

Bethel Lutheran Church Council
Minutes, January 17, 2023
Approved as corrected February 21, 2023

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

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

Administrative Business

Gary Helgemo moved, and Randy Baskerville seconded, to approve the November 15, 2022, minutes as presented. (The Council did not meet in December 2022.) Motion passed unanimously.

Action Group Ideation

Congregant Vic Hanson presented ideas and concerns about church attendance, member participation and congregation growth that have been the subjects of conversation at the Sausage and Scripture bible study. Vic urged the Council to be open with the congregation and discuss the concerns together. He volunteered to draft a survey for Council's review in February to measure the mood of the congregation and learn what they are thinking. Vic feels fellowship is at a low point and suggested there be organized fellowship after services to spark open, meaningful discussion.

The presentation opened a lively discussion that included how to create an intentional church; the need for honest, candid feedback; ways to look at this as an opportunity to reclaim people Bethel is leading to Christ who are not worshipping regularly; and the need for every Council member to encourage people to fellowship with one another.

Treasurer's Report

Paperwork was completed to have three check signers (Dee Baskerville, Mary Jo Mikulski and Harold Seamon). Payroll information was submitted as a first step to determine if Bethel is eligible to receive money through the Employee Retention Tax Credits program.

Harold Seamon would like to securely dispose of financial documents that are more than 7 years old. A shredding company could bring a truck to Bethel for \$219-\$309. Congregants could be invited to bring their personal documents when the truck is on the property. Steve Horton moved, and Gary Helgemo seconded, that Harold contract with a company to shred old documents. The motion passed unanimously.

January 20 payroll checks will include the cash Christmas gifts given to the pastor and staff.

Because Laura Houser is not paid out of the general fund, the 4 percent pay increase that Council approved for staff unintentionally does not include her. Pastor Dave moved, and Randy Baskerville seconded, to give Laura a 4 percent pay increase in 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

At its January meeting, the Financial Committee agreed it will better monitor the budget this year than has been done in the past and compile a list of expenses, such as property insurance, that could be bid out.

The amount due on the farm property purchase is down to \$56,000.

Reviewing contributions, expenses and the general fund balance, Harold believes 2023 will be a better year financially for the congregation.

Attendance Report

Pastor Dave reported that attendance averaged 183 people/week for all three services in 2022. That is about 20 percent lower than attendance in 2021, but there was a 21 percent increase in December 2022 alone.

Sunday School/Preschool Opportunities

Legacy Preschool is running out of room in its building near Forest Park and has approached Bethel about a partnership that would bring its preschool to our building in Fall 2023. They would use space that is currently unused and as it is configured. Further meetings are planned. The measure could go to the June Congregation Meeting. Legacy also is looking for property to build a gym. That has not yet been part of the discussion, but it could be in the future.

Gary Helgemo reported that Sunday School attendance has dropped since classes started in the fall, making the committee question if VBS is viable this year. The Council consensus was that Bethel should partner with another church to offer VBS in 2023.

Farmhouse Zoning

Everything has been submitted and letters mailed for the Feb. 6 meeting to determine if the farmhouse can be rezoned to allow the food pantry and Marilyn's Place to operate out of it. Provided the zoning is approved, the pantry hopes to open there by April 1. Remodeling work in the house is nearing completion, thanks to a small corps of hard-working members.

Missions

Randy Baskerville reported that payment has been made to the Great Commission and \$4,600 was sent to our mission church in Senbete, Ethiopia. That \$4,600 gift is enough to cover about a third of the church's expenses.

The Missions Committee is discussing bringing Tri Cities Baptist Ministry, which received Bethel funds in 2022 after Hurricane Ian, here. The \$625 in gift cards given to hurricane relief efforts was very much appreciated.

Bethel is helping to restock the regional disaster warehouse at Connersville.

Thanks to an unexpected Central Indiana Community Foundation grant, Bethel provided Christmas gifts to 28 local kids, 2- to 17-years-old.

Thank-you letters are being compiled for Bethel's gift to Waters International.

