

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

Tuesday, January 16, 2024

Title	Council Meeting			President	Jason Bruns	
Purpose	Monthly Business			Secretary	Bob Ihrig	
Date	January 16, 2024		Time	7:00 pm	Location	Grounds for Joy
Meeting Time	Start	Stop	Total Time			Council Members/Guests
	7:00 pm	8:22 pm	1 hr 22 min			
Council Members			Terms of Office	Present	Absent	Position
1.	Jason Bruns		2023-2024	X		President
2.	Marie Slotemaker		2023-2024	X		President-Elect
3.	Matt Drewitz		2023-2024	X		Vice President
4.	Bob Ihrig		2021-2024	X		Secretary
5.	Jeremy Carter		2021-2024	X		Treasurer
6.	Josie Lust		2022-2025	X		Member at Large
7.	Amanda Neubert		2023-2024	X		Member at Large
8.	Cynthia Zacharias		2023-2026	X		Member at Large
9.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang			X		Lead Pastor
10.	Pastor Jacie Richmond			X		Associate Pastor
11.	Chuck Piehl			X		Endowment Board Chair
	TOPIC					PRESENTER
1.	Devotions					Jeremy Carter
2.	Additions to & Approval of the Agenda Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by J. Carter to approve agenda with advancing Endowment Board report. Approved.					Jason Bruns
3.	Secretary's Report December 19, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Slotemaker to approve minutes. Approved.					Bob Ihrig
4.	Financial Report December 31, 2023 Report December financial reports unavailable from Financial Secretary for meeting.					Jeremy Carter
5.	Lead Pastor's Report A. <u>Finances</u> : December deficit improved to approximate -\$17,000. Funding received for mortgage payments with balance now under \$600,000. Additional funds available to make another payment in January to reduce balance to under \$500,000. B. <u>Worship</u> : Positive Advent & Christmas worship season with good turnout on Christmas. C. <u>Ministerial Association</u> : First meeting of new group held in January with 5 ministers attending. City manager has reached out to group to schedule listening session on January 30 regarding new city strategic plan. D. <u>Lent</u> : Will share Lent with 3 other area churches. Theme to be decided. Noon Ash Wednesday and Good Friday services also planned in addition to Wednesday evening worship. E. <u>Synod Work</u> : Continues to serve bishop in mediating conflict in a church. F. <u>Birthday Greetings</u> : Positive outcomes to birthday phone calls to BLC members. G. <u>Pastoral Care/Acts</u> : Made 33 home, hospital & care center visits during December. BLC care ministry distributed nearly 40 gift packages which were gratefully received by members. H. <u>Vacation</u> : Scheduled from Friday, 1/19 to Monday, 1/20.					Pastor Jay Dahlvang
6.	Associate Pastor's Report A. <u>Youth/Young Adults</u> : Promoting & planning for summer youth gathering in New Orleans. 8 BLC youth planning to attend. Fat Tuesday fundraiser planning in the works. Hotel assignments to be announced.					Pastor Jacie Richmond

