

**Bethel Lutheran Church Council**  
**Minutes**  
**Wednesday, March 9, 2022**

A monthly meeting of the Congregational Council of Bethel Lutheran Church was held on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, after Wednesday evening Lenten worship. Pastor David Young, Council President John Fredericksen, Vice President Vonda Wilt, Treasurer Betty Puffinberger, Secretary Bruce Lothrop, David Look, and Bookkeeper Kim Williams were present in Fellowship Hall. Curt Grymala attended by Zoom.

**Call to Order**

Council President John Fredericksen called the meeting to order at approximately 7:20 pm.

**Opening Prayer**

Pastor David Young opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Devotion**

Vonda Wilt offered a brief devotion.

**Minutes of Prior Meetings**

Secretary Bruce Lothrop had emailed the minutes of the Monthly Council meeting held on February 9<sup>th</sup> and a special meeting held on February 22<sup>nd</sup> to all members of Council prior to the meeting.

The minutes of both meeting were accepted, as presented, by motion.

**Financial Reports**

Because the meeting took place early in the month, Bookkeeper Kim Williams did not have complete information needed to present a full report on February financials. Kim distributed a detailed report on January financials to all members of Council prior to the meeting. The report showed income for January was \$41,522.962, \$6,183 more than expected in the ministry spending plan. Expenses in January were \$37,355.53, \$5,995 more than expected in the spending plan, with \$5,963 of the overage allocated to ministry support. Overall, income exceeded expenses by \$4,167.43 in January.

The financial reports were approved, as presented, by motion.

**Pastor's Report**

Pastor Dave emailed a detailed Pastor's report to all members of council prior the meeting.

Highlights of the report included:

- Worship was limited to virtual attendance during January due to high Covid-19 rates.
- The theme for Lenten worship is "Sharing God's Abundance."
- In the Congregational Meeting held February 6<sup>th</sup>, the Congregation voted to approve the "New Day" plans for renovation.
- Pastor Dave is working to restart the "Visitation Team", which fell away at the start of the pandemic. The team will visit members of the Bethel community who have difficulty leaving their homes.

- The Bethel Podcast has restarted.
- Pastor Dave is leading ministry for elementary aged children, but Bethel is looking for a new part-time leader.
- Pastor Dave would like to facilitate fundraising for ALS research through Bethel, in support of Mel Siebert, in light of her recent diagnosis.

### **First bank loan**

Our application for a \$600,000 loan with First Bank is in process. New accounts will be opened at First Bank. Bethel currently has a \$100,000 line of credit at Jefferson Security Bank. Outstanding debt against the line of credit will be paid off with funds from the new loan from First Bank. First Bank has offered to extend a similar line of credit to Bethel, with a similar interest rate.

A motion was made and seconded to close the \$100,000 line of credit with Jefferson Security Bank when it is paid, and open a new line of credit for \$100,000 with First Bank. The motion passed, unanimously, by acclamation.

There are currently no plans to borrow against the new line of credit.

### **KEE Construction**

Betty Puffinberg has been meeting with representatives of Kee Construction, to reinforce elements Bethel's agreement with KEE. The expected timeline includes about two months of preparation work, and four months of construction. A project manager from KEE will be on site daily.

The artist who had planned to build a new base for the baptismal font may not be available. Jack McAllister is working on alternative solutions.

Plans for the sacristy need to be finalized.

The organ base may be slightly more expensive than planned, but will fall within the margin of error built into the plan.

Council agreed that any donations received in relation to items removed during cleanup days should be applied directly to the New Day expenses.

### **HVAC**

HVAC replacements will exceed expected cost, but some of the overage will be offset by savings in the purchase of new signs. The net overage will be under \$5,000, which is within the margin of error built into the New Day Plan.

### **Roof Leak**

Issues with ongoing roof repairs caused temporary, but significant, leaking leading to damage to ceiling tiles in the old Sunday School area. The leak has been repaired. The roofer will replace all damaged ceiling tiles. Final payment to the roofer will not be made until all damages have been repaired or compensated for.

### **Golf tournament proposal**

A golf tournament will be held to raise money for Shenandoah Lutheran Ministries and Caroline Furnace Camps. Pastor Dave proposed using money in the Memorial Funds to sponsor the

tournament. A motion to allocate \$1,000 from the Memorial Fund to support the golf tournament as a Platinum Sponsor was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously by acclamation.

### **Caring for Creation Committee**

Urve Crowder sent an email to council proposing that Bethel start a team called “Bethel Climate Solutions.” The team would explore working in connection with a faith-based group in Northern Virginia called Faith Alliance for Climate, as well as planning actions to support care for the environment that Bethel may carry out. Council expressed support for the proposal.

### **Boy Scout request**

The Boy Scout troop chartered at Bethel would like to plant a dogwood tree on Bethel grounds. Members of Council expressed that, if approved, the Boy Scouts must take responsibility for care of the tree after planting to ensure that it reaches healthy maturity. Kim Williams agreed to work with John McAllister to select an appropriate location for the tree, and to understand the scouts’ commitment to care for it. Council expressed support for the request, provided the scouts plant in an approved location, and commit to care and watering for at least the first several months after planting.

### **Easter Brunch**

Vonda Wilt is working to organize a brunch on Easter Morning. She will request that food donations be delivered warm, so that no volunteers to heat food during Easter worship will be required.

### **Work Days for New Day**

Pastor Dave will communicate requests for volunteers to participate in work days at Bethel from 9:30 to noon on three Saturdays to prepare for New Day construction work.

### **Staffing**

Kristin Siebert is expected to step away from her position as communications director at the end of March. Pastor Dave shared a proposed job description for an office administrator to work about sixteen hours each week. The role will combine the communications role with receptionist duties, and other office work.

Pastor Dave also shared proposed job descriptions for a children’s ministry coordinator and a facilities manager. The office administrator position is currently the top priority. All three positions would be for paid, part-time employees.

A motion to approve the three job descriptions as proposed was made and seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by acclamation.

Council agreed that positions should be advertised to the Bethel community on or about March 13<sup>th</sup>, and then generally publicized on or about April 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **Masking**

Council discussed masking requirements in worship, given updated recommendations by the CDC. CDC changed its metrics so that risk is assessed based partly on ICU hospital bed availability in a region, rather than assessing risk only on the number of cases and percent of positive PCR test. Council had previously decided to base masking requirements for worship on Virginia Department of Health metrics for Winchester and Frederick County. VDoH reported that they would soon change recommendations to align with the new CDC risk assessment, but the nature of the proposed changes was not clear. After discussion Council agreed to consider changes to policy regarding masking during worship after VDoH published updates to their guidelines and recommendations.

### **Breeze training**

Kim Williams provided information about how to use the “Breeze” tool, and gave a demonstration of the tool. Breeze allows users to access information in a database of members of the Bethel community, and initiate communication with groups within the community via text or email.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10 pm.