

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING  
June 17, 2021  
Meeting held in hybrid format due to COVID-19

Called to order by Ann Ciske at 6:28 pm.

Attendance:

Jack Paulson-Zoom  
Halley Harms-In Person  
Pastor Jen Johnson-Zoom  
Ruth Price-In Person  
Kory Anderson- Excused  
Geoff Gilbert-In Person  
Don Bender-Zoom  
Ann Ciske-In Person  
Kerry Melby -Zoom  
Jerry Saalsaa Zoom (guest representative for finance)

Prayer by Pastor Jen

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**Motion by Geoff Gilbert, second by Halley Harms to approve the proposed agenda. Motion Carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE May MEETING MINUTES

**Motion by Jack Paulson, second by Don Bender to approve the May meeting minutes as submitted. Motion Carried.**

**Pastor's Report**

Worship: Conducted 2 services each week, both with communion. Sunday at 9:00 am online and in person. Wednesday at 5:30 pm in person.

Graveside memorial for Clarence Jacobi 06/07/2021. Former BLC member who transferred out but did not join another congregation.

Funeral for Virginia Fenske 06/08/2021. Done as coverage for a colleague while they were on vacation. Administrative: Staff meetings and inter-office communications this past month. BLC

Ministry Meetings: Covid 19 Task Force, All-Committee, Council, Finance.

Synodical Meetings and Events: Monthly Conference Gathering online, Weekly Conference Check-in which includes one Dwelling in the Word practice, Weekly Conference Text Study, Renewal Pastors Monthly Gathering, Faithful Innovations Learning Community (FILC) Monthly Meeting, Frequent communication and meeting with Synod staff regarding my leaving

BLC and going to a new Call.

Personal Study and Continuing Education: Seasonal Preaching Series online with Karoline Lewis of Luther Seminary. Also periodic “Coffee Hour” with members of the Easter Preachers community.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Finance Committee**

#### **Financial Update**

1. Revenue/Expenditures: Revenue is \$21774 up about \$5000 from previous year. Mortgage and general offerings are both up. Total expenses were \$17289, down from last year, so that means we have a net profit of about \$4500, as compared to last year we had a loss of about \$8000.
2. Motion to approve financial update by Denise Derey, seconded by Don Bender.
3. Motion approved.

2

### **Old Business**

#### 1. Council Update

- a. Nothing to report. Council focusing currently on congregational transition.

#### 2. Audit

- a. Date May 20, 2021
- b. People: Angie Pace, Jamie Rudolph, Judy Traut, Jerry Saalsaa, Janice Petersen
- c. Recommendation that the church council create and follow a discipline process to annually reach out to historical donors or donor families of the undesignated and designated fund on the balance sheet to provide guided recommendations on Bethlehem Lutheran Church needs that the families can designate the fund to.
- d. Motion to approve audit report by Janice Petersen, seconded by Denise Derey. Motion approved.

#### 3. Adopt-a-bill

- a. Started last month.
- b. Total money raised is about \$140.
- c. We will continue to announce Adopt-a-Bill intermittently and update the numbers.

### **New Business**

#### 1. Property upcoming Expenses

- a. Del Molden stated that the church has a couple of large expenses coming up. The current lawn mower is old and needing constant repairs. A new mower would be about \$6000. The committee suggests getting bids and doing research and bringing them back to the finance committee.
- b. The Parking Lot will need Crack Sealing at a cost of about \$5000 next year. Finance committee recommends getting bids in spring and bringing it to

- finance committee for review. The committee believes that the cost of the property maintenance could be financed from the building fund.
- c. Janice will talk to Del and relay this information to him.

## 2. Call Committee Expenses

- a. The Call Committee had expenses related to interviewing one candidate.
- b. These receipts were turned in and will be paid.

