

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
DECEMBER 14, 2017

**Attendance:**

Pastor Christopher Miller – present  
Ron Harapat, Pres – present  
Jan Olson, Vice Pres – present  
Linda Dahlman, Sec – present  
Jerry Wiedebush – present

Jacqueline Whitehorn – excused  
Kelly Jorgenson – present  
RobinLynn Stobart – excused  
Mike Nelson – present  
Kathy Buffington – present

**Opening Meditation:** Pastor led devotion, from John 16:19-33, and prayer time beginning at 6:33 PM in the church library. Prayers were lifted for 10 (ten) individuals or situations.

**Meeting called to order** at 6:51 PM by Ron.

**Correspondence:** None

**Minutes:** Minutes of November 9, 2017 meeting were **approved**.

**Treasurer's Report:** Report for November 2017 was **approved**. Discussion on 2018 proposed budget. Motion made and seconded to adopt the proposed budget as presented. **Motion carried.**

**Pastor's Report:** November 10 – December 12, 2017

We made the difficult decision at our previous council meeting to retire the All Aboard program. I asked to keep it going until December 13, so that we could have a proper sendoff. Unfortunately, that did not happen. The two other kids that have been consistent with the program, besides my daughter, are both involved in the White Christmas presentation, and would be practicing and unable to attend. Therefore, the final All Aboard was on November 29. All Aboard served its purpose in this congregation for many years, but it is time for us to find new ways to serve the youth of our community.

On November 19, we polled the congregation about the possibility of moving to weekly Communion. The results were 39-29 to stay with our current practice. I want to thank the congregation for taking the time to think about the Lord's Supper deeply, and I pray that we continue to treat the Sacrament as the gift that it is.

Confirmation is chugging along nicely. Attendance has been pretty consistent, and we've had a great time working through the book of Romans over the last 4 weeks. We will have one more session before our Christmas break. The students are also doing a very good job with serving on Sundays, and we've already incorporated them into our scheduling for January-March, which I worked on with the Worship & Music committee on December 7.

Much of the month has been taken up by preparation for Advent and Christmas. We've had our first soup supper already, back on December 6. There will be two more on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. This

coming Sunday, the 17<sup>th</sup>, our students and choir will have their Christmas program together this year. There have been a lot of moving parts, but I believe that everything will come together in time. We will once again have our Blue Christmas service on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and three services on Christmas Eve, the usual Sunday morning service, and then the two Christmas Eve services.

After Christmas Eve, I will be taking the first 7 days of Christmas off. I will then be back to work on January 2.

#### Visits

2 pastoral

3 homebound

6 phone calls

\*In addition: Pastor travelled to Dutton, Montana, to officiate the funeral service for Tommy Larson.

**President's Report:** Good December morning to you all. As I look out my window this morning, 12/13, it looks like we may have a white Christmas after all. My wish for you is to enjoy the holiday season with family and friends, and to watch for the coming of Christ in all the people and activities you encounter. Merry Christmas!

This month your executive board (Jan, Linda and myself) met to compile our annual evaluation of Pastor's work at Bethany. After comparing notes together, and listening to other members, we met with Pastor to discuss with him our observations. We found, of course, both areas of strength and areas that need improvement. I've met with Pastor every first Thursday of the month this year to help prepare for the next council meeting. This being my first year as your president, I feel this meeting time has helped us both develop a good working relationship. I look forward to a future where we both grow in our work and cooperation with each other and those in our congregation. If you'd like to review our board's work and evaluation please see me at your convenience.

Our annual congregational meeting is scheduled for January 28<sup>th</sup>. Chris is requesting you have your reports turned in by Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>.

Ron

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Worship and Music:** In December, Mike Nelson and Jacqueline Whitehorn met with Pastor Christopher and scheduled the worship assistants for January through March 2018. We worked on scheduling more youth to assist on Sunday mornings.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mike Nelson and Jacqueline Whitehorn

**Property:** Guess we did not do a lot. I did review our insurance and any of you can, it is in the office.

The church building is 18,445 sf ins. For \$2,542,000 Ark is 6560 sf ins for \$688,000 Directors and officers liability is one million. Buildings and contents insured for a total of \$4,135,000

Policy period is 12-10-17 to 12 10-20.

