

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

August 18, 2020

Title	Council Meeting			President	Wendy Keenan	
Purpose	Monthly Business			Secretary	Bob Ihrig	
Date	August 18, 2020		Time	7:00 p.m.	Location	Zoom Online Meeting
Meeting Time	Start	Stop	Total Time			Council Members & Guests
	7:00 pm	9:30 pm	2 hr, 30 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
TIME	TOPIC					PRESENTER
7:00 p.m.	1. Devotions					James Arentson
	2. Dear Church Book Study: Introduction & Chapter 1: pp.1-24					Council
	3. Additions to & Approval of the Agenda Addition of New Business E: Heritage Room Air Conditioning Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by D. Olson to approve amended agenda with flexibility. Approved.					Wendy Keenan
	4. Secretary's Report Approval of July 21, 2020 Minutes Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Bliesmer to approve July 21, 2020 Council minutes. Approved.					Bob Ihrig
	5. Financial Report A. July 31 deficit = -\$15,390.04 compared to -\$13,413.88 on June 30. This does not include the \$86,600+ federal PPP funds. Wendy will provide status of use of PPP funds at September meeting. B. Member giving declined to 84% from the June 30 rate of 85%. C. Status of member annual pledges & mortgage payments being researched by Elizabeth Ruiz to provide updates to members. D. Federal PPP loans under \$100,000 likely to be converted to grants without completing paperwork. E. AARP tax preparation service generated \$6,800 income for BLC for use of facilities. AARP hopes/plans to return to BLC in 2021.					Diana Olson
	6. Lead Pastor's Report A. <u>General Fund Balance</u> : 5-year summary of monthly balances provided to allay concerns about current deficit. Summer and fall months traditionally reflect deficits but end-of-year balances finish positively. PPP \$ provide financial cushion as well. B. <u>Adult Education</u> : Zoom will be the fall adult forum platform rather than in-person meetings. To be held on non-Sundays with 1-2 per month. "Update from the Council" to be presented on Wednesday, 9/9 from 6:30-7:30 pm. 2nd forum with update on Connections Ministry being planned for September. Fall Financial Peace University class scheduled. Book of Faith Bible study to start in September on Zoom. Life in the Spirit group meeting outdoors.					Pastor Jay Dahlvang

	<p>C. <u>Confirmation</u>: Plans for 10th graders being worked out with parents after COVID-19 suspended spring event. May be a fall event. The current TEC attendance requirement is suspended but students will be encouraged to participate.</p> <p>D. <u>Building Use</u>: AARP had positive experience with tax prep service held at BLC and plans to return in 2021. Primary election went well with Grounds for Joy used as voting site. Wedding planned on 9/5 in sanctuary with safety considerations planned.</p> <p>E. <u>Vacation</u>: Plans to be out of office from August 24-30.</p>	
	<p>7. Associate Pastor's Report</p> <p>A. <u>Vacation</u>: Grateful for recent family vacation week.</p> <p>B. <u>Connections Ministry</u>: Grateful for BLC \$4,800 donations to cover \$2,600 cost of additional shelter beds in increase capacity to 35. Excess funds to be used to meet other Connections needs. Council needs to define future pastoral time for Connections. This discussion will be planned for September Council meeting.</p> <p>C. <u>Faith Formation</u>: Working with A. Wencl to develop 2 tracks for families this year (Worship Only track participation with contacts from staff & Worship/Family-Centered track with limited events & activities for home engagement). Confirmation hybrid model being developed with fewer requirements & mix of in-person and at-home learning options.</p> <p>D. <u>Racial Justice Task Force</u>: Provided resource materials from "Be The Bridge" to guide work of task force.</p> <p>E. <u>Collaboration with Local Clergy</u>: Worked with local clergy group to craft a prayer of lament & healing. Also working with MN Council of Churches on education event for clergy on racial inequities in payday lending as part of state and national campaign. Hoping to present adult forum this fall on this topic.</p> <p>F. <u>Pastoral Care</u>: Made nursing home call and a dozen phone calls this month. Enjoyed this personal connection and outdoor visits with members.</p>	<p>Pastor Collette Broady Grund</p>

