

**Bethel Lutheran Church Council  
Minutes, November 15, 2022**

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

Mark Heckman called the meeting to order at 6:35. Pastor Dave led an opening prayer.

**Administrative Business**

Jim Herr moved, and Pastor Dave seconded, to approve the October 18, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**Sunday School Discussion**

Expressing appreciation for the ideas given in October by Liz and Chris Camparelli, Mark Heckman reported that Eddie Burks created a video about the importance of Sunday school that was emailed to the congregation with Bethel Happenings and received favorable reaction. Mark also said the Sunday school will present a Christmas play at 10 a.m. Dec. 18.

**Treasurer's Report and 2023 Budget**

Revenue was up markedly in October, which was a five-Sunday month and included the farmland rent income. Expenses were down, partly because September was a three-pay period month and October was a two-pay period month and because the principal on the mortgage was reduced, although the interest rate increased. Mary Jo Mikulski moved, and it was seconded, to approve the treasurer's report as presented.

Harold Seamon asked if Bethel should consider raising the farmland rent, which is around \$225/acre. Jim Herr estimated that similar land elsewhere rents for \$300/acre. Bethel owes \$84,000 on the farm property, which was purchased on a two-year agreement. Congregants who pledged money that has not been received will be contacted to see if they still plan to honor their pledge.

With the resignation of Pastor Al, there are only two signers on the bank account, Dee Baskerville and Harold Seamon. After a brief discussion about the need for a third person in the event of an emergency, Pastor Dave moved, and Jeff Reising seconded, to remove Pastor Al from the account and add Mary Jo Mikulski.

A minor typo – two numbers were transposed – on the proposed budget was the only change suggested. Neither dental nor vision insurance rates are scheduled to increase in 2023; health insurance is increasing 5 percent. Mark Heckman will get a decision from Holly Eldredge about her desire for a benefits package.

Harold Seamon has received an offer from a company to apply for Cares Act funding called Employee Retention Tax Credits. If the application is approved, the company would get 15 percent of the amount Bethel receives for each full-time employee retained during the latter months of the COVID shutdown. Harold will investigate this offer and report back to Mark.

**Annual Congregational Meeting**

Council reviewed and tweaked the slideshow presentation created for the Nov. 20 Congregational Meeting that will focus on “Building Upon a Solid Foundation to Grow Our Faith and Reach.” It will explain how the Council has instituted budget accountability, as promised in 2021, and is better managing Bethel’s resources.

### **Partnerships and Outreach Update**

**Marilyn’s Place:** The application for a zoning variance for the farm property has been submitted to the city. It likely will be considered at the January Board of Zoning Appeals meeting. Approval is anticipated and while the opening date for Marilyn’s Place is to be determined, Jeff Reising said work needs to begin now to make the house ready.

**Food Pantry:** Thanks were expressed to all congregants who were responsible for reopening the pantry on Nov. 8. It will be open four times a month.

### **NALC Disaster Relief Effort**

Randy Baskerville reported that Bethel will replenish flood buckets for Florida in late November. Supplies are being purchased from the \$5,000 originally allocated from Missions for this effort; \$2,600 remains in the fund.

Recovery continues in Mayfield, Kentucky, which is expected to take six more years, and in Florida, where recovery is nine-plus years in the future. People are needed to help. Missions has money to send a team, perhaps in April.

### **Stewardship Campaign 2022**

Mary Jo Mikulski will announce the number of pledges and total amount pledged at the Nov. 20 Congregational Meeting. Commitment cards will be blessed at all services Nov. 19 and 20.

### **New Business**

**Office Transition Plan:** Holly Eldredge and John Patterson continue to develop a plan for 2023 when John will become a consultant. A celebration of John’s service to Bethel is being planned.

**Council Christmas Gathering:** The Dec. 20 Council meeting will be a short one at a place to be announced. A Christmas gathering for members will follow the meeting.

**Music/Worship Updates:** Linc Schneider said that Sharon Watson has asked to become the regular organist, telling him, “I want to play here because I like the church.” She will involve her music students in our services, and Kathy Bloom will substitute for Sharon as needed. Linc will create a hiring package for Sharon.

Aidan Biddle and Amy will lead a Saturday service in December, which is a great opportunity to grow Bethel through the youth of the congregation.

**Janitorial Needs:** There is a great amount of activity in the building each week, but it has been asked if there is sufficient janitorial coverage to keep up with it. Cleaning is done three times/week. The 2023 budget includes \$2,000 more for cleaning services than was budgeted in 2022. Jeff Reising was tasked with forming a committee to determine Bethel’s needs and meet with the janitor to ensure those needs are understood and met.

**Midweek Advent Services:** This year, there will be a light supper, devotion and craft time the four Wednesdays in Advent. (Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, 14 and 21). All attendees will be encouraged to provide food, while Bethel groups will oversee the set-up and clean-up. Council will be the lead group Dec. 7.

**Operation Christmas Child:** Randy Baskerville reported that 68 Operational Christmas Child boxes were filled and were to be delivered Nov. 16. Missions is paying postage costs for boxes that didn't include that money.

**Wednesday Night Fellowship:** Ben Black is organizing a Wednesday Night Fellowship for each week when there isn't a service scheduled. It will always include a bring-your-own-dinner and an activity.

