

# **Bethel Lutheran Church**

## **Council Meeting**

January 13, 2021

A monthly meeting of the Congregational Council of Bethel Lutheran Church was held on Wednesday, January 13, 2021, by Zoom. Pastor David Young, Council President John Frederiksen, Vice President Vonda Wilt, Treasurer Betty Puffinberger, Secretary Bruce Lothrop, Curtiss Gyrmala, Mike McKiernan, Beth Garner, Dustie Fisher, Lee Braithwaite, Youth liaison Ella Carlson, and Office Administrator and Bookkeeper Kim Williams were present at the meeting.

### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by John Fredricksen at approximately 7:00 pm.

### **Opening Devotion:**

Pastor David Young offered an opening devotion and prayer.

### **Approval of December Minutes:**

Minutes of the December 2020 meeting of the council had been distributed by email prior to them meeting. The minutes of the prior meeting were approved as presented according to a motion made by Betty Puffinbeger, and seconded by Curtiss Grymala.

### **Pastor's Report:**

Prior to the meeting, Pastor Young distributed a written report to Council, outlining activities since March 2020. Regular, formal reports had not been prioritized while adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic. Moving into the new year, Pastor Young will return to the practice of providing written reports to Council. At least initially, reports will be organized into three sections, Up (worship, and other activities centered on God), In (activities centered on the Bethel Community), and Out, (activities focused outside the Bethel Community.) Within each section, Pastor Young will highlight activities since his last report, what he hopes to do before his next report, and any obstacles to his activities. Pastor Young will use this format as long as it is useful to himself and to the Council.

Pastor Young's report highlighted efforts to find new "virtual" approaches for worship in 2020 and finding new approaches to meeting for study and fellowship. His primary obstacle was time and energy, as 2020 brought an array of unexpected challenges to the Bethel Community.

The report was accepted as presented, according to a motion made by Vonda Witt, and seconded by Bruce Lothrop.

### **Financial Reports:**

Kim Williams presented an informal financial report. Because US Postal service has been slow for several weeks, not all 2020 giving has been received and Kim was unable to complete records for the 2020 fiscal year prior to the meeting.

Kim reported that, pending further 2020 income that could be received, expense would have exceeded income by about \$3,000 in 2020 if Bethel had not been granted a PPP loan. Given that the total Ministry Spending Plan for Bethel is in excess of \$400,000, this is a small shortfall. In addition to giving, Bethel received a PPP loan as part of pandemic relief in the amount of \$42,000. Funds from that loan were used to cover payroll. Kim will apply to have that loan forgiven. Indications are that the loan is very likely to be forgiven. If the loan is forgiven then income for 2020 will exceed expenses by approximately \$39,000.

Kim is researching the possibility of applying for a second PPP loan, which would also be used to cover payroll expenses.

### **Board Reports:**

Pastor Young requested that each board chair inform President or Secretary prior to monthly meeting if they intend to submit a report to the council, so that the report can be included when planning the agenda.

#### *Servant Board:*

Beth Garner reported that she is planning a congregation wide service project or service theme for Lent.

#### *Congregational Life*

Curtiss Grymala reported that he is considering a virtual or drive-through Shrove Tuesday event to celebrate the start of Lent. A pancake dinner is one possible option.

### **Goals for 2021:**

At the Council and Staff retreat on January 9<sup>th</sup>, participants discussed possible goals for Bethel leadership. The secretary emailed a draft statement of goals discussed, as follows:

#### 1. Communication

We will focus on improving communication within the Bethel community, using multiple types of media (phone, email, text, social media, for example) with an effort to communicate with each person in our community in the media that is most comfortable for them.

#### 2. Up, In, and Out

Our ministries should be balanced among the “Up” (focused on God), “In” (focused on the Bethel community) and “Out” (focused on serving those not in our community.) We will work to support all of these types of ministries, and, and will carefully consider how each of these focuses are served while allocating resources

#### 3. 200 for 200 for 200

We will put special effort this year into building of the strength of Bethel’s first 200 years as a community, and marshal resources to best position Bethel for a productive future (the next 200 years.)

John voiced support for “Up, In, and Out” as a simple model to help guide people in Christian growth. Pastor Young plans to present the “Up In and Out” model to congregation in several different ways.

Curtiss noted that activities that support the different directions should be balanced within the Congregation. Leadership may need to shift focus to whichever aspect is weaker at a given time.

Betty suggested that tracking activities relating to each direction would be help council focus additional effort in the needed area.

John advocated for focus on Youth Ministry as a critical part of our In ministries. Pastor Young shared plans to meet with Ella Carlson and other youth members for activity planning. Pastor Young has reached out to contacts at Shenandoah University to recommend possible candidates to assist in Youth leadership.

With regard to the Capital Campaign John emphasized the need to build momentum for financial support from the congregation for building repairs, and improvements.

Council discussed plans to make a request for permission from the Congregation to expand use of line of credit beyond the repairs to the underground. Betty noted that it might be more cost effective to refinance, rather than use the line of credit. Bethel should use whichever source of funding is most cost effective.

Council agreed that until we develop more details regarding the capital campaign, we should not commit to a particular name.

Curtiss made a motion to accept the goals as drafted, pending minor fixes as needed. Beth seconded, and the motion passed by acclamation.

### **Music Ministries:**

Director of Music Ministries, George Donovan presented a written proposal with two alternatives to pay musicians that regularly play during worship. The first alternative would use the full amount budgeted in the spending plan for musicians (\$31,500). This alternative would include \$100 per week for musicians, \$13,500 annually for the music director, and \$7,800 annually for the position of organist and bell choir director. The second alternative would pay the music director \$15,500, pay the organist as other musicians, and move the bell choir director to a volunteer status. Currently the bell choir is not active. Musician under this alternative would be paid slightly less than \$100 per week, for a total of \$5,166 per year. The total cost of this plan is \$30,998.

There was discussion as to whether musicians should be paid as contractors, or employees. That decision was determined to be outside the scope of the meeting. Council agreed that Bethel should adhere to all appropriate laws and rules.

Vonda made a motion that musician pay should be adapted to the second alternative presented, that the proper status (contractor or employee) should be determined and applied to all musicians, and that all musicians should be allowed two Sunday’s off per year, with pay. Any time missed in excess of those two days would not be paid. Betty seconded the motion. The motion passed by acclamation.

### **Facilities Use Request:**

Mel Siebert forwarded a request from Winchester Pipes and Drum to use Discipleship Hall as a practice space. After discussion a motion was made, and passed by acclamation that indoor use by the group would not be allowed at this time, but outdoor practice on the Bethel grounds would be permitted.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was closed with a prayer by John Fredericksen, and adjourned at approximately 8:35 pm.