

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

January 18, 2022

Title	Council Meeting			President	James Arentson	
Purpose	Monthly Business			Secretary	Bob Ihrig	
Date	January 18, 2022		Time	7:00 p.m.	Location	Grounds for Joy
Meeting Time	Start	Stop	Total Time			Council Members & Guests
	7:00 pm	9:10 pm	2 hr-10 min			
Council Members – Terms of Office				Present	Absent	Position
1.	James Arentson	2021-2022		X		President
2.	Mary Bliesmer	2021-2022		X		President-Elect
3.	Jason Bruns	2021-2022		X		Vice President
4.	Bob Ihrig	2021-2024		X		Secretary
5.	Jeremy Carter	2021-2024		X		Treasurer
	Jessica Auel	2019-2022		X		Member at Large
6.	Aaron Geringer	2020-2023		X		Member at Large
7.	Matt Drewitz	2021-2024		X		Member at Large
8.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang			X		Lead Pastor
9.	Pastor Kristen Venne			X		Transition Pastor
TIME	TOPIC					PRESENTER
7:00 p.m.	1. Devotions & Balcony Question					Aaron Geringer
	2. Additions to & Approval of the Agenda <u>New Business Additions:</u> E. Building Safety Protocols F. LSS Meals on Wheels <u>Motion</u> by B. Ihrig; Second by J. Carter to approve amended agenda with flexibility. Approved.					James Arentson
	3. Secretary's Report December 21, 2021 Minutes <u>Motion</u> by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Bliesmer to approve minutes as printed. Approved.					Bob Ihrig
	4. Financial Report December 31, 2021 Report A. <u>General Fund:</u> 12/31 balance is approximately +\$2,000+ pending final calculations. This positive balance offsets the -\$12,255 deficit on 11/30. Member giving was strong in December. B. <u>Mission Investment Fund Balance:</u> \$116,138.99 (to be used for future monthly mortgage payments of \$8,188).					Jeremy Carter
	5. Lead Pastor's Report A. <u>Christmas:</u> Attendance at Christmas Eve services positive. Great music coordinated by C. Leftridge and FFF children's program. B. <u>Capital Campaign:</u> 4 companies contacted for more information with 2 responses thus far. Stewardship Board will interview and make recommendation to Council. C. <u>Strategic Planning:</u> Day of Remembering. Task force has developed additional proposed goals focusing on Strengths, Dysfunctions to be fixed, Mission in our community and Aspirations for the next 4 years. Day of Norms scheduled for 2/6. D. <u>Councils as Leaders:</u> Synod gathering for church council leaders scheduled for 3/20 at 1 pm in Owatonna. E. <u>Lenten Theme:</u> Meeting with fellow pastors to discuss common theme & sharing pulpits. Plans being made for evening prayer services on Sunday nights during Lent.					Pastor Jay Dahlvang

