

Bethel College Mennonite Church Board Minutes
Pending approval at the March 2026 Board Meeting

Our faith in a God of love leads us, by the power of the Spirit, to follow Jesus in doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.

Board Members Present: Bill Eash (Moderator), Margaret Toews (Moderator-elect), Mary Ann Boschmann, Tim Hodge, Brad Kohlman (Past Moderator), Carolyn Penner, Kathryn Simmons, John Waltner

Absent with notice: Elaine Schurr (Clerk), Jon Zerger

Staff Present: Joanna Harader

Staff not present: Mike Claassen

Others attending:

- 1. Welcome and Opening** – Bill Eash opened by reading from 1 Corinthians 12 and by reading highlights from the February 8 congregational meeting request for attendees to write one thing they are grateful for at BCMC.
- 2. Consent Agenda** – Bill asked for questions and comments on the Pastors' reports and online minutes which were made available to the board before the meeting. There were no questions or comments. **Carolyn Penner moved to accept the consent agenda. Tim Hodge seconded; the motion passed.**
- 3. Finance Report** – Bill asked for questions or concerns with the Financial Report. There were no questions or concerns. **John Waltner moved to accept the report; Tim seconded. The motion passed.**
- 4. Review of congregational meeting** – The presentations were very helpful. The Zoom of the meeting failed after 38 minutes. A significant portion of voters want to limit benevolences. An elective Sunday School class or Wednesday night program could provide a chance for discussion around this issue.
- 5. Discussion of Finance Committee proposal** – The proposal from the Finance Committee is to hold excess funds at the end of the year in a reserve fund against future budget deficits. Since the presentations and discussion at the congregational meeting have just happened, the board wants to give the Finance Committee a chance to discuss the matter. The board will take this question up in March. The board should also check with the Witness Commission as to their reaction to the congregational meeting.
- 6. Estate bequest** – The board needs to acknowledge the recent non-restricted estate bequest. Bill will look into the process.
- 7. Pastoral Search Update** – There are no updates at this time.
- 8. AV update** – There are no updates at this time

- 9. Facilities Update** – The board went to the quilting room to look at the new flooring. There was also a brainstorming session around potential future improvements in the sanctuary.
- 10. Committee/Commission downsizing reports** – Several members reported on conversations with various committees and commissions. In general, leaders of these groups feel ok about level of participation and size of groups. A discussion about eliminating term limits on commissions/committees. In some cases it might be helpful. Faith Formation would like another member. Discussion followed about reaching out to college students and offering to help Student Life in whatever capacity they might need.
- 11. Executive session**
- 12. The meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm. The next meeting will be held March 5 at 7 pm.**

Submitted by Margaret Toews, acting clerk