	<p>Connected with REACH staff to discuss effective communications and engagement with young adults in future. New social media platform being explored for future event connections.</p> <p>B. <u>Worship</u>: RIC Sunday planned for 1/28 & 1/31. Congregational art project being constructed to mark 50th anniversary of Reconciling Works. Special Wednesday night dinner worship planned for 1/24.</p> <p>C. <u>WELCOME</u>: Coordinating team meeting on 1/18 to review current operations to meet future needs of Cruz family. 5 pastors to be invited to attend. Family doing well. Traveled to Wisconsin to visit other relatives.</p> <p>D. <u>Crossroads Campus Ministry</u>: New campus pastor, Jenna Couch, to be installed on 2/28 at 3 pm at Crossroads with synod bishop presiding. BLC members welcome to attend. Goal is to have Pr. Jenna provide BLC Temple Talk in August for monthly mission.</p> <p>E. <u>Personal</u>: Participating in MNSU Friendship Family Program. Will celebrate birthday with family during Feb 2-4 weekend.</p>	
7.	<p>Old Business</p> <p>A. <u>WELCOME Update</u>: See associate pastor report above.</p> <p>B. <u>Fall Stewardship Pledge Final Report</u>: 165 BLC members pledged for 2024 with \$371,289 pledged compared to \$358,243 for 2023 = \$13,046 or 3.64% increase. Stewardship board completed written reminders to unpledged members in December with no additional pledges received.</p> <p>C. <u>Personnel Committee Update</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Weekend Janitor Planned 6-Month Performance Review</u>: <u>Benny Montalbo</u>: New employees complete 6-month review. Self-review questions approved & sent to Benny. Positive review provided by janitor coordinator Molly Nelson. Review to be completed by 1/31. 2. <u>Minnesota State Sick & Safe Law Compliance & Personnel Committee Recommendations</u>: New January 1, 2024 state law regarding new sick leave requirements reviewed by committee. Recommendations presented to update BLC Personnel Handbook and provide notification to employees. Motion by Pr. Jay; Second by C. Zacharias to approved recommendations. Approved. Specific language changes will be made to handbook for approval by committee and Council in January. Changes will be communicated to BLC employees in writing. <p>D. <u>2022-26 Strategic Plan Updates</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Strategic Plan Goal #1 Progress Report</u>: “Engaging Youth” goal was updated with activities conducted since last report. B. Ihrig will update status of objectives & practices to implement goal. 2. <u>Community Leader Interview Report</u>: <u>Jeremy Carter</u>: To be presented at February 20 Council meeting. 	<p>Pastor Jacie Richmond</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Pr. Jay, Pr. Jacie</p> <p>Jeremy Carter</p>
8.	<p>New Business</p> <p>A. <u>MN River Conference Annual Meeting: Sunday, February 18, Grace Lutheran Church, Waseca</u>: Council members invited to attend. BLC is entitled to 6 representatives. Action: Interested members should contact Pr. Jay. B. Ihrig indicated his intent to attend.</p> <p>B. <u>Southeaster MN Synod Assembly Representation: Saturday, May 11, Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center, Mankato</u>: BLC entitled to 2 adult delegates & 1 youth delegate in addition to the 2 pastors. Council members have the first opportunity to serve as BLC delegates. Action: Pr Jay will accept Council names with delegate approval by the Council scheduled for February 20 meeting.</p> <p>C. <u>Endowment Board Update</u>: Chairperson C. Piehl provided background on the work of the board. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 board members currently serve • Review of 1983 congregational resolution establishing Fund 	<p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>Chuck Piehl</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial growth from \$17,032.40 in 1983 to \$1,453,214.68 in 2023. The dollar increase has resulted from interest accumulation, annuity income, donations, memorials & large gifts & income from intentional investment strategy. New investment strategy approved August 20, 2022 with more diversified and less conservative investments to generate more income. David Morgan, BLC member and professional investment adviser, assisting board with investment. Board investment tracking reported for 2023. Endowment grants provided to advance the Christian mission with \$22,575 in grants made to 15 separate projects/groups in 2023. Plans to publicize fund and available dollars for future grants. Written and online application forms available. <p>D. <u>2024 - 25 BLC Nominations for Council, Boards & Committees:</u> B. Ihrig reported that he, as Nominating Committee chair, will connect with BLC groups to identify positions to be filled and to solicit their involvement in filling these positions for 2024-25.</p> <p>E. <u>2024 - 25 Council Nominations:</u> The following Council positions will be on the 2024-25 ballot: Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer & Member at Large (A. Neubert). B. Ihrig indicated his intent to continue serving as Secretary. Action: Suggestions for names to contact for VP requested. B. Ihrig will contact these individuals for ballot consideration</p> <p>F. <u>Fat Tuesday Council Contribution:</u> Council agreed to sponsor a basket for the silent auction. Action: M. Slotemaker will collect donations, plan the basket theme and contents. Baskets must be donated in the church office by January 28. B. Ihrig reported that a Thrivent Action Grant of \$250 was approved to pay for food ingredients.</p>	<p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Jason Bruns</p>
9.	Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, February 20, 2024 7:00 pm Devotions: Cindy Zacharias	
10.	Adjournment Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by A. Neubert to adjourn at 8:22 pm. Approved.	

Our Mission: Bethlehem is an inviting community that is growing in Christ, loving our neighbors and serving God's world.