

Bethel Lutheran Church council Minutes

February 26th, 2025

Attendees: Jill Duncan (virtual), Jim Herr (virtual) Tom Hopper, Sarah Manro, Steve Middleton (virtual). Mary Jo Mikulski, Jeff Reising, Linc Schneider, Harold Seamon, Annette Lang, Jess Abbott, Susan Tobison, Tom McGrail, Kristen Wells.

The meeting was called to order a 6:32 pm.

Devotion was given by Pastor Jess Abbott

Motion was made to approve the minutes for January 21, 2025. Jeff Reising seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

Finance Report-Harold Seamon

Revenue minus expenses was negative \$13, 506.00 for January of 2025. Total revenue minus total expenses for the 2024 budget was positive \$48,255.00. Currently in the general fund there is a balance of \$140,215. The total of all funds is currently \$513,583.00.

Motion for approval of the treasurers report was made the motion was seconded by Annette Lang. Motion passed unanimously.

Pastor's Report- Jeff Abbott

Pastor Abbott will be filling in as our dean at Bethel because of conflict of interest with Doug Gast who would be Bethel's Dean. Pastor Abbott will be doing an exit interview for Bethel Jim Herr as president of Bethel who will answer questions for the congregation. Pastor Jeff shared several questions but not all the questions that he will be asking at the exit interview. The first question was what the congregation has become accustomed to with Pastor Dave?

The next question was what are the positive aspects of our ministry at Bethel?

Pastor Abbott shared eight areas of a church that make for strong church. The 8 areas are worship, education, care ministry, administration, social outreach, evangelism, youth and small groups.

The next question from Pastor Abbott was: What is our financial situation at Bethel?

The church has a healthy financial position with about 80% of last year's expenses in CD's.

The last question was: Is there anything else the Bishop and the NALC staff need to know?

The church is experiencing a shortage of pastors and is focusing on bringing in pastors from other denominations.

Advice from Pastor Abbott for the transition for an interim pastor.

Focus more on the organic and emotional processes of congregations rather than the mechanical tasks and finding the balance.

Think about things that can be done with the interim pastor before the pastor arrives. Get an evaluation form established and use it to address issues from the start with the new pastor. NALC has these forms available. Let the pastor select 3 people with one being a member of council to do the review.

If there is good financial stability use the money not being used for salary to make repairs at the church.

Consider using lay ministers to help with programming for the church. There needs to be a period to allow the congregation to grieve the loss of the previous pastor. The interim pastor position is a 1-year call, and the call committee can still work at finding a pastor.

If the interim pastor has a commute that is at least an hour commute, consider paying the interim for his mileage. Offer to pay for interim training.

Preaching coverage- Mary Jo Mikulski

All the mid-week services are covered for Lent.

Jim Herr will have a conversation with Dave Smith about the idea of being an interim pastor. Dave Smith is scheduled to preach for March 9th and if Dave is interested in the interim call he will consider preaching for the 8th of March.

There is still a need a need for a pastor to preach on Easter Sunday and Jim Herr will follow up to see if Dave Smith is available.

Music- Linc Schneider

Linc has submitted a request for a part-time organist to the organist pool and has some coverage. He has coverage for 2nd and 9th of March at 8:45 services. Linc said that if there is an issue for coverage Trudy Kussow will help. Linc is considering that if getting a substitute organist for the 8:45 that there be one service and the music would be a combination of traditional and praise styles.

Discussion point

Sweet corn patch has been organized by Jim Herr. Jim is suggesting that the patch of land be used to establish native wildlife/ pollinator habitat.

Property-Jeff Reising

HVAC on the education building needed emergency approval to replace the heating unit on the first floor. There is a quote on getting it replaced and the parts have been ordered.

The issue with the environmental services and the need to maintain our well system, is still on going and Kim Forrester Jim Herr and Jeff Reising.

There was a motion to purchase a small John Deere mower. Tom Hooper made the motion to purchase a small zero-turn John Deere mower. Jeff Reising seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Communication-Annette Lang

The issue of the annual reports was brought up. The date and of the annual report is confusing as about the report being from form June to June rather than January to January. Annette will seek clarification on then all the

information is needed and send out an email on the and the actual deadline for when reports are due.

Steve Middleton motioned for adjournment it was seconded by Annette Lang and it passed unanimously.