

Dear fellow disciples at Bethlehem:

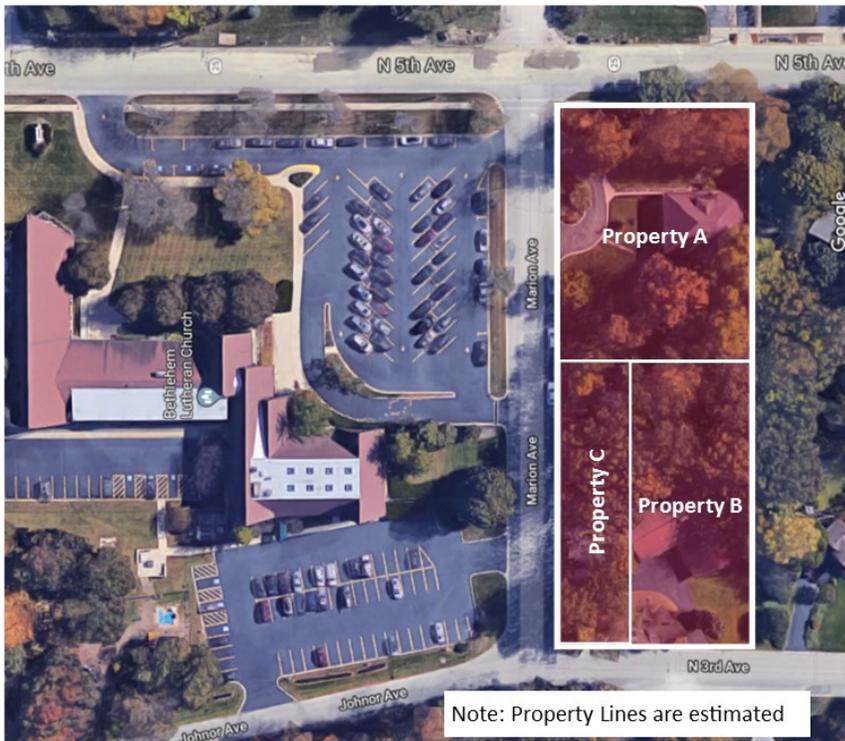
At our forthcoming congregational meeting on January 28, 2018, in addition to the 2018 budget, the following motion from the church council will be presented for a vote.

Be it resolved that Bethlehem Lutheran Church sell the properties south of Marion Avenue.

The properties consist of two houses (Properties A & B) and an undeveloped lot (Property C).

As a Council, we believe that transparency is a crucial part of who we are at BLC. In that spirit, we provide the information below.

About the Properties



[Holmer House | 1045 N. 5th Ave. | Parsonage | \(Property A\)](#)

In late 2016, after an inspection, the St. Charles Fire Department determined that the building (Property A) was unsafe for meetings. We could use the facility again if there was an addition of an emergency exit from the basement and a fire alarm system connected to the fire department.

It should also be noted that despite having a ramp (not to code) the building is not properly accessible for disabled people and does not have an ADA-compliant restroom.

[Berkhout House | 1050 N. 3rd Ave. | Rental Property | \(Property B\)](#)

Bethlehem purchased the property at Third Avenue and Marion Ave., around 1999. This was at a time when our congregation was growing rapidly. When securing the property, the idea was to acquire land along Marion Ave. with the idea of closing the street to through traffic and developing additional parking. Based on recent conversations with the City of St. Charles, closing Marion Ave. is not possible. Further, other than Christmas and Easter, we do not run into severe parking shortages.

We rented the house to an elderly tenant for many years. He passed away in the Fall of 2017 and the building is currently not rentable without significant investment as outlined below.

Because this is a rental property and not a property used for the mission of the church, we pay property taxes. In 2017 that amount was \$9,884.

Estimates

Property "A" – Basic Code Compliance	
\$23,000	New Exit <i>(Based on lowest estimate \$23K-\$26K)</i>
\$11,673	Fire Alarm
\$25,000	Ramp Replacement Replace current concrete ramp with ADA compliant wood ramp
\$12,000	ADA Compliant Washroom
\$71,673	Total
Note: This does not include the deferred maintenance or needed updates.	

Property "A" - All in Approach	
\$59,673	New Exit, fire alarm, ramp
\$134,000	New windows and doors, 2 ADA compliant bathrooms, removing walls for better space, flooring, roof, exterior updates and repair. <i>Not Included: Interior painting, cabinets or counters.</i> <i>(Based on lowest estimate \$134K-\$145K)</i>
\$193,673	Total

Property "B" - Rental Ready	
\$145,000	New kitchen and appliances, bathroom remodel (3), flooring, interior doors and trim, electrical, doors and windows, roof, exterior work and repair. <i>(Based on lowest estimate \$145K-\$155K)</i>

Total Scope Options

If we did the basics...	
\$71,673	Property "A" – Basic Code Compliance
\$145,000	Property "B" – Rental Ready
\$216,673	Total

OR

All in Approach...	
\$193,673	Property "A" – Code Compliance & Renovation
\$145,000	Property "B" – Rental Ready
\$338,673	Total

Sale of the Properties (A, B, and C)

Sale of Property A, B, & C	
\$645,000	March 2017 appraisal by Coleman Land Company

Information on both, costs and appraisal, are estimates. Actual costs or value may vary.

