



BETHLEHEM  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

SEMI-ANNUAL  
CONGREGATIONAL REPORT  
OCTOBER 2020

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**AGENDA**  
**SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION**  
September 27, 2020

1. OPENING PRAYER
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
3. REPORTS
  - PASTOR'S REPORT
  - PRESIDENT'S REPORT
  - TREASURER'S REPORT
4. NEW BUSINESS
  - PROPOSED BUDGET FOR NEW YEAR
5. DOXOLOGY AND ADJOURNMENT

## President's Report

Greetings Friends in Christ;

These past few months continue to challenge all of us as we deal with the effects of this pandemic. Here at church we have also continued to deal with the many changes that have taken place in society as a result of COVID and still carry out God's work with a little more effort and thought. Thankfully we have returned to worship in church this summer. Maybe not as it was, but at least we are again able to gather and worship in smaller groups. We continue to be a leader in financial support for the Montana Synod in addition to the support we share with our mission partners. Our staff has done a great job of providing the service on the radio and TV with outdated equipment and we now have slowly been integrating new equipment as we have been learning what is needed and would function best for our use. They have also worked extremely hard at keeping everything functioning during this time. We are fortunate to have people that care and are willing to put effort as they have.

Going forward, I would ask that as we look into the next year that we pray for healing in the world, the nation, the community and in our church. This has been a tough time for all of us with lots of unknowns, uncertainties and questions. This causes stress and anguish, which can lead to unrest and dissatisfaction. Pray for patience and understanding during this time, for yourself and others so we can help each other find God in these times and a way to serve him. It may be a little different right now but that is okay. Bethlehem has a strong tradition of serving and helping others as well as taking care of ourselves. This might be a good year to help take care of your church family, by reaching out to someone you haven't seen for a while or don't really know and help rebuild the community that has been interrupted during this pandemic.

Yours in Christ,

Paul Holmgren

## Pastor's Report

I want to thank the congregation and especially the council for the trust you have placed in me to navigate these difficult months. COVID has definitely changed the way we function as a church community. We've had fewer gatherings and we've learned to use Zoom, Facebook Live, Video Streaming and more. In all of it there have been new things to discover and grow into. There have been mistakes and bumps along the way. But there have been successes, too. I'm grateful for the ways we have weathered the waters of change!

I'm also grateful for your financial faithfulness. Through this fiscal cycle we have seen offerings and gifts remain at a level that we would have expected even without the displacement COVID has created. We end this year with money in the bank as opposed to last year when we scrambled to make up a deficit. Through the efforts of our leaders' diligent planning, a gracious God, and lots of prayer, we are presenting a mission plan (budget) that, I think, is attainable in the year to come.

These are anxious times. But we are blessed to be a blessing by God who will give us the grace that we need to face the coming days. I look forward to walking this path with you.

Pastor Scott Thompson  
September 2020

## Treasurer's Report

Greetings friends in Christ,

I am writing this as 'acting' Treasurer as Anne Taylor decided to step away from Council duties as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. Anne has been a great asset on the Church Council and Executive Committee and we will miss her greatly. Her attention to detail and active concern around good stewardship of our financial resources was a real gift; please join me in thanking Anne for her service!

Wow, 2020 has been quite a year. I don't know about you, but I'm ready for it to be over! It's hard to believe we are already entering a new fiscal year at BLC. I'm pleased to report that, in spite of the huge challenges we faced this year with the pandemic, our finances at the end of this FY are in good shape with an estimated ending balance of around \$59,000. Many thanks to you all who have stepped up and kept current with your giving, or even given extra, during these incredibly difficult times. God's work is alive and well among us. Thank you!

In March, BLC applied for a Federal 'Payroll Protection Plan' (PPP) loan in the amount of about \$33,000. The loan was funded in late April. We took advantage of the program as there was great uncertainty about how the pandemic might impact our income, and followed the advice of Synod leadership and other ELCA churches in the area who also participated in the program. The funds were used (per guidelines) to help us offset the cost of payroll and benefits for May and June. We are nearly certain that the loan will be converted to a 'grant' which will occur soon.

Our current Mission Proposal for 2020-21 is quite similar to last year's plan. The hard work we did last year in adjusting some budget items downward, and your continued commitment to regular giving this year, has allowed us to move forward with a proposal that is very similar to last year's. There were modest increases in insurance (about 3.5%) and we're proposing a 2.5% salary increase for all staff. BLC continues to stand out in the Montana Synod as one of the most generous in terms of mission support. This year, again, we are committing nearly 15% of our resources to local, State, National, and worldwide causes. This is an incredible commitment to mission work and a testament to God's work here at BLC.

Many thanks to the Stewardship Committee for putting the proposal together and for the Executive Committee and Council for careful review and approval of the plan for Congregational consideration. We look forward to a conversation of the proposal at our semi annual meeting.

