

**Bethel Lutheran Church Council**  
**Minutes, July 19, 2022**

**Attendees:** Randy Baskerville, Ros Demaree, Mark Heckman, Jim Herr, Pastor Dave Hill, Steve Horton, Sarah Manro, Steve Middleton, Mary Jo Mikulski, Jeff Reising, Linc Schneider, Harold Seamon. **Absent:** Sandy Hanke

Mark Heckman called the meeting to order at 6:40. Jim Herr opened with prayer. Mark welcomed new members Jim Herr, Steve Middleton and Mary Jo Mikulski and reviewed the various ministry roles, reminding all that the search to fill the Care Ministry council position, which comes with an active committee, continues. Mark urged council members to nurture cross-over ministry opportunities this year.

Jim Herr moved, and Steve Middleton seconded, to open nominations for president, vice president and secretary. The motion passed unanimously. Randy Baskerville nominated Mark for president, and Sarah Manro seconded. Jim moved to close nominations for president; Steve Middleton seconded. Both motions passed unanimously. In accepting the role, Mark said that his objective this year is to grow Bethel's unity.

Jim Herr nominated Mary Jo Mikulski as vice president, and Steve Middleton seconded. Jim moved, and Steve seconded, to close nominations for vice president. Both motions passed unanimously.

Steve Horton nominated Sandy Hanke to be secretary, and Randy Baskerville seconded. Jim moved, and Steve seconded, to close nominations for secretary. Both motions passed unanimously.

Each council member received a folder that included council job descriptions, which also are in the shared drive. Mark pointed out that these should be updated as needed, adding committees, responsibilities, etc.

Harold Seamon reported that, thanks to the \$12,756 gift from the annual rummage sale to the general fund, the deficit at the end of June was \$1,153.54. He has several concerns about Bethel's financial health that he urged council to help monitor:

- Historically, giving drops in the summer.
- September will have three pay periods, increasing expenses.
- The summer has been hotter than normal and electric rates have risen.
- Per the approved agreement, Pastor Al will be paid severance through August.
- Inflation will increase costs.
- The mortgage resets Sept. 15.
- Year-to-date, the current deficit is smaller than the 2021 deficit.

The Finance Committee reviewed revenue and developed its best projections for the remainder of the year that were distributed as a handout.

Council asked that the record note that the previous council approved the severance package that Pastor Al requested: a final paycheck on July 8 with benefits, three weeks of vacation pay with benefits, and six weeks of severance pay without benefits. The entire package will cost \$17,420 and end Aug. 19.

Mary Jo Mikulski explained biblical giving and emphasized that stewardship has nothing to do with the budget. We give because we're Christians, want to share what God has given us and want to support Bethel's ministries. She is preaching the last weekend in July, and the lessons fit in with stewardship. She will talk with others who are preaching to incorporate biblical giving in their sermons.

In her financial role for Bethel, Sarah Manro said she has noticed that people step away from giving when they don't feel their gifts are doing godly things. Harold pointed out some things that he sees Bethel doing differently than other churches where he's been a member – the annual report is distributed in June rather than the more typical January; the congregation votes on the budget in November, and then congregants are asked to submit pledges. He noted that people work hard to live up to their giving commitments. It was the consensus of the council to consider asking for pledges before making budget decisions in 2023, publishing the annual report in January, consider changing the bylaws to move the annual meeting to January, and urging online givers to put the green cards in the offering plate.

Jeff Reising complimented the group of volunteers who do outdoor work so willingly whenever asked. He continues looking for a concrete contractor to install a curb cut at the entrance. If the work can't be done by mid-September, it will need to wait until spring. A gift paid to replace the garage door on the farm property. The second-floor A/C has been fixed. Window treatment is needed to cool the cross classroom. The pump for the air handlers needs to be installed. The cost will come out of the Building Fund.

Jeff urged Pastor Dave to tell us when he needs support. All agreed that we need to take care of him first.

