

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Traverse City, Michigan

“We journey with God to serve with love”

Council Minutes: 1/17/23

CALL TO ORDER President Gail Goldsmith called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

OPENING PRAYER Jim Hinds provided the opening prayer.

QUORUM CALL President Gail Goldsmith, Vice President Maureen Bauer, Secretary Jana Rockne, Scott Farley, Leonard Graf, Jim Monroe, Cindy Monroe, Laura Hahn, Denise Bossardet, Jim Hinds, Paul Wiemerslage and Pastor Paul Busekist were all present.

CONGREGATIONAL AND VISITOR COMMENTS: Carl Lehto was present as a visitor to discuss paving of the alley and an area between the newly paved alley and our parking lot.

He presented a petition from the City of Traverse City for paving of the alley with an underground drainage system, for an estimated cost of \$5,648 per property. The assessment is payable over a 10 year period at an interest rate of 6%. Because Bethlehem owns two properties with frontage on the alley (1020 Peninsula Drive and 1050 Peninsula Drive), Bethlehem must pay for two assessments for a total estimated cost of \$11,296. Maureen moved, Cindy seconded a motion that Gail Goldsmith, Council President, sign the petition to pave the alley with underground drainage for the property at 1020 Peninsula Drive and the property at 1050 Peninsula Drive. Gail signed the petition in two places as a representative of the council and the congregation.

Also, to complete the paving of our parking lot, Bethlehem will separately engage a contractor to pave the narrow strip lying between the new alley pavement and our existing parking lot pavement.

Bethlehem included in its 2023 budget, adopted in December of 2022, funds to pay the annual assessment for the alley paving with underground drainage, and the cost to pave the narrow strip lying between the new alley pavement and our existing parking lot pavement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Cindy moved, Denise seconded the approval of the agenda. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES Following one correction (the spelling of Leonard’s name in the Treasurer’s report), Maureen moved and Cindy seconded the approval of the minutes from the December meeting. Motion passed.

REPORTS

PRESIDENT’S REPORT Gail expressed happiness at being out of the house after a prolonged recovery from an injury/illness.

PASTOR’S REPORT Pastor Paul’s written report was submitted and reviewed. Please refer to his written report for detailed information.

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT Maureen deferred discussion to her report on the Ministry Coordinator position (under New Business) and Personnel Handbook Revision (under Old Business).

TREASURER'S REPORT Leonard referred council members to his submitted report and reviewed the information provided. The city has finally submitted a three month bill for utility which was expected.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT Jim referred council members to his emailed report. He provided information on year end giving which reflected an excess of \$6439 over the annual budget projection and resulted in total income for the year at 103% of projection. Total income for the year ended up \$11,592 over budget. Projections for 2023 are also positive, based on # of pledges and pledge amounts.

CONSENT CALENDAR: Committee Reports Reports were submitted by the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Christian Care, Fellowship, Personnel, Pastor Paul and the Ad-Hoc Rental House Committee. All were accepted as reported. Please refer to the reports for more details.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Stewardship Update: no new information

B. Safety and Security Update: Gail will reschedule the walk-through of the church with Officer Makowski, who had to cancel tonight's presentation.

C. Sabbatical Update: Focus is on pulpit supply – getting dates filled for the sabbatical times, with the hope of communion twice a month. Contributions can be made to the general sabbatical fund or to a specific financial need during Pastor Paul's sabbatical.

D. Christian Ed, Y2A: Paul reported on plans for Intergenerational activities, including a pancake breakfast on 1/22/23 and a skating outing. A question was also raised about Sunday School and review of the current time/programming.

E. Nursery Attendant update: Pastor Paul reported that Sarah Denton is now providing coverage in the nursery twice a month. Sarah also presented some ideas on how to get families in the church without an emphasis on evangelism. Scott suggested exploring YouTube as a way of reaching out to young families.

F. Handbook Revision Update: Maureen provided sample language as a revision to our Personnel Handbook, addressing Professional Boundaries. There was significant conversation regarding this issue with questions raised about the potential conflict between what is addressed in the constitution (regarding rights of congregational members) and any limitations this policy may have on congregational members. Ultimately, Maureen made a motion, Paul W seconded that a revision be made to the Human Resource Handbook to include a policy statement on professional boundaries and conflict of interest. This motion was passed.

G. Volunteer for Social Media: This issue was deferred as it may be addressed with the filling of the Ministry Coordinator position.

H. Advertisement for church space: Both Scott and Cindy discussed movement with this issue, presenting options. Discussion to be continued.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Rental Property Ad Hoc Committee update: Scott reported on the development of an AdHoc Committee to review the rental property. Dave Peppler is chairing the committee. An update was

provided via an email including the following update for the council: "The AdHoc committee to research the feasibility and pros and cons of selling the rental property is underway. Dave Peppler has agreed to be chairperson with Phil Anderson representing the Finance Committee. Scott Farley representing Council, Joe White and Carl Lehto as additional members. Dave has reached out to Neal Kibby as well. Jo, Carl and Neal have historical knowledge of the rental property, mortgage and issues surrounding a sale. Joe was a member of the Finance Committee for many years and brings a wealth of knowledge in financial analysis and history of BLC. The committee plans to meet bi-weekly so we can meet the timeline set by Council for review and approval of any actions prior to the June Congregational Meeting. Action items for gathering financial information on the mortgage, documentation on the mortgage and condition of the rental property for sale are already being researched." This email was sent by Dave Peppler to Scott with Gail, Phil and Barbara Oster (Admin at BLC).

B. Craft Show Funds: Gail addressed the designation of money raised by the Craft Show, with proceeds going to the baby pantry and then BLC general funds. See following discussion regarding Safe Harbor funding.

C. Safe Harbor Update: Pastor Paul and Gail addressed the funding issues with Safe Harbor. No funds are available this year, as funds are generated through endowment accounts and, due to downturns in the stock market, no funds are available. This is the first time those present can remember this occurring. As a result, spontaneous fund raising by Tom Rockne (Safe Harbor Coordinator) has generated at least half of the anticipated \$750 need. There is confidence the remaining amount will be raised by contributions from the congregation. To prevent this shortfall in the future, Cindy made a motion, Maureen seconded, to fund Safe Harbor with proceeds from the 2023 Craft Fair (for Safe Harbor expenses in 2024). At this time, no funds are being requested from the budget for Safe Harbor.

D. Ministry Coordinator position: Maureen provided information on an offer being extended to Alanna Steffunick. There was discussion on her salary and the details of the position (including hours, probationary period) along with a copy of the Terms of Employment. Cindy moved, Paul seconded a motion to make the offer to Alanna. Additionally, Paul moved, Scott seconded a motion to offer a 2 % cost of living increase to Barbara Oster.

E. Professional Boundaries: Please refer to the Handbook Revision Update above.

F. New Members: A new member meeting is scheduled for Saturday January 28. Council members were invited to attend the meeting. New members are John and Judi Block, as well as their daughter Jenny and granddaughter Kelly.

GOOD OF THE ORDER: Each council member was given an opportunity to comment or share information.

LORD'S PRAYER: Said by all.

ADJOURNMENT; The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Jana Rockne, Council Secretary