

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

Tuesday, July 18, 2023

Title	Council Meeting			President	Jason Bruns	
Purpose	Monthly Business			Secretary	Bob Ihrig	
Date	July 18, 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.	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.	Jessica Auel	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
	TOPIC					PRESENTER
1.	Devotions					Jason Bruns
2.	Welcome to Current & New Council Members M. Drewitz was welcomed as the new Vice-President. M. Slotemaker was welcomed as the new President-Elect. A. Neubert & C. Zacharias were welcomed as new Members at Large. Council members introduced themselves.					Jason Bruns
3.	Additions to & Approval of the Agenda New Business J: Fair Trade Committee Responsibilities Motion by Pr. Jay; Second by B. Ihrig to approve amended agenda with flexibility. Approved.					Jason Bruns
4.	Secretary's Report May 16, 2023 Minutes Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Slotemaker to approve printed minutes from last Council meeting. Approved.					Bob Ihrig
5.	Financial Report June 30, 2023 Report A. <u>General Fund Balance</u> : Deficit of -\$38,247 as of June 30 due to higher expenses and 94% giving rate. 6-month giving statements & letter to encourage catching up or making advance payments sent to members. 8-yr fund balances reviewed to provide history during the year. Optimism that summer deficit will once again be made up by end of year as customary. B. <u>Mortgage</u> : Balance of \$686,278 as of June 30. \$22,000 advance principal payment made. Mission Investment Fund balance used to make future monthly payments = \$102,870. Mortgage terms reset with new higher interest rate and new monthly payment of \$5,736.81. Finance Committee recommended paying new monthly total with difference from previous \$8,187 to be paid as early principal payments.					Jeremy Carter

<p>6.</p>	<p>Lead Pastor's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>LSS/REACH Lease</u>: BLC approved new lease & waiting for LSS signatures. New humidity controls installed & positively received. B. <u>REACH Staff Meeting</u>: Both BLC pastors attended monthly REACH staff meeting with plans to continue to grow BLC relationship with REACH. C. <u>BLC Budget Deficit</u>: 8-year monthly general fund balance information shared to provide background on current summer deficit. BLC members received mailing of 6-month giving & encouragement to fulfill pledges. D. <u>Boards</u>: Participated in meetings of Adult Education (adult forum planning), Stewardship (fall campaign discussion), Endowment (4 projects funded) & Facilities (future projects) boards. Facilities board is exploring options & costs of security cameras, upgrading phone system & LSS bathrooms, parking lot and upgrading audio-visual system in sanctuary. E. <u>Free Press Interview</u>: Interviewed by <u>Free Press</u> on decline of church participation. F. <u>Lay Staff Reviews</u>: Being conducted in July after self-reviews completed. G. <u>Financial Peace University</u>: BLC will host this fall with participants to pay enrollment costs. H. <u>Fall Activity Promotion</u>: Professionally printed catalog of all fall activities & programs to be distributed with color photos & QR sign-up codes. I. <u>Personal Time</u>: To be out of office August 4-12 to assist son James with move to Connecticut. J. <u>Pastoral Care & Acts</u>: In June, made 32 care ministry visits, officiated 3 committal services & a wedding & attended 3 graduation open houses. 	<p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Associate Pastor's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>Youth</u>: Positive June trip to Montana of 7 BLC youth & 3 adults to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. Planning future ways to keep group connected. Application submitted for Faith Formation Co-Op Congregation Team project to provide ELCA funding & support for BLC FFF program. B. <u>Family Faith Formation Comprehensive Plan</u>: Collaborating with Anna Wencil to retool & update guiding plan. C. <u>Young Adults</u>: Planning monthly meetings & events for BLC young adults starting September 16. D. <u>WELCOME Update</u>: Summer going well for Cruz family. Moondog game fundraiser scheduled for July 20 with other churches. Other fundraisers being organized. Celebration event planned for fall. Family will be able to attend Holden Village for 1 week in August with costs paid. E. <u>Community Engagement</u>: Participated with BLC Welcome & Inclusion Board in Mankato Juneteenth event on June 17. Considering invitation to join Mankato committee organizing Indigenous Peoples' Day. F. <u>Personal</u>: Has secured a house for purchase in Mankato. Expected closing to occur on July 28 . Thankful for BLC support during house search. 	<p>Pastor Jacie Richmond</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Old Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>WELCOME Update</u>: See Associate Pastor report. B. <u>Financial Review Format Update</u>: Feedback on proposed format received & reviewed. Next step is to identify priorities for annual financial reviews to create standardized process. Bob will meet with Wendy Keenan for assistance with this step. C. <u>LSS/REACH Lease Renewal Update</u>: Waiting for LSS signatures on new negotiated 5-year lease reflecting 2% annual rent increase starting year 2 & opt-out clause. Humidity controls & bathroom renovations in LSS to be completed by BLC. D. <u>LSS Humidity Control Plan Update</u>: System installed with positive results reported by LSS staff. 	<p>Pastor Jacie Richmond Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Jason Bruns, Pastor Jay</p> <p>Jason Bruns, Pastor Jay</p>

