

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

February 15, 2022

Title	Council Meeting			President	James Arentson	
Purpose	Monthly Business			Secretary	Bob Ihrig	
Date	February 15, 2022		Time	7:00 p.m.	Location	Grounds for Joy
Meeting Time	Start	Stop	Total Time			Council Members & Guests
	7:00 pm	8:50 pm	1 hr 50 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
6.	Jessica Auel	2019-2022			X	Member at Large
7.	Aaron Geringer	2020-2023			X	Member at Large
8.	Matt Drewitz	2021-2024		X		Member at Large
9.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang			X		Lead Pastor
10.	Pastor Kristen Venne			X		Transition Pastor
TIME	TOPIC					PRESENTER
7:00 p.m.	1. Devotions & Balcony Question					Matt Drewitz
	2. Additions to & Approval of the Agenda Discussion order adjusted to provide appropriate time for all topics. Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by Pr. Jay to approve agenda with flexibility. Approved.					James Arentson
	3. Secretary's Report January 18, 2022 Minutes Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by J. Bruns to approve minutes. Approved.					Bob Ihrig
	4. Financial Report January 31, 2022 Report A. 12/31/21 general fund balance updated for positive \$2,181.70. 2021 budget worked as intended with 95% member giving rate. December giving was \$17,000 above budget. B. Electronic giving is equal to giving by envelopes & other forms. C. 1/31/22 balance still being calculated. Estimate of \$500 deficit.					Jeremy Carter
	5. Lead Pastor's Report A. <u>Flag Conversation</u> : Positive discussion at 1/23 forum. Options developed by executive committee to be discussed tonight. B. <u>40 Together</u> : Synod asking member churches for \$1 per member contributions to support mission partners in Colombia, Mexico & Tanzania as part of Lenten activities. C. <u>LSS Lease</u> : Current 10-year lease expires 8/31/22. LSS asking for one-year lease renewal given uncertainty about future office needs. Concern expressed about potential financial impact on BLC with \$44,000 annual rent paid by LSS. D. <u>Councils as Leaders</u> : Synod leadership meeting set for 3/20 in Owatonna in person and via Zoom. Council members invited. E. <u>Lent/Easter</u> : Plans for sharing pastors for Lent Wednesday night services in collaborative effort with focus on Sabbath theme. Plans for one service on Easter Sunday. F. <u>Strategic Planning</u> : Day of Norms held on 2/6 with useful feedback provided by members. Team will interview community leaders. Goals to be developed for presentation to Council for final decision and recommendation to congregation in spring.					Pastor Jay Dahlvang

	<p>G. <u>Refugee Resettlement</u>: BLC visiting with 3 other local churches to consider sponsorship of refugee family to Mankato based on Winona church model. Synod providing information & guidance with more discussion to take place.</p> <p>H. <u>Nominations</u>: 27 positions on Council, boards & committees for 2022-23 being addressed now by Nominations Committee.</p> <p>I. <u>Synod Assembly</u>: To be held on 5/7 at Mankato civic center. BLC entitled to 3 delegates. M. Mallory has expressed interest.</p> <p>J. <u>Public Safety Violence Prevention Training</u>: Workshop set for 3/30 from 3-4:30 pm to discuss & enhance BLC safety policies with Mankato public safety representatives. Meeting open to staff, ushers, Council & interested BLC members.</p> <p>K. <u>Capital Campaign</u>: Stewardship board will interview 2 firms to guide campaign. Plans to present recommendation in March.</p> <p>L. <u>New Member Approval</u>: Julie Missal has asked to join BLC membership. Motion by Pr. Jay; Second by B. Ihrig to approve. Approved.</p> <p>M. <u>Continuing Education</u>: Attended online forum on “Christianity and Divided America”. Will attend required boundaries workshop sponsored by synod.</p> <p>N. <u>Care Ministry</u>: Made 18 home & care facility visits & presided over 1 non-member funeral.</p>	
	<p>6. Transition Pastor’s Report</p> <p>A. <u>Call Committee</u>: Adult forum to be presented on 2/20 to update congregation and complete survey pertaining to member opinions regarding expectations for new associate pastor. Survey to be available online for 2 weeks. Working on Ministry Site Profile for presentation to congregation at 5/15 forum. Committee is thankful to strategic planning task force for collecting needed information for profile.</p> <p>B. <u>Other Activities</u>: Assisting with Book of Faith Bible Study and Confirmation. Will help with March Milestone events.</p>	<p>Pastor Kristen Venne</p>
	<p>7. Old Business</p> <p>A. <u>BLC COVID-19 Plan Update</u>: No plans to change masking rules & communion practices given high transmission rate in region per CDC recommendation. Ash Wednesday practices to return to normal.</p> <p>B. <u>January 23 Congregation Conversation on Flags in the Sanctuary</u>: Discussion held of congregational opinions shared at 1/23 adult forum; letters sent to President Arentson & ELCA article. Executive committee options discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Return flags to previous chancel front location 2. Keep flags in back of sanctuary where currently located 3. Move flags out of sanctuary to another church location to be determined 4. Move flags to non-chancel front & add diversity/inclusion flag <p>Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by Pr. Jay to table decision to 3/15 Council meeting to allow for full Council participation (3 members absent tonight) and consideration of 3 new options for placement of U.S. flag & a diversity/inclusion flag:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Place 2 flags in the narthex on either side of the center entrance to sanctuary; 2. Place 2 flags in the right front corner of the sanctuary; 3. Place 2 flags by front pillars on each side of sanctuary. <p>Motion To Table Approved.</p>	<p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>James Arentson</p>

	<p>C. <u>Strategic Plan Update</u>: See Lead Pastor Report for details</p> <p>D. <u>Call Committee Update</u>: See Transition Pastor Report for details. Hope to be interviewing associate pastor candidates in June.</p> <p>E. <u>Personnel</u>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Lay Staff Compensation Model Development</u>: Committee has reviewed article <u>12 Step Guide To Setting Fair Church Compensation Packages</u> as background for development of new lay staff compensation model. Discussions to continue. 2. <u>Anna Wencil Sabbatical Leave Update</u>: Working with pastors, Children’s Board, Youth Board, staff & others to assume responsibilities during sabbatical absence. Sending ceremony will be held at 4/10 worship service. Welcoming reception to be held on 5/29. Children’s & Youth Boards to be invited to host reception. 	<p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang Pastor Kristen Venne</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p>
	<p>8. New Business</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>Fat Tuesday Donation</u>: Council members committed \$150 in personal donations in lieu of basket to support Fat Tuesday event. B. <u>Lutheran Social Service Lease Renewal</u>: Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by J. Bruns to agree to a new 1-year lease effective 9/1/22 with plans to conduct discussions at start of 2023 regarding a long-term lease commitment. Approved. C. <u>Forty Together Synod Lenten Initiative</u>: See Lead Pastor report. Motion by Pr. Jay; Second by B. Ihrig to approve \$1,500 BLC donation from undesignated memorial fund. Approved. Discussion held about including this as an annual budget item in the future. Approved. D. <u>May 7 Synod Assembly Delegates</u>: BLC entitled to 3 delegates. M. Mallory & B. Ihrig expressed interest. Council members asked to contact B. Ihrig if interested in delegate position. Council to approve delegates at March meeting. 	<p>James Arentson</p> <p>James Arentson</p> <p>Pr. Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>Pr. Jay Dahlvang</p>
	<p>9. Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 7:00 p.m. Devotions: Pr. Jay Dahlvang</p>	
	<p>10. Adjournment Motion by J. Bruns; Second by M. Drewitz to adjourn at 8:50 pm. Approved.</p>	

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