

Bethel Lutheran Church Council
Minutes, February 21, 2023
Approved March 21, 2023

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

Mark Heckman called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m. Pastor Dave led an opening prayer.

Minutes

One correction was proposed: Gary Helgemo was incorrectly identified as Jeff Helgemo in the draft January 17 minutes. Jeff Reising moved, and it was seconded, that the January minutes be approved as corrected. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Giving in January, which was a five-Sunday month, was about \$52,000, compared to an anticipated \$64,000. Giving in the first three weeks of February averaged about \$11,000 per week; we need \$13,000.

The remaining debt on the farmhouse is about \$36,000. Mary Jo Mikulski suggested people with unfulfilled pledges for this purchase be reminded what they pledged. Mark Heckman will do that and report to Council how much of the outstanding amount is attributed to pledges made to give in 2023. The Finance Committee will discuss the equity implications.

Harold Seamon reported that there was some confusion over the organist's pay. Linc Schneider will write a voucher for payment every two weeks to end the confusion.

While some work was being done on the organ, it was discovered that the bellows need to be rebuilt, which is estimated to cost \$3,000 for each of the two bellows. This was not budgeted, so Harold suggested riding it out for the time being, and then consider using memorial funds when we are ready to act.

Because giving remained strong through COVID, Bethel did not qualify for the federal Employee Retention Act funds.

Sunday School/Preschool Update

A proposed working relationship between Bethel and Legacy Christian School was presented that would rent (except for the first three months) unused space on the first floor of the Education wing to the school, which has run out of space due to steadily growing enrollment and high demand. The presentation outlined the term of agreement and incentives; expense sharing and rent, including a quarterly financial review; operations; marketing; and facilities to be used. Bethel and LCS share a common vision that could become a bigger relationship in the future. Laura Houser, Bethel Preschool director, has been regularly involved in the discussions, and the Legacy board was presented with the same information.

Under the plan, the Bethel Preschool would merge with LCS, and all Bethel preschool staff members would work for Legacy. The school is not looking for physical alterations to the building. If any would

arise, LCS would have to bring the proposal to the Council. Bethel would designate a person to coordinate operations and be a liaison between the school and the church. The critical importance of Bethel using the space for the rummage sale had been emphasized to LCS.

The proposed agreement is for three years, with LCS paying \$3,500 per month for the first floor. If at some point space on the second floor is needed, the rent would increase to \$7,677 per month. The committee that has been involved in the talks is confident Bethel's expenses will be covered.

The partnership would bring young families into the building five days a week, opening doors to participation in Bethel events and membership.

Questions were raised about how to market the partnership as a joint operation in God's calling, how to explain the plan to the congregation as soon as possible, and how giving the school use of the first floor might cause disruptions to other groups that meet at Bethel (Boy Scouts, Bible studies, the home school group, etc.).

After lengthy discussion, Sarah Manro moved, and Steve Middleton seconded, to approve the proposed relationship between Bethel and Legacy Christian School with the understanding that plans will be shared immediately with the congregation via mail, email and in person at a forum between services on Sunday, Feb. 26. Motion passed unanimously.

Farmhouse Zoning

The Noblesville Board of Zoning Appeals approved the farmhouse zoning. Jeff Reising said a little work is yet to be done inside and outside, and that Marilyn's Place is eager to move in. A blessing service will be scheduled.

Office Transition

The office transition is going well. A meeting with the staff will soon be held.

Care Pastor

Mark shared proposed expectations for a care pastor, inviting Council members to give him comments and suggestions. Because Pastor Doug wants to continue being involved in Bethel's ministry, the proposal intends for him to have this position, being paid \$200 per week for 10-15 hours of ministry per week. The Care Committee needs to consider the proposal. Action was tabled to the March Council meeting.

Ministry Wall

Mary Jo urged members to update their ministry's bulletin boards in the hallway between the Narthex and the Education wing.

Worship Attendance

Attendance at weekend services so far this year is 15-20 percent lower than 2022. It was suggested that the congregation be surveyed quarterly, using a short, simple form, to get worshippers involved, to share ideas and to get their thoughts.

Fellowship

Eddie Burks was commended for a fantastic Comedy Night. Other fellowship ideas were suggested: routinely involving Legacy Christian School families, including as soon as the April 8 Easter Egg Hunt, an

event that encourages grandparents to bring grandchildren to church, a Mother's Day tea, a Daddy-Daughter Dance, a sports night with BBQ, an evening at Victory Field, extending the reach of the rummage sale with music, and a chili cook-off during March Madness.