## 3. Trust Money Received

- a. The church received a disbursement from a trust set up by members. This will be an annual payout to the church for general support. The questions are how to record and manage the donation.
- b. First, a thank you will be sent to the donor and to Thrivent as manager of the trust. This thank you will come from the Church Council as we do for other large donations.
- c. Recording of this donation will also be in our Church360 software. Right now, the individual donor will receive credit on the giving record, and then when the member dies, a Trust Giving Record will have to be set up to credit the trust donation.

## 4. Additional Upcoming Expenses

- a. There are several upcoming expenses that will be donated by the Saalsaa family. They will donate computer equipment and a 60" TV monitor.
- b. Another consideration is that currently Pastor Jen is using her own computer for work. The old pastor's laptop hasn't been used in many years, and the password is unknown.
- c. Also anticipated expenses related to a new pastor in addition to a computer would be moving expenses.

3

### Christian Education Committee Report

Megan Jahoda would like to begin planning another mission trip to the Dominican Republic in January 2022. She would like approval to begin organizing the trip.

**Motion by Halley Harms, second by Kerry Melby to approve the planning of the mission trip to be funded through group fundraising. Motion Carried.**

Megan Jahoda would like approval to host a trivia night on September 25th. She has a venue secured. Pending approval of the mission trip, this would be a major fundraiser for those attending.

**Motion by Halley Harms, second by Geoff Gilbert to approve the trivia night as presented. Motion Carried.**

Without having a pastor secured for the near future, we will need to plan on how to proceed with Christian Ed this fall. At this time we don't have a curriculum to use. Halley will contact those involved in Christian Ed to set up a meeting to plan.

### Worship & Music Committee Report

No report.

### Property Committee Report

A major concern is one of planning for replacement of the lawn mower. It is being kept running through Del Molden's maintenance efforts at this point. Del has approached several members of the finance committee to begin planning for a commercial grade machine which is more in keeping with the size of the area being mowed. Hopefully the existing mower will make it through this season.

The air handlers were inspected and belts tightened on several of the units. One unit is particularly attractive to mud wasps so Del is working on some screening to keep them from clogging up the works.

Lawn mowing is continuing on an as needed basis given the lack of rain.

### Local & Global Committee Report

Janice and Jeanette continue to collect items for the kits that will be assembled. Margaret has set up October as the month our church will collect food for the Wyocena Food Pantry.

Ann is organizing "coffee hour" 2X per month during the summer (2nd and 4th Sundays of June, July, August). June 13 was our first one.

We are planning to gather info and/or videos to make a powerpoint of all committee activities in our church to show to confirmation students and the congregation.

### Stewardship/Evangelism

No Report

### COVID-19 Task Force

#### **Summary of May 25, 2021 Meeting**

**Present:** Ann Ciske, Janice Petersen, Larry Sween, Melissa Bradbury, Kerry Melby, Julie Saalsaa, Del Molden

#### **Mask Discussion**

- Discussed current CDC guidelines on mask wearing. Fully vaccinated people do not need to wear a face covering.
- Looked at the "at-risk" population and reviewed statistics that those at highest risk of serious complications or death from Covid is the population that is most vaccinated.
- Reviewed statistics that children are more likely to die from the flu than from Covid. •

Discussed options for mask usage in the church and decision: **Fully vaccinated people do not need to wear a mask or social distance, not fully vaccinated people—recommend wearing a mask and social distancing.**

### **Capacity limits**

- Reviewed capacity limits on Worship and Fellowship Hall for groups
- Decided that capacity for Worship and Fellowship Hall can be increased to 75%. This means we can have **225 in Sanctuary and 60 in Fellowship Hall**
- Further decided to continue to restrict the kitchen to 2 people and keep the Sunday School Rooms off limits for meetings at this time.
- Bathrooms- remove limitations.

### **Outside Groups**

- Outside groups can use facilities within these guidelines. Keeping the limits to above numbers.
- Groups should follow the same mask guidelines that we have set.
- Ultimately groups using the church can make their own decisions if they choose a stricter policy. They are responsible for their groups, and any contact tracing should it become necessary.

