

**Bethel Lutheran Church Council**  
**Minutes**  
**April 14, 2021**

A monthly meeting of the Congregational Council of Bethel Lutheran Church was held on April 14<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was held in the sanctuary of the church, with some members joining by Zoom. Pastor David Young, Council Vice President Vonda Wilt, Treasure Betty Puffinberger, Secretary Bruce Lothrop, Beth Garner, and Bookkeeper Kim Williams were present in the sanctuary. Mike McKiernan, Lee Braithwaite, Dustie Fisher, and Curtiss Grymala attended via Zoom. Kathryn Carpenter attended to discuss proposed renovations to the sanctuary, and other areas of the church. Council President John Fredericksen was not able to attend.

**Called to Order**

Vice President Vonda Wilt called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 pm.

**Devotion and Opening Prayer**

Betty Puffinberger offered a devotion to open the meeting

**Minutes of the March Meeting**

Secretary Bruce Lothrop had distributed minutes of the March meeting by email prior to the April meeting. The minutes of the March meeting were approved, as presented, by motion.

**Financial Report**

Bookkeeper Kim Williams had distributed detailed financial reports to all members of Council, prior to the meeting. Although funds from the second PPP loan have been received, Kim reports only the amount of the loan that has been spent each month, to avoid showing income high income when the funds are received, and expenses exceeding income in subsequent months. The PPP funds are designated to be spent on payroll only.

Income for March 2021, not including PPP funds was \$24,264.14. Total expenses were \$49,724.85. Expected expenses from the Ministry Spending Plan for March were \$33,824.78. The primary driver of high expenses was a large bill to fill Bethel's propane tank, and a an overpayment on the old photocopier lease, which should be refunded. Not including PPP loan funds spent in March, expenses exceeded income by \$25,460.71. Including \$12,389.84 of PPP loan funds spent towards payroll, expenses exceeded income by \$13,070.87.

Betty Puffinberger asked if undesignated youth funds could be used to furnish the newly renovated underground. Pastor Dave responded that some of those funds could be used for the underground, if the youth chose to do so.

The Treasurer's report was approved, as presented, by motion.

## **Pastor's report**

Pastor Dave distributed a written report to all members of Council prior to the meeting. The report noted that Bethel has returned to outdoor, in-person worship, livestreamed for those who cannot attend or do not feel safe. In-person worship on Easter morning was particularly meaningful. Confirmation class is going well, and confirmation will be held on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Pastor Dave has reached out to potential 2022 confirmands, and is planning confirmation camp for June. Dustie Fisher is forming a leadership team for Sunday School programs. Pastor Dave also reported that the Schuweilers are moving to Washington State, and will be acknowledged in a Sunday Service.

## **Board reports**

Beth Garner reported for the Servant Board. She noted that youth members of Bethel were very active during "Returning Thanks," and helped assemble and distribute "brunch to go" bags for CCAP.

Dustie Fisher reported for the Learning Board. The Northern Valley Conference Sunday School program Bethel has been using concluded with our Easter video, posted last week. Sunday School will now break for the summer and may resume in the Fall. Dustie and Pastor Dave are looking at and planning to use of a new Sunday School curriculum in the Fall. She would like to put together a Sunday School planning team and has communicated with our Little Lutheran families. She will be reaching out to a couple of other Bethel members as well to identify interest. She hopes to establish this soon so that we can begin to provide additional gathering and learning opportunities for our youth.

Lee Braithwaite reported for the Worship Board. Lee reported that he was looking for volunteers to be communion assistants, and parking assistants.

Curtiss Graymala reported for the Congregational Life Board. Although Easter breakfast was not workable, Curtiss is considering other possibilities for Congregational activities.

Vonda Wilt reported for the Prayer and Care Board. Vonda is working to give support to the quilting team, in particular.

## **Shenandoah Foundation Fellowship for Winchester House rep. Sara Smith**

Sara Smith provided a written report to Council on the activities of the Shenandoah Foundation. The Shenandoah Foundations run Winchester House, a home for low-income seniors. The foundation is in solid financial condition, and contemplating opening a second house.

## **Youth Minister Proposal Discussion**

Pastor Dave shared a proposal for a leader for High School Youth. The proposal is for position that would require ten hours a week at \$15 per hour. A flat fee would be arranged for overnight events.

### **Reconciling Works**

Pastor Dave shared a website for the organization Reconciling Works with members of Council. If Bethel becomes a Reconciling Works Congregation, we would go through a learning process, and write a statement of welcome. Pastor Dave will reach out to Reconciling works to arrange an information session for council.

### **Bethel New Day Initiative**

Kathryn Carpenter walked Council through proposed renovation in the sanctuary. The proposal is comprehensive, and includes:

- Moving the Baptismal font to the opposite side of the Sanctuary
- Moving the choir area to the opposite side of the sanctuary, and removing pew on that side to allow room for expansion
- Updated lighting
- Keeping existing pews, but adjusting the spacing and changing upholstery
- Reducing dais size.
- Replacing the infamous green carpet with beige carpet
- Adding wood-look flooring in the narthex
- Installing video screens added near the alter, with wooden frames added by Jack McAllister
- Adding partial wall separating the narthex from the sanctuary

Repositioning pews, and allowing movable seating near the choir would keep seating capacity nearly the same as it is now, although the partial wall would inhibit overflow into the narthex.

Through the rest of building, repairs to flooring, replacement of ceiling tiles, and painting are planned. The plan also includes renovating the Christiansen room to present it as an adult library, and creating and organizing displays to tell the Bethel's story and present a welcoming environment for visitors

The team is currently waiting for pricing on the work. Once prices are available, the plan can be presented to the Congregation.

### **Staff Services Continuity Planning**

Patty White will likely retire in the next 18 months to 2 years. Cliff Crowder may step back from some parts of his building maintenance role. Council should begin to plan for transition to new staff members, or alternatives when necessary.

## **Closing Prayer**

Pastor Dave closed the meeting in Prayer about approximately 8:40pm.