**Resource for Small Groups:** Jim Herr is offering his Study Gateway Subscription to any small group that would like to use its resources.

Jim Herr moved, and Jeff Reising seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45. Members joined in prayer led by Pastor Dave before leaving.

Respectively submitted  
Ros Demaree

## MINISTRY REPORTS

### CARE MINISTRY

This is an open seat on the Council

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY, GARY HELGEMO

**Attendance:** Sunday School attendance has gradually increased since our first session on September 25<sup>th</sup>, when there were 24 total attendees from pre-school through high school. Last Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 26 students attended.

**Christmas play:** The Christmas play is a non-traditional one that will be presented starting at 10 a.m. on December 18 in the sanctuary. It will include the students from pre-k through high school. The Sunday School teachers and the students have been working very hard to bring this Christmas play together.

We were able to purchase children's bells that the children will use to play Oh Holy Night and Silent Night during the play. Also, they will sing Go Tell It On The Mountain with the Youth Band. It promises to be a very entertaining and exciting play for both the students and the audience. You won't want to miss it. There will be a short fellowship immediately following the play.

### COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY, ROS DEMAREE

The Pentecost issue of FootPrints was published with the theme of Angels. Editor Gay Hanson and seven other writers contributed to the edition, which included information on the NALC's 2020 Vision and Disaster Response, as well as the Stewardship Ministry.

The office staff added significant updates to the website, including videos about Sunday school (an outcome of the October Council meeting discussion) and the hurricane relief efforts that Bethel helped provide, as well as details about the reopening of the food pantry.

**FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY, SARAH MANRO**

Fellowship helped with Trunk or Treat, which was a great success. An estimated 150-200 people visited. We were blessed with fantastic weather. I think we had 13 trunks. We had 104 entries in the Candy Corn Guessing game. Mark Heckman generously donated three \$50 gas cards for the three closest guesses. We had a signup sheet for visitors to get on a mailing list for future Bethel events. I have talked with Gay about getting this set up in Realm. We're also thinking of a way to use all the phone numbers we got with the candy corn game in some kind of event blast-texting alerts.

Coffee Fellowship signups have been low! Not sure the reason.

Next up is Pie Fellowship after the Thanksgiving Eve service on Nov. 23. Announcements will be made at the Nov. 19-20 services and a signup to bring pie will be passed around at all services.

Midweek Advent Dinners follow immediately after Thanksgiving on Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, 14, and 21. Pastor Dave has a different plan for these midweek services this year and meals will be kept simple; soup and sandwiches, pizza, etc.

Typically we do Chili Cookoff in November; last year it was the first weekend in December. I'm holding off on it for now and thinking of trying it with a different theme (not football) in February.

**MUSIC AND WORSHIP MINISTRY, LINC SCHNEIDER**

Holiday planning music committee met, and we have secured our musicians through the holidays. There will not be music during our Midweek Advent services as we try a different twist with more of a fellowship/less formal setting. On Christmas Eve, there will be a family service at 5:30 and then the Candlelight Service at 10:30.

December brings a youth movement where the youth band will lead an 11:11 service and a smaller youth group will lead a Saturday Service. Continue to see 11:11 praise group growing and leading the congregation.

We have a couple of organists Sharon Watson and Kathy Bloom handling the bulk of the services for 8:45. I continue to lead the 5:30 service as we are working to get our group healthy. Mike Musick continues to struggle. Still searching for some longer term solutions to have other people lead the Saturday night music.

The screen seems to be getting better as there has been more focus in this area.

**SMALL GROUPS, MARK HECKMAN**

Active Groups as of November include Sausage and Scripture, Circle of Sisters, Women on Wednesday, Monday Night Men's Group, Sisters without Misters, Creative Spirits, Garage Night and Wednesday Night Fellowship, a new group that met for the initial time Nov. 9. The group's charter is to simply bring people together mid-week to share games, interests, scripture, and friendship. Ben and Melissa Black are the organizers and will continue to evolve the activities of the group as membership grows and interests are explored. Their next meeting will be dinner and movie night on Nov. 16. Anyone interested in learning more about the group can reach Ben at [ben.lee.black@gmail.com](mailto:ben.lee.black@gmail.com)

Mark will begin connecting the group leaders of all the existing groups via a monthly email chat that will help to coordinate and share things between groups that are working especially well for individual groups.

**STEWARDSHIP, MARY JO MIKULSKI**

Our stewardship campaign, Being a Biblical Giver, is in process. We will dedicate the commitment cards at each service Nov. 19-20, thanking all those who have brought one to church. A reminder to all Council members to submit their commitment card before our worship.

I also asked for a short testimony from each council member and so far, I have received five out of the 12. I would appreciate it if the rest of you would submit yours to me soon. They do not have to be any more than several sentences or a paragraph. I plan to put them all in a booklet and give it out in January as an emphasis for all of us to remember our commitment to the work of our church. Let us use the stewardship program as a means to move forward with our faith in action.

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

Eddie and the Dream Team (Youth Committee) met the week of Nov. 7 to discuss plans for activities in the near term and out into next year. Lots of good ideas were shared and there was enthusiasm. Brian Robbins shared some ideas from his daughter that we are looking to execute in the near term. Eddie is also looking into connecting with other youth groups for an activity. Family night is on the horizon as well for the youth and their families to get together and enjoy some fellowship.