

Bethany Lutheran Church
Council Minutes
May 12, 2026

Attendees: In person: Patty Fess, Jane Nelson, Randy Nelson, Barb Olson, Ron Fischer, Nancy Steinke. On line: Chuck Brems

Patty opened with prayer at 10:54 am

Minutes from the October 29, 2025 council meeting were approved - motion: Barb, seconded: Jane.

Ron Fischer presented the Treasurer's Report. As of March 31, 2026 Bethany's total current assets in checking, savings, money market, and a CD was \$509,772. Other assets included \$975,755 in the Bethany Heritage Endowment Fund and \$1,107,030 in the Bethany Property Preservation Fund. Total Assets as of March 31 was \$2,683,026. For the calendar year ending December 31, 2025, general congregational offerings were \$173,817, of which \$131,737 was designated for the vestry addition project and \$2,775 for the Endowment Fund. Total normal operational expenses for 2025 were \$48,398, resulting in expenses exceeding general income by \$8,835. Total funds raised for the vestry addition is \$452,000, which exceeds the \$450,000 goal. This includes special designated funds, donations and pledges.

Randy Nelson gave the property report. Fire extinguishers have been serviced. One stump at the parsonage has been ground out. Another stump needs to be ground out, and Randy is working on that. He is seeking clarity from the village as to whose responsibility it is due to its close proximity to the road. Randy is also working on coordinating with Ephraim Shores on the clean up of the area between Ephraim Shores and the parsonage.

Old Business:

*There is no update on the sanctuary shades as Randy has been frustrated by the lack of response from the person who had fixed the other shades. It was agreed that if that can't be resolved, new shades should be ordered.

*Patty reported that the tag line input request was the biggest response she has ever had. 39 suggestions were received. There was not a clear winner in the voting for a favorite. "A Historic Church - A Living Faith" will be the main one used in 2026.

*Patty reported that the insurance payment has been received thanks to an extra "push" from Randy

New Business:

*Update on the alternate liturgy was that the liturgy discussed last fall had only minor changes and tweaks done. The service will be printed on 11" x 17" paper, folded and stapled. Discussion followed as to how red folders and these paper copies should be handled. The conclusion was that red folders will stay in the pews and the alternate order of worship will be handed out on the days it is being used. There will then be a request for the alternate liturgy to be returned as people leave the sanctuary.

*Patty updated the group on the formalization of the beginning of the service.

*Randy gave an update on the construction - PortSide requires \$10,000 to secure the project and about \$50,000 before the project begins. The hope is to begin July/August.

*Patty updated on the call for pledges and fund raising. Patty and Ron will be responsible for an email in June with an update about the project moving forward, and a second email will follow requesting fulfillment of pledges when there is a firm date from PortSide.

*Jane introduced the idea of having a budget for hiring musicians on occasion for special music. Patty noted that that idea has not met with enthusiasm from Lori in the past, but she will talk to her and feel her out for a direction that could be acceptable. As she is Director of Music, we all agreed that it was something that needed to be coordinated with her.

*Coffee fellowship after the service was discussed, and the following was agreed upon:

June 7 - Coffee and Juice

June 21 - Coffee, Juice, and Treats

July 5 - Coffee, Juice, and Treats

Aug 2 - Coffee and Juice

Aug 16 and 23 - Coffee and Juice, Treats - Jan Abrahamson

Sept 6 - Coffee, Juice, Treats

Oct 4 - Coffee and Juice

Oct 18 - Coffee, Juice, and Treats

* Friday Fellowships were discussed and it was concluded that June had an "event" with the presentation by Rev Brecke on The Gift of Aging. Other dates for Friday Fellowship are July 31, Aug 28, and Sept 25 - which we believe will likely be hosted by sisters Marne and Shirley.

* Patty has promoted Rev Brecke's The Gift of Aging presentation to a few other churches and is hoping for a good turnout. 10 are currently registered.

* Patty circulated the 'Treat and Note' sign up for the parsonage and the Wednesday Parsonage Check sign up.

* Barb suggested that the current vestry window, which will be removed in the new construction, be used for a mirror and/or an art piece in the new addition

Next council meeting: July 7, 9 am at The Victorian

Annual meeting of the congregation: July 19

Motion to adjourn - Ron, seconded - Randy

Meeting adjourned at 12:28 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Nancy Steinke