



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, July 18, 2023 Meeting held via Zoom

2023 Council

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> President: Rochelle Hill | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vice President: John White |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Treasurer: Millie Fosberg | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secretary: Janice Burwash |

At-Large Members:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeremy Dierst (1 yr remaining) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mary Nolte (filling unexpired 2-yr term) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nancy Hill Hoffman (2 yr remaining) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eva Yeoman (1 to 3-yr term) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Svaren (2 yr remaining) | vacant (remaining 1-yr term) |
- Pastor: Charis Weathers
- in attendance

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order by President Rochelle at 6:30pm.

OPENING PRAYER Pastor Charis led the members in an opening prayer.

AGENDA FOR SPECIAL MEETING Rochelle noted that there were two topics on the agenda for this special council meeting:

1. A discussion of church security, including the status of current building security projects and new policies related to keeping staff, congregation members, and visitors safe while they are in the building. This discussion is in response to increased community awareness of BLC as a RIC (Reconciling in Christ) and affirming congregation.
2. The opportunity to purchase chairs from a congregation that is moving to a new space.

CHURCH SECURITY There was a visitor at worship on 7.16.2023 whose behavior made several members uncomfortable. This incident came just after the article in the Skagit Valley Herald about the Wedding 2.0 reception for Charis and Deborah, and also after BLC's recent involvement in several LGBTQ+ events in the community. This brought to the forefront several building security projects that are in the works and need to be completed ASAP and made the council aware that we also need to discuss putting in place policies to help insure we are doing all we can to keep people safe while they are in the building.

Charis shared that she has notified the synod of the incident as well as a local representative of the Department of Justice. This DOJ contact asked permission to share our situation with the FBI and may come to BLC at sometime in the future to conduct a safety audit of our building.

UPDATE ON BUILDING SECURITY PROJECTS

Charis told the council there had been a delay in the installation of security cameras, but the person we have been working with will be back from vacation this week and Charis has sent an email letting him know that we are anxious to complete the project ASAP.

John and David met with someone from A-1 locks about the possibility of adding a keypad entry system to the double glass doors on the north side of the education wing. It appears that it may be possible to add this feature to the existing doors. John will follow up on this.

SECURITY FOR CHARIS AND DEBORAH AT HOME

Several suggestions were discussed to provide security and privacy for Charis and Deborah in their home. Charis said this is something she has discussed with Deborah and is not something they are interested in pursuing at this time. The council can revisit this topic in the future if necessary. (Update: Following the meeting Charis clarified that she and Deborah are considering the possibility of installing cameras, after they have taken other security measures.) It was suggested that for both the church and Charis's home "security stickers" could be purchased and placed in windows as a deterrent.

ACTION ITEMS After discussion the following action items were established:

1. It was MSC (moved, seconded, and carried) to have David speak to the City of Burlington Chief of Police. David will share this specific incident with him and ask about any incident de-escalation training that the BPD might be able to offer.
2. John will contact Ty Schroyer about de-escalation training.
3. Nancy and Mary will look into the possibility of offering training similar to the training that teachers receive for deescalating classroom situations.
4. Millie will share resources from the synod related to risk management assessment and incident de-escalation.
5. Terry Kylo will share info with the Council after Paths to Understanding meets with a security consultant.
6. Nancy will explore getting a better doorbell system for the glass doors that could be heard in the office(s), the conference room, and possibly in the basement fellowship hall.
7. The following new policies were suggested to keep people safe in the building.
 - No one works alone in the building.
 - All doors remain locked during business hours and visitors use the doorbell.
 - The double glass doors remain locked during worship, with a sign redirecting people to the double wooded doors into the main church building.
 - The first person arriving for a meeting should not "prop" the glass doors open for the rest of the group.

Charis and Rochelle will work on an announcement of these new policies to be included in the next weekly eNews, and possibly shared during the announcements on Sunday.

FUTURE FOLLOW UP The council will arrange incident de-escalation training for members who are interested, with the goal of having at least one trained member at each worship service. The council will also create a de-escalation plan that can be shared with worship leaders and facilitators.

PURCHASE OF CHAIRS It was MSC to purchase 50 chairs at \$10/each from a local congregation that is moving from their current location.

PRAYER/ADJOURNMENT The meeting was closed with prayer by Pastor Charis at 8:00pm.

Congregational Council Secretary,
Janice Burwash