

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

February 16, 2021

Title	Council Meeting			President	Wendy Keenan	
Purpose	Monthly Business			Secretary	Bob Ihrig	
Date	February 16, 2021		Time	7:00 p.m.	Location	Zoom Online Meeting
Meeting Time	Start	Stop	Total Time			Council Members & Guests
	7:00 pm	8:25 pm	1 hr 35 min			
Council Members				Present	Absent	Position
1.	Wendy Keenan			X		President
2.	James Arentson			X		President-Elect
3.	Mary Bliesmer			X		Vice President
4.	Bob Ihrig	2018-2021		X		Secretary
5.	Diana Olson	2018-2021		X		Treasurer
6.	Derek Brown	2018-2021		X		Member at Large
7.	Jessica Auel	2019-2022			X	Member at Large
8.	Aaron Geringer	2020-2023		X		Member at Large
9.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang			X		Lead Pastor
10.	Pastor Collette Broady Grund			X		Associate Pastor
	TOPIC					PRESENTER
1	Devotions					Aaron Geringer
2	Dear Church Book Study: Chapter 7: pp. 87-98					Council
3	Additions to & Approval of the Agenda Add New Business: 40 Together Synod Lenten Initiative: M. Bliesmer Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by Pr. Jay to approve amended agenda with flexibility. Approved.					Wendy Keenan
4	Secretary's Report Approval of January 19, 2021 Minutes Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by D. Olson to approve printed minutes. Approved.					Bob Ihrig
5	Financial Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 31 General Fund Balance: -\$93.08 • Several 2021 pledges paid in full. Funds will be placed in special savings account and applied on a monthly basis. • PPP loan forgiveness application approved by IRS. • Additional contributions of \$11,066.67 received for mortgage reduction. 					Diana Olson
6	Lead Pastor's Report – Written <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person worship resumed on February 7. All going smoothly with low attendance during first two Sundays with cold weather affecting numbers. • Thanks to Council for \$125 Fat Tuesday donation. • Surplus fund allocation plan developed by executive committee to be presented and discussed tonight. • Samaritan Fund distributions made by pastors to support BLC members. • Minnesota River Conference annual meeting held on 2/14 with Pr. Jay and M. Bliesmer representing BLC. • LSS Resource “And Who Is My Neighbor? Talking About Race and Racial Equity” will be the basis of Lenten series. Worship services will focus on the 5 themes of the study. Conversation opportunities for members to be provided on Zoom on Wednesday mornings and evenings. 					Pastor Jay Dahlvang
7	Associate Pastor's Report – Written <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith Formation classes continue online. • New FFF support staff position description being developed with Anna Wencl & Children's Board with goal of position being filled by May 1. • Connections Shelter Church being started with proposal to be discussed with Council about site partnership with BLC. 					Pastor Collette Broady Grund

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing for Lenten study on racial justice issues. Plans being made for Holy Week & Easter. Likely to have 2 Easter morning services with goal of balancing attendance numbers to maintain COVID-19 protocols. 	
8	<p>Old Business</p> <p>A. <u>Sabbatical Leave Update</u>: 2nd committee meeting held on 1/27. Focus is on interim pastor staffing for May-July with synod and local options being considered. Funding to include carry-over \$ and 2021 budget along with use of some 2020 surplus funds. Calendar developed. Next meeting: 2/24.</p> <p>B. <u>Facilities Tile Replacement Bid</u>: 2 bids received for lower level hallway tile replacement ranging from \$13,700 to \$20,000. Facilities Board will continue to research bids and tile options and present future proposal. Sufficient facilities funding available for this project. Carpeting approved for Grounds for Joy and adjoining hallway. To be installed in near future with respect for tax preparation operations in GFJ.</p> <p>C. <u>National RIC Funding: Motion</u> by B. Ihrig; Second by D. Olson to approve \$1000 for the national Reconciling Works organization. Approved. This group supports RIC church efforts such as BLC. This will be paid from the undesignated memorial fund. Bob will communicate this to E. Ruiz. The BLC Welcome & Inclusion Board will be informed about this year's contribution and to propose future contributions in BLC annual budgets.</p> <p>D. <u>2020 Surplus Budget Allocation & Future BLC Mortgage Funding Plan</u>: Discussion continued from January on the allocation of the \$100,000+ budget surplus at the end of 2020. This was a result of reduced expenses and the federal PPP funds that were used to pay staff salaries, utility costs and mortgage costs. Proposal submitted by BLC executive committee to allocate the funds to the following areas: \$86,600 for mortgage reduction; \$13,656 for staff costs related to interim pastor for summer sabbatical and for FFF support staff position. The FFF position, previously held by S. Morgan, was not included in the 2021 budget. The estimated cost is \$7,600 (15 hrs per wk x \$13.50 for May-December). Motion by M. Bliesmer; Second by D. Olson to approve this budget allocation. Approved.</p>	<p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>James Arentson</p> <p>Wendy Keenan</p> <p>Wendy Keenan</p>
9	<p>New Business</p> <p>A. <u>Music Support Specialist Job Description Approval</u>: Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by Pr. Jay to approve job description for new BLC music position. Developed & recommended by Personnel Committee with feedback from the pastors, Laurie Rossow & Charlie Leftridge. Approved. Charlie will assume this new position with an annual stipend of \$3,510 (\$292.50 per month) from the Brass Ensemble & Junior Bell Choir suspended positions due to COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>B. <u>2021-22 Nominations Committee Update</u>: Bob (Nominating Chair) has contacted the Council, BLC boards and committees regarding positions to be filled for 2021-22. A total of 29 positions need to be filled for approval at the April 18 semi-annual meeting. He is contacting suggested members for the Council Vice-President, Treasurer and Member-at-Large positions. D. Olson indicated her interest in serving on the Finance Committee. Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Bliesmer to approve Diana to fill a 3-year position on the Finance Committee from 2021-24. Approved.</p> <p>C. <u>2021-22 Personnel Committee Approval</u>: Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by D. Olson to approve the membership of the 2021-22 Personnel Committee as nominated. Approved. This will be noted on the 2021-22 ballot.</p>	<p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p>

	<p>D. <u>2021 Financial Review Update</u>: Bob has communicated with E. Ruiz, F. Larsen, M. Larsen & K. Rehbelein to start the review of 2020 finances. He provided the financial review policy & timeline to be followed during February-May. The process will start with a meeting with E. Ruiz.</p> <p>E. <u>Connections Ministry Shelter Church</u>: Proposal presented by Pr. Collette to make no-cost use of BLC back parking lot for Sunday evening dinner & worship services for Connections guests, staff and community. This would become part of the new Connections Shelter Church. These services would be held from April 4 to the end of August this year. Motion by M. Bliesmer; Second by J. Arentson to approve proposal. Approved.</p> <p>F. <u>40 Together Synod Lenten Initiative</u>: M. Bliesmer presented background information on a SE MN Synod Lenten proposal to raise funds for synod mission partners in Tanzania, Colombia and the U.S.-Mexico border area. It requests financial contributions from synod churches of \$1 x 40 days x total members. Informational videos are available to show at worship services. Action: Pr. Jay will contact the Endowment Board for an appropriate BLC contribution. M. Bliesmer will write up information for the STAR and weekly E-News to encourage individual contributions.</p>	<p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Pastor Collette Borady Grund</p> <p>Mary Bliesmer</p>
10	Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 7:00 p.m. Devotions: Pastor Jay Dahlvang	
11	Adjournment	

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