

**Bethel Lutheran Church  
Congregation Council Meeting  
July 10, 2018**

Council members in attendance: Pastor David Young, Traci Shoberg, Pat Blevins, Julie Shanabrook, Beth Garner, Dave Griffin, Rose Pierce, Mike Asmussen

Guest present: Rev. John Wertz, Director of Evangelical Mission for the Virginia Synod

**Opening Prayer:** Introduction of Pr. Wertz

**Approval of June Minutes** (even though we didn't have them)

Motion to approve: Trevor, 2nd: Traci, Unanimous approval

**Approval of Financial Report**

Discussion: Beth asked a clarifying question about the Quilt Ministry being in Servant Board line items.

Motion to approve: Dave G, 2nd: Michael, Unanimous approval

**Pastor's Report**

**Board Reports**

Community Life - Oktoberfest planning is under way and going well.

Learning - VBS is upon us and we need volunteers. Trevor suggested that Bryan make an appeal at worship.

Prayer and Care - August 5th will be Senior Quilt Blessing Day.

Servant - Summer Service and Supper Church is happening three times this summer, where we will be working with Bright Futures for the service part.

Ministry Support - Michael confirmed that Berkeley Glass has been contracted to provide the new doors for the sanctuary, and they came in under budget.

**New Business**

1. Light on the Steeple: Council voted to send the request of spending \$950 to the Task Force to approve for lighting the steeple once it is painted.

2. Carter Woolly request: Carter Woolly is spending a year with YAGM (Young Adults in Global Mission) with the ELCA. He will be going to Rwanda. The council unani- mously approved sending Carter \$1000 from our Student Missions Fund to support him.

3. Supporting Luke Lafollette baseball team: Luke Lafollette's 8U baseball team won its way to the World Series in Florida. His mother, Jennifer Lafollette, made a re- quest for help for the team, as it is rather large expense for many of the fami- lies. The council decided to allow the family to request help at the July 15 worship service.

**Primary Discussion Item**

1. Bethel Reforming – next steps

Pastor John Wertz, VA Synod Director of Evangelical Mission/Assistant to the Bishop was our guest to discuss Bethel Reforming data and strategic implementation.

- A. Pastor Wertz opened with scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4; the gifts each holds that are all given by God.
- a. no one gets all the gifts. To EACH is given their gift which matches his or her own spirit and identity. Some people try to be the master at everything, but this is not possible or for the best compared to each person contributing.
  - b. the gifts are given for the common good, not to hide or use only for ourselves, but to help all.
  - c. as congregations evolve, different gifts surface and ministries change. Amazing things happen when we combine our gifts.

B. Congregational health and Church attendance

32-36x/year worshipers are considered super active congregants

12-15x/year is perceived by congregants to be "active"

Can be encouraging to understand that # of worshipers or faith or church vitality does not necessarily equate with "bottoms in the pews"

Considerations that are more important in assessing vitality:

how are we faithful to how God calls us to live?

how do we act that out in the world?

Since vitality cannot be assessed simply by # of worshipers each week, there is a need to tell one's stories to keep those faith stories and ministries alive; proclaim what God is doing in our members' lives and by our members' hearts and hands.

From congregation to congregation, the decision of how to assess the effectiveness of each church is highly individualized. Each congregation must first understand who they are as a group and whether they consider the system of their particular church to be healthy.

At Bethel, 225 average worshipers per week

Equates to a probable 400-450 members who are an active part of the congregation

The entry points to church have changed; non-church members can learn about Bethel through service that we sponsor, through youth activities, etc.

## **5 Bethel Reforming Priorities**

1. Discern our staff arrangement (what is needed NOW to best serve / grow)
2. Discern our organizational structure (what needs to change to best be adaptable to changing world and ministry needs)
3. Discern a financial vision to support our ongoing ministry
4. Develop new logo/theme to "brand" our ministry moving forward
5. Build upon our strengths, do less with more impact

33% participated in Bethel Reforming

Discussed “Deeper faith, wider love” mission statement and whether it represents the current goals/desires/perspectives of the congregation. (New Bethel Twitter is @LoveOneServeAll. Is this more appropriate?) As we are not who we were 10 years ago, has our focus changed enough to direct a new mission statement? People notice whether what you say you are and what you “do” match.

John consolidated the above Bethel Reforming Priorities into 3 Areas:

1. Implementing God’s mission for Bethel

1. organizational structure
2. staffing conversation

(to begin addressing this goal Julie will initiate casual but informative data gathering meetings in which council members meet with each staff person about what they do and the time distribution as well as needs/challenges of each position. Pastor John stated that the common denominator is that in the end, successful churches build staffs that support the specific gifts of the pastor. We may wish to present a history of past staffing models to demonstrate how this changes naturally over time versus stigmatizing the discussion.)

2. Supporting God’s mission at Bethel

1. identifying strengths
2. developing a strong stewardship team

not a fundraising arm but helping people figure out what it means to grow deeper in their relationship with God through their use of their time, gifts, and financial resources

N.B. Includes identifying partnerships with other churches and grants

3. Sharing God’s mission for Bethel

1. telling God’s story and telling our story, to each other and the community
2. know our “1” thing that Bethel is known for in the community grapevine

N.B. this is the storytelling group, creative types who can address “what is our story and how do we tell it?”

Discussed pastoral care annual meetings in which about 5 congregation members (not all on Council) meet with the pastor and ask several questions:

1. What’s the most fun you had at church this year?
2. What is the biggest challenge you faced?
3. If you could change one thing about your position, what would it be?
4. How can we support you?

**Plan:** As we seek to refine our mission and move ahead, we will hold a Congregational meeting after One Service Sunday, September 30, for “Crafting the 2020 vision: Next Steps of Bethel Reforming”. Pastor John will preach that day and direct the meeting. PD will put Banner article in August newsletter. At meeting, would discern the overall direction/focus/mission of Bethel (addendum: could we get info that directs this by looking at Reforming notes?). Then ask members to choose which of the 3 areas they are drawn to. Have a leader for each area. Each group sets a meeting time before we adjourn.

Next Council meeting August 15, 2018 7 pm

Addendum: Letter sent to Bethel staff by Julie 7/16/18

Greetings, talented and treasured Bethel staff! Last evening Council was blessed to meet with Pastor John Wertz, the VA Synod Director of Evangelical Mission. Pastor Wertz was present to help us continue to grow the vitality of Bethel and to put into action the priorities that surfaced during our Bethel Reforming meetings.

One of the congregational priorities that our Reforming meetings revealed is a desire to assess how we implement and achieve God’s mission for Bethel. When discussing that priority, we realized that we don’t fully understand the many roles, responsibilities, and myriad of little “extras” that fill our staff’s time at Bethel (and stream into personal time as well!) It would be most helpful to know what tasks you do, how your time is distributed, how your position interacts with other staff, and what your frustrations on the job, your predominant needs, and main challenges are.

We would like to invite each of you for a confidential, laid back conversation with 2 or 3 council members. A council member will contact you to find a time this summer to gain from your experience and insights over coffee or a meal. Thank you for your knowledge as we strive to best use our talents to realize God’s mission for our world, our church, Bethel’s staff, and all our church family.

In Christ,

Bethel Council