunity to learn with and from my fellow ministry colleagues.

In peace, Pastor Jaime Benson

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Met on February 1st. In attendance: Pr. Jaime Benson, John Denhartigh, Janice Petersen, Don Bender

- Revenue for January was \$24,784 and expenses were \$24,587. Net income of \$1059. Historically, many Januarys have been losses, so January of 2022 was a solid month.
- Annual Meeting was held on January 30. No questions or concerns were raised by the congregation. Budget was passed and new personnel position were approved.
- Purchase of Choir chimes was approved by council. Most will be financed with memorial money that had been donated. \$1225.00 to come from Designated memorial donations.

- Audit is planned for the week of Feb 21st. Jerry has emailed members and is setting up the audit
- Peak Systems came to evaluate the livestreaming equipment. They recommended some parts to connect the overhead mics to the sound equipment. An estimate for the parts and labor is \$890. There is \$2000 budgeted for technology. A member has offered a donation to the church of where the greatest need is. Finance committee recommends this money go towards sound system upgrade.

Christian Education Committee Report

Confirmation: See Pastor Jamie's Report

Sunday School: First communion classes start March 6th. There are less children attending since Christmas but this is typical in previous years.

Youth Group: Megan will be leading a Bible Study group for those that attended the mission trip every other Wednesday. They will be using the app Mission 19 which guides you through reading through the whole Bible over a year and a half.

Worship & Music Committee Report

The hand chimes are here. We will be practicing the first and third Sunday after worship and had approximately 10 people show interest. Once we get that going Carla will look into the praise team

Property Committee Report

Utility reports were completed and forwarded. Jack Paulson will continue to create these reports until someone volunteers to do so. Well, here's the bad news. Billing period is for 29 days from January 6th to February 4th. This covers the coldest part of the winter so far and some of the coldest temps we've seen in a while. Coupled with a rate increase effective January 1st and high demand for natural gas, the bill for gas alone was \$1,4336.15. with electricity coming in at \$706.66. Wondering if Alliant offers a budget plan for commercial customers so we could take the spikes out of the bill.

From Del:

1. Replaced two can lights with LED in the hallway outside of the men's bathroom and near the entrance of the fellowship hall
2. Igniter went out for the air handler on the west end of the narthex – it was blowing cold air. New one was ordered for \$155. Should receive it in 5 business days

Stewardship/Evangelism

Covid Task Force

Met on Jan. 25th. In attendance: Del Molden, Janice Petersen, Julie Saalsaa, Pr. Jaime Benson, Kerry Melby

Wednesday Night Lenten Services & Soup Suppers

We discussed whether or not to host soup suppers during lent and thought it easier to make a plan and cancel if needed. We will watch the case numbers the next few weeks. If cases increase, we will meet again to evaluate. If cases decrease, we will move forward with the suppers. We ask that the following changes be made:

- Put food along the window wall in buffet instead of the middle of the room
- Spread tables out more and reduce number at each table
- Set up tables in the narthex if needed
- Mandatory masks if serving food

For Ash Wednesday, ashes will be distributed as normally would with masks worn for those imposing ashes and highly encourage all to wear masks.

Chili Cook-off

Ok with if same guidelines are followed as with the soup suppers. Julie will look into when would be a good time to hold the event. (nothing has been scheduled – may wait until fall)

Local and Global

BLC is collecting food for **The Market food pantry** for the month of February. The Market is a partnership of the community School District and the Portage Food Pantry. It's mission is to "create an equitable sustainable food source for all members of our school district that also educates users about healthy eating and food preparation." Wish list items are available on the table and in the Chimes. Volunteers are welcome. Our contact person is Kerry Melby.

Donations for **Open Doors for Refugees**: The Local and Global committee is helping organize this collection. Open Doors for Refugees furnishes and sets up apartments for refugees who arrive in Madison using furniture and housewares donated by the community. The February Chimes has more information and our contact person is Ann Ciske.

Personnel Committee

The committee met on February 9th to discuss updating the job application and to begin the hiring process for the parish associate. A job application is in the process of being finalized and an announcement will be included in the March CHIMES about the new position along with the bulletins and the website. We will have an internal deadline for members of Bethlehem to apply for the job by March 15 and the committee will meet on March 16 to review the applications and schedule interviews. If needed, we will post the position externally after that meeting and will ask for applications to be submitted by April 1. The committee will meet after this deadline to review applications and schedule interviews as needed.

A motion by Lisa Cook, second by Kerry Melby to approve the committee reports as presented. Motion Carried.

Old Business

none

New Business

- Election of officers

A motion by Ruth Price, second by Jaimie Rudolph to nominate Kerry Melby as president, Geoff Gilbert as Vice President and Halley Harms as secretary. Motion Carried.

- Committee Liaison Assignments
 1. Kory Anderson as Property
 2. Tina Thomas as Worship and Music
 3. Halley Harms- Christian Education
 4. Lisa Cook- Stewardship
 5. Ruth Price- Local and Global
 6. Jaimie Rudolph- Finance Committee

- New Council Member Information (send to Julie)

- Photo for Council Bulletin Board
- Preferred phone number
- Preferred email address

- Dwelling in the Word Schedule- Will follow the list on council terms list
- Computer for Parish Associate

A motion by Kerry Melby, second Kory Anderson to approve the purchase of a computer for the future parish associate not to exceed the dollar amount of \$1000.00 Motion Carried.

- Synod Assembly Representatives (May 6 & 7th)

Geoff Gilbert as male rep, will look to the congregation for female rep and youth rep.

- Lenten Plans & Easter Breakfast- Council recommends one 9:00 Easter Sunday Service with a “Egg-stra” special coffee hour after service. Will discuss further at All Committee night.

- Women’s Group Tea scheduled for April 30th

A motion by Lisa Cook, second by Kory Anderson for the Women’s Group Tea on April 30th to take place. Motion Carried.

- Clothes “closet”- Will discuss at all committee night.
- Youth Selling Items (ie. girl scouts, fundraisers for school, etc.)- Council recommends the use of a table to sell items vs. person to person selling. Those interested in selling items need to contact the church office and get approval prior to selling.
- Ensuring Success Project- Council approves this. No motion required.

A motion by Ruth Price second by Kory Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 8:02. Motion Carried.

Lord's Prayer

