

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

May 16, 2023

Title	Council Meeting			President	Mary Bliesmer	
Purpose	Monthly Business			Secretary	Bob Ihrig	
Date	May 16, 2023		Time	7:00 pm	Location	Grounds for Joy
Meeting Time	Start	Stop	Total Time			Council Members/Guests
	7:00 pm	8:25 pm	1 hr 25 min			
Council Members	Terms of Office			Present	Absent	Position
1.	Mary Bliesmer	2022-2023		X		President
2.	Jason Bruns	2022-2023		X		President-Elect
3.	Marie Slotemaker	2022-2023		X		Vice President
4.	Bob Ihrig	2021-2024		X		Secretary
5.	Jeremy Carter	2021-2024		X		Treasurer
6.	Aaron Geringer	2020-2023			X	Member at Large
7.	Matt Drewitz	2021-2024		X		Member at Large
8.	Jessica Auel	2022-2025			X	Member at Large
9.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang			X		Lead Pastor
10.	Pastor Jacie Richmond			X		Associate Pastor
11.	James Arentson			X		Guest
TIME	TOPIC					PRESENTER
7:00 pm	1. Devotions					Mary Bliesmer
	2. Additions to & Approval of the Agenda <u>Motion</u> by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Drewitz to approve meeting agenda with flexibility. Approved.					Mary Bliesmer
	3. Secretary's Report April 18, 2023 Minutes <u>Motion</u> by B. Ihrig; Second by Pr. Jay to approve printed minutes. Approved.					Bob Ihrig
	4. Financial Report April 30, 2023 Report No monthly report available due to personal vacation scheduling of BLC Financial Secretary. Will be available at July Council meeting.					Jeremy Carter
	5. Lead Pastor's Report A. <u>Thank You</u> : Council acknowledged for positive leadership during a year of many events (pastoral call, capital campaign, new BLC Congregational Coordinator, budget concerns). Thanks to leadership of President Mary Bliesmer & service of Member-at-Large Aaron Geringer. B. <u>LSS Lease</u> : Positive news regarding future LSS & REACH leases (see Old Business). Thanks to J. Arentson for assistance with LSS space renovation needs and lease renewal discussions with LSS facilities manager. C. <u>Good Counsel Learning Center</u> : Inquiry regarding availability of space at BLC to house the Learning Center in future due to Good Counsel property sale. See New Business for Council discussion. D. <u>Mortgage Paydown</u> : Additional principal payments to be made with funds exceeding one year of monthly \$8,187 payments. Mission Investment Fund increasing interest rate as of June 1. See Old Business. E. <u>Scholarships</u> : Endowment Board awarded \$600 scholarships to 15 BLC student applicants. June 4 worship service will recognize these individuals.					Pastor Jay Dahlvang

