

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL Minutes
February 8, 2023 – 7:00pm

A monthly meeting of the Congregational Council of Bethel Lutheran Church was held on February 8th in the library at the church at 7 pm. Pastor David Young, Council President Traci Shoberg, Vice President Rachel Carlson, Treasurer Betty Puffinberger, Secretary Bruce Lothrop, Dustie Fisher, David Look, Curt Grymala, David Look, John Fredericksen, and Church Administrator Kim Williams were present at the meeting.

Call to Order

Council President Traci Shoberg called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 pm

Opening Devotion and Prayer

Pastor Dave offered an opening prayer and devotion.

Consent Agenda Items

The agenda, minutes of the January Council meeting, Pastor's report, staff reports, and January Worship Committee meeting minutes were approved as presented by unanimous acclamation as consent agenda items.

The January financial reports were removed from the consent agenda for discussion. Actual income in January was \$49,335, exceeding the amount anticipated in the Ministry Spending Plan by \$13,663. Actual expenses in January were \$49,981, exceeding the amount anticipated in the MSP by \$8,150. Income in January exceeded expenses by \$7,354. Kim Williams reported that the income was, in part, due to gifts related to Required Minimum Distributions from retirement plans. Such gifts have been typical in January for the past few years, but have been increasing slowly year over year. The income seemed to reflect increased giving in general. A significant element in increased expenses were energy costs covering cold weather and increased facilities use in late December.

The financial reports were approved as presented unanimously by acclamation.

Old Business

Renovation Update Report

Kim Williams, Traci Shoberg, and Betty Puffinberger shared information about progress in the renovation of the Sanctuary. The location for the baptismal font has been selected. Flooring work may begin late in February. Tile will be installed at the location of the baptismal font, then carpet will be installed. Pew installation needs to be scheduled. A team will select upholstery for the pews. Based on congregational input, a shade of blue will be used. Installation of sound equipment should be completed shortly.

The rough electrical work is 90% complete. Electrical finish work is 75% complete.

The Christiansen room is being painted.

A \$2000 donation has been received for the prayer room.

Internship Site Informational Zoom Review

On February 6th, members of Council met with a representative of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary to discuss the possibility of Bethel hosting a Seminary student as an intern. Council members agreed that hosting an intern is a missional task that Bethel may be well suited to. Given its current financial challenges, Bethel would need to find creative ways to bear the cost of hosting an intern.

Reflection and Response to “Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate”

Members of Council are reading the book “Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate” by Cliff Christopher. The book suggests approaches to funding ministry in the current social and economic environment.

John Fredericksen is starting investment team that will develop strategies and opportunities for members of the community to offer new types of gifts.

Kim Williams is working towards presenting future Ministry Spending Plans in a narrative budget format.

Brian Davis is developing a series of brief videos, called “Ministry Moments” to share ways in which Bethel impacts the lives in the community.

New Business

Approval of Fund Raisers

Council considered proposals for:

- A “Red Envelope Campaign” for the Youth, in which supporters could donate funds from \$1 to \$100, in specific envelopes (one for each dollar amount.)
- “Bright Futures” Food Drives in May and October, held on honor of Judy McKiernan, to collect healthy snacks for students in need.

Both proposals were approved unanimously by acclamation.

Ministry Area Reports – Up, In, Out

Council members broke out by Ministry areas, and discussed the needs in their respective areas.

Follow Up on Congregation Meeting Action Items

No specific action items came out of the Congregational Meeting on February 5th.

Seniors Ministry Committee Meeting update

Linda Grymala, Traci Shoberg, and Vonda Wilt, and Betty Puffinberger met prior to the Council meeting to plan Senior Ministry events. The group will host a bingo event during the afternoon of April 15th. Going forward the group will plan monthly activities.

Other New Business

Traci Shoberg reported that Lee Braithwaite knows someone who may donate a baby grand piano. It is not clear that the piano will be appropriate for use in worship, but such a gift could be extremely helpful.

Traci requested that the calendar on the church website be made viewable as a standard grid calendar, not only as a schedule of events. Curt Grymala agreed to update the web-site appropriately.

Pastor Dave will lead a hybrid live/on line bible study of a book entitled “Don’t you care that we are Drowning” during Lent.

Beth Garner is planning a possible family trip to Guatemala to visit Esucela Integerata may take place this summer.

A walk and event called “The Coldest Night of the Year” will be held to support WATTS of February 25th. Bethel will participate in the event.

Curt Grymala asked if Bethel will support relief for earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria. Pastor Dave will share information about Lutheran World Relief’s efforts, and how to help, with the Congregation.

Council discussed how best to greet and serve potential new members.

Lee Anne Marple, Ev Boyle, and Beth Garner will lead a team to earn a “Reconciling in Christ” designation for “Reconciling Works.”

Closing

Pastor Dave closed the meeting with prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 pm.