	<p>E. <u>Personnel Committee Update</u></p> <p>1. <u>Lay Staff Performance Reviews Update</u>: Annual reviews of 7 BLC lay staff completed in July with positive outcomes. Summary reports of meetings with pastors and Personnel Committee members completed for staff personnel files. BLC is fortunate to have an outstanding staff.</p> <p>2. <u>Office Assistant & Organist Operating Handbook Updates</u>: Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Drewitz to approve recommended changes by Personnel Committee in staff handbooks submitted by Christine Schulz as part of summer lay staff review process. Approved.</p>	Bob Ihrig
9.	New Business	
	A. <u>Review of Council Role & Responsibilities</u> : Council member roles and responsibilities were reviewed and affirmed.	Jason Bruns
	B. <u>Designation of 2023-24 Council Liaisons to Boards/Committees</u> : Council liaisons to 11 identified boards/committees designated for future communications & representation on issues before the Council. List to be finalized & sent to Molly Nelson for the master directory.	Jason Bruns
	C. <u>Review & Approval of 2023-24 Council Calendar</u> : Calendar of proposed monthly Council meetings & fall (11/19) & spring (4/21) semi-annual meetings reviewed. Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Slotemaker approved.	Jason Bruns
	D. <u>Review & Approval of 2023-24 Council Proposed Goals</u> : Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Slotemaker to approved 11 Council goals including 5 strategic plan goals. Approved.	Bob Ihrig
	E. <u>Approval of Pastoral Performance Review Questions & Timeline</u> : Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Drewitz to approve 2023 pastoral performance review questions, timeline & process to take place in July and August. Approved.	Bob Ihrig
	F. <u>Approval of Stewardship Board Responsibilities Revision</u> : Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Slotemaker to approve recommended revised board responsibilities. Approved.	Bob Ihrig
	G. <u>Reporting on 2022-26 Strategic Plan Goals</u> : Each month, Council will focus on 1 of 5 strategic goals to gain understanding of goal background & progress in addressing goal by BLC individuals and groups. Purpose is to ensure that strategic goals are being addressed & fulfilled.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang
	H. <u>Approval of Finance Committee Responsibilities Proposed Change</u> : Motion by Pr. Jay; Second by B. Ihrig to approve committee recommended revision of responsibilities. Approved.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang
	I. <u>Council Member Survey of Community Leaders (Strategic Plan)</u> : As one of strategic plan goals, Council members asked to each interview one community leader during the year about community priorities and role for BLC in addressing issues. Details to be sent to Council with leaders for interviews to be identified by October Council meeting.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang
	J. <u>Fair Trade Committee Responsibilities</u> : Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Slotemaker to approve newly established responsibilities. Approved.	Pastor Jay Dahlvang
10.	Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, August 15, 2023 7:00 pm Devotions: Marie Slotemaker	
11.	Adjournment Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by C. Zacharias to adjourn at 8:25 pm. Approved.	

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