	<p>F. <u>Continuing Education</u>: Registered for forum series on “Christians & Divided America” and for required boundaries workshop.</p> <p>G. <u>Confirmation</u>: Completing “Our Neighbor’s Faith” unit. Students have heard speakers on Judaism and Islam.</p> <p>H. <u>Care Ministry</u>: 29 care visits made & officiated at 2 funerals. Care ministry team meeting postponed & rescheduled due to the cold.</p>	
	<p>6. Transition Pastor’s Report</p> <p>A. <u>Call Committee</u>: Meeting held to develop timeline for writing the Ministry Site Profile. Will host adult forum on 2/20 to provide update & gather input on desired role of new associate pastor. Goal to have Profile completed for May Council meeting.</p> <p>B. <u>Day of Remembering</u>: Activity went well with honest conversation on difficult topics in history of church.</p> <p>C. <u>Church Activities</u>: Assisting with Book of Faith Bible study & Confirmation. Hope to lead some Milestone events if needed.</p>	<p>Pastor Kristen Venne</p>
	<p>7. Old Business</p> <p>A. <u>BLC COVID-19 Plan Update</u>: FFF activities adjusting to changing health circumstances. Worship attendance changing. Synod assembly on May 7 in Mankato will require vaccinations or negative test results for participants. Tax preparation sessions also requiring vaccinations for staff and those needing help.</p> <p>B. <u>January 23 Congregation Conversation on Flags in the Sanctuary</u>: Rachel Maccabee from Gustavus Counseling will moderate conversation. Purpose is to provide BLC members with time to share and hear opinions with Council to make later decision. Time limits per person to be set. To be held in Heritage Room.</p> <p>C. <u>Strategic Plan Update</u>: Day of Remembering held on 1/9. Day of Norms on 2/6 is next planned event. Task force will meet on 2/7 to review results. Proposed goals being developed.</p> <p>D. <u>Call Committee Update</u>: Forum scheduled for 2/20 to update congregation. Questionnaire to be completed on future pastoral role & skills shared & completed by Council. Town Hall meeting planned for May to review final Ministry Site Profile & meet with synod representative.</p> <p>E. <u>Personnel: Congregational Services Coordinator Compensation</u>: Meeting held with E. Heinis, J. Arentson, M. Bliesmer, P. Gushwa, B. Ihrig, J. Auel & Pr. Jay to discuss complex issues regarding lay staff compensation & Emily’s 2022 salary request. Positive conversation allowing all views and opinions to be shared. Follow-up conversations held to further clarify situation. Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Blesmer to provide option for Emily to receive eligible pension benefit (4% of salary) as monthly taxable income rather than pension investment. This option will also be available to other pension-eligible BLC lay staff. Approved. B. Ihrig will communicate decision to Emily, E. Ruiz & Personnel Committee.</p>	<p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>Pr. Jay, Pr. Kristen</p> <p>Pr. Kristen, Pr. Jay</p> <p>James Arentson</p>

	<p>8. New Business</p> <p>A. <u>Personnel: FFF Director Sabbatical Recommendation</u>: Personnel Committee met with A. Wencil on 1/11 to review sabbatical leave application & plan coverage of responsibilities. Leave will occur on 4/11 to 5/23. Leave will involve travel in France/Spain. Continuing education \$\$ allowed to be used for leave expenses. Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by J. Bruns to approve Personnel recommendation of leave. Approved.</p> <p>B. <u>Personnel: 6-Month Employee Review & Compensation Policy</u>: Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Bliesmer to approve Personnel recommendation for revised Personnel Handbook language pertaining to compensation protocols for 6-month employees after completion of performance appraisal. Approved.</p> <p>C. <u>Personnel: BLC Lay Staff Compensation Framework</u>: Personnel Committee will undertake research and study to develop a framework for future lay staff compensation. A subscription to <u>ChurchSalary</u> resource will be pursued.</p> <p>D. <u>Councils as Leaders Meeting</u>: SE MN Synod will hold leadership meeting on 3/20 in Owatonna for synod church councils. BLC Council to contact Pr. Jay if interested in attending.</p> <p>E. <u>Building Safety Protocols</u>: In the wake of the recent Texas synagogue hostage situation, discussion was held about the need to review and update BLC safety procedures. Action: Pr. Jay will contact Mankato public safety to schedule future presentation for BLC staff and members.</p> <p>F. <u>LSS Meals on Wheels</u>: BLC has been contacted by LSS about interest in serving as new site to prepare/pack meals on M-F from 5 am to 1 pm. Kitchen and office space required. Monthly compensation would be provided to cover expenses. BLC funerals would have priority in scheduling of space. Action: Council expressed interest in pursuing further discussion on details before decision is made. Chef Barry, Kevin and Facilities Board to be involved in discussions.</p>	<p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>James Arentson</p>
	<p>9. Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 7:00 pm Devotions: Matt Drewitz</p>	
	<p>10. Adjournment Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Bliesmer to adjourn at 9:10 pm. Approved.</p>	

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