

Burlington Lutheran Council Meeting

Being God's Love in Our Communities



All are welcome in this church community. You are welcome here if you have ever felt excluded or judged because of your gender, ethnicity, race, religion, status, ability, sexual orientation, doubts or questions. We are a community committed to racial equity, and we believe in Jesus' commandment to love God and love neighbor.

Tuesday, October 24, 2023

2023 Council

President: Rochelle Hill

Vice President: John White

Treasurer: Millie Fosberg

Secretary: Janice Burwash

At-Large Members:

Jeremy Dierst (1 yr remaining)

Mary Nolte (fill remaining 2-yr term)

Nancy Hill Hoffman (2 yr remaining)

Eva Yeoman (3-yr term)

David Svaren (2 yr remaining)

OPEN (1-yr term)

Pastor: Charis Weathers (Absent, at Princeton Theological Seminary for continuing education)

in attendance

CALL TO ORDER (quorum = at least 6 members) President Rochelle called the meeting to order at 6:01pm with eight members present.

OPENING PRAYER Millie began the meeting with prayer.

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES It was MSC (moved, seconded, and carried) to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2023 meeting as presented.

PASTOR'S REPORT – Highlights from Pastor Charis's report:

- Pastor Charis, Rochelle, and Janice – along with two Skagit County staff – met with Kelly Blaine, the Burlington Fire Marshal, regarding requirements for using BLC as an Extreme Weather Shelter. He told the group that one major requirement would be the installation of a monitored fire alarm system. Madeleine Anthony (one of the two Skagit County staff at the meeting) has put Charis in touch with a Lynnwood company to get a quote on the installation cost of such a system. A quote will allow BLC to apply for grants to help cover the installation cost, and Madeleine has begun working on grant applications on our behalf.
- The September 24 Annual Congregational meeting was successful and uneventful. 2024 council members were elected and the 2024 budget was passed. Charis and John White will be reviewing the information from the time spent on the Visioning process.

- The second annual blessing of the animals happened on Sunday afternoon, October 1. Lulu Miller assisted Charis with this, and about 20 animals (and their owners) were in attendance.
- Indigenous People's Day Worship on October 8 was a meaningful service and Charis noted that Lora, Jay, and Kay all gave heartily of themselves to make it happen.
- October 12-14 Charis was in Chicago at the Churchwide ELCA headquarters to help facilitate a cohort for the annual training conference for new Mission Developers, as a resource for those who are starting inclusive mission developments.
- The Fall Stewardship Campaign, Find Your Why, began on October 15 with a video by Traci and Denise sharing their Why – Why they choose to attend BLC. The campaign will end with Commitment Sunday on November 12.
- Youth Group meetings continue to be a success and provide an ongoing opportunity for conversation with the 6th and 7th graders. Grant Burwash makes sure there is pizza and is creating a dedicated gathering space, including a youth music room. Grant has also filled the volunteer schedule for Godly Play and is now the BLC contact for our nursery attendant Elly, in case she is unable to make it on a Sunday morning.
- Barb Jones presented the latest installment of Church 2.0 on October 22 on the power of group prayer.
- Plans are under way for Adent at BLC, including a children's pageant on Sunday, December 17 – which Eva Yeoman has offered to help lead.
- The Fall Speaker series will focus on the experience of Transgender persons. There will be four evening sessions: a talk by Linden Jordan on the Science of Gender, two panel discussions, and a final session on how to be an ally. The series begins the week of November 7th and ends with Transgender Day of Remembrance at BLC on Monday, November 20.

TREASURER'S REPORT Millie reported that we are still maintaining our good ratio of income to expenses. She also reported that we will be getting the ERC (employee retention credit) funds that John spoke about at the September meeting, which will be approximately \$14,000. Millie also reminded the council that we still have \$4,500 left from the gift we received from Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church in Concrete when they closed. How to spend these funds can be a discussion for a future meeting. It was MSC to approve the Treasurer's report as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

1. DOOR SECURITY David reported that keypads have been installed on one of the doors to the fellowship hall and the exterior door on the west side of the building. There is a general code for the door to the fellowship hall and individuals will be assigned personal codes for the exterior door. The issue has been resolved with the glass doors on the north side of the education building that had been keeping them from closing securely. David reported that the sidewalk to the west door has trip hazards that he will address. He will also investigate the lighting along the path to that door to make sure it is adequate. The Grace Grant that we received to increase fellowship with the Upper Skagit Community covered the cost of the keypads.

2. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY John sent out an updated draft of the Financial Management Policy, but as he was not in attendance to answer questions, it was decided to move this discussion to the November meeting.

3. EMERGENCY SHELTER STATUS Janice, Rochelle, Charis, and Madeleine from Skagit County met with the Burlington Fire Marshall, Kelly Blaine. See highlights of Pastor's report for information from this meeting. There was a discussion about whether this requirement for a monitored alarm system impacts

our continuing to host Family Promise in our building. The consensus was that we need to inform the director of Family Promise of Skagit County ASAP (and Kathleen and Robert Hasselblad, and our partners at Edison Lutheran Church) that we cannot host families overnight until this issue is resolved, although we could partner with another hosting church—as Edison Lutheran has partnered with us. Rochelle offered to work with Charis to let Family Promise know about this decision. Also as noted in the Pastor’s report, there is already follow-up work being done to facilitate resolving this issue, so we are hopeful this is a temporary setback.

4. SECURITY CAMERAS We now have our own BLC account to monitor the security cameras, but there has been an issue with several of our cameras following a system glitch by Arlo, the maker of our cameras. Jacob will continue to troubleshoot this problem. Mary shared that some people are unhappy that the glass doors are locked before and during worship on Sundays. There was a discussion of possible solutions, but no action was taken.

5. DE-ESCALATION TRAINING This discussion will be continued at another meeting, hopefully with feedback from John and Charis. If Ty’s training is not a good match for us, we can discuss other options at the November meeting.

6. SPACE FOR LUTHERAN COUNSELING NETWORK SERVICES Millie has not been able to find out yet if other congregations charge counselors for using space, but she will continue to research. We will discuss this at the November meeting.

ONGOING TEAM REPORTS

1. VISIONING PROCESS: John and Charis will report on the work from the Annual Meeting at a future council meeting.

2. TECH TASK FORCE: John and David still need to get an update on this from Brad Dana.

3. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE The Personnel committee has met and is making progress on creating a Personnel/HR handbook. The final step will be to have an HR professional, or attorney, look at the final product. David offered to look at the final draft. Rochelle also mentioned the breakdown of the pastor’s salary, in terms of what portion is considered housing allowance. This is just something that the council approves at the beginning of each year and then documents in meeting minutes so it can be reported correctly for IRS purposes.

4. STEWARDSHIP PROGRESS REPORT: All members and friends of BLC received a letter in mid-October announcing the Fall Stewardship Campaign: Find Your Why. There will be several temple talks from members sharing their Whys, and the council members were encouraged to use the link in the weekly eNews to share Why they attend BLC. The stewardship campaign will end with Commitment Sunday on November 12.

5. FALL SPEAKER SERIES: TOPICS AROUND BEING TRANSGENDER, UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE AND TERMINOLOGY, AND BEING ALLIES See highlights from the Pastor’s report for additional information. Nancy shared handouts with dates of all the meetings. Rochelle will be looking for volunteers for Transgender Day of Remembrance. It was suggested that we consider asking someone to stand at the doors as people come into these events just in case anyone protests this series.

NEW BUSINESS

1. CHRISTMAS BASKETS FUNDING Janice shared information on BLC's support of the Skagit Valley Herald Christmas Fund. We plan to sponsor 15 families, with a total of 40 kids to shop for. In addition to gifts for the children we also give each family a Fred Meyer gift card. It was MSC to approve spending up to \$2,600 for gift cards for our 15 families.

3. FINANCIAL REIMBURSEMENT FOR YOUTH PROGRAM DIRECTOR To make it easier to purchase snacks and any other needs for the youth nights, it was MSC to give Grant Burwash a church credit card to use for these purchases.

4. APPROVAL OF 2024 OFFICERS AND COUNCIL It was MSC to appoint Janice Burwash as vice president for 2024. Pam Dix, who was elected as a council member at-large at the annual meeting, will move into the role of secretary to replace Janice.

5. STATUS OF LIBRARY SPACE David brought to the council's attention that several members have spoken to him about the current state of the library space, now that most of the books and the table have been removed. There is a sense that the space has not yet be outfitted as intended when the idea of transitioning from a library was discussed. Janice will talk to Charis to share these concerns, and they share their thoughts at the November meeting.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at 7:59pm.

Janice Burwash
BLC Council Secretary

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING Tuesday, November 28th