

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Title	Council Meeting			President Elect	Marie Slotemaker	
Purpose	Monthly Business			Secretary	Bob Ihrig	
Date	September 19, 2023		Time	7:00 pm	Location	Grounds for Joy
Meeting Time	Start	Stop	Total Time			Council Members/Guests
	7:00 pm	8:20 pm	1hr 20 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					Matt Drewitz
2.	Additions to & Approval of the Agenda <u>Motion</u> by Pr. Jay; Second by B. Ihrig to approve agenda with flexibility. Approved.					Jason Bruns
3.	Secretary's Report August 15, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes <u>Motion</u> by B. Ihrig; Second by C. Zacharias to approve printed minutes. Approved.					Bob Ihrig
5.	Financial Report August 31, 2023 Report A. <u>General Fund</u> : Monthly deficit increased to -\$50,884.35 from July 31 deficit of -\$36,286.66. Larger deficit than customary. Proposals to be developed to address deficit. B. <u>Monthly Member Giving</u> : 88% of budgeted giving. C. <u>Expenditures</u> : Higher than usual & budgeted. LSS humidity control project completed at \$8,200. D. <u>Giving Statements</u> : 3 rd quarter member giving statements mailed. E. <u>Mortgage</u> : \$34,000+ early principal payment made. \$647,381 balance from \$1 million capital campaign level. Member pledges being paid.					Jeremy Carter
6.	Lead Pastor's Report A. <u>Deficit</u> : Expressed concern about growing monthly deficit. Prepared letter for 3 rd quarter member-giving statements & STAR article to address deficit and member giving. Will focus on positive activities of BLC. B. <u>Boards</u> : Provided update on activities of Endowment, Stewardship, Finance and Facilities boards and committees. C. <u>Fall Programming</u> : Positive response for fall activities and group participation. Financial Peace registration taking place. D. <u>Community Involvement</u> : Serves on YMCA Board of Directors and Personnel Committee. Attended Lincoln Park Night to Unite and walked with BLC members in Pride Parade. Led 2 groups to clean up neighborhood for God's Work, Our Hands on a Sunday & Wednesday. Men's Group serves Lunch 4 a Buck on October 4 & will join youth for Rake the Town in November.					Pastor Jay Dahlvang

	<p>E. <u>New Members</u>: Commitment received from prospective new members with orientation planned in October.</p> <p>F. <u>Fall Theological Conference</u>: Will attend mandatory synod conference with Pr. Jacie on 10/8-10 in Okoboji, Iowa.</p> <p>G. <u>Prayer Chain</u>: More members interested in being on prayer chain. Will expand prayer activities of group.</p> <p>H. <u>Synod Work</u>: Serves on the synod compensation guidelines committee. Asked by bishop to help mediate a synod congregation dispute.</p> <p>I. <u>BLC Staff</u>: Reviewed health issues and accidents involving BLC staff.</p> <p>J. <u>Pastoral Care & Acts</u>: Made 40 care ministry visits, officiated the renewal of vow for a BLC couple and a baptism.</p>	
7.	<p>Associate Pastor's Report</p> <p>A. <u>Youth</u>: Monthly events planned for high school youth this fall. Pride activities reviewed with 3 additional activities planned.</p> <p>B. <u>Young Adults</u>: Held first gathering at Jake's Pizza. October 14 is next gathering with bonfire for attendees.</p> <p>C. <u>Pride</u>: Represented BLC at ecumenical worship service prior to parade. 60 individuals from 9 churches attended worship and walked together to parade.</p> <p>D. <u>WELCOME</u>: See Old Business 8A.</p> <p>E. <u>Crossroads</u>: Increasing attendance at Lunch-4-a-Buck. Campus Cupboard also seeing increase in demand. Ministry is preparing to call a new campus pastor. Synod Council will vote to extend call to identified candidate. Hope to have new pastor starting October 1.</p> <p>F. <u>Community Leader Conversation</u>: See Old Business 8D2.</p> <p>G. <u>Personal</u>: Will attend continuing education worship at Gustavus on 9/28-29 to focus on mental health for pastors. Will attend Power & Boundaries synod workshop on 12/14.</p>	Pastor Jacie Richmond
8.	<p>Old Business</p> <p>A. <u>WELCOME Update</u>: All is well with the Cruz family.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is back in session for all family members. • Asylum application legal work is progressing. • The August Moon Dogs fundraiser generated \$1,152 in funds. • The Applebees Restaurant fundraiser is scheduled for September 21. • A 5-church celebration of the WELCOME project will be held on November 9 at Christ the King. Synod staff member Kathy Chatelaine & the bishop of Colombia have been invited to attend. RSVPs will be required since space is limited to 350 people. • Legal work restrictions limit the job opportunities to cash-paying jobs. <p>B. <u>BLC Financial Review Format Update</u>: B. Ihrig to work with E. Ruiz to develop background information regarding BLC financial practices and policies. He continues to work with W. Keenan to identify the essential topics to be covered in annual financial reviews.</p> <p>C. <u>Personnel Committee Update</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>2024 Lay Staff Compensation Recommendations</u>: Salary proposal from the Personnel Committee presented & reviewed. Based on national church salary comparative data, inflationary impacts and positive staff performance reviews. Proposal will be considered by the Budget Committee, Council & congregation as the 2024 annual budget is determined & approved this fall. 2. <u>BLC Staff Service Recognition</u>: Personnel Committee formalized process to publicly recognize BLC staff members on 5-year employment anniversaries. It will coordinate this process with the pastors. 	<p>Pastor Jacie Richmond</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p> <p>Bob Ihrig</p>

