

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES
October 11, 2023 – 7:00pm

A monthly meeting of the Congregational Council of Bethel Lutheran Church was held in the Conference Room at the Church on Wednesday October 11th, 2023. Pastor David Young, Council Vice President Rachel Carlson, Treasurer Betty Puffinberger, Secretary Bruce Lothrop, John Fredericksen, David Look, Dustie Fisher and Church Administrator Kim Williams were present at the meeting. George Donovan Sr. attended to share plans for a security team. Music Director George Donovan Jr. also attended.

Call to Order

Council Vice President Rachel Carlson called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 pm.

Opening Devotion and Prayer

Pastor David Young shared an opening prayer and devotion.

Consent Agenda Items

The agenda for the meeting, the minutes of the September Council meeting, the Pastor's report, the Solar Project report, and the RIC designation update were unanimously approved by acclamation under the consent agenda.

Financial Reports

Church Administrator Kim Williams emailed detailed financial reports to all members of Council prior to the meeting. The reports showed that income for September was \$24,759, \$1,560 less than anticipated in the Ministry Spending Plan. Total expenses for September amounted to \$33,273, \$457 less than planned for in the MSP. Expenses for September exceeded income by \$7,411. Year-to-date expenses have exceeded income by \$13,003.

Kim reported that funds from the Youth bake sale held in conjunction with the Bethel Yard Sale have been applied to the youth accounts. There was concern those funds had not been appropriately allocated at the September Council meeting.

The Financial Reports were approved, as presented, by unanimous acclamation.

Old Business

BLC Campaign

Church Administrator Kim Williams requested members of Council who have not already done so, make pledges to the BLC campaign. A goal is to have all members of Council and all Trustees engaged before the campaign is officially rolled out to the Congregation. Details of the Campaign will be shared with the Congregation at worship on October 15th, when stewardship packages will be distributed. The campaign will be emphasized again at the Sanctuary dedication on October 29th, and the Congregational Meeting on November 12th.

October 29th Dedication/200 Year Anniversary Planning & Update

Invitations have been sent out for the celebration on Sunday, October 29th. 200 Guests are expected. Light food will be served after worship.

Other Old Business

There was no other old business.

New Business

Nursery Update

While Gretchen Mead will no longer be able to provide child care during Sunday Worship, Matt Mead is still willing to continue in the role. Matt will share the job with Lexi Grymala. Each will be paid for the hours that they work. No job posting for the role is required at this time.

Security & Facility Update

George Donovan Sr. has joined the Bethel staff on a volunteer basis to lead the Safety and Security team and as Facilities Manager. George distributed a plan to provide multi-level support in the event of security or medical issue that could occur during worship. George also noted that state and/or federal grants could become available to help pay for expenses related to electronic and physical security (such as cameras and new locks.) George will monitor available grants and apply for any that are appropriate.

Nominees for Council

Dustie Fisher, Curtiss Grymala and Bruce Lothrop will be completing Council terms at the end of 2023. David Look will resign from Council at the end of the year. Cherie Lauck and Lynda Grymala have agreed to be candidates for Council terms. Pastor Dave asked for any suggestions for two additional candidates. Bruce noted that if enough suitable candidates are not available, he is willing to serve again, but would like to step back from the Executive Team.

Service time change to 10am discussion

No Action was taken with regard to a proposal to change the time of Sunday Worship to 10 am.

Christmas in a Barn

Christmas in a Barn will be held at Cloverdale Barn on Christmas Eve. Communication about the event will begin soon.

2024 MSP approval

Church Administrator Kim Williams distributed a draft of the 2024 Ministry Spending Plan to all members of Council via email prior to the meeting, and walked Council through the plan.

Kim noted that income is an unknown. Giving is very difficult to accurately predict, as some people may stop attending Bethel, other may begin attending and financial situations change. Betty Puffinberger advocated for clearly communicating what the needs and expectations are for Congregational giving to meet the expenses laid out in the MSP. To meet expected expenses, the average family attending Bethel (at current levels of participation) would need to contribute \$325 per month.

Kim's breakdown of planned expense did not include a line item for repayment of the line of credit used to pay for critical maintenance during 2022 and 2023. Rachel Carlson advocated for including that amount. Kim added \$6,000 to the MSP to reflect minimum payments.

The total amount of spending in the MSP was \$455,043. That exceeds estimated income by approximately \$49,000.

After discussion Council approved the amended MSP unanimously by acclamation.

Other New Business

Third Friday Trivia

Beginning in December, Bethel will host a Friday Night Trivia Night, on a trial basis. Food and prizes will be provided through Thrivent action cards. The cost will be \$5 per person.

Solar Project

Pastor Dave reported that Cory Carlson and Julie Shanabrook will meet with MTV Solar to discuss options for providing solar power for Bethel's needs.

Kyle Duff

Former member of Bethel Kyle Duff has completed seminary, and is in a call process in Grand Rapids Michigan. He will be at Bethel on October 29th for the dedication of the Sanctuary and celebration of our 200th anniversary. Plans are being made to recognize Kyle's vocation.

Facilities use

A local Montessori School is interested in using Space at Bethel. They would like to use three classrooms in upper Bethel, Monday through Friday from 8 am through 5 pm. An arrangement to allow Church activities to be held on occasion should be arrived at before any agreement is finalized. There has been no discussion of the amount of rent yet.

Additional BLC Support

Pastor Dave requested that members of Council consider reaching out to family and friends that might be interested in contributing to the BLC campaign.

New Members

Planning is underway for a meeting of potential new members of Bethel in the Library at Church on Wednesday October 18th and Wednesday October 25th. Members of Council are welcome to attend.

Bethel Women's Facebook Group

Dustie Fisher requested any available contact information for women who recently began attending Bethel. She would like to extend a personal invitation to join the Bethel women's Facebook group.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by motion at approximately 9:00 pm