Concerned about the low attendance at Saturday evening services, Linc Schneider asked if continuing that worship opportunity made sense at this time when compared to the time commitment required by the pastor and musicians. While the Praise Band is growing, COVID hit the Saturday night music group particularly hard, and Linc believes it is paramount that we hire an organist. Pastor Dave said he did not want to cancel any service, and the council concurred. Ideas to help the musicians and continue all three services included occasionally using recorded music and asking "Eddie's crew" to lead music perhaps once a month.

A group met recently to determine how Bethel can support Pastor Dave. Mary Jo, Pastor Doug and others will provide preaching relief. Mark wants to create a Pastoral Support/Care committee that could become a call committee. Council discussed the possibility of recasting and mobilizing the Mutual Ministry Committee, which, when it was previously active, had a proscribed outline and relationship with Church Council. All agreed that we would like to see Eddie Burks play a larger role in worship and that he be invited to attend occasional council meetings.

A master list of committees was distributed. Mark encouraged members to add committees and volunteers.

The Executive Committee is discussing on its own and with staff the need to restructure the office in 2023 in light of John Patterson's retirement. Harold pointed out that given the year is more than half over, we are quickly reaching a critical point to ensure smooth transfers of responsibilities and training. Pastor Dave said Holly Eldredge has assumed many of John's responsibilities and is handling them very well. She needs training on using the hard drive; the AV team has grown but more people are needed to staff it fully. It was noted that John is amenable to doing some consultant work after he retires. Jim Herr volunteered to help this group. He will look for the Mutual Ministry outline. Pastor Dave said the Mutual Ministry Committee also can help with calls, the eucharistic ministry, etc.

The master calendar is on the hard drive but likely not used as much as it could/should be. When ministries schedule events, they need to email the information to Ros, who will add it to the master calendar; a copy of the calendar will be in the shared folder. Events organized by outside groups need to be added to the calendar. They need to provide details about their events using the packets that Sandy Hanke developed, and

those packets need to include an indemnification form, so the church is not held liable. Due to John's retirement, someone may need to be assigned to manage these forms.

It was announced that Gary Helgemo and Larry Gray have volunteered to do outreach to neighbors and others, sharing a package of Bethel information. Steve Middleton will meet with Pastor Dave and Mark to kickstart evangelism ideas and plans.

Sarah Manro announced that the Congregation Campout will be Sept. 24. The Wyatts have volunteered to help; the Youth and Evangelism committees will be part of the planning. Sarah will talk with Tom Foreman to determine what was donated last year and identify those donors.

Randy Baskerville reported that volunteers (13 and older) are needed for the mission trip to Mayfield, Ky. It can be scheduled anytime in October. The two churches that were supposed to help at the same time have backed out, and all but two Bethel volunteers have had to cancel. Missions will pay for most expenses. CSI will provide transportation, food and lodging. Randy will invite a CSI representative to make a presentation about the mission.

Randy also reminded everyone that the Expenditure Voucher/Purchase Order form, available in the office, must be submitted to get a check written for bills or reimbursements. Receipts need to be attached. Steve Middleton suggested the form be put in the Google drive. Dee Baskerville processes checks every Sunday.

Rachel Carson may be the new Food and Baby Pantry coordinator. Holly Seamon and Linda Schutte will help. Randy will schedule a meeting to plan and create a schedule.

Per the congregation's approval of the bylaws amendment regarding contract signing, the updated constitution has been posted on the website. Mark will check that copies of the constitution available in the Narthex also have been updated.

An Action Item list will be added to the shared drive. Council members are encouraged to add items for the Executive Committee to consider as they set the monthly meeting agendas.

The 90-Day Plan continues to need follow-up attention. It could be an agenda item, as well as setting council goals for 2022-23, at an off-site meeting in late August. (Date, site TBD.) The Long-Range Planning Committee and other standing committees need to be reformed.

Jim moved, and Steve Middleton seconded, to approve the June meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Randy told a moving story about how a woman walked 30 minutes each way to get water before Waters International, one of the missions Bethel supports, dug a well that is now 3 minutes from her home. The council urged Randy to share this story in a Ministry Moment with the congregation.

Bethel sent \$3,000 to the NALC this week. We had not made a contribution the past two years.

Pastor Dave closed the meeting with prayer, which adjourned at 8:39.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ros Demaree