	<p><u>D. Strategic Plan Updates</u></p> <p>1. <u>Strategic Plan Goal #2 Progress Report</u>: Progress is occurring on the strategic goal #2: <u>Sharing Gifts</u>: “We will empower our members to share the gifts God has given us.” Pr. Jay noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Time & Talent Survey has been refined to focus on the essential volunteer opportunities. Distributed to BLC members in early September. Survey results will be posted on Breeze for access by boards/committees. • The Care Ministry Team is meeting quarterly as planned. • Financial giving by members is recorded, reported & recognized regularly. • The Stewardship Board has set a goal of a 10% increase in annual financial pledges by members. • The church is recognizing & celebrating the attainment of milestones in the payoff of the mortgage. • Legacy giving is promoted annually by the Stewardship Bd. <p>2. <u>Community Leader Interview Reports/Updates</u>:</p> <p>A. Pr. <u>Jacie</u> reported on her meeting with David Jones, Vice-President of Student Affairs at MSU. He explained the closing of the Campus Kitchen. He identified the MSU focus on developing student opportunities off campus for work, study and service. He noted that students are pragmatic in selecting activities that enhance their future careers and lives. He addressed the mental health concerns affecting students and the challenge of finding student transportation to activities off campus.</p> <p>B. <u>M. Slotemaker</u> shared the results of her interview with MSU President Inch. He noted the need for a common purpose & commitment in the community and the importance of a strategic vision. He explained that churches are good at inspiring people to find a common purpose. He noted the importance of the Crossroads Campus Ministry. He was excited about the community art project at Number 4 and hoped for a similar project at MSU.</p>	<p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p> <p>Council Members</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>New Business</p> <p>A. <u>Council Replacement for Jessica Auel</u>: Members discussed possible replacements for J. Auel who has resigned her at-large Council position due to personal reasons. M. Slotemaker will contact identified individuals for their possible interest in serving in this position that extends to 2025.</p> <p>B. <u>Adult Forum Location Rationale</u>: Questions raised by Welcome & Inclusion Board on the decision to hold adult forums in Grounds for Joy. Concerns raised about the extended time required of coffee servers and less socialization time after worship. It was noted that the goal behind this move was to increase attendance & learning at forums by making them more visible to members. Members have 15 minutes after worship for socialization and can always visit in the library and narthex later. Forum planning has been enhanced with topics & speakers. Overall, it has been a positive decision. It was noted that forums are not held every Sunday. Coffee servers can collect/wash cups earlier and leave when needed.</p> <p>C. <u>Facilities Board New Member Approval: Sarah Morgan</u>: Motion by Pr. Jay; Second by B. Ihrig to approve Sarah Morgan as a new member of the Facilities Board. Approved.</p>	<p>Jason Bruns</p> <p>Jason Bruns</p> <p>Pastor Jay Dahlvang</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 7:00 pm Devotions: Bob Ihrig</p>	

11.	Adjournment <u>Motion</u> by B. Ihrig; Second by C. Zacharias to adjourn at 8:20 pm. Approved.	
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Our Mission: Bethlehem is an inviting community that is growing in Christ, loving our neighbors and serving God's world.