### **Singing**

- CDC says fully vaccinated people can sing safely in groups. Congregational singing in a large mixed group remains a higher risk activity. Outdoor singing, as with most activities, is safer.
- Committee recommends continuing to suspend congregational singing inside. Safe musical activities inside include: Vaccinated singers, cantors, and instruments in the church during the service.
- Singers and other performers should be 12 feet from the audience.
- Promote outdoor singing and music.

### **Food**

- Discussed eating food and events serving food, inside and outside.
- Group approves all outdoor eating events and encourages outdoor eating.
- Discussed Covid food policy vs a non-Covid food policy, and that we need to have a good food policy for all events.
- Group tabled indoor eating discussion until next meeting, June 22, 2021.

### **Miscellaneous Notes**

- No sign up needed for worship.
- Communion Cards used for contact tracing and attendance, if needed.

Next meeting June 22, 2021 6:30 pm

### Call Committee

At this point the committee is waiting for the Bishop to forward the names of additional

candidates. She was unaware that the one candidate the committee was most interested in had accepted another call so there has been a delay in securing the names of more prospects.

Since it is unlikely that a new pastor will be on board in the near future, the council needs to plan for coverage of Sunday services. My understanding is that Dan Pulfus will be available through August although I have not seen his schedule.

### Transition Team

The Transition Team has divided into 3 groups:

- Group 1: All the plans are ready for the Farewell/Celebration of our time with Pastor Jen.
- Group 2: This group is working on questions for Pastor Jen's Exit Interview. We could use a few more people for the Exit Interview. If you are not available to be at the meeting but have a question you would like presented at the Exit Interview, please forward it to Ann Ciske. We are discussing how to strengthen our committees during the interim, to help the new pastor when he/she arrives. See Local and Global above
- Group 3: Welcoming Committee for the new pastor when he/she arrives.

### APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Motion by Don Bender, second by Geoff Gilbert to approve the committee reports as submitted. Motion Carried.**

### Old Business

### **HYBRID MINISTRY: IN A POST-PANDEMIC CHURCH**

This Webinar was presented over 3 weeks.

Week 1 talked about what the future may be using a hybrid model. It is not on-line plus off-line equals hybrid ministry but a way to equip people for service and invite inclusiveness.

Week 2 talked about how to, (or not) have hybrid meetings and education

Week 3 evaluated some ways other churches have set up for on-line services, how to measure, evaluate and reflect upon how you are doing and how to proceed. Julie has these webinars recorded and available to anyone interested.

### New Business

- Thrivent Grant Thank You Letter- A letter was sent out by Julie
- Lifeline Screening request Tuesday October 12, 2021

**A motion by Don Bender, second by Jack Paulson to allow lifeline screening to use**

**the building on the date proposed. Motion Carried.**

- Transition Committee and Plans
- Wednesday Night Worship

An electronic vote was made by the church council to discontinue Wednesday night services due to the lack of having a Pastor. A member has asked the council to reconsider. Julie has checked and August 18, 2021 would be the only date we do not have a supply Pastor. At this time we can only guarantee a supply pastor through the end of August. After reconsidering we have decided to reinstate the Wednesday night services.

**A motion by Don Bender, second by Geoff Gilbert to continue the Wednesday night service through the end of August. Motion Carried.**

- Interim Pastor needed by Sept. 1st - Ann is waiting for a call back to get on the list for an interim pastor.
- Request to use the church for a funeral

**A motion by Halley Harms, second by Geoff Gilbert to approve the use of the church for the funeral. They will use the sanctuary and restroom. Fees will be decided on through the funeral home and church fees for cooling, electricity and custodial fees. Motion Carried.**

- The card club has requested to be able to leave the chairs down.

**Motion by Geoff Gilbert second by Don Bender to adjourn the meeting at 7:40. Motion Carried.**

