

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING  
March 18, 2021  
Meeting held via Zoom due to COVID-19

Called to order by Pastor Jen at 6:15pm.

Attendance:

Jack Paulson-Zoom

Halley Harms-Zoom

Pastor Jen Johnson-Zoom

Ruth Price-Zoom

Kory Anderson- Zoom

Geoff Gilbert-Zoom

Don Bender-Zoom

Ann Ciske- absent with notification

Kerry Melby - zoom

Prayer by Pastor Jen

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

**Motion Carried.**

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES

**Motion by Kerry Melby, second by Don Bender to approve the February meeting minutes as submitted. Motion Carried.**

**Pastor's Report**

Pastor will be attending a virtual seminar on preaching on and after Easter.

**Pastor Jen**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Finance Committee

In attendance:

Pr Jen Johnson, John Denhartigh, Don Bender, Jerry Saalsaa, Janice Petersen

1. Financial Update

a. Revenue for the month of Feb \$21513.63 with expenditures of \$18, 769.33. These represent an improvement overall from last year at this time.

b. Transfer of \$2300 was necessary to cover bills, but it did not negatively impact over net income of \$2870.25 for February.

c. Motion to approve financial update by Don, Second by Janice

d. Motion approved.

## 2. Finance Chair

a. John Denhartigh volunteered to head the Finance Committee, with Janice Petersen taking minutes.

b. Motion to approve John Denhartigh as Finance Committee Chairman by Don, Second by Janice

c. Motion approved, with John Denhartigh abstaining from the vote.

## 3. Internet

a. The Internet and phone contract was changed in early Feb.

b. Our last bill was \$245 but has a partial month with some credits. We are in a 1-year contract—expire about Feb 2022.

c. The Internet is faster, but questions remain for the needs of live streaming.

d. While this came to the finance committee for initial review to spend about ~\$8000 to lay cable for Spectrum, we now forward it to the council to consider if more measures need to be taken to review broadband/internet.

## 4. Check Signers

a. Currently the check signers are Denise Derey, Don Bender and Robin Kvalo.

b. Since Robin Kvalo is now off council, we recommend the new Council president, Ann Ciske be approved to sign checks.

**Motion by Halley Harms, second by Kory Anderson to approve Don Bender, Jack Paulson, Denise Drury, and Ann Ciske to be approved check signers on behalf of BLC. Motion Carried.**

c. Ann would need to hook up with Denise to get authorization.

d. Motion to recommend Ann Ciske as check signer made by Jerry Saalsaa, seconded by John Denhartigh

e. Motion approved.

## 5. Audit

a. Jerry Saalsaa will reach out to last year's Audit committee to schedule a time to hold the audit. We suggested a time to review the procedures when we can do it in person, in fellowship hall-socially distanced.

b. Last year: Angie Pace, Roger Duchow, and Andy Wagner

## 6. Annual Meeting

- a. Annual meeting went well
- b. No changes were made to budget

#### 7. Job Descriptions

a. Janice and Denise wrote down Job Descriptions for Financial Secretary, Financial Assistant, Office Manager, and Accounts Payable Oversight Volunteer.

b. These will be emailed to the Finance Committee for review and then forwarded to council for approval.

**Motion by Halley Harms second by Jack Paulson to approve the job descriptions for the financial secretary, financial assistant, office manager, and accounts payable oversight volunteer as presented. Motion Carried.**

#### 8. Government Stimulus Packages

a. Currently we do not qualify for the Employer Retention Credit.

b. Jerry will monitor this and if our financial situation changes, he will bring it back to the Finance Committee.

#### 9. Fundraisers

a. Upcoming fundraiser for Easter Breakfast to raise money for Camperships for the youth. Other fund raisers being considered for this summer/fall.

b. Finance decided that we do not need to be involved in management of fundraisers, Council will be the approval.

#### 10. File back ups

a. Janice has backed up files on to the Church's OneDrive and also put pertinent financial documents and meeting minutes on Google Drive.

#### 11. Meeting time

a. It was decided that the Finance Committee will meet on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:00 pm. Next meeting April 6.

b. Janice will set up Zoom.

#### 12. Adjournment

a. Motion to adjourn by Don, seconded by Jerry.

b. Meeting Adjourned.

#### Christian Education Committee Report

Confirmation will be meeting after Easter for in-person classes.

An idea of an end of the year get together is in the beginning stages of planning. More information will need to be provided to the task-force as planning evolves.