Blessing to all of you as we move into this next year together,

In Christ,

Duane Anderson, acting Treasurer

## 2020-2021 Budget Proposal

<b>Church</b>	<b>Bethlehem Lutheran</b>			
	<b>Plan</b>		<b>2020-2021 Mission</b>	
<i>Summary</i>				
<b>Income</b>		<b>2019/2020 Plan</b>	<b>2019/2020 Actual (Est.)</b>	<b>2020/2021 Proposed</b>
	Beginning Balance	\$21,589	\$21,589	\$59,174
	Trust Mission Endowment Funds	\$10,500	\$10,500	\$10,500
	General Offering	\$355,000	\$355,000	\$355,000
	Special Offering	\$0	\$9,429	\$0
	<b>PPP Loan/Grant</b>		<b>\$33,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
	Other Income	\$10,000	\$9,321	\$9,625
	Real Estate Fund	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$437,089</b>	<b>\$478,839</b>	<b>\$474,299</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
	Total Admin/Salary	\$205,976 (48%)	\$208,711 (50%)	\$203,711 (47%)
	Total Benefits	\$72,149 (17%)	\$70,349 (17%)	\$71,994 (17%)
	Total Office Expense	\$17,800 (4%)	\$18,174 (4%)	\$18,700 (4%)
	Mission Partners Total	\$65,300 (15%)	\$64,951 (15%)	\$63,463 (15%)
	Program Ministries Total	\$71,295 (16%)	\$57,480 (14%)	\$75,260 (17%)
	<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$432,520</b>	<b>\$419,665</b>	<b>\$433,127</b>
	<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$4,569</b>	<b>\$59,174</b>	<b>\$41,172</b>

## 2020-2021 Budget Proposal, cont.

### Details

#### Administration

Pastor Salary, Housing, SS Offset	\$82,781	\$82,781	\$84,851
Supply Pastor	\$600	\$150	\$600
Contract Bookkeeping	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Secretary Salary	\$23,400	\$24,560	\$23,985
Office Fill-In	\$0	\$0	\$0
Youth & Family Director Salary	\$0	\$0	\$0
Custodian Salary	\$34,129	\$34,130	\$35,875
Director of Music Salary	\$41,600	\$41,600	\$42,640
Choir Accompanist Salary	\$3,420	\$2,090	\$1,750
Nursery Attendant Salary	\$0	\$400	\$0
Synod Assembly	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
Payroll Taxes	\$12,546	\$17,000	\$6,510
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>\$205,976</b>	<b>\$208,711</b>	<b>\$203,711</b>

#### Benefits

Medical	\$51,609	\$50,889	\$52,104
Pension	\$12,832	\$13,651	\$13,196
Disability	\$2,350	\$2,630	\$2,450
Survivor	\$2,259	\$1,726	\$1,144
Other-CE, Mileage, Misc Exp	\$3,100	\$1,453	\$3,100
<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>\$72,149</b>	<b>\$70,349</b>	<b>\$71,994</b>

#### Office Expenses

<b>Total Office Expense</b>	<b>\$17,800</b>	<b>\$18,174</b>	<b>\$18,700</b>
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**Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
2020-21 Mission Plan**

	2019/2020 Plan	2019/2020 Actual (Est.)	2020/2021 Proposed
<b>Mission Partnerships</b>			
Montana Synod/ELCA	\$40,850	\$41,725	\$39,763
Lutheran World Relief	\$700	\$700	\$700
Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Immanuel Lutheran Home	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Tanzanian Girls School	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Synod Project	\$0	\$0	\$0
NW MT Veterans Food Pantry	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Mission Congregation (MT St Prison)	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Neighbors in Need	\$500	\$500	\$500
Samaritan House	\$750	\$750	\$750
Host Feeding the Flathead @ BLC	\$1,500	\$276	\$750
Serious Juju	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Trust - Neighbors in Need	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Trust - Samaritan House	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Trust - Food Bank	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Trust - MSU, UofM, PLU	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Total Mission Partnerships</b>	<b>\$65,300</b>	<b>\$64,951</b>	<b>\$63,463</b>
<b>Program Ministries</b>			
Stewardship	\$2,000	\$1,310	\$3,000
Property	\$40,920	\$40,000	\$41,920
Worship & Music	\$9,225	\$8,970	\$11,190
Education	\$4,000	\$900	\$4,000
Youth	\$5,500	\$2,000	\$5,500
Fellowship	\$6,650	\$3,500	\$6,650
Outreach	\$3,000	\$800	\$3,000
<b>Total Program Ministries</b>	<b>\$71,295</b>	<b>\$57,480</b>	<b>\$75,260</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$432,520</b>	<b>\$419,665</b>	<b>\$433,127</b>