

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Council Minutes September 8, 2015 5:30 pm

Members: Alex Schwarzhoff, ~~Laura Pearson~~, Stefanie Gerhardson, Jill DeBrito, Judy Bradow, Sally Nelson, ~~David Nyeklemoe~~, Jeanne Schetnan, Marc Sikkink, Laura Skogen, ~~Kim Langbehn~~, Keith Olson, ~~Donavan Rasmusson~~, Brad Russell

Call to order: Steph called the meeting to order.

Devotions: Pastor Tom led devotions.

Secretary's report from August was approved. Motion by Keith, 2nd by Marc.

Treasurer's Report was discussed and put on file for examination.

Pastor's Comments

Pastor Tom

God's Work, Our Hands will be held on Sunday September 20.

With the contract with Augustana ending on September, we will have to compensate for this loss of income (\$26,000/year), and some ways in which we are doing this is with the following:

- Pastor Jake's salary is less than Pastor Kate's was
- Pastor Jake is also taking on the SS director role so we don't have to hire this position

Chair Comments

The executive committee is still working on putting a call committee together. We have 3 people committed so far. What are our needs for a pastor? After discussion and input from Pastor Tom, **a motion was made by Keith, with a 2nd by Jeanne to recommend that the call committee hire a full time associate pastor. All approved, motion carried.**

Presentation and Discussion

Benevolences and synod payments will continue to be held due to low cash flow.

Action Requests from Committees

New Business

1. Staff health benefits
 - a. The cost for staff health benefits is increasing for 2016.
 - b. The staff currently have a Gold Plan, which is a middle-of-the-road package.
 - c. **A motion was made by Laura S. with a 2nd by Marc to continue with the Gold package for the Bethlehem staff. All approved, motion carried.**
2. Fall stewardship campaign/Consecration Sunday
 - a. Consecration Sunday will be October 11.
 - b. Pastor Jon Olson, pastor at MSUM in Moorhead (former pastor of Hope Lutheran) will be our guest speaker.
 - c. There will be a brunch between services.
 - d. We need to get more people committed financially to the work of the church. Pledges are very low.
 - e. We need to focus on electronic giving
 - i. Possibly set up tables in the Narthex to get members signed up
3. Rally Sunday is September 13.
 - a. There will be a youth led service, with highlights from the National Youth Convention.

Old Business

1. Capital improvements project and campaign.
 - a. Hopefully we can have information and a plan in place to present at the annual meeting in January. Clearer plan and dates will be presented at the October meeting.
 - b. Pastor Jake contacted Mission Investment Fund regarding financing and/or a capital improvements campaign.
 - i. They have staff in place to assist, or manage (at a cost) a capital campaign.
 - c. David Nycklemoe reviewed the Church Constitution to see how the council can proceed with this project.
 - i. The council does not have authority to enter into a real estate mortgage on the property unless approved by a 2/3 vote of the congregation.
 - ii. The council can incur unsecured debt on behalf of the church, but an unsecured loan of this size would be difficult to obtain.
 - iii. It is recommended that regardless, the council hold a congregational meeting.
2. Nancy Eldridge-Hess will update the council on the Strategic Plan at the October meeting.
3. The Council is still in need of a Vice President.

Announcements

1. Next meeting is on October 13 at 5:30 at the church.
2. Rally Sunday - September 13
3. Mud Run - Sept 13
4. God's Work, Our Hands - Sept. 20
5. WELCA Backwards Bazaar - Sept 20 and 27
6. Consecration Sunday - Oct 11

*****Committee chairs please remember to send your committee minutes to Amy by the last day of each month.**