Council Deliberation

We are recommending this action in a spirit of stewardship. As a council we struggled with what to do with the resources God gave us. We tried to balance the needs of the people using those buildings while also looking at our mission and the short and long term needs of BLC. We struggled with the emotional history of the parsonage and the fear of “what if we need it for...”. In the end, we overcame our fears and could not find a compelling reason to continue owning the properties. We believe it is in the best interest of our church to sell the properties and use the proceeds toward the renewal of our main church building where, at a minimum, we must address a great deal of deferred maintenance.

Our Youth Group and Boy Scout Troop No. 13 both formerly used the Property “A” house for meeting space. Our Youth Ministry has relocated to the 400 level of the main building, where after some consolidation of the music rehearsal space, they are now enjoying renewal under the guidance of our newly hired Youth Director.

We understand that the Boy Scout troop feels the impact of this change more than anyone. This is a long-term relationship that we believe in supporting. They have grown to upwards of 90 scouts and 20 adult leaders and assistants. They have simply outgrown Property “A”. The troop has met in our main building for the past year but would like to have a more consistent space assignment. They also have significant storage needs which we and they need to address. Pastor and Eagle Scout Bill Hutchison, Director of Operations Heather Feltman, and the Congregational Council are working with the troop on how best to accommodate them in the main church building. The use of Property “A” has contributed to their growth and success over the years, but at this point, with upwards of 90 scouts and 20 adult leaders and assistants, they are bursting at the seams.

Conclusion

The Council came to the following conclusions:

- Upgrading Property “A” to a minimum level is not acceptable and does not address the maintenance and updates that are sorely needed. Doing the minimum would only kick the deferred maintenance bucket down the road.
- Renting Property “B” “as is” is not an option.
- Owning a rental property (Property B) does not fit with the mission of the church.
- The Boy Scouts have outgrown their former space.
- If we invest in the Marion Ave. properties, it is at the expense of the deferred maintenance in the main church building.
- The benefit received by updating the properties would provide little benefit for most of the larger congregation.
- The estimated \$645,000 from the sale of the properties could be used to address the many deferred maintenance items in the main church building

Therefore, selling the properties would provide the greatest impact for the church.

The Congregational Council will host forums regarding the motion and our decision to put this before the church on **Sunday, January 21, at 9:15 AM and 10:30 AM (childcare provided at 10:30 meeting)**. If you have questions or want further details, we urge you to attend one of these forums. Also, we invite you to attend our **Congregational Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 28 at noon** when the congregation will vote on the motion (child care provided).

In Christ,

Dee Johnson
President, BLC Congregational Council

Guiding Document and Strategic Objectives for Bethlehem Lutheran Church



One Page Plan- Summary

Cause: God calls Bethlehem to go, love and serve.
Vision: We will go, love and serve as a welcoming community of flawed people, shaped by faith as we change the world.
Mission/Value Proposition: We <i>invite</i> people into community, <i>nurture</i> each other with care, then <i>go</i> to serve.
Values: We will be guided by our commitment to move forward together in compassion, honesty and grace.
Culture: We are a community where the gospel meets the world; where people come not to fit in, but to belong; and where God's grace is shared with compassion, humility, and joy. We ask big questions. Tradition informs our imagination though it does not limit our embrace of God's mysteries in this ever changing world.
Objectives (12-36 month window) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop, communicate, and implement a collective compelling vision, mission and values 2. Call a new pastor 3. Redevelop our property to further our mission 4. Revitalize youth ministry

(adapted from Joe Calhoun, *One hour plan for growth*, Wiley, p.6)

As of 10/3/17

Important Dates

God's Church. Our Moment.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH ~ bethlehempluth.org

TRANSITION TEAM

Hear about—and participate in!—the preliminary pastoral call process.

Sunday, December 10, 2017
@ 9:15 & 10:30AM ♥

Sunday, January 14, 2018
@ 9:15 & 10:30AM ♥

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Hear the Church Council's recommendation to the congregation.

Sunday, February 4, 2018
@ 9:15 & 10:30AM ♥

Wednesday, February 7, 2018 @ 6:30PM

Sunday, February 11, 2018
@ 9:15 & 10:30AM ♥

Wednesday, February 21, 2018 @ 6:30PM

COUNCIL FORUMS

Hear about the strategic mission priorities of BLC leadership.

Sunday, January 14, 2018
BUDGET FORUM @ 9:15 & 10:30AM ♥

Wednesday, January 17, 2018
BUDGET FORUM @ 6:30PM

Sunday, January 21, 2018
MARION AVENUE PROPERTY DISCUSSION @ 9:15 & 10:30AM ♥

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Participate in the life of BLC—your vote is important!

Sunday, January 28, 2018
ANNUAL MEETING @ 12PM ♥
Voting on 2018 Budget and Marion Avenue properties

Sunday, February 25, 2018
SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING @ 12PM ♥
Voting on the Master Plan Proposal

♥ CHILDCARE PROVIDED

ALL MEETINGS IN EDUCATION HALL
EXCEPT CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS IN FELLOWSHIP HALL