	<p>8. Old Business</p> <p>A. <u>Personnel Committee Update: Lay Staff Performance Reviews:</u> Completed via Zoom meetings in July and August with positive outcomes. Good opportunity to address successes, challenges and future goals. Staff is grateful for church support during pandemic. Other reviews planned for choir directors, nursery attendant, weekend janitors and Wednesday night supper coordinator.</p> <p>B. <u>2020 Annual Pastoral Reviews Update:</u> Self-assessments completed. Meeting held with Pr. Collette today. Meeting with Pr. Jay scheduled for 8/19. Reports to be shared 1t 9/15 meeting.</p> <p>C. <u>2020-21 Council Goals Approval:</u> Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by M. Bliesmer to approved revised Council goals. Approved.</p> <p>D. <u>Racial Justice Task Force Members:</u> Identified BLC members to serve on task force: B. Sullivan, B. Ihrig, L. Paul, A. Geringer verified interest. M. Nagel, E. Heinis, K. Piehl, R. Beckel & M. Slotemaker to be contacted by pastors & Council for interest. Membership to be confirmed at 9/15 Council meeting. Task force will need to define its mission and goals as well as conducting an assessment of the congregation to determine what we need as a church in this area.</p> <p>E. <u>Fall Worship & Programming Planning:</u> Discussion held about plans for fall worship when outdoor worship is no longer possible and congregation survey results of member preferences. This focused on online only (25 responses) or moving to indoor services on September 19 (44 responses) or mid-October (65 responses). It was noted that indoor worship can be done safely with sanctuary seating limitations for social distancing, mask wearing, no visiting in narthex before & after worship, no singing, end-of-service dismissal, etc. Waiting until mid-October would provide more time to weigh COVID-19 community rates. We have to be prepared to react to changing circumstances. Attendance at indoor services would be voluntary. Concern was raised that this should also include the pastors and staff based upon their personal opinions & concerns. Motion by B. Ihrig; Second by Pr. Jay to authorize the pastors to develop a plan for indoor worship services starting in mid-October. This would also include online and/or live-streaming options. Amendment proposed by W. Keenan & J. Arentson to provide for flexibility in changing these plans based upon community health situation. Amendment & motion approved. <u>FFF Programming Plans:</u> Explained in the Associate Pastor report. A. Wencl & Pr. Collette will coordinate this planning. <u>Staff Employment & Compensation</u> for 2020 & 2021 were discussed. Council affirmed continuation of current BLC staff positions & compensation through the end of 2020 since these have been budgeted and PPP funding is available to cover costs. This will include choir & music group directors, weekend janitors, nursery attendant & supper coordinator. 2021 staffing & compensation will be determined as budgeting and church needs are determined later this year.</p>	<p>Pr. Jay, Pr. Collette, B. Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Wendy Keenan</p> <p>Wendy Keenan</p> <p>Wendy Keenan</p>
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	<p>9. New Business</p> <p>A. <u>Streaming Worship Services Proposed Technology & Costs</u>: 2 technology plans developed by E. Heinis reviewed to provide for live-streaming of future worship services & other church events. Option 1 with limited capability would cost \$1,358+ while Option 2 would be more advanced for cost of \$3,033+. Member volunteers need to be trained and scheduled to operate system. Motion by M. Bliesmer; Second by B. Ihrig to use undesignated memorial funds to purchase Option 2 technology. Approved.</p> <p>B. <u>Eve Circle Building Use Proposal</u>: Request proposed by Eve Circle members to use BLC to provide weekly support and collaboration sessions of 2-3 hours each for parents & children engaged in homeschooling or school district distance learning. Details and questions involving room preferences, health requirements, cleaning procedures, food preparation & kitchen use, facility use policy & fees reviewed. Motion by Pr. Jay; Second by D. Olson to table issue until questions can be addressed by Eve Circle. Council members asked to submit questions & concerns to W. Keenan by 8/20. She will communicate these to group for responses by 8/21. Email vote to take place after this information received.</p> <p>C. <u>Sabbatical Committee Plan</u>: Tabled to 9/15 Council meeting due to lateness of hour.</p> <p>D. <u>September Congregational Forum</u>: “Meet the Council” Zoom meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 9 from 6:30-7:30 pm. Opportunity to hear church updates & ask questions.</p> <p>E. <u>Heritage Room Air Conditioning</u>: The AC has finally stopped functioning. This was anticipated by Facilities Board. Replacement cost of \$14,000 for planned bid from Paape Energy Services. Motion by D. Olson; Second by Pr. Jay to approve \$7,000 from Facilities Committee major repairs budget & \$7,000 from Capital Improvement Fund to cover costs. Approved.</p>	<p>Wendy Keenan</p> <p>Wendy Keenan</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>Wendy Keenan</p>
	<p>9. Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 7:00 pm Devotions: Mary Bliesmer</p>	
	<p>10. Adjournment Motion by D. Olson; Second by Pr. Jay to adjourn at 9:30 pm. Approved.</p>	

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