Stewardship

The ministry bulletin boards in the hallway between the Education Wing and the Narthex have fallen out of date, which makes a bad impression of what Bethel is doing. Mary Jo Mikulski asked all Council members to update their section of the boards within two weeks, offering the help of Holly Eldredge to create visuals for the small spaces and who will simultaneously update the ministry pages on Bethel's

website. As an incentive, the congregation will be asked to vote on the Best Bulletin Board, with a prize being given to that ministry leader.

Altar Flowers

Donors are needed to provide altar flowers leading up to Lent. Council members were urged to sign up.

Office Transition

A Jan. 18 meeting is scheduled to better understand staff members' responsibilities, office priorities and gaps in service. Mark Heckman will update the Council in his mid-month report.

Music/Worship

The new organist, Sharon Watson, has students she would like to teach at Bethel and has a heart for forming a children's choir. Linc Schneider plans to talk with her, making sure she understands she would need to lead/build a choir starting from Ground Zero.

Memorials for Shannon Schneider will be directed to the Bethel Music Program.

Linc reminded everyone that the Music Ministry has immediate rewards, is a powerful communicator and plays an important role in worship. Singers are welcome. The consensus of the Council is that the Music Program has grown greatly and is part of Bethel's momentum.

Care Ministry

The Care Team meets weekly with Pastor Dave; he and Pastor Doug are making calls. The number of people in the congregation who need care calls is growing; many are people who helped build Bethel. Care is a critical ministry, a big part of our church walk.

Pastor Dave proposed making Pastor Doug the Care Pastor, putting him on a \$200/week retainer to include preaching and other ministerial responsibilities as needed. It was moved, and Sarah Manro seconded, to invite Pastor Doug to provide pastoral help, primarily as Care Minister, with compensation to be determined between Pastor Doug and the Finance Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

2022 Annual Report

To publish the 2022 Annual Report earlier in the year than has been done in the past, Council members were asked to submit their reports by Feb. 10. Ros Demaree will send members the 2021 copy for their ministry as a starter.

Long-Term Planning Committee

Members need to be appointed, starting with the people who served the committee in 2022 and those who have voiced interest in joining it. The structure of the committee also needs to be considered. The council was tasked with emailing nominees to Mark Heckman so there can be a vote at the February Council meeting. Mark will email ideas to the Council.

Fellowship and Evangelism

Due to substantial commitments of a new job, Sarah Manro must scale back her involvement in Bethel event planning. She will continue to plan Fellowship events and give Stewardship event ideas to Steve Middleton, who will execute plans for them.

Patterson Appreciation

The Council, office staff and their families will organize a March 2 dinner at Wolfie's to thank John and Suzy Patterson for their dedicated service to Bethel.

Rummage Sale

Jill Duncan is willing to chair the annual rummage sale, provided there is a full complement of room volunteers.

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:59 p.m.

Respectively submitted
Ros Demaree

JANUARY 2023 MINISTRY REPORTS

PASTOR DAVE'S REPORT

Led worship services Jan. 7/8, 14/15, 21/22 and 28/29.

Taught Confirmation Class.

Participated in meetings with the office staff, Care Team, Council Executive Committee and Church Council.

Conducted chapel services for preschool and greeted parents at the school.

Attended Volunteer Luncheon.

Help remove the Christmas decorations.

Took a staycation Jan. 1.

Prepared a Lenten series suitable for midweek and Sunday services.

Prepared a Holy Week series suitable for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Saturday and Sunday of Easter.

CARE MINISTRY

This is an open seat on the Council. Leaders of individual programs within the Care Ministry meet regularly with Pastor Dave.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY, GARY HELGEMO

Sunday School Attendance:

Sunday School attendance is a concern for the month of January. Pre-K through confirmation we are averaging 11 students total for the first two weeks of the year. During the fall months the average was 20. Confirmation classes are concerning as there are 7 students enrolled however only 3 or 4 are in attendance each week. The high school group is constant in their attendance.

Christmas Play:

The highlights of the Christmas play were the ringing of the bells and the song Go Tell it On the Mountain. Thank you to Susan Adda for working with the students and to Erin Eckert for guiding the children in that great Christmas song.

