

**Bethel Lutheran Church Council  
Minutes, September 20, 2022**

**Attendees:** Mark Heckman, Gary Helgemo, Jim Herr, Pastor Dave Hill, Steve Horton, Sarah Manro, Steve Middleton, Mary Jo Mikulski, Jeff Reising, Linc Schneider, Harold Seamon; staff, Pastor Doug. **Absent:** Randy Baskerville and Ros Demaree.

Mark Heckman called the meeting to order, and an opening prayer was offered.

**Administrative Business**

It was moved and seconded to approve the August 16, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously. It was moved and seconded to approve Gary Helgemo as a Council member whose ministry will be Christian Education. Motion passed unanimously and Gary was welcomed.

**Special Discussion: Growth Through Partnerships**

**Marilyn's Place**

Jeff Reising and Pastor Doug discussed their meeting with the owners of Marilyn's Place, a privately operated facility currently located on 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Noblesville that provides personal items, clothing, household items, etc. – but not food -- to Hamilton County families. It will be without a place to operate in early October; it is paying \$1,700/month in rent.

The meeting discussed a proposal to combine Bethel's food pantry with the Marilyn's Place initiative, having both operate out of the farmhouse. Pastor Doug and Jeff see this as ministry opportunity we must act on. It would not only relaunch our pantry ministry but could also expand it by using the church bus to deliver food to designated locations or possibly provide transportation to the pantry for those who need it. Pastor Doug will help contact the NALC for any assistance they can provide and offered to be among the volunteer bus drivers. Additional volunteers will be needed to help clean up and paint the interior of the house to prepare for this collaborative project. Steve Horton moved, and it was seconded, to allow Pastor Doug and Jeff to continue to explore, evaluate, and create a plan for Council's immediate consideration to prepare the farmhouse to house our food pantry and Marilyn's Place. Motion passed unanimously.

**Valor Classical Academy**

Mark reported on the meeting with Valor Classical Academy, which would like to rent space in the Education Wing for its Christ-centered school, and follow-up discussions with Council members. The consensus is that Bethel would need to invest in major renovation before Valor would be able to occupy our space, and there is a low probability of them being a tenant due to the investment required. Mark commented that this is a good exploratory opportunity for Bethel to map out a plan to consider how we can better accommodate a tenant like Valor.

**Food Pantry Report and Strategy**

The short-term strategy for the current pantry is to re-open. Pastor Dave reported that several volunteers have come forward to help staff it for the interim in its present location. Harold Seamon volunteered to call a meeting of the volunteers to map out a staffing plan that will get the pantry reopened regularly. Pastor Dave talked about placing labeled bags in the Narthex where the congregation can donate nonperishable foods.

**Treasurer's Report**

The Finance Committee presented its draft recommendations for a 2023 budget, which will be presented for the Council's consideration at the Oct. 18 meeting and for member approval at the Nov. 20 congregational meeting.

### **Campout and Ministry Fair**

Sarah Manro reported planning for the Sept. 24 campout and ministry fair is in good shape. Mary Jo Mikulski reminded Council members pick up and update the presentation boards for their ministry to use at the fair. Jim Herr and Mark Heckman will donate the burgers and buns. Several others are bringing side dishes. Games and music will be provided.

### **Ministry Notes (Reports from all attached at end of minutes)**

#### Music

Linc Schneider reported that he is pleased overall with the help selecting hymns that Trudy Kussow and Jill Deitz provide. The youth show "synergy" at the 11:11 service. Sharon, Ernie, and Charles have been helping with organ-playing duties.

#### Youth, Sunday School, Outreach (3D) Progress and Update

Jim meets regularly with Eddie Burks to help organize and engage Bethel youth. They are working on a monthly program to engage more family and youth activity.

Gary Helgemo reported that Laura Houser has said the preschool is operating on a tight budget. Harold said that \$18,000 is currently available to the preschool.

As the Sunday School year opens, Gary said we are down 15 families from last year; three confirmation students are enrolled. Sunday school estimates:

- Pre-K (3- to 4-y-o): 2-3 students expected; 2 teachers
- K-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade (5- to 8-y-o): 5-6 students expected; 2 teachers
- 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade (8- and 9-y-o): 5-6 students expected; 2 teachers
- Confirmation (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade): 5-6 students expected; 1 teacher
- High School (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade): 6-7 students expected; 2 teachers

Total: 23-28 students; 9 teachers; 5 substitute teachers

The 30-day plan is to mail postcards to all families with children who have not registered for classes; Christmas program; evaluate the current curriculum; and evaluate class groups for those in Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade to determine if changes are needed based on attendance.