Missions

Randy Baskerville said a letter was sent thanking the Central Indiana Community Foundation for the funds it provided that enabled Bethel to provide Christmas gifts for children. The Missions Committee hopes the funding is given annually.

By consensus, the Council decided to use the Lenten offering for the NALC Disaster Relief

Shred Day

The Shred Day that Harold Seamon organized to get rid of outdated financial records and that was open to the congregation was a great success. About 54 boxes of documents were shredded, half from the congregation, half from church records. A certificate that all had been securely disposed was given to Bethel.

Property

With warmer temperatures coming, Jeff Reising has renewed the plan to replace concrete in front of the church that includes a handicap-accessible curb cut. Three contractors are giving quotes. The estimated \$3,000-\$4,000 has already been given.

Judy Ottinger has given a gift to Bethel that will plant trees in the bed outside Pastor's office.

Jeff moved, and Steve seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously at 8:42 p.m.

Respectively submitted
Ros Demaree

FEBRUARY 2023 MINISTRY REPORTS

CARE MINISTRY

This is an open seat on the Council

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY, GARY HELGEMO

Attendance: Sunday School attendance continues to be a concern. In pre-K through High School, we are averaging 18 students total for the first six weeks of the year. Class size is lowest during weeks that are 3-day weekends with a Monday being a day off in the public-school calendar.

- Pre-K through 3rd grade averaged 5.33 students per week YTD 2023.
- 4th and 5th grade averaged 3.66 students per week YTD 2023.
- Confirmation averaged 3.83 students per week YTD 2023.
- High School averaged 4.5 students per week YTD 2023.

We are disappointed with our attendance but don't have any solutions. We would welcome any thoughts.

First Communion Class: First Communion class will be offered in March and will be taught by Pastor Doug. This will be offered primarily to the 4th grade students, though older students who have not been through the class can also be part of it.

Spring Break: We will not hold Sunday School classes on April 2 due to spring break and April 9, which is Easter.

Easter Egg Hunt: Our annual Easter Egg hunt will be on April 8 from 10-11:30 a.m. Lead coordinators will be Anna Marie Hill and Natasha Burks. More info to follow next month.

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

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY, ROS DEMAREE

The Lent/Easter issue of FootPrints published. Regrettably, it marks the final issue under Gay Hanson's leadership. Her devotion to the quarterly magazine that she created and built has never faltered, and FootPrints has never disappointed. Five people have been approached to succeed Gay; two have yet to respond, so hopefully are prayerfully considering it. Gay has offered to train the new editor(s). She has also been trying to recruit new writers, as that team has lost some participants.

Development of the 2022 annual report started. Reports from the various ministry leaders are being submitted.

MUSIC AND WORSHIP MINISTRY, LINC SCHNEIDER

The organist position is now under contract as we continue to understand more of what Sharon would like to do at our church. We will need a repair done to the organ (approximate cost is \$6,000), and we are working on financial solutions to get this done.

The 11:11 worship continue to hum along. Currently, the 5:30 service is led by me with help from Mike Musik and the Youth. With Mike we are moving as long as his health will allow. Lenten services will be in Fellowship Hall, so there will be no midweek Lenten music.

We continue to need volunteers for AV and all areas of worship. A big thanks to all the volunteers who are making each weekend happen with very few disruptions.

SMALL GROUPS, MARK HECKMAN

Small Groups (Life Groups) continued to meet as much as practical through the Christmas holiday season and for the most part have resumed their efforts in January and on into February.

Active Groups as of January include Sausage and Scripture, Circle of Sisters, Women on Wednesday, Monday Night Men's Group, Sisters without Misters, Creative Spirits, and Garage Night. One of our newest groups, Wednesday Night Fellowship has stopped meeting as we are looking for a new group leader there to resume the great start that Ben and Melissa Black provided.

With new group opportunities emerging as we approach spring, Mark is tasked with updating the graphics and information with a lot of help from Holly. As the wall in the Educational Wing is updated, I

will work with Holly (and perhaps Gay, based upon her availability) to use similar graphics and content to update the Bethel website (ministry page).

Also on the "to do" list for February is to provide a more macro update of Life Group activity for the Bethel Annual Report. My hope is to use some of the new graphics to be developed in that effort. My goal remains 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.