Annual premium is \$8,535.00

Would be nice to get that premium lower. We have a five thousand deductible now and maybe need to raise that.

Jerry and Kelly

**Congregational Life:** RobinLynn and Linda met to discuss Adopt-A-Room and nursery supervision.

To refresh memories, Adopt-A-Room is mainly for the library and nursery, with certain storage areas also included.

The library seems to have become a storage room for items that have nothing to do with the library e.g. the cabinet for Prayer Shawl supplies. That group has not met at the church for this activity for some time. There is also a stack of boxes in the corner-does anyone know who these belong to or why they are in the library? The building has ample storage space for items that do not contribute to the library function.

The counter where the coffee pot is located is always cluttered. The library should be a neat, calm space for meeting, counseling, praying, etc. Those who volunteer for the library would be asked to keep the room clean and clutter-free. Linda talked to Jan Olson about the need for someone(s) to actually catalog books, etc. We felt this wasn't necessary and could encourage library users to return their books to the shelves themselves. Storage areas e.g. the big storage room on the east end of the basement hallway, and the storage closet behind the choir room could benefit from "adoption". Kari Nelson does a fantastic job with the seasonal decoratives room now.

We will vigorously pursue Adopt-A-Room volunteers after Christmas.

A primary concern right now is the nursery, and for several reasons. The A-a-R would ask that the nursery and its contents be deep-cleaned once a year (sterilizing toys; discarding broken or little-used items). The room is constantly a mess, with toys not being put away after the room is used. Everyone who uses the room will be reminded that they are responsible for returning items to their proper places before they leave.

Parents will be reminded that the nursery is for preschool children, ages 0-5 years old. When older children come they tend to be disruptive and noisy.

Our *BLC Youth Safety Policy* states on page 3: “F. Nursery Use. The nursery is unsupervised but still available for use. Parents are asked to stay to supervise their child’s play. If they cannot stay to supervise, they are asked to be aware who is with their child.” (my underline) Given that we have a Youth Safety Policy, and that this committee’s goal is to provide supervised care for every worship service, we suggest that this section be revisited. The top of page 3 of the policy begins with “Any youth ministry leader or volunteer...” is required to undergo a background check. We will specifically ask adults who have already passed a background check to staff the nursery during worship services. Any who are willing to volunteer and haven’t had the background check will be required to do so, as the policy so states.

Respectfully submitted,  
RobinLynn and Linda

**Care Team:** This was a busy month. We provided 1 ride, 2 cards in written outreach and 6 meals for two families. Both these families need to be kept in prayer.

Thank you to everyone for another year of service on council.

Have a blessed Christmas.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sharon

**Beyond Our Walls:** Care Team arranged for several "kid friendly" casseroles to be sent with Pastor Christopher to the Larson family in Great Falls. Other than that, no activity.

Kathy and Jan

\*In addition: Besides the food sent with Pastor for the Larson family, a prayer shawl was sent for Dierdre, and quilts for the four children.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Electronic sign repair:** The estimated cost to repair the sign damage made by a bullet is \$1,000. Since we do not have the money to repair the sign at this time, it will not be fixed.

**Nominating Committee:** Jan Wiedebush, Nancy Lester, and Rebecca Miller are the nominating committee for new council members. One position for certain will be open, and a possibility for a second. Keith Kapelke and Marge Bagley indicated they are willing to stay on as Trust Fund committee members.

**Revision of Committees:** Discussion on the most current list of responsibilities for each of the 4 committees. It is noted that there is some overlap among the committees for responsibilities, and

that some activities are challenging to assign solely to one committee. Revisions will be discussed at the next meeting.

**NEXT MEETING:** January 11, 2018 at 6:30 PM in the church library

**COUNTERS:** December: Jan and Kelly  
January: Jacqueline and Kathy

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Dahlman  
Council Secretary