Youth gathered on March 6th to prepare for the Easter Sunday Breakfast as well as gather items for the Schilling family.

#### Stewardship & Evangelism Committee Report

The Easter offering letter will be going out.

**A motion by Halley Harms second by Geoff Gilbert was made on March 9,2021 via email vote to approve the Easter Letter be sent out to the congregation. Motion Carried.**

#### Worship & Music Committee Report

No report received.

#### Property Committee Report

The gas and electric bills and usage for last month were the highest in the last five years for the same period. This is due in part to two weeks of exceptionally frigid weather and partly due to running the fans on the air handlers to circulate the air when the building is occupied due to Covid 19 concerns.

State mandated water samples were done. All the thermostats were reviewed to make sure all schedules and temperatures were properly set. All the thermostat clocks were set for daylight saving time.

#### Local & Global Committee Report

no report received

#### COVID-19 Task Force

The committee met twice since the last council meeting.

Minutes from February 23, 2021, 6:30 pm, Via Zoom

In attendance: *Pr. Jen, Dan Pulsfus, Ann Ciske, Melissa Bradbury, Janice Petersen, Larry Sween, Kerry Melby, Del Molden, Julie Saalsaa*

Opening Prayer – led by Pr. Jen

Columbia County Numbers & Local Hospital Capacity

- Numbers are down (-32) since 2/10/21

Capacity Allowance for Worship

- We agreed to raise the capacity for worship to 40 people. We will evaluate again in two weeks. This will start Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. We reviewed the current seating arrangement

and will be making changes to remove the tape and replace with string. The new layout is attached.

- Del will look into what a safe number for capacity of the fellowship hall should be based on the low ceilings and air exchange and get back to the committee.
- The increased capacity of 40 people only pertains to gatherings that happen in the sanctuary, not in other parts of the building. Capacity will be determined by the size of the space.

#### Sanitation stands

- We approved to purchase an automatic hand sanitizer for \$149. Before purchasing, Julie will ask Brad Cook about if this is something his company sells.

#### Plans for Easter

- Two services 8:30 am and 10:30 am
  - capacity will be addressed closer to the date of Easter
- Good Friday “Jesus Christ Superstar” movie showing
  - this will not be in person. Julie will look further into having a “watch party” on Zoom
- Continental Bagged Breakfast Easter Sunday – Coordinated by Confirmation families
  - This was approved

#### Youth Activity Requests

- Returning to in person Confirmation classes in April
  - In person confirmation will be allowed in the sanctuary and will follow the allowed capacity at the time.
- End of year gathering for Sunday school
  - This will be tabled until more information is received.

#### Fundraising Events

- Fashion Show May 1<sup>st</sup>
  - This will be allowed in the sanctuary and follow the allowed capacity at the current time. Food will not be allowed to be served and eaten on the premises, but grab and go bags would be allowed for people to eat later. More detailed information regarding the logistics of how things will be run will be needed before this is fully approved.
- Rummage Sale
  - Tabled until next meeting
- Craft Fair
  - Tabled until next meeting

Next meeting Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm

**Minutes from March 9, 2021, 6:30 pm, Via Zoom**

*In attendance: Pr. Jen, Janice Petersen, Ann Ciske, Kerry Melby, Melissa Bradbury, Dan Pulsfus, Del Molden, Larry Sween, Julie Saalsaa*

## Opening Prayer

Easter cleaning between services – high touch areas will need to be cleaned

- backs of used pews
- door handles to entryways
- faucets, toilet handles and door handles in bathrooms
  - o ***We will ask ushers to do this with the help of the Confirmation students who will be at church.***

Columbia County Numbers & Local Hospital Capacity

<https://www.co.columbia.wi.us/columbiacounty/Portals/7/Public%20Health/03032021%20COVID%20Weekly%20Update.pdf?ver=2021-03-03-163715-660>

## ***Numbers continue to decline***

Capacity Allowance

- for Worship
  - o ***will stay at 40 and will look at this again in two weeks***
- ***Palm Sunday/First Communion (March 28<sup>th</sup>)***
  - o ***It was suggested to have two worship services to help with capacity***
  - o ***9 am regular service***
  - o ***11 am service for first communion families. We will have Jeff Melby ask the parents to give the church a list of names of those family members attending. If we do not reach capacity, then we will open it up to other church members. If the number is above 40 we will look to see what the overage is and address that if needed at the March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. The service can be livestreamed to allow for families to share the link with others.***
- for fellowship hall
  - o ***24 people; 3 people in the kitchen***
- Guidelines for building use in other spaces of the building (classrooms, narthex)
  - o ***Groups can use a combination of the fellowship hall, sanctuary and narthex to spread people out if needed.***