### **Long-Term Planning**

Discussion tabled

### **Remaining Events and Calendar Review**

Discussion tabled

### **New Business**

Kim Forster and Max Rudy will continue to rent the garage on the farm property for \$2,400/year.

Steve Horton raised the proposal to re-introduce the welcome/attendance sheet for all services to improve volunteer sign-up with faithful follow-up expected by Council members and ministries to all

who volunteer. From his perspective, sign-up on clipboards in the Narthex does not seem to be working. Discussion was tabled.

Pastor Dave urged Bethel to get youth to attend Revive and Renew, the Heartland Mission District Convocation and Youth Gathering, Oct. 8 at Peace Lutheran Church in Connersville.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. A closing prayer was offered.

Respectively submitted  
Steve Middleton and Ros Demaree

## **MINISTRY REPORTS**

### **CARE MINISTRY**

This is an open seat on the Council

### **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY, GARY HELGEMO**

This was an open seat most of August, so no report this month, other than Sunday school will start Sept. 25.

### **COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY, ROS DEMAREE**

The Olps and Kerrys have agreed to be greeters before the 8:45 services in October, November and December. Volunteers for other services will be recruited.

### **FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY, SARAH MANRO**

1. Fellowship has been getting ready for our 2nd annual campout coming up this Saturday, September 24th. This is a big event as it is being combined with the 4th Saturday, the Ministry Fair and the start of the year's Sunday School classes. Due to the many changes in our church recently it is really important for all Council members to be present for these activities. You do not have to camp, but please come for the Ministry Fair, dinner, and music.

I spoke at all 3 services the weekend of Sept 10/11 and Sept 17/18 to promote the event and will be making several Facebook posts this week. This weekend I also passed around a sign-up sheet for campers and those who can bring a side dish/dessert for the picnic. I have not seen the list yet, but I believe there were many signed up to bring something.

Pastor Dave said he can bring his cornhole set, and my family has badminton and croquet sets we can bring. But I thought it would be good for the church to have these games. Eddie agreed to split the cost for these games 50/50 from Fellowship and Youth. I have not spent any money from the Fellowship budget for the past year and I figure youth will use these games more than anyone else. I will speak to Gay to order. We may not have them by this weekend, but we will have them for future events.

Jeff Reising is setting up the Ministry Fair for us. This falls under the Stewardship Ministry (Mary Jo) but because it is happening during the campout, I am helping her with the details. This will be outside near the picnic shelter. The white tents we use for Rummage Sale outdoor items will be set up with 6 tables. There will be 2 ministries per table. Council members should be here and available to answer questions and try to recruit volunteers. Holly is making sign-up sheets for each ministry area. Mary Jo has the

boards we used last year for displays. The fair should be ready to go by 4 pm Saturday. Please be there as soon as you can. Be prepared to be available 4-5:30pm and after the church service 5:30-7pm. I think moving the displays inside for Sunday services is a good idea.

Being the 4th Saturday, the Saturday service will be held outside at the picnic shelter at 5:30 and we will have dinner together after the service. Hamburgers are being provided and I have asked people to bring a side or dessert. We need someone to grill for us. I've asked Jeff to set up the grill and a table. Not sure of the location yet. Do we want this near the picnic shelter or on the way to the music? Live music will start around 7 pm and is being provided by the Moontown Pickle Stompers. They charge \$300 for an hour of music. I feel this is a worthy expense and can pay for it from the Fellowship budget, but I received a very generous donation from a congregation member that will more than cover this fee. Jeff and I are working on the location for the band to perform.

After music will be campfire time! I have my husband on board to be our fire builder. I believe there is firewood. S'mores can be made at this time. I've asked for s'mores donations too. Last year we used wooden sticks that can be used and then tossed in the fire, and I will look to get these again. This would be a good time for hot chocolate too. The weather looks like it will be on the cool side so I think this will be welcomed. I'll check our supplies in the kitchen. Would someone like to lead a campfire devotion?

