

St John's Bennington Lutheran Church

Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Sunday, November 14, 2021 after worship

Present: Denise Pierce, Jeff Seamans, Jerry Mixdorf, Willie Wolff, Dan Salisbury, Deanne Kuenstling, Joe Stafford, Brandy Zuck

Absent: Brenda Clark

Meeting called to order by Denise

1. Opening prayer by Pastor Beth.
2. Secretary's minutes by Deanne (It was decided that the secretary's minutes will not be read at future meetings. The minutes are available to all members in the Mustard Seed and on-line, prior to the meeting. Deanne will provide one set of minutes for anyone who wants to review them prior to the start of the meetings.)
 - a. Approved by Jerry, second by Brandy.
3. Financial Reports:
 - a. Treasurer Report by Brandy
 - I. Check book balance 10/31/21: \$38,676.17
 - ii. Savings balance 10/31/21: \$24,500.84
 - b. Financial Secretary Report by Brandy
 - I. General funds total for September: \$8,854.24. This includes \$1,000 for Lutheran World Relief and \$1,070 given for cranberry hymnals.
 1. Approved by Jeff, second by Joe
4. Presidents Report by Denise:
 - a. Welcome Pastor Beth!
 - b. Memorial money: (We received the large alter book, guitar hymnals, simplified playing version of the hymns). We have other undesignated memorial money from this past year for: Phyllis Mixdorf, Arnold Averhoff, May Mixdorf, Buck Joens and Sharon Kuhlman. There was discussion on the possibility of upgrading to LED lights and adding a couple trees/plants on the north side. We can involve the congregation in these decisions.
5. Committee reports:
 - a. Deacons: nothing new to report
 - b. Trustees: a new burn barrel has been installed.
6. Pastor's Report:
 - a. She has been averaging 20-22 hours, visiting shut-ins, first communion class, teaching confirmation, working on music. We discussed mailing the newsletter after one Sunday in the boxes. She is getting a file cabinet and wants help to clean out files.
7. Old business:

- a. Vanco offering via on-line giving: Jeff reports it is up and running. We have 6-8 people using it. We are ready to open it up to the entire congregation. Jeff or Bobbi will put a note in the newsletter. There will be an active link on the website.
 - b. LED lights: Pastor Beth asks if we are ready to do this. The lights in the narthex and sanctuary could be upgraded to LED. There was discussion on how to safely replace the bulbs. Joe will follow up on this project and start with the narthex.
 - c. Copier update: (For the office): It did run bulletins OK. We were going through Manchester in the past. Dan can follow up with cost and talk with Troy Belmer (was employed at Advance Systems). We need to follow up with Brenda and the copier needs.
 - d. Worship updates and possibilities, Blue, cranberry, online/projection
Advent and Christmas: Pastor Beth, started with the blue book, will put together on 11/28. Cranberry: accompanists are getting ready to do setting 10. January: plan to start singing in Cranberry hymnals. It brings seasonal variety. It allows for flexibility in the service. We will need more projectionists. Is Brenda willing to help with this? We need to use caution with asking youth due to other obligations and only 1 family is covering each Sunday for fellowship.
 - e. Installation Sunday: December 12: Pastor Brackett will be here. WELCA will add to the fellowship.
 - f. Education updates: Confirmation, First Communion, Christmas program: The Christmas program will be on Christmas Eve. Pastor Beth will be meeting with Bethany Anderson. Pastor is looking ahead to Lent for possible adult classes: Consider adult education during Sunday school.
 - g. Office furniture update: Chair is working. File cabinets need to be organized.
 - h. Establish constitution review team of 3. Jeff to approach possible team members.
8. New Business:
- a. Patterns of healthy communication: Pastor Beth wants to be in the loop. She was not aware of some of the events and plans that were occurring. Is there a channel of communication? Talking to Pastor directly is very important. She wants to be our guide and leader. Joe informed of outreach calls that are currently being done. Pastor Beth and Denise to proofread secretary minutes per Deanne's request.
 - b. Worship guests follow up: Who tracks visitors coming to SJB: We have not done this in the past. We have a guest sign in. Pastor Beth suggests thinking about how to improve this. We have not had a process for quite some time. We will start with deacons being more intentional with guests.
 - c. Covid #s on the rise: how will we keep community safe? Black Hawk Co is at 13%. We have worn masks in the past and social distanced. Council had a conversation about covid awareness, and we will work with the school system on following the same plan.
 - d. Whiteboard in large meeting room is needed. Jeff recommended we get a whiteboard. Denise will pick up the whiteboard.
 - e. Budget/stewardship. We have a meeting for Budget in December with current council president, upcoming president, and pastor. Brenda sends communications on when she needs annual reports submitted. Jeff reports that the Council picks stewardship and special projects in November. An "Opportunity for giving" envelope has been used in

the past. We need to be careful regarding giver burnout and fatigue. Consensus was reached: Opportunity for giving for this year: Bremwood, U of I Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach, (LCO), St John's Education Fund.

- f. Living Lutheran subscription: we already pay for this. Brandy will check with Brenda, as it is already in our budget and to make sure all members are getting it.
Helping Hands fund distribution: we have \$2500. (Lutheran World Relief comes out of Helping Hands fund). Several opportunities were discussed, including NEI food bank, Lutheran Chaplaincy, Lutheran Services in Iowa, NEIA Synod for leaders. Motion to donate \$700 to the NEI food bank for helping hands by Jeff, second by Jerry. Brandi will bring helping hands total for next month.
 - g. Izzy Hesse and Ellie Teisinger addressed the council regarding an upcoming group gathering for LYO to include snow sledding near Boone. The LYO is asking for financial support for admission into the event. The date is not set. Motion to approve covering admission for all attending the event out of our general funds by Jerry and second by Jeff.
 - h. Christmas Eve services: Planning 100 bags of treats with apples, peanuts. Jerry will get the peanuts. Motion to approve by Brandi, second by Willie.
9. Announcements:
- a. Motion to adjourn by Jeff, second by Joe.
 - b. All stood and said the Lord's Prayer.