

**Bethel Lutheran Church Council**  
**Minutes, April 18, 2023**  
**Approved May 16, 2023**

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

Eddie Burks offered an opening prayer. Mark Heckman called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m.

**Minutes**

Jim Herr moved, and Jeff Reising seconded, to approve the March 21, 2023, minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**Annual Rummage Sale**

Jill Duncan, leader of the June 15-17 Rummage Sale, brought concerns about filling the many volunteer positions, particularly room leaders, needed to organize, set up, staff and tear down the sale. She reminded all that the sale provides community outreach and builds fellowship among congregants. A successful sale also could help ease the current budget deficit. The council determined:

- Mark Heckman will invite Legacy Christian School to volunteer at the rummage sale and offer it a table to distribute preschool information and registration.
- Upcoming Spring Renewal talks during weekend services will include a call for volunteers.
- Harold Seamon and Randy Baskerville will pick up heavy and oversized donations from donors' homes.
- Jill will work with the office staff to send a congregation-wide eblast about sale needs.
- Sarah Manro will create an electronic sign-up that can be part of the eblast.
- Clipboards will be passed during worship services to encourage volunteers to sign up.

**Treasurer's Report**

The need for training back-up people to do financial tasks must become a priority. A family emergency took Sarah Manro out of town for several weeks, leaving no one trained to enter offerings into the books. Harold Seamon provided a preliminary report on March finance; a final report will be sent to all when the numbers are available.

March expenses were about \$46,000. They went down in most areas except salary and benefits because it was a three pay-period month. Estimated revenue was \$50,000. Harold believes the best-case scenario will be a loss of \$3,399 in March. The in-plate offering Easter weekend was \$13,242. The following weekend, it was \$3,208, the lowest Harold remembers of any week since he's been treasurer.

Steve Horton reported that Larry Gray is working to transfer the ownership of credit cards from Pastor Doug. The bank will not allow the church to own the cards; the owner must be a person. The Finance Committee will solve problems identified with who has access to the cards.

Steve reviewed the procedure for submitting receipts for payment. This and some bookkeeping tasks need to be included in office cross-training, so vouchers are complete and submitted on time to avoid late charges.

Jamie Wilkinson is among several new people on the Finance Committee. She has volunteered to track budget and expenses for reports to the Council.

Actions are being taken to switch waste services as a cost-cutting measure. The Republic contract requires notice if we intend to end the contract early and the opportunity to give a competitive bid. Manifold is considerably less costly at \$120 per week.

### **Bethel Spring Renewal Plan: Visitor Evangelism**

We must get more intentional with visitors. They meet Bethel staff and members and receive a gift bag, but no one is following up with them after services. We need a process for following up and someone to lead the process, as well as a greeting team.

We need to figure out how to turn eventgoers (such as the 17 visiting youth at the April 15 Sneakers Ball) into worshippers and members. Eddie advocated for making time in services to reach out to visitors. The 11:11 service seems particularly well positioned for attracting families, though it needs an infusion of energy. Jim Herr moved, and Jeff Reising seconded, to make Eddie Burks the point person to present ideas to Pastor Dave to give the 11:11 service a livelier vibe, while being certain to contain the four required elements of every service. Motion passed unanimously. Mary Jo Mikulski volunteered to work with Eddie.

Mark and Steve Middleton will meet with Pastor Doug and Eddie to develop a plan for visitor follow-up. In the meantime, it was agreed that becoming intentional starts with council members. Each one will take a month to visit visitors. All were asked to send Mark examples of what we've experienced as visitors at other churches that worked well.

### **Vacation Bible School**

Instead of a VBS in June, Bethel will host a Back to School Bash (carnival) in mid- to late July when parents are looking for activities. LCS families can be invited so it becomes an opportunity for the congregation to engage with the preschool before it opens. This is a way Bethel can stay laser-focused on attracting families with children as members. Gary Helgemo and Eddie will create a plan, recruit people to be involved.

### **Library**

Legacy Christian School will use the room that houses the library. Because it is a little used but still valuable asset, it will be broken up and moved. Children's books could be put in classrooms. Videos and CDs can be stored on shelves in the vacant music director's office. The remainder of the library can be downsized and moved elsewhere. Jeff Reising, Gary Helgemo and Mary Jo Mikulski will work on this.

### **Nominating Committee**

Linc Schneider has agreed to run for a second term. Mary Jo is looking for candidates to fill the only other seat open this year on the Council, a person representing the Care Ministry. Pastor Doug is being asked for suggestions.

### **Property**

Weeds have been sprayed and the entire property has been mulched. Jim Herr has started tilling ground for the cornfield. Jeff will meet with LCS April 19 to create a To Do list of needs.

Due to spring break, the LCS board has not yet approved the contract to use Bethel. Mark continues to stay on top of this.

### **Missions**

NALC Disaster Relief is building another disaster trailer with showers in Connersville. The generator sent to Florida will be returned to Connersville. Missions is asking for donations of hygiene kits, including full-sized bath towels.