We've talked about a late movie as well. I don't have any details on this or know the logistics of it. Neither of the BSA Scout Troops are available to help this weekend as they have a campout of their own. My family will provide Coffee Fellowship on Sunday.

2. The Fellowship budget for next year has a couple issues I've discussed with Harold. There were a couple things charged to Fellowship that did not fall under Fellowship (80s+ luncheon and VBS expenses) and the Coffee Fellowship income has not been added to the Fellowship budget. This definitely needs to change as I've told the congregation their freewill offerings go to Fellowship, and it makes sense for these offerings to go to Fellowship.

3. I am researching more Fellowship ideas and welcome suggestions!

#### **MUSIC AND WORSHIP MINISTRY, LINC SCHNEIDER**

Matt Benkert declined the position for organist due to travel time between Bloomington and Noblesville. He accepted a position in the Bloomington area which is much closer for him. We continue to search for a candidate, and Trudy Kussow is leading the 8:45 coordination of our pool of musicians to play the organ. Many thanks for her talents and efforts in communicating to me and the staff about who is playing. We have identified a core group of musicians who can handle the 8:45 service and God continues to lead us.

We will have a music meeting coming up in the next few weeks to go over holiday planning. Saturday night is still being covered by myself and piped-in music when I am not there. We piped in music over Labor Day, and it was received ok as the congregation sang.

The 11:11 Praise Service continues to shine with volunteers and enthusiasm in the band. Big blessing for the church.

Altar Guild and the readers/greeters/comm assistants/acolytes/ushers continue to be a work in progress. Thanks to Suzy P for her coordination of many of these volunteers. Many things still to do....

**PROPERTY, JEFF REISING**

Turnout Sept. 17 for some property work was totally disappointing. My wife and The Dietzes were the only people there. Don't know what it will take.....

Spoke with locksmith and Nelson alarm about the Narthex door being part of the security system. No resolution on price yet.

Hoping to get Pastor Doug helping with mowing this month.

Will need to replace two trees on the trail, a crab apple and a skyline locust. All others appear to be healthy.

Wondering out loud as to whether we really need permanent car bumpers in the lot. If we need something occasionally, maybe we get a couple more temps like Gay Hanson bought last year. I hate the permanent ones. Messaging is everything, first impressions like bouncing through the parking lot are negative. Temporary ones show concern for safety without causing spinal injuries(sarcasm)

**SMALL GROUPS, MARK HECKMAN**

Mark Heckman will connect with Gay Hanson and Holly in September to update the Bethel website to reflect both information on new groups as well as updated graphics and information on existing groups. Interest remains in forming a new 365 Bible reading group that would use content from an existing online program. Pastor Dave is reviewing the content before the group convenes. Racheal Carson is sponsoring this new group.

Mark Heckman will pursue online resources that could be used by our Life Groups to add continuity and connect those groups to our Evangelism efforts with Steve Middleton. Mark will also be reviewing other small group programs in other churches for ideas about what is working well.

As with the other Bethel Ministries, Small Groups will be represented at the Annual Bethel Camp Out on September 24th in our Ministry Fair tent....and opportunities for both signing up and starting new groups will be provided.

**STEWARDSHIP, MARY JO MIKULSKI**

During the past month, Stewardship has been working on presenting the Ministry Fair, which will be this coming weekend.

Each ministry area will have a table, and the tri-fold posters that were done last year are available for you to revamp as needed and be ready to place on Saturday before 4:00 in the tent by the shelter. Have something to give out or you may use some of the bracelets that I purchased for the fair.

After the picnic etc., we will need to bring them in so they can be displayed in the Narthex on Sunday morning.

I also discovered that each ministry area has a portion of the bulletin boards in the hallway. They are sadly dated and earmarked. Please work with your committee to update them so they look attractive as members and visitors move down the hallway.

As we move into October and November and Commitment for the coming year, I would like to have volunteers to give a two-minute testimony at services each week sharing why you give and how you determine your financial commitment to Bethel.

**YOUTH MINISTRY, JIM HERR AND EDDIE BURKS**

Eddie and Jim have met a couple times since our last Council meeting. We have focused on setting up a Youth Ministry Committee. Eddie sought volunteers and has assembled what we are calling the 'Dream Team'.

We are looking forward to upcoming Sunday School and continued efforts with Triple D.