

Bethel Lutheran Church Council

Minutes

July 18, 2021

A monthly meeting of the Congregational Council of Bethel Lutheran Church was held on Sunday July 18th, following worship. Pastor David Young, Council President John Fredereicksen, Vice President Vonda Wilt, Treasurer Betty Puffinberger, and Curtis Grymala were present in the Council Room. Secretary Bruce Lothrop and Beth Garner joined the meeting by Zoom.

Call to Order

President John Fredericksen called the meeting to order at approximately 11:10 a.m.

Opening Prayer and Devotion.

Pastor Dave offered an opening prayer. John Fredericksen led the group in a brief devotion.

Minutes of the June Meeting

Secretary Bruce Lothrop had distributed the minutes of the June meeting by email prior to the July meeting. Reading of the June minutes was waived by acclamation. The Minutes of the June Meeting were approved by acclamation.

Financial Report

Bookkeeper Kim Williams had distributed a detailed financial report to all members of Council by email prior to the meeting. The report showed a total income of \$31919.67 and total expenses of \$29,949.04, giving a net income of \$1970.63. The Ministry Spending Plan anticipated expenses exceeding income by \$4,853.11. Tithes and offerings for June exceeded expectations by approximately \$4046. Treasurer Betty Puffinberger reported that a general increase in giving appeared to account for the higher amount of giving, rather than a single, one-time gift.

The Treasurer's report was approved by acclamation.

Pastor's report

Pastor David Young distributed a written report to all members of council by email prior to the meeting. Highlights of the report included:

- Live stream of worship is continuing, even as we return to a traditional service in the sanctuary. Worship services will continue to be held at 9:30 am weekly.
- Pastor Dave attended the virtual Virginia Synod Assembly.

- In the fall a time for Fellowship will follow worship services. Youth group time and fellowship time will replace Sunday School. Youth groups will be organized by age: k-2, 3-5, 6-7, and 8-12 grade levels.
- Four young people celebrated first communion in June.
- Melissa Sibert has been installed as the Senior High School Youth Minister.

Board Reports

Prayer and Care:

Vonda Wilt proposed providing coffee and pastries after worship once a month to promote fellowship. Curt suggested that the Youth could take responsibility for providing food, and accept donations to cover costs. Any excess funds received could support Youth activities.

Betty Puffinberger reported that that quilting team has made over 100 quilts. The quilt will be blessed during worship in September.

Servant Board:

Beth Garner reported that the 9 members of Bethel, mostly Youth, participated in a Virtual Vison Trip to Escuela Integrada in Antigua Guatemala.

Congregational Life:

Curt Grymala reported that he will reach out to Will Sigler to begin planning the Shrimp Boil in September.

New Business

Reconciling works

After discussion, a motion was made to enter in to the Reconciling Works one year discernment process. During this time, Bethel will consider becoming a Reconciling Works Congregation. A Reconciling Works Congregation seeks to be open and welcoming to all life expressions. During the process Council will work with the Bethel Community to determine whether becoming a Reconciling Works Congregation is the right choice for Bethel. The motion passed by acclamation.

Coffee with Council

Council agreed to resume “Coffee with Council” in the fall. On designated Sundays, after worship, members of Council will be available to informal discussion with members of the community in an effort to more effectively hear concerns and share information. Coffee with Council was halted in the Spring of 2020, due to pandemic concerns. Details of schedule and participation will be worked out by email.

Organist replacement

Pastor Dave asked that this issue be tabled. Pastor Dave would like to review all staffing, and determine priorities before seeking to hire a new organist.

Flower Donation Policy

Prior to the meeting, Betty Puffinberger distributed a draft policy for members of the community who wish to provide flowers for the alter during Sunday worship. Betty and Kathryn Carpenter created the draft policy. The policy was approved by motion.

Facility use fees

Kim Williams and Pastor Dave generated a proposal for fees to be charged for use of rooms at Bethel by outside groups. Outside groups would not include any Bethel activities such as Quilting, Bible Study, and fellowship activities. Because the Boy Scouts are chartered by the Bethel Congregation, they would also not be charged. Groups with minimal resources, and missions that align with Bethel community outreach goals, such as AA, would be treated with some leniency. More details were needed about what time frame amount proposed would cover. Pastor Dave will present more details at the next meeting.

Lutheran Internship proposal

The Virginia Synod has requested that Bethel consider hosting a Seminary Intern in 2022. Pastor Dave has applied to a sabbatical program for the summer of 2022. The discussion of this question was tabled until the status of Pastor Dave's sabbatical application is resolved.

Pew storage/sanctuary project

Discussion of Pew storage in Discipleship Hall, or other location, was tabled until more information about how work on Sanctuary renovation will proceed is available.

Nursery

Betty Puffinberger suggested that a basic clean-up and refresh of the nursery should be done expediently. The state of the nursery can have a large impact on families with young children who are considering participation in the community. Betty suggested removing existing carpet, painting walls, and disposing of damage or dirty toys. Ideally volunteers will complete the work between Sundays to keep the nursery available during worship. Council agreed that this task should be a priority.

Roof/AC repairs

Council agreed that needed repairs to the roof and HVAC system should not be delayed while plans for renovation of the sanctuary are developed. Failure to repair the roof could lead to interior damage. Failure to repair the HVAC system could deter people from attending worship.

Roof repairs will cost about \$40,000. The HVAC unit replacement will cost about \$10,000 each, for two units. This amount of money is within the limits of the line of credit approved at the February congregational meeting. A motion was made to begin repairs on the roof of the original portion of Bethel's roof, and replace two failing HVAC units, using funds from the approved line of credit. The motion passed unanimously by acclamation.

Bethel New Day initiative

Bethel has engaged an Architect to review renovation plans, determine correct typical occupancy number, and understand the number of accessible restrooms needed. Failure to provide enough accessible restrooms could provide an unwelcoming environment. Converting more restrooms than needed will cause unnecessary expenses.

Bike fundraiser, God's Work/Our Hands, Diaper Drive

Red Wagon Ministries has requested that Bethel participate in a diaper drive in August through mid-September. The congregation will be requested to donate diapers at Sunday worship. Council approved the request by acclamation.

CCAP is sponsoring a bike-athon fund raiser. Bethel has been asked to man a station in the Middletown area to hand out fruit to riders on August 28th.from 9 to 4. Council approved the request by acclamation. Beth will work to recruit volunteers.

Offering counting:

Bethel has changed procedure for counting offering. Previously, it was counted on Sunday morning, and then deposited in the safe in the office. Going forward, offering will be placed in the safe on Sunday, but counted by the bookkeeper and treasurer during the week. To maintain proper accountability, Pastor Dave suggests that at least two people, at least one of whom should be a member of Council, should deposit the offering into the safe after worship on Sunday. Treasurer Betty Puffinberger will draft a procedure for the procedure, and scheduling members of Council.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12pm.