

Bethany Lutheran Church
Meeting December 9, 2019

The meeting was called to order by President Hughes at 6:30 p.m.

Members present were Nancy Bruns, Linda Black, Cheryl Fischer, Curt Casper, Del Hughes, Alan Beyer, Wayne Frauenholtz, Dave Bahnsen, and Pastor Whaley. Absent was Tonya Samuelson.

Pastor Chad led opening devotions with a reading from Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 followed by a reflection on special moments at Bethany this past year and opportunities for our congregation.

Pastor's Report: Report to Council – December 9, 2019

Grace and peace from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Advent is upon us and as I put out the banner at the top of the stairs in the Narthex, I observed the words found on it: joy, peace, hope and love. These are words to pray about, center ourselves in, and ponder during this season as we await the celebration of Christ's birth and the eventual second coming of our Lord. Perhaps, we may even consider creating a journal each day noting our observations about life together in Christ here at Bethany and in the larger church. What brings us joy here at Bethany? How does being part of the body of Christ instill in us a sense of peace? How does faith bring us hope today? How do we experience the love of Christ by being part of this community? Blessings on your Advent journey! As I write this article, I answered those questions:

- What brings me joy as your pastor and part of the people of God at Bethany?
 - Today, I find myself resting in the joy of knowing I am not alone in my walk with God. I am surrounded by a community of faith that cares for me and my family. I am supported by our Bishop and his staff and colleagues within the Southeastern Iowa Synod and beyond.
- How does being part of the body of Christ instill in me a sense of peace?
 - Well, certainly that also comes through my answer above but I am reflecting on a situation recently in which I was struggling with something causing me anxiety, uncertainty and even a bit of fear and the peace of Christ came to me through one of our faithful members helping shed light on the situation at hand and be a calming and wise voice.
- How does faith bring me hope today?
 - Faith is the gift that instills in me the hope God will continue to provide for our needs at Bethany.
- How do I experience the love of Christ as part of this community?
 - Yesterday, I visited one of our senior saints who always inquires about how I am doing and how my family is doing? It's a short, simple question but it's filled with sincerity and rooted in the love of Christ.

I am not going to give a long list of what has been done since our last meeting but rather highlight just a few items: completed reviews of staff with assistance from Linda Black (worship) and Curt Casper (custodial), Emergency Management Team Meeting (made visits with Al Beyer to local restaurants and convenience stores to form partnerships in providing meals should we have to put in place our shelter), WBARC (West Branch Area Religious Council) meeting (continue to discuss and discern our future ministry and mission together), worked with local police and others on several cases of requests for assistance within the West Branch community, had a Turning Point meeting with Scott and Paula to discuss the future (reevaluating current strategy to be more in line with focus of the Saturday learning forums – next one is January 18, 2020), as part of the FreeIndeed Outside Council (Prison Ministry) worked to find candidates (nominating committee) to replace those whose terms are ending and all the other day-to-day activities and will take part in the process of searching for and hiring new pastor, & 12 pastoral visits.

A short discussion on WBARC and Bethany's role followed the report.

Secretary's Report:

Cheryl moved to accept the secretary's report as amended. Dave seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurers's Report:

The November General Fund Income and Expense report reflects revenues of \$13,044 and expenses of \$11,472 for a net gain of \$1,572 for the month of November. There is approximately \$3,200 balance in the account. A baptismal bowl was purchased with funds from the Temporary Memorial Fund.

Curt moved and Linda seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed.

Building and Grounds:

- The carpets in the stairway and the Great Hall were cleaned.
- A light next to the Great Hall needs to be replaced.
- Curt salted the parking lot this evening after a snow squall.

Education: no report

Evangelism and Outreach:

The Designated Shelter Committee met on November 18th and will meet again next week to finalize plans. Supplies are in place, signs made, duties outlined and assigned, and food vendors have been contacted.

Fellowship:

- November 4th Sunday Meal was a great success and plans are being made for the Dec. 29th meal.
- Cookie Walk made \$857 with a \$712 profit and quilters made \$210 at Christmas Past.

