

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Traverse City, Michigan

“We journey with God to serve with love”

Council Minutes: 9/20/2022

CALL TO ORDER President Gail Goldsmith called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

OPENING PRAYER Maureen Bauer 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, Paul Wiemerslage.
Absent: Jim Hinds and Pastor Paul

CONGREGATIONAL AND VISITOR COMMENT Chuck Ardingo was present to provide updates on various church projects.

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

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES Maureen Bauer moved, Denise Bossardet seconded to approve minutes from 8-16-22. Minutes were approved.

REPORTS

PRESIDENT’S REPORT Gail reported she continues to focus on visibility of BLC within the community. She also expressed gratitude for the volunteers who helped make GWOH a success.

PASTOR’S REPORT Pastor Paul’s written report was submitted and reviewed. Responses to the report included a suggestion to wait on Visioning until after his sabbatical.

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT Maureen provided an update on the filling of the Administrative Assistant position. The new Administrative Assistant is Lisa Peele. Her hours will be 8:30 – 2:30 T, W and Th. Annie’s position is still being reviewed and the Tech position is still open.

TREASURER’S REPORT Leonard referred council members to his submitted report and reviewed the information provided. He also reported on the \$6400 over budget expense that is due to tree removal.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY’S REPORT Jim referred council members to his emailed report. He provided information on August 2022 contributions and YTD contributions. We are \$2000 behind last year but expects us to be where we’ve been the past three years before the year end. Concern is to get a statement out to members asking them to get caught up on their pledges, which will put us ahead of previous years if people do fulfill their pledges. Scott confirmed the letter will go out soon. Additionally, there was discussion regarding an audit. Leonard recommended an outside, independent audit. Chuck Ardingo reported that our books have been looked at internally in the past 2 years but no independent audit has been conducted (likely due to the cost). Quotes will be gathered and will be addressed at the October council meeting.

CONSENT CALENDAR: Committee Reports Reports were submitted by the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Christian Care, Personnel, Property, Youth/Y2A. Please note the recommendation from the Finance Committee to obtain an independent, outside audit/compilation report of our books.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Refresh – Chuck reported on paving the alley and a conversation with neighbors regarding upgrades to the alley (not a Refresh issue, but a property issue). This will likely pass, which may result in a \$7000 (approximate) cost to the church, to be paid over the course of 10 years. This will involve about a \$1500 cost annually and an additional \$3500 paving fee (these amounts are subject to change). In regards to Refresh, Chuck reported the process has started with pain in some rooms, new lights, rewiring (new needs are identified as the project moves forward). New tables are here. Garbage disposal in the kitchen is broken. Discussion was held on what to fix, replace and prioritizing of needs.

B. Safety and Security – Gail reported the committee held its first meeting and plans to meet the first Wednesday of each month. Areas of focus include building safety, the need for security lights, ensuring the safety of the products in the food pantry and training for active threats in the building. Metro Fire Department offers free classes on AED (automatic external defibrillator) and council members were encouraged to check out these classes.

C. Personnel Update, open positions/Annie's position – As noted above, Maureen provided updates on the new administrative assistant and the progress in exploring Annie's position. Additionally, the tech position is still open.

D. Information Forum for September 24, 2022 – Discussion regarding the Forum (to include conversation about Annie's position and Sabbatical planning) was held. A motion was made by Scott Farley, seconded by Jana Rockne to postpone/cancel the Forum at this time due to the need for further small group discussion on the needs of the church and the belief that Sabbatical planning is being addressed at the committee level. The motion was passed.

E. Vision Planning 3-5 year plan – this was tabled for the time being.

F. Budget for 2023 – Leonard reported a recommendation is for a 2% increase for personnel for the coming year.

G. Thank you notes – Council members signed a number of thank you notes, to be sent to members of the congregation. Additionally, thank you messages will be part of the Star and weekly announcements for those who have made anonymous gifts.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Stewardship Campaign 2023 – Scott is working on the stewardship campaign with Pastor Paul. The Stewardship Theme for 2023 is being finalized. Additionally, he reported on advertising for the Star and funding options with renting parking spaces. This issue is very complicated and will require reviewing a number of issues.

B. Paving Parking Lot – As reported above, Chuck reported on discussions with neighbors of the church regarding paving the parking lot of the church and the potential financial impact.

C. WODA Cooper Company, Leasing Parking Spaces – this is a complicated issue. Various members of the congregation (Scott Farley, Tom Rockne) are working with the developer to obtain information that would allow educated decisions to be made regarding revenue, impact on the church, non-profit status, liability to the church, etc. Again, this is a complicated issue and will require careful analysis.

D. Advent Dinners – Laura Hahn discussed the plan and process for Advent Dinners. Last year we did Advent desserts (scaled down from dinners due to COVID). Volunteers are a challenge. Notices will be in the announcements asking for volunteers. Fellowship Committee will lead this project. Advent Services will be on Thursdays – dinner at 6 pm and services at 7 pm.

E. Craft Show sales – Gail and Chuck talked about the possibility of selling an extra (not being used) piano as well as pews that are not being used. Details of this process will be explored and finalized.

F. Pastor Appreciation Month (October) – Maureen provided suggestions on how we can express our heartfelt gratitude to Pastor Paul during this time of special recognition.

G. Member leaving BLC – Cindy Monroe reported that Nancy Downer has requested she be removed from the BLC roster. Cindy moved, Maureen Bauer seconded. Motion was passed (regretfully).

H. Christmas Service Schedule – Concern was expressed about having three services during Christmas. Recommendation was to consider service times be 4, 6 and 8 pm with the possibility of having only 2 services. A final decision needs to be made as soon as possible to allow for advertising and securing volunteers for all services.

GOOD OF THE ORDER: Each council member was given an opportunity to comment or share information. All comments expressed gratitude for the good works and support of the church.

LORD’S PRAYER Said by all.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Jana Rockne, Council Secretary