Spring Break:

We will not hold Sunday School classes on April 2nd due to spring break or on April 9th which is Easter.

Easter Egg Hunt:

Our annual Easter Egg hunt will be on April 8th from 10am to 11:30am. We are currently looking for a lead coordinator.

Sunday School Recognition:

Mark your calendars for May 21st our last day of Sunday School before summer. We will recognize students and teachers during Sunday Service. Students will receive a certificate for attending classes.

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY, ROS DEMAREE

Under Gay Hanson's direction, the Advent issue of FootPrints published, and the Lent/Easter issue was in production. Sadly, that will be the final edition under Gay's helm. She was the founder of FootPrints and has been a strong, devoted editor for this quarterly publication/ministry. Gay's leadership will be missed. A successor is being recruited, and Gay has offered to train that person.

We continued to recruit greeters for the Sunday services, but none are scheduled for January at either service.

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY, SARAH MANRO

The four midweek Advent dinners and services in December were each attended by 25-30 (or so) people. The meals followed as previous years. Thank you to Council, Youth, Sausage and Scripture, and the Praise Band for hosting each week! The crafts were well received and a fun change!

The new Wednesday night Fellowship night met a couple times before Advent. I believe 3-4 families attended each. I've been in contact with Ben Black about resuming this weekly get-together and he told me they are considering leaving Bethel so will not be continuing with this group. Unless someone else steps up to take this over, it is indefinitely on hold.

In my personal life, I started a job at Noblesville West Middle School Dec. 12. I work four days a week with Wednesdays off and have the same schedule (same breaks and days/holidays off) as my boys. After 19 years staying home pretty much full time, this is a big change for my family to adjust to and my free time is much more limited. I will not be able to help as much as I have with activities/events outside the area of Fellowship and Finance.

MISSIONS, RANDY BASKERVILLE

We received a \$1,600 check from Central Indiana Community Foundation. The missions committee added \$179.25, allowing Bethel to provide gifts for 28 youth, who ranged in age from 2 to 27 years old.

Kitchen supplies, \$124.04

Wreath Across America, \$56.79

Hamilton County Navy Club Homeguard, \$50.00

We received \$220.93 from Kroger for the period of July 1 to Sept. 30 with 94 households participating.

We pair the Great Commission of \$1,200.00

I will hand deliver a \$4,500 check Feb. 4 to Pastor Eddy Perez.

MUSIC AND WORSHIP MINISTRY, LINC SCHNEIDER

Our organist candidate Sharon Watson signed the agreement, and we now have a committed organist. I am going to meet with her on her goals and see where we might expand her heart with her talents. I know we will occasionally have fill-ins, Ernie Schaumber and Kathy Bloom. Looking to have fill-ins for Saturday night music. Amy and Aiden filled in a week in December. Praise for 11:11 is still going well.

The reading/ushering teams and altar guild are stilling going ok but could use more volunteers. The AV team is still taking shape as John Patterson is looking to back away from those responsibilities under his part-time commitment.

I have not seen attendance numbers, but it seems they are not going down, but not going up either. Special thanks to Mary Jo for stepping in to preach for Pastor Dave.

PROPERTY, JEFF REISING

Farmhouse work continues, and it really has made a significant difference. All but one room is completed with paint, new flooring and an added touch of quarter round on the baseboard by Mike Husek. The one room left needs some stuff removed, the carpet pulled, flooring installed, and everything painted. Sounds like a lot but compared to where we were, it's nothing. If you want to help, reach out to me or Pastor Doug, who has been doing a large portion of the work.

The zoning meeting for the farm property will Feb. 6th. I may not be back in town, but Mark has agreed to go if necessary. All documentation and paperwork is in the Planning and Zoning Department hands.

As Mark will talk about and ask for a vote on, expenditures over and above donations are around \$4,000-5,000, most of which has recently been reimbursed to my credit card company. There are some other things that we would like to do including:

1. Activating the alarm system to increase security there.
2. Add a phone and internet connection, especially for Marilyn's Place, but also for potentially having an outreach program in addition to the pantry.
3. Outdoor lighting rehab around the house.
4. Replace toilets and sink.
5. Install a handicap ramp.
6. Etc.