	<p>F. <u>New Members</u>: 8 new BLC members welcomed on April 30 and require Council approval. See New Business.</p> <p>G. <u>Confirmation</u>: 11 BLC students confirmed at May 7 worship.</p> <p>H. <u>Synod</u>: Attended May 6 SE MN Synod Assembly with Pr. Jacie, Mary Bliesmer & Amy Haigh. Participating in meetings of synod Compensation Guidelines Task Force to develop future synod pastor & deacon salary recommendations.</p> <p>I. <u>Personal</u>: Celebrated Nate's graduation from South Central College. Plans to attend MSU in the fall. James accepted into MD/PHD program at Yale Medical School starting in August. Plans to travel with Tammy to see her parents in week prior to Memorial Day.</p> <p>J. <u>Pastoral Care</u>: Made 30 care ministry visits and officiated 2 memorial services and 1 graveside service since last report.</p>	
	<p>6. Associate Pastor's Report</p> <p>A. <u>Youth Ministry</u>: School-year activities winding down. Flamingo fundraiser in progress. Summer plans to review Family Faith Formation comprehensive plan for updating in line with new BLC strategic plan and FFF goals/priorities post-COVID.</p> <p>B. <u>WELCOME Update</u>: May 23 meeting scheduled with immigration lawyer & Cruz family with hopes that future legal representation can be arranged. Recent purchase of bicycles for family to facilitate transportation needs. Some of house-hold bills put into family name for budgeting/payment purpose. WELCOME team & finance committee assisting with this.</p> <p>C. <u>Crossroads Campus Ministry</u>: New ministry coordinator job description written & shared with synod. Plans to interview an applicant. Updating policies & paperwork for building apartment for new fall tenants. Lunch For A Buck has concluded for season. Campus Cupboard will continue to serve students during summer.</p> <p>D. <u>Pastoral Care</u>: Will preside over 2 burials in May in Mankato family plots for past BLC members who had moved away.</p> <p>E. <u>Personal</u>: Will participate in a grief continuing education retreat at Gustavus on May 18-19 led by Pastor Collette. Will be on vacation May 29-June 3 with family.</p>	<p>Pastor Jacie Richmond</p>
	<p>7. Old Business</p> <p>A. <u>WELCOME Update</u>: See Associate Pastor report.</p> <p>B. <u>Financial Review Format Update</u>: Detailed feedback on proposed standardized annual review form received from Wendy Keenan. Additional feedback is sought from other BLC members associated with financial issues (Finance Committee, Financial Review Committee, Financial Secretary).</p> <p>C. <u>Mortgage Paydown</u>: The Mission Investment Fund has revised the loan rate of the BLC mortgage in line with its policy for periodic adjustments. The current interest rate of 4% will change to 5.625% as of June 1. The current monthly payment of \$8,187 will change to \$5,736.81 as of June 1. This reflects the current balance due up to 2039. The Council agreed to maintain the \$8,187 monthly payment since this has been budgeted and will save on interest costs and pay off the mortgage much earlier. Capital campaign donations will be made during the next 3 years to reduce the mortgage principal.</p> <p>D. <u>LSS Lease Renewal & Renovation Update</u>: Meeting held with LSS state facilities manager to review needed renovation upgrades in BLC space housing LSS (humidity levels & bathrooms). Plans made with local contractor to address humidity issue at cost to be finalized and as priority project. Need for future quarterly facilities meetings between LSS and BLC Facilities Board for communications.</p>	<p>Pastor Jacie Richmond Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Mary Bliesmer</p> <p>James Arentson, Mary Bliesmer, Pr. Jay</p>

	<p>Action: Lease plan is for a new 5-year lease for both LSS and the REACH on same timeline effective August 1. Lease rates for first year will be same as current rate with subsequent 2% increase each year thereafter. Pr. Jay will ask Molly Nelson to send the 2 proposed updated leases to the Council for review before distribution to LSS property manager.</p> <p>E. <u>Nominating Committee Update:</u> The May 14 special BLC meeting of the congregation with the required quorum approved 2023-24 Council, board & committee members. The Council membership is complete. Vacancies still remain on these boards/committees: 1 Stewardship, 3 Finance, 2 Nominating. B. Ihrig will continue to pursue filling these positions.</p> <p>F. <u>Personnel Update: Weekend Janitor Replacement Update::</u> 2 individuals originally applied for the position to be available on August 1. One applicant withdrew prior to interviews. The other applicant was interviewed by R. Beckel & B. Ihrig with positive results. The Personnel Committee approved offering the position to the applicant. Waiting for a response from the applicant.</p> <p>G. <u>June 5 Council/Boards/Committees Leadership Retreat Agenda:</u> The meeting will focus on: Implementation of the new 2022-26 BLC strategic plan; discussion of ideas for enhanced BLC communications; organizational meetings of boards & committees. The meeting will be held from 5:30-7:30 pm in Grounds for Joy. Pizza dinner and beverages will be served.</p>	<p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Council Members</p>
	<p>8. New Business</p> <p>A. <u>New Member Approval:</u> Motion by Pr. Jay; Second by B. Ihrig to approve the following new BLC members: Susan & Jonathan & Kjera Arntz; Floyd & Sharalyn Arntz; Taylor Hayenga; David Juliar & Christine Mehegan. Approved.</p> <p>B. <u>Thank You to Departing Council Members:</u> Mary Bliesmer & Aaron Geringer were thanked for their 3 years of service to the Council.</p> <p>C. <u>Good Counsel Learning Center:</u> Discussion held on Good Counsel inquiry for space at BLC (see Lead Pastor report). Approval to invite them to visit possible space in Youth Room. Action: J. Bruns will contact Good Counsel. Pr. Jay will visit with A. Wenc about this request and possible use of Youth Room.</p> <p>D. <u>New BLC Directory:</u> A brief discussion was held on the need to publish a new BLC member directory since the last directory was published in 2013. The pastors will explore options for this during the summer.</p>	<p>Mary Bliesmer</p> <p>Council Members</p> <p>Council Members</p> <p>Council Members</p>
	<p>9. Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, July 18, 2023 7:00 pm Devotions: Jason Bruns</p>	
	<p>10. Adjournment Motion to adjourn at 8:25 pm approved.</p>	

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