

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church Council

Minutes

December 14, 2021

A monthly meeting of the Congregational Council of Bethel Lutheran was held on Tuesday December 14th in the Council Room at the church. The meeting had been scheduled for Wednesday December 8th, but was postponed due to scheduling conflicts. Council President John Fredericksen, Vice President Vonda Wilt, Treasurer Betty Puffinberger, Secretary Bruce Lothrop, Dustie Fisher, Beth Garner, Bookkeeper Kim Williams, and newly elected 2022 Council member David Look were present at the meeting. Pastor David Young was ill, and unable to attend the meeting.

Call to Order

President John Fredericksen called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 pm.

Opening prayer

Beth Garner offered an opening prayer.

Minutes of the Prior Meeting

Secretary Bruce Lothrop had distributed draft minutes of the November meeting to all members of Council prior to the meeting. The minutes were accepted as presented, by motion.

Financial Reports

Bookkeeper Kim Williams provided detailed financial reports to all members of council by email prior to the meeting. The report showed total income of \$29,808.78, \$2,968.13 less than anticipated in the ministry spending plan. Total expenses for November were \$30,074.26, \$696.96 less than expected, and \$265.48 more than actual income for the month. Expenses year to date exceed income by \$4737.79, including \$35,408.00 from a PPP loan, which has been forgiven. Giving in December is typically strong, and the shortfall may be made up before end of the year. Kim expressed concern for finances in 2022. No additional PPP loans will be available, and there is not much room to reduce spending without significant discomfort. She was also concerned about the number of families that have not kept pace with their 2021 estimated giving goals. Council discussed the need to

periodically send out an informational statement to each family/household unit indicating their actual giving compared to their estimated giving. Such a reminder could help reduce the number of families/households that inadvertently fall behind in their giving goals.

Council Visibility

Kim Williams relayed a request from Bethel Staff that Council try to be more visible to the congregation, and exert more leadership. The small number of ministry response forms and estimates of giving received have complicated 2022 financial planning. Council agreed that a council member could speak prior to worship on December 19th, and encourage the congregation to return the forms. Kim also proposed that each member of council be assigned a set of families to contact to periodically maintain better communication between the church leadership and the congregation.

Election of Officers

Council discussed the election of officers for the 2022 Council year. Each 2021 officer was willing to continue serving in his or her current role, and no other members present expressed interest in serving as an officer. Dustie Fisher's name was suggested but she declined due to a new job commitment. Both Lee Braithwaite and Curt Grymala were suggested for roles on the executive committee, but neither was present. Council agreed to delay a final vote until Curt and Lee could respond. If neither would like to serve on the executive team, Council will vote on the following slate of officers:

President: John Fredericksen
Vice President: Vonda Wilt
Secretary: Bruce Lothrop
Treasurer: Betty Puffinberger

Pastor's Report

Pastor Dave shared a written Pastor's report with Council prior to the meeting. Highlights included:

- Confirmation class, and "Advent in Plain Sight" study are proceeding.
- Christmas in a Barn will be held on the Bethel campus on Christmas Eve.

- Pastor Dave and Darline Demott are planning a visioning time to lay out a direction for Bethel's future.
- Tours showing the changes planned for the "New Day" initiative have not been well attended. The reason is not clear.
- Planning continues for the "FREEDGE" program to provide free, quality food to people in the community.
- Bethel served for a week in the WATTS ministry, with Pastor Dave taking a prominent role.

Board Reports

Servant Board

Bethel was the lead congregation for WATTS during the week of December 5th. The number of volunteers that turned out was good, making for a successful week.

Congregational Life

The November Women's Retreat hosted thirty-five participants and was very successful.

Bethel New Day

Tours

Betty has been offering tours to show planned maintenance and upgrades throughout the church. Some concern for costs has been expressed. Generally, members of the Congregation support maintenance and repair projects, but are more hesitant about improvements proposed for the Sanctuary. Concerns center of taking on more debt than is affordable.

Adjustments

The New Day Team is still waiting for adjusted costs estimates from the contractor. Fluctuating costs and availability of materials continue to be problematic.

Roofing quotes

Due to increasing material costs, and more damage to the roof that was originally apparent, the estimate for repair of the roof has increased to \$66,500. Council agreed that not taking action on the roof would lead to

interior damage, and increased expenses. A motion was made to approve funding for roof repairs at \$66,500.00. The motion was seconded, and passed unanimously by acclamation.

Facilities Director & Custodial positions

Patty White is still serving as custodian, but will likely retire in the foreseeable future. Cliff Crowder has retired, but continues to perform minor maintenance jobs and assisting Kim Williams in scheduling maintenance professionals as needed.

Christmas in a Barn

Christmas in a Barn will be held at the amphitheater at Bethel on 3pm on Christmas Eve.

Retiring Council gifts

Beth Garner completed two three-year terms on Council, as well as an additional year in which she completed the term of a Council member who had resigned. Council expressed appreciation with a card and a small gift.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at approximately 8:45 pm.