Earmarking the \$10,000 from the building fund will allow us an amount we can all agree on, while not spending all of the money (hopefully).

I am working on a real-life property committee that divvies up responsibilities of oversight and will email it out when finished and reviewed.

SMALL GROUPS, MARK HECKMAN

Groups with a few exceptions continued to meet through the holiday season. Possible new, future groups include Bible Reading 365, and Action Groups that will be presented by Vic Hanson at the Jan. 17th Council Meeting

Active Groups Include:

- Sausage and Scripture
- Circle of Sisters
- Women on Wednesday
- Monday Night Men's Group

- Sisters Without Misters
- Creative Spirits
- Mid-Week Fellowship
- Garage Night
- Above and Beyond (recently out of HS)

Goals for Life Groups for 2022-23 remain focused on:

1. Establishing a periodic ministry presentation from each of these groups, which could manifest in a video or in-person ministry moment during a worship service from a member of each group, providing a quick overview of the group's activities and offering invitations to new members.
2. Updating our website and collateral information (to include Educational Wing Hallway) with interactivity that would enable online connection to each group for sign-ups and more information.
3. Re-thinking how we showcase these groups beyond the annual Ministry Fair. Early thinking is a video production that could be assembled and played on our website as well as during announcements. This same video production could play in rotation on selected monitors in the church on weekends and other special service times.

STEWARDSHIP, MARY JO MIKULSKI

This month I am attempting to lift up a continuation of our Stewardship program, Being a Biblical Giver. As a result, I gave a sermon on Jan. 14/15 about as a part of being a Biblical Giver, our giving is a part of our living our Christian life in an effort to be more holy or saint like.

Next month I would like to have someone from council give a brief testimony on why they give to Bethel and how it helps their walk with the Lord. Are there any volunteers? I feel that everyone on council is amply capable of giving a brief talk on why they give. So please see me to volunteer.

We had 56 units fill out commitment cards and I am hoping there are others who are committed in their hearts if not on a card. Please pray that we are able to meet our budget as we are doing a lot of God's work in our church and in our community.

Blessings on our ability to give.

YOUTH MINISTRY, JIM HERR AND EDDIE BURKS

Eddie called a meeting of the Youth committee (Dream Team) that met Jan. 12, where Eddie walked us through past events and future plans for January and February. We recapped the Youth caroling event and moved on to planned events.

Eddie shared a vision of 'Connect 4' for Youth this upcoming year:

1. Connect with Christ
2. Connect with Church
3. Connect with Community
4. Connect with Charity

The foundation for all the activities will be viewed through this lens, and the focus will be on these four connections.

On Jan. 14, the Youth had a cupcake baking competition where 6 teams competed and made cupcakes. The remaining cupcakes from the event were made available in the Narthex on Jan. 15 and

16. They had a great time, and the cupcakes were quite creative. Special thanks to the Robbins family for their vision and follow through on this event.

Starting Jan. 19, there will be a weekly Teen Trivia event at the church, starting at 7 p.m.

Jan. 22 will be a Family Fellowship night for the Youth and their families. This will re-occur the last Sunday of every month, starting at 5 p.m.

Plans are underway for Comedy Night, Feb. 10 in Fellowship Hall. Sarah has confirmed with the comedy acts and the Youth will pull together the theme, food, and decorations. A special thanks to Sarah for helping us get this going and for her guidance going forward.

Feb. 11 will be the Winter Jam at Banker's Life Fieldhouse and Eddie and the gang will be attending. This is a large Christian event focused on music and fellowship, and the kids really enjoyed it last year.

Eddie spoke of a potential new scholarship, and we discussed some of the ideas. He is continuing to explore based upon the guidance of the committee.

Brian Robbins suggested, and Marinara in March event and we all thought that sounded pretty fun for the youth. That is still in development but will likely have a similar format as the cupcake baking competition.