Worship experience

- Sanitation stands – ordered one and it is up and running
- Feedback from those attending and volunteering
  - o Seating layout in sanctuary
    - ***we are going to make an adjustment with the presentation of the seating in the sanctuary, there will be no change to the arrangement only the presentation: remove the center yarn, place “pew closed” signs on the seats. Ushers can ask people to sit where there is no sign present.***

- Ushering
  - ***Going back to two ushers as it's easier to manage both indoor and outdoor members***
- masking for Pr Jen
  - ***Pr. Jen is going to try out wearing the face shield or clear face mask instead of a paper/cloth mask to help those that are hard of hearing to hear her better. This has been a concern (not being able to hear well) for several people since we are back to in person worship.***
- Singer
  - ***Tabled to next meeting***
- plexiglass barriers
  - ***this was brought up as an option for Pr Jen if she felt more comfortable with it if she wasn't wearing a mask. But it was decided to go with a face shield/clear mask.***

Next meeting Tuesday, March 23<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm

### Call Committee

There are currently 3 items the call committee is working on.

The first is developing the interview questions to be used for the interview process. A draft of the questions as developed so far is shown below.

Secondly: Jeff Melby is working on a summary of the congregation's survey responses to be provided to the Council in time for Thursday's meeting.

Thirdly, I have provided a copy of the approved Ministry Site Profile (MSP) for you to have on hand. This is the document that prospective candidates have the opportunity to review and gives them a snapshot of our congregation needs and wants as outlined in the survey responses.

## Interview Questions

March 1, 2021 Draft

1. What did you see in our congregational profile that intrigues you about Bethlehem?
2. What are your hobbies outside of church? What do you do in your free time?
3. What drew you to the ministry?
4. What do you see as some of your strengths and where does your passion lie?
5. How have you adjusted your ministry during the current and ongoing pandemic?
6. In today's culture, youth and their families have busy schedules that may conflict with activities at church. What approach might you take to engage youth and their parents to encourage church involvement as a priority?
7. What is your outreach strategy when dealing with members and their families in times of illness, death and dying?
8. Describe ways in which you typically become acquainted and associated with people in the surrounding communities who are not members of your church?
9. What do you think is a pastor's role for a congregation? In your pastoral practice how have you utilized staff in outreach?
10. It can be difficult to optimally serve every demographic of the congregation. What is your perceived priority of ministry to groups such as shut-ins, disconnected parishioners, the sick, homebound and emergencies?
11. How do you define a work ethic?
12. What is your preferred style of worship?



13. When it comes to counseling members how do you handle those who need professional intervention vs. pastoral help?
14. Do you plan to continue your studies to further enrich your goals in the ministry?
15. Is there something we did not discuss today that you feel is important for us to know? Do you have any further questions for us?

#### APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

#### Old Business

- Questions:
  - What do you see as our immediate needs (how will we say goodbye to Pastor Jen and any others you come up with)
  - What are our goals for the next 12 months
    - Getting people back into the sanctuary
    - Get kids back in the building for confirmation/sunday school
    - Reaching out to the community to increase membership and financial supports
    - Find a new Pastor
    - More activities offered to get people back into the church
    - Bringing back the opportunity to worship together
    - Healing from the loss of Pastor Jen/Finding a new Pastor
    - Getting members reconnected to each other.
    - Getting other members involved in the church
- Spring Fashion Show update- Ruth has secured clothing, makeup, and hair. Megan will be working with the youth on finding the models and escorts. Ruth is looking for a flyer to promote this event as well as ticket sales.

- Training Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion update- Pastor Jen will be reaching out to Vicki from the synod for information on this.

#### New Business

- Check signer (from Finance Report)- Motion Carried. See Finance Report.
- Internet review (from Finance Report) Tabled for Later Discussion.
- Job description approval for Financial Secretary, Financial Assistant, Office Manager, and Accounts Payable Oversight Volunteer (from Finance report - see attached) Motion Carried. See Finance Report.
- Council member binders – Julie is working on assembling binders for all council members that include our policies and other pertinent information. They should be ready to pick up by the end of March.

**Motion by Kory Anderson second by Kerry Melby to adjourn the meeting at 7:13pm .  
Motion Carried.**

Next Finance Committee Meeting: April 6th

All Committee Night: May 10th

Next Council Meeting: April 15th

