

**Bethel Lutheran Church Council and Call Committee Meeting Minutes
Special Meeting - August 27, 2013**

Council Members Present: Mark Evashenk, Hella Bluhm-Stieber, Victor Chinn, Trish Cunningham, Donna Kuester, Mary Thomas, Pastor Gabi Schroeder, Minnie Sudarsanam, Dave Tribby

Call Committee Members Present: Doreen Baldwin, Angela Brown, Erik Edstrom, Brian Hadding, Ordetta Hovland, Ann Marie Kenitzer, Janice Martinson, Rachel Sudarsanam

Staff: Fara Brock, Tom Hoegel

Guest: Pr. Nancy Nelson (Bishop's Associate, Sierra Pacific Synod)

Meeting start: 7:05 pm

Topic	Discussion	Action
Opening devotions: Hella		
Short council item:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trish Cunningham is willing to change her assignment on the church council. • Motion: to move Trish from at large to ministry liaison. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion carried.
Pr. Nelson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pr. Nelson is here tonight to answer questions and clarify issues, not to make a presentation. She understands there are two areas of concern: timing and decisions. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the timeline in the call process from the time the Ministry Site Profile is submitted until candidates are provided to the congregation? • As soon as synod receives MSP, Nancy will start work (unless it is her vacation week). Expects to have slate of candidates within a month. Will review potential candidates based upon top characteristics requested in the MSP. Can put in 3 or 4 characteristics from Bethel's MSP per day, then narrow the list by date of ordination (i.e. compensation). Nancy will contact each potential candidate and they will determine if they are a match with congregation before their name is presented to Bethel. She uses candidate's profile and Bishop's comments in this process. Will also take seriously any names brought forth from the congregation, although there may be confidential circumstances where those names would not be brought back. The search might turn up 50 names. There are about 5 new names per week for people interested in serving in Sierra Pacific synod. Congregations typically take 4 to 6 weeks to review the slate; if none are acceptable, then the process starts again. The slate will be from 1 to 7 names; typical is 3 to 5. • Call committee is asked to interview all candidates. Call committee could prepare for interviews before candidate names are given by preparing questions and holding mock interviews; then when names are provided they would be ready to make contact. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is length of service the sole determination of compensation? • Synod has 3-page worksheet for determining appropriate salary. [Hella passed around copy.] Base salary is \$49,000, plus a multiplier for cost of local real estate. Additional points: years of experience in ministry (extra points for continuous ministry in one location), other relevant experience, advanced degrees, and several other items. Council will determine top amount that can be paid, which will indicate how much experience the candidate will have. Church may choose to use average of several local ZIP codes to determine the real estate multiplier. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will candidates be considered from both within and outside our area? • Yes, candidate search is national, although synod only knows about those outside the synod if they have been in contact. List of available candidates is currently 250, but about 5/week are added. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pr. Nelson will check back with church to ensure she completely understands its needs before she approves the MSP. Call committee should meet with Pr. Nelson just before they are ready to hit "submit" on MSP; there may be confusing terms or priorities that should be clarified. If there doesn't seem to be a good answer to a question, clarify the concerns with her. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much involvement will Pr. Gabi have in the call/interview process? 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church needs to decide. Typically, associates do not have much say in the process, but it could be appropriate if that's the direction we choose. Congregations might make assumptions about the strengths or weaknesses of an associate, but these need to be verified. Synod encourages existing pastor to write a message to be included in the MSP or addendum. The MSP is flexible enough to allow Pr. Gabi to write a letter (or make a statement) to potential candidates sharing her views on the congregation, its goals, and how she does ministry. • Pr. Gabi noted that her candidate profile from three years ago is now out of date. Her profile should be considered confidential and not shared with lead pastor candidates without her permission. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, Bethel's MSP is about 4 sections short of being completed. The call committee needs to get information from the council and then the council's approval before submitting. Does the MSP need to be complete before the content can be discussed with Pr. Nelson? • Don't need to get council's formal approval before submitting. • Is it necessary to get congregation's approval? That could lengthen the process. • Would be good to get consensus that MSP reflects the congregation, but don't need congregation to perform a detailed review of each word. Pr. Nelson will review the MSP in detail before activating it, in order to ensure correct spelling and grammar, and that it matches what she knows about the congregation. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have to wait until January to submit MSP? Council has hired a consultant whose contract runs through December. • Council hopes to be ready for a congregation meeting in latter part of October, to get approval for budget (which includes staffing plan). • Pr. Nelson cannot review the MSP until we know if we are calling a lead or solo pastor. • Interviewing is typically difficult during Advent and Christmas, due to schedules of pastors and of committee members. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If decision is for solo pastor, Call committee will have a lot of rework. • Committee could have parallel versions with different answers to questions that are affected by the number of pastors. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the process if congregation wants to change Pr. Gabi's call? • First, talk to Pr. Gabi and discuss options. Wouldn't need a new congregation vote if everyone is in agreement, e.g. for ¾ time, as long as title ("Associate Pastor") is the same and it remains a called position. ELCA policy rates a full time as 50 to 55 hr/wk; pastors need 23 hr/wk to qualify for benefits. Pr. Nelson could not think of a reason for holding an additional congregation vote on calling Pr. Gabi. 	
Final note	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy Birthday to Pr. Gabi! 	
Meeting adjourned 8:08	Next Council meeting: Tuesday 9/17/2013	

Submitted by Dave Tribby
August 28, 2013