Stewardship: no report

Youth: no report

Worship and Music:

- Altar Care schedule is done for next year.
- Lector schedule is done for next year.
- The pianos will be tuned by Arlen Ottmar on December 19th.
- Poinsettias are being ordered.
- We have a new bowl for the baptismal font.

Old Business:

- A Memorial Committee has been formed and will be meeting in February.
- Little Free Food Pantry project will be done in the spring.
- The audit committee has been formed.
- The nominating committee is in place.
- Paula Casper and Dave Bahnsen have expressed interest in attending the 2020 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly. Final candidates will be selected at Bethany's Annual Meeting.

New Business:

- Budget Committee has met to propose next year's budget. Considerable discussion was held concerning the projected budget deficit. Nancy said that expenses have risen about 2% and revenues are fairly flat. Local Missions outreach will need \$6080 in this year's budget. Cheryl moved to add an additional line item for the Local Mission offerings separate from next year's General Budget and to accept the rest of the General Budget as proposed. Linda seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- The council continues to encourage Simply Giving method for offerings.
- Wayne moved and Linda seconded to give Jill Barnhart a \$500 bonus for her music ministry.
- Cheryl moved to move \$10,000 from the Mission Investment Fund into the General Fund. Wayne seconded. Motion passed.
- Nancy composed a letter to the congregation regarding the budget. Discussion was held regarding the wording and timing for distribution. It was decided to put it in the weekly newsletter and copies will also be placed in the mailboxes.
- Christmas Eve offerings: Al moved and Nancy seconded to give 10% of the Christmas Eve offering to the school hunger program. Motion passed.
- Wayne moved to distribute the 4% Local Mission offerings (2 ½ % to mission outreach and 1 ½ % to internal ministries), the same as we did last year. Cheryl seconded. Motion passed.
- Bethany will celebrate its 125th Anniversary next year.

Dave moved and Curt seconded to adjourn. Motion passed.

Meeting closed at 8:50 with the Lord's Prayer.

Following the December 9, 2019 council meeting, two amendments were proposed. Due to the time sensitive nature of these two proposals President Hughes along with Pastor Chad deemed it necessary to communicate to the council and vote on these amendments via electronic format as allowed by our Constitution under C.12.12.01. Our Constitution also states that the results of this vote will be ratified and entered into the minutes at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The email sent on December 16, 2019 was:

I am forwarding this information on behalf of Council President Del Hughes. We are requesting your electronic vote on 2 items, which is allowed by our Constitution. Please respond “yes” or “no” to each item “1.” and “2.” below by this Wednesday, December 18 to Del at: hughesdelsue05@gmail.com

The items in consideration are:

1. At the December 9, 2019 meeting, Council approved designating 10% of Christmas Eve offerings to School Hunger Programs. Upon follow-up with the school, we have learned funds for the programs are sufficient to meet current needs. Therefore, in conversations with the local Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) Cedar County coordinator whom we have developed a partnership with, it has been suggested Christmas Eve offerings of 10% be directed toward assisting with Domestic Violence victims directly in the West Branch community of which there are currently 9 clients. These funds could possibly be used to purchase Jack and Jill gift cards or other needed items.
2. At the December 9, 2019 meeting, Council approved the 2020 budget. Since that time, an amendment has been suggested and is recommended by the Executive Committee to eliminate the Internal Ministry percentage (1.5%), which is included in the “Local Mission” line item (4%). This would reduce the 2020 budget expenditures by \$2280 helping to bring expenses more in line with projected revenues. Currently, the Internal Ministry fund has a balance of \$3528.32, which is sufficient to support ministries such as Quilting and Hope Chest.

Please contact Del or Pastor Chad with any questions. Thanks everyone!

Pastor Chad

Results:

8 responses were received all voting “yes” on item 1 and 2 above. Motions passed unanimously.

*Ratified and added to December 2019 minutes at January 13, 2020 Council meeting.