Randy Baskerville was able to purchase about \$750 of shovels, rakes and brooms for the disaster relief warehouse. About 250 flood buckets were the only items left in the warehouse after the April tornadoes. Circle of Sisters provided prayer shawls.

Bethel send \$4,500 to Senbete. For security concerns, that is the maximum it can send; it represents 39 percent of the congregation's annual income. That congregation started with seven people. It now has more than 300 members.

Thank you letters for donations made through Missions are posted on the bulletin board.

### **Annual Report**

The annual report needs to be produced before the June congregation meeting. Ros Demaree needs to receive submissions ASAP.

Sarah moved, and Randy seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously at 9:04 p.m., followed by saying the Lord's Prayer.

Respectively submitted  
Ros Demaree

## **MARCH 2023 MINISTRY REPORTS**

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

#### **Attendance:**

Our Sunday School classes for grades pre-K through high school are leveling at a total average of 18 students year to date. Below is a breakdown of each class. We are excited about the Legacy merger and feel that we can get some children and families into our church family.

- Pre-K through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade averaged 6.1 students per week from January 8<sup>th</sup> through March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade averaged 3.9 students per week from January 8<sup>th</sup> through March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Confirmation averaged 3.6 students per week from January 8<sup>th</sup> through March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- High School averaged 4.5 students per week from January 8<sup>th</sup> through March 12<sup>th</sup>.

#### **First Communion Class:**

First Communion class is being offered this month to students in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade and is being taught by Pastor Doug. Four students who are in the class will be ready to make their first communion on Maundy Thursday.

#### **Spring Break:**

We will not hold Sunday School classes on April 2<sup>nd</sup> due to spring break and April 9<sup>th</sup> which is Easter.

**Easter Egg Hunt:**

Our annual Easter Egg hunt will be on April 8<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 11:30am. The lead coordinators are Anna Marie Hill and Natosha Burks. There will be a bounce house for the children as well as the Easter Egg Hunt. We will serve hot dogs and chips. This is a great outreach event; we have fliers in the pre-school inviting children and their families and neighbors to the Easter Egg Hunt.

**Sunday School Recognition:**

Mark your calendars for May 21<sup>st</sup>, 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**

Five people were asked to prayerfully consider succeeding Gay Hanson as FootPrints editor or co-editor. None felt they were called to do that, so the search continues. Gay plans to edit one more edition, creating a little more time to search for a replacement, and provide training. Some excellent work was done to upgrade Bethel's website. Material for the 2022 annual report continued to be requested.

**FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY, SARAH MANRO**

Midweek Lent dinners before the service are happening. Of the three so far, I've only been able to go to one and it was well attended. Sounds like the others have been as well.

After Easter I'd like to start a weekly group to view and discuss The Chosen. Not sure if this would be better as a Wednesday night or Sunday between services. I need a couple of people who have been watching the show to help lead discussions.

**MUSIC AND WORSHIP, LINC SCHNEIDER**

We continue to seek volunteers for AV and Saturday worship music. I am the only one at this point to lead the Saturday services. 8:45 and 11:11 are humming along with Sharon and the Praise Group.

The organ at some point will need repaired as we are on borrowed time. Working on the needed funding.

Anxious to see how we can work together with the Preschool and growth with their families. I believe there will be many opportunities forthcoming with participation in worship and other arts activities during the week.

**SMALL GROUPS, MARK HECKMAN**

Small Groups (Life Groups) continued to meet through the month of February. Active Groups as of February include Sausage and Scripture, Circle of Sisters, Women on Wednesday, Monday Night Men's Group, Sisters without Mistrs, Creative Spirits, and Garage Night.

With new group opportunities emerging as we approach Spring, Holly was outstanding in producing new graphics for each of the active groups and the Ministry Wall in the hallway towards the educational center has now been updated with current Life Group information and ability to sign up.

I will work with Holly (and perhaps Gay, based upon her availability) to use similar graphics and content.

April and May will be a great time to encourage new groups to be formed. I will use my ministry moment time in the upcoming weeks to focus on some out-of-doors-oriented groups that may be inclined to start as the weather warms.

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.

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

Greetings my fellow Bethelites, I pray all is well; we wanted to give some updates on the youth ministry. I would first like to say that Bethel Youth are amazing, and I am truly blessed to be here to serve this group of young people. The youth here have endured some very difficult times and yet they persevere.

The youth band continues to practice and lead worship, the youth have been meeting for Trivia (Bible Study) on Thursday nights via Zoom. The youth have also been hosting events, that is allowing new people to visit our campus. Events such as the Bake-off competition, Marinara Party and Comedy Night to name a few.

Comedy Night was bigger than we expected: we had 105 people in attendance, and we raised over \$2,000, which we want to use for a Youth Retreat and Summer Camp. The youth will continue to host family friendly events to draw more people to Christ and our loving church; we will continue to look for opportunities to engage the curious. The youth ministry is in a rebuilding stage, and we will continue to fight until we have a thriving youth ministry that's impacting this generation for Jesus Christ.

In His Love, Eddie