

Church Council Minutes
February 11, 2026
DRAFT COPY/ NOT YET APPROVED

Present: Randy Garner, Kathy Nowlan, Dwayne Brees, Dan Pritchard, Peter Harvey, Terry Burgee, Pastor Amy Lignitz-Harken, Wendy Ross, Joy Kacik, Annette Higby
Guest Attendee: Deb Allen

The Minutes from the January 7 Council meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report- Randy

Randy sent a detailed budget report to Council before the meeting.

He noted that the overall equity of Bethany's net worth has increased significantly over the past 12 months.

Annette asked if there might be money in the budget to help fund food for a lunch that will be a part of the Betty Edson Lecture Series on April 11. Missions Special Funds will support this cost.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report. Passed

Pastor's Report- Amy

- Transition Team: Amy sent out an email explaining the role of the Transition Team and will put it in The Blast. The team has met twice and has identified a few things to be addressed. High on the list is the location of the safe in the pastor's office which is a big ethical issue plus the supplies are also in that office, impeding confidentiality of conversations in the office. Also, previous congregational discussions have been summarized to bring the most important issues to light.
- The Deacons are working on strengthening their committee by adding a few new members.
- The Interim period is a time to focus our thinking about who we are as a church. We will be asking the questions that the Search Committee will need to address: Who are we as a church? What is our vision of the future? Who is our neighbor? Who is God calling us to be?
- Circle Conversations: Three Circles happened in January with 21 people involved. Folks found it valuable and meaningful and would like more Circles. Going forward, the topics will be more focused and given in advance. They will be limited to 12 people and have multiple Circles around the same topic.
- Lent: Ash Wednesday 7 pm service in the Sanctuary. Amy will do a Lenten Sermon Series: "What Does it Mean to Really Follow Jesus?" This could be advertised in the Herald and on FPF and on our website. There will be Prayer Circle and Communion every Wednesday at 5 pm during Lent.
- Zoom participants may be introduced at the beginning of the service. There was a discussion of the pros and cons of doing this. The Transition Team can discuss further.

Charlie's Loft Mission Statement/ Policies- Terry and Deb

A Mission Statement and Policies for Charlie's Loft were written by Deb and Kristin Chandler and edited by Terry. These documents help to clarify the mission and procedures of Charlie's Loft. They will be added to the Documents Notebook along with a copy of the Terms of Agreement that is signed by Loft guests.

It was moved and seconded to approve the Mission Statement and Policies of Charlie's Loft. Motion passed.

Bylaws- Terry

The final copy of the Bylaws with the correct formatting was passed out to Council.

Committee Membership/ Activation

Employee Relations Committee: The ERC will connect one person with each staff member to check in with how things are going. See page 11 in the Bylaws. Volunteers for the ERC are Peter, Joy, Kathy, and a Deacon. Staff involved are: Jenni (Admin), Christine (Choir), Marilyn (Music), Kenny (Sexton), Irene (Cleaning). Terry will be in touch by email to get the committee started.

Stewardship Committee: This committee needs to be revived in order to do the pledge drive this spring. See p. 9 in the Bylaws for their duties. A few names were suggested for Stewardship and will be approached.

Nominating Committee: This committee will need to find folks to be officers and committee members for the next fiscal year. See p. 7 in the Bylaws. No one volunteered to be on the Nominating Committee yet. Terry told Council she will not be Moderator or Clerk next year.

Search Committee: People who have agreed to be on the Search Committee are: Allen Matthews, Kayla Joy Cribbs, Dave Haberl, and possibly Jeanne Ward. There are a few others who will be asked.

Committee Reports

Trustees

- Admin hours- Jenni has asked for two more hours/week for her position. As her supervisor, Amy will talk with her about her current job responsibilities and how her time is spent. Once the Employee Relations Committee is set up, someone from that committee will also check in on how things are going. A recommendation can then be made to the Trustees.
- Admin/ Pastor space: Richard Smith, the architect who helped with Lil Sunshine, is being consulted on how to improve the pastor and admin spaces. He has drawn up a plan of the current fellowship hall space and will be in touch with recommendations.
- Carpeting: Dan reported on getting an estimate for replacing the carpeting on the altar area and two of the runners from Barre Tile and Carpet. They require a 50% deposit up front and would take 4-6 weeks once the carpet was ordered. They will send an estimate. The woodwork in that area will also need to be repainted. Work should not be done during Easter Sunday. Dan will email the estimate when he gets it from Barre Tile.

Peace & Justice

- VIA Membership - Annette reported on Vermont Interfaith Action and their work in Vermont on faith issues especially with the Vermont legislature. They help organizing churches to take action on issues. She recommends Bethany join VIA with a membership fee of \$500 for the first year. P&J Committee would be the connection point with them.

Council decided to take a vote on VIA membership next month after taking time to learn more about VIA and getting a better sense of how we would fund the membership fee.

- Update on RAES Fund- Deb

All checks that had been made out to Bethany for the RAES fund will be sent to Capstone and future donations will be made out directly to Capstone. Capstone will use these funds to fill in the gaps for heating assistance that aren't normally covered.

A motion was made to approve the efforts of the Peace and Justice Committee to raise funds for the Randolph Area Emergency Support to be distributed by Capstone to provide heating assistance to those for whom the normal heating assistance program does not apply. Seconded. Passed.

- Deb has formally requested that Bethany provide funds for a potential fundraising dinner to support the RAES funds. The food would be made by RTCC Culinary students as a take out dinner for St. Patrick's Day.

After looking at the budget, Randy found that Missions Special Fund had money to cover the cost of purchasing food. Dwayne felt that the Missions Committee would approve use of funds for the fundraising dinner. Council hopes that any advertising for the dinner will include Bethany Church as the sponsor.

Other Business

- Council discussed the use of the Bethany Church banner at local protests against governmental actions that did not support the Constitution. It was agreed that use of the banner should be approved by Council first and that taking it to the local protest was fine as long as the general vibe of the protest was positive and without explicit language.

- Stockbridge CSA- Wendy (tabled)

Next Meeting: Weds, March 4, 4 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Burgee, Clerk