

Bethel Lutheran Church Council

Minutes

September 8th, 2021

A monthly meeting of the Congregational Council of Bethel Lutheran Church was held on Wednesday September 8th, 2021. Pastor David Young, Secretary Bruce Lothrop, and Beth Garner met in the Council room at the Church. President John Fredericksen, Vice President Vonda Wilt, Treasurer Betty Puffinberger, Curt Grymala, Mike McKiernan, and Dustie Fisher attended by Zoom.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:05 pm

Opening Prayer

Pastor Dave opened the meeting with prayer

Devotion

John Fredericksen provided a brief devotion.

Minutes of the Prior Meeting.

Prior to the meeting, Secretary Bruce Lothrop emailed minutes of the August 11th meeting to all members of Council for review. The minutes of the August 11th meeting were approved as presented, by motion.

Treasurer's Report.

Bookkeeper Kim Williams distributed detailed financial reports to all members of Council prior to the meeting. The report showed \$26,946 in income for August, \$1,424 less than anticipated by the ministry spending plan. Expenses for August totaled \$32,212, \$837 more than expected in the spending plan. Expenses for August exceeded income by \$5,265. Year to date, Bethel's income has exceeded expenses by \$9,954, including \$35,408 of income from a PPL loan. The Treasurer's report was approved as presented, by acclamation.

Preliminary comments on 2022 MSP

Pastor Dave reported on planning for the 2022 Ministry Spending Plan. He stated that he and Kim Williams had reviewed the prior three years to understand trends. In 2020, Bethel ended the year with a cash surplus, due to a forgiven PPP loan that supported payroll in place of reduced income due to the pandemic. Bethel may complete 2021 with a surplus, but also received a PPP loan this year, which is also expected to be forgiven. It is likely that income from offering will not fully rebound in 2022. Expected expenses for 2022 could exceed income from tithes and offering. New income streams may be necessary. Pastor Dave has asked Darline DeMott to lead a visioning effort to explore new types of income. Possibilities include efforts to build an endowment, active marketing of Bethel as a wedding venue, and market the building and facilities for conferences, concerts and other events.

Board reports

Congregational Life

Curt Grymala reported for the Congregational Life Team. The shrimp boil was postponed for one week, and will take place on Sunday September 19th. Due to increased Covid-19 cases, the event will revert to the “Grab and Go” style used last year, rather than the traditional communal dinner.

Prayer and Care

Vonda Wilt reported for the Prayer and Care Team. As part of the Day of Service, the team plans to distribute prayer shawls to shut ins and oncology patients.

Staffing considerations

Pastor Dave reported. During prior meetings, Council has been asked to consider adding an organist and a leader for youth ministry for children in middle school and younger. Pastor Dave would like to defer any decisions regarding those positions until the 2022 Ministry Spending Plan develops. Cliff Crowder is planning to step back from his role as facilities manager. As that happens, Pastor Dave would like to move the facilities manager’s responsibilities to Kim Williams, while moving office management responsibilities now performed by Kim to Kristin Siebert. Kristin’s hours would be increased. Bethel also needs to plan for cleaning services when Patty White retires.

Internship

The synod has requested that Bethel consider hosting an intern in the future. The cost for Bethel would be about \$40,000. Any decision about an intern will be deferred until the 2022 Ministry Spending Plan is more fully developed.

God’s Work - Our Hands

Beth Garner reported on plans for the ELCA Day of Service on September 12th. Several projects are planned. Prayer shawls will be tagged as gifts for members of the community. Mission Quilts destined for Lutheran World Relief will be available for tying by participants. Trail mix will be prepared for the WATTS cooling center. The items collected in the diaper drive, carried out in conjunction with Red Wagon Ministries, will be inventoried and delivered. The team would like to write notes of encouragement to refugees being assisted by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services. Beth and Pastor Dave have reached out to the group to learn where to send notes to people receiving assistance, but have not yet received a clear answer. Mulching projects on the Bethel campus will not be included as part of the Day of Service, because that day focuses on outward looking ministry. Beth will try to include such projects in Returning Thanks. Betty will reach out to John McAllister to see if new areas that should be mulched can be included in regular maintenance.

Coffee with Council September 26th

Coffee with Council will be moved to September 26th, so as not to conflict with the Shrimp Boil.

Water in the Underground Youth Area

Despite renovation work and drainage remediation, the water seeped into the Underground youth space during recent storms. The water appears to have come through the restroom. The likely cause was that gutters and downspouts were blocked, and could not move runoff away from the building. Those blockages have been cleared, and the problem appears to be resolved. Mel Siebert is leading the effort to get the Underground ready for use.

Excess items sale

Betty Puffinberger reported that plans to hold a “yard sale” to dispose of furniture and other items at Bethel that are no longer needed is on hold until plans for the “New Day” initiative move forward.

200th Anniversary activities- Dave

ELCA Virginia Synod Bishop Robert Humphrey will likely not be available on Oct 17th as originally planned.

Bethel New Day

Estimates for Sanctuary renovation and other work have not yet been complete by the contractor. Estimates are expected within a week or so.

Closing Prayer

Pastor Dave closed the meeting with a prayer.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20.