

**Church Council Meeting
Bethany Lutheran Church
May 26, 2009**

Present: Pastor Ron Gluskamp, Pastor Ruth Ann Loughry, Kevin Dempsey, Peggy Furgason, Andy Gift, Heather Kekstadt, Joel Halvorson, Michelle Stone Kraus, Kevin McAuliffe, Karen Witt, Bill King, Becky Godec, Deb Bayles, Maren Dierks, Terry Pickett, Don Abram, Sherri Koelbel

Excused: Doug Aldrich, Andy Gift

Walk with Jesus: Heather Kekstadt

Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:20p.m.

April minutes were approved as written

Pastors' Report (No written report)

1. Pastor Ron thanked Council members for their support during the past few months of budget discussions and asked everyone to reflect on how Council deals with things going forward. He said that it's important for the leadership to be non-anxious in anxious times.
2. There was discussion regarding how to begin the healing process especially for those who did not vote to approve the budget. Pastor Ron said that it is important not to personalize any of the votes; people can have many reasons for voting against the budget. Joel pointed out that all of the membership never agrees on all of the issues and that this particular budget process served as a tool to get the discussion to the forefront. He observed that discussions have taken place in the past, but that on this occasion, leadership heard more about it. Pastor Ron reported that he had met with many people one-on-one to address questions they had. Sherri thanked the pastors for their communication during the process. Terry asked for prayers for those members who are finding it difficult to accept change. Pastor Ruth Ann pointed out that a healthy system allows for conflict and thanked Pastor Ron for instituting the Town Hall meetings to facilitate Q & A and discussion. Peggy said she felt that Council has become stronger and more united through the process.
3. Pastor Ruth Ann reported on Synod Assembly and said she would follow up with an article in the Beacon. She said there were great speakers on the topic of immigration and that she and the others had participated in immersion experiences.
4. Pastor Ruth Ann will be going on the Iowa mission trip with the youth, departing on June 13.
5. On May 27, Pastor Ron and Pastor Ruth Ann will be meeting with the Chancel Choir regarding the transition plan upon Kathy's departure. A subset of the Worship & Music Team will make up the search committee as well as outline the new position. Kathy will play for the 7:00, 9:00 and 11:00 services on Christmas Eve. Sheree Weverstad will serve as interim organist from September through December and is not a candidate for the position.

Finance Report: Kevin Dempsey, Joel Halvorson

1. See handout for April and year to date updates. Joel stated that he expects May contributions to be close to budget and is hopeful for \$144k in June general fund giving.
2. Joel is developing work plans for the administrative and custodial staff to continue to provide coverage, even though hours have been cut. He reported that Rit Vogel will have her health coverage in place until the end of the year.

Reflections on Budget Process

1. Discussion included:
 - a. Council consensus is that the communication provided to them by Joel and the pastors around the budget helped them make informed decisions.

- b. The general membership needs to be educated regarding the role of leadership; there are classes being planned by the Nominating Committee in that regard.
- c. To help facilitate the healing process going forward, it is important to incorporate the MVG in communications and move away from financial issues.
- d. There was a concern that the staff has no one to go to when issues are raised. Deb suggested an ombudsman to serve as a confidential outlet and provide a 3rd party to facilitate conversation. Should it be a council member?
- e. Is there a misconception that committees are closed; are there any that are closed?
- f. Pastor Ron said more conversation around these issues is needed and suggested including them on the June council meeting agenda.
- g. Pastor Ruth Ann observed that healthy discussion is helpful in learning how to handle conflict in a Christian manner. She thanked council for their work throughout the process.

Other: Andy Gift and Deb Bayles are serving as fellowship hosts for the July 18 new member class. Terry Pickett and Don Abram volunteered to attend the class to help walk through the Mission, Vision and Goals.

Pastor Ruth Ann closed with prayer at 9:06pm.