

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Traverse City, Michigan

“We journey with God to serve with love”

Council Minutes: 8/16/2022

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

OPENING PRAYER Paul Wiemerslage provided the opening prayer.

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

CONGREGATIONAL AND VISITOR COMMENT A letter submitted by Renee Wells was read by Maureen Bauer. The letter addressed the responsibilities of Annie’s position and the need to continue to provide services to the youth and young adults of the congregation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Maureen Bauer made a motion to approve the agenda, with Cindy Monroe seconding. Agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES There were two corrections to the minutes from the July 19, 2022 council meeting. Maureen Bauer moved, Paul Wiemerslage seconded – minutes from the July 19, 2022 council meeting were approved with the identified corrections.

REPORTS

PRESIDENT’S REPORT Gail reported she is very busy acclimating herself to the position as president of the church council.

PASTOR’S REPORT Pastor Paul reviewed his written report, emphasizing the following: administrative assistant position has been re-opened due to the new hire not showing up as scheduled. Also discussed the need to update the signage out front (Tom Rockne will serve as liaison with the sign company, with Pastor Paul to communicate directly with Tom regarding the wording on the new sign). Pastor Paul suggested we strengthen our expressions of gratitude to members who serve the church via written thank you notes. A process will be implemented to identify those members of the congregation we would like to send a written thank you to, with thank you notes prepared in advance of council meetings and signed by all council members.

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT Maureen shared additional information regarding the re-opening of the administrative assistant position. She and Gail will interview prospective hires together. Maureen also shared the various input received at the church forum on 8/14/22 (regarding Annie’s position and requesting input from the congregation regarding the needs of the church and how to structure this position accordingly). Please see additional information under the Personnel Update in Old Business.

TREASURER’S REPORT Leonard referred council members to his submitted report and reviewed the information provided.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY’S REPORT Jim referred council members to his emailed report. He noted that unplugged income has been higher than anticipated.

COVID UPDATE Jim Monroe reported that accurate information on the positivity rate of COVID in the region is unreliable due to home testing, which makes it very difficult to establish policies for the congregation and gatherings at the church.

CONSENT CALENDAR: Committee Reports Reports were submitted by the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Christian Care, Personnel, Property, Youth/Y2A. All reports are submitted and on file. Maureen also submitted a revised draft of the duties of Specialized Ministry & Youth Coordinator (it was emphasized that this is a working document describing the various duties Annie has worked on during her tenure and not a job description).

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Sunday School – 9:15 start time will be implemented in September, with an evaluation in late November/early December.

B. Refresh Committee – Paul Wiemerslage reported on behalf of the committee. Projects identified by this committee are moving forward, with lighting and painting scheduled to start in early September.

C. Safety and Security Committee – Gail reported an ad hoc committee has been formed and will begin meeting September 7, 2022 at 4:30 pm (in person and Zoom participation is available).

D. Personnel Update, open positions/Annie’s position – Maureen Bauer provided updated information on the Administrative Assistant position being re-opened, the advertising and interviewing process and the continued gratitude to members of the congregation who have helped out in the office during this process. There was also considerable conversation and discussion regarding Annie’s position, with each council member having the opportunity to share their thoughts about the needs of the congregation and how the person filling this position may best be utilized. There are a variety of thoughts related to this position – should it be focused primarily on youth/young adults, should there be more of an emphasis on intergenerational needs, how to not overwhelm or overload this position, is it possible to incorporate tech needs into this position? There was also discussion on the time line to fill this position, being mindful of the challenges in filling positions in the current job market and anticipating Pastor Paul’s sabbatical next summer. Another forum is scheduled for September 11, during which time input from the congregation will be solicited and incorporated into the challenging task of creating a job description that meets the needs of our aging congregation while nurturing congregational growth through youth/young adult programming.

E. Advertisement update for the Star – no update.

F. Purchase of tables for the Fellowship Hall – Leonard reported tables have not been ordered yet, due to an increase in cost of the tables. This has been an ongoing topic of conversation and needs some resolution.

G. Last Slice of Summer/TC Art Fair – scheduled for August 20 at the Open Space, 10 am – 7 pm. This project is designed to share the good works being done at BLC and sharing information about our worship opportunities. Bottles of water, craft projects for children and information cards will be handed out by volunteers from the congregation.

H. Grief and Loss Workshop – 2 members of the congregation have expressed interest in this service. If there are no other members interested or identified, the two who have expressed interest will be guided to services in the community who are currently providing grief/loss support.

I. God's Work Our Hands/September 11 – This project will be held after the 10 am church service and parking lot communion, starting with a Forum that will provide members of the congregation an opportunity to talk about needs of the church and how Annie's position can best help meet those needs. Following the 30 minute Forum (which will include food!), participants will go over to Bryant Park for a clean-up project.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Road Commission letter and funds for work on driveway: \$300 has been given to the church for this project.

B. Alley way parking and new building in the area: condos are being built on the property formerly owned by a bank next door.

C. Sabbatical planning meetings: Gail reported these meetings will resume on the 4th Monday of the month, starting in September.

D. Freedom Builders comments: Cindy Monroe shared comments from the director of this program, with positive comments regarding the good stewardship work being done at BLC.

E. Committee Budgets: Leonard handed out budgeting information for various church committees, to aid in budget planning for the coming year. He asked that committee chairs return the budget requests by the end of September.

F. New Vision for the Church: Pastor Paul strongly encouraged us to get back on track with this process again.

GOOD OF THE ORDER: Each council member, along with Pastor Paul, 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