

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

Called to order by Ann Ciske at 6:05pm.

Attendance:

Jack Paulson-Zoom
Halley Harms-Zoom
Pastor Jen Johnson-Zoom
Ruth Price-Zoom
Kory Anderson- late with Notification
Geoff Gilbert-Zoom
Don Bender-Zoom
Ann Ciske-Zoom
Kerry Melby - zoom

Prayer by Pastor Jen

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Geoff Gilbert, second by Kerry Melby to approve the proposed agenda. Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF THE April MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Jack Paulson, second by Don Bender to approve the April 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.

Baptized Natalie Kay Giraud on 04/17/2021.
Baptized Ian Hayes and Alex Hayes on 05/14/2021.

Teaching: Partnered with the confirmation mentors in offering 4 weekly lessons on New Testament themes. Wednesdays at 6:30 pm online and in person.

Administrative: Staff meetings and inter-office communications this past month.

Membership update: received official transfer request from Duane & Joan Meister – they moved to Janesville at the end of 2020

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

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, FILC rehearsal, FILC Training Gathering #2 online

Personal Study and Continuing Education: Seasonal Preaching Series online with Karoline Lewis of Luther Seminary: Lent and Easter

Festival of Homiletics online

The Most Spiritually Enriching Activity this month: Periodic online “coffee hours” with colleagues from the Easter Preaching online class; enriching because we come together informally to support one another and talk about joys and concerns regarding the given texts.

Also, Confirmation Class.

The Most Spiritually Draining Activity this month: Daily pastoral work in a time when we are all in transition. I’m preparing to leave (on many levels) and am spiritually exhausted. I’ve actually been spiritually exhausted since the pandemic began.

Pr. Jen

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Financial Update

1. Financial update provided by Jerry Saalsaa. Revenue for April \$23,396 which is less than last year even if you consider special offering. Expenses: \$19,818
2. Our net revenue for April is \$5854.94 which is about \$4000 less than last year net of \$9761, even when the special offering is factored in. Year to date net income is \$493 while last year’s net income currently was \$4541.
3. We are about \$8000 behind in our offering income as compared to last year.
4. Our expenses are lower, so we have been able to show a net profit.
5. The decrease in offerings/income is a concern.
6. Motion to approve financial update was made by Janice Petersen and seconded by Donald Bender.
7. Motion approved.

Old Business

1. Council Update
 - a. Council proposed starting the Adopt-a-Bill program again.
 - b. John Denhartigh volunteered to be the spokesman for the program and make announcements in church.
 - c. Janice Petersen will provide the information on bill amounts and get into the Chimes and weekly newsletter.

2. Audit
 - a. Date to be determined.
 - b. We still need one more person to help with the Audit. We are considered others who would be interested in helping.
 - c. Janice will put a request for volunteers in the weekly newsletter.

New Business

1. Call Committee
 - a. The Call Committee requested information on budget items for Pastoral supplies and continuing education. This information was given to John Denhartigh who will relay to the call committee.

Christian Education Committee Report

Sunday School

8 out of 14 families enrolled in Sunday School attended the end of the year in-person event on the 16th. Kids celebrated with a scavenger hunt, rock painting, planting a pot and received a goody bag.

Confirmation

We ended our confirmation year on the 19th with outdoor games and a bonfire. We celebrated with Pastor Jen as she prepares to end her time at the church.

Other

Halley wrote the open doors grant to help provide funds for the outdoor movie projector, screen and outdoor games.

Worship & Music Committee Report

Outdoor services starting in June will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. Carla is looking into what it would take to purchase hand chimes for a future hand chime choir.

Property Committee Report

Utility usage and billing continues to be monitored and is in line with season expectations. The electric bill is running higher than normal due to Covid concerns which require the air handler fans to be run much more often. Floodlight bulbs in the Sanctuary will hopefully be replaced

this week and the shade in the west window will be repaired. Weather permitting, an oak tree which is down on the south lot line will be cut up and moved out of the field.

Local & Global Committee Report

- The Local and Global committee met at All Committee night May 10, 2021.
- The Quilters will stop quilting May 25 for the summer.
- We discussed how to re-engage committees after Covid. We will be putting together a powerpoint of all activities that go on, through all committees, in the church. The power point will be run on the TV that is planned for the Narthex or in the Sanctuary screen when the set up allows. It will be used to introduce all church activity options to the confirmation students in the Fall.
- Mission Kit collection is ongoing.
- God's Work our Hands will move to October so church activities will be spread out. We are looking at having congregation members do work, like raking, for people in the Portage/Pardeeville communities on a donation basis. Donations are then to be given to River Haven.
- The next highway clean-up will be in October.

Stewardship/Evangelism

Starting to look at new ideas for inactive member list.

COVID-19 Task Force

C19TF had to reschedule their May 18th meeting due to multiple schedule conflicts. On the agenda to discuss are the following topics: increasing worship capacity, eliminating sign up requirement, CDC's latest mask and physical distance guidelines for vaccinated people and what the means for the rest of the unvaccinated people (how does this affect our policies), outdoor gatherings and mask wearing, and gatherings with food.

Action Item

The Covid task force voted in favor of increasing the capacity to 50% and eliminating the sign up requirement for worship effective immediately. We will have people fill out communion cards to have an idea of who was at worship for contact tracing purposes.

A motion by Kerry Melby, second by Geoff Gilbert to approve increasing capacity to 50% and eliminating the weekly sign up for attending services. Motion Carried.

Call Committee

The Synod forwarded the names of three prospective candidates. The committee decided to interview two of the three, and of those, one has been invited for a second, in-person interview which is scheduled for Friday, May 21st.

APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE REPORTS

Motion by Halley Harms second by Kerry Melby to approve the committee reports as submitted. Motion Carried.

Old Business

- Council pictures – if you don't have a picture on the bulletin board at church, please bring in a 4x6 picture to hang up

New Business

- “Hybrid Ministry in a Post-Pandemic Church” Webinar, May 27th, June 3rd & 10th. Three 2 hour sessions. Cost is \$75.
(<https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/hybrid-ministry-in-a-post-pandemic-church/>)
Three council members stepped forward and donated the cost of this for the registration costs of this webinar.
- Transition Committee and Plans
- Road sign promoting the church. Signs from the ELCA are \$203.00 a piece with exemption of DOT taxes.
We will wait until we find out if the open doors grant is approved. We will revisit this in July.
- Pastor Jen shared with us that her last day of serving our congregation will be Sunday, July 4, 2021. We will need to find coverage for pastoral needs.

Motion by Don Bender second by Geoff Gilbert to adjourn the meeting at 7:07. Motion Carried.

Next Finance Committee Meeting: June 1st All Committee Night: August 9th Next Council Meeting: June 17th
