

Bethel College Mennonite Church
Spring Congregational Meeting Agenda
Sunday, April 28, 2019, 1 pm — Sanctuary

1. Welcome and opening prayer

John Waltner, moderator, called the meeting to order at 12:56 p.m. and pointed out that this meeting will focus on commission/committee reports, election of officers and other reports on work of the church.

John led the congregation with the opening prayer 745 in the hymnal.

2. Approve minutes of the January 27, 2019 congregational meeting

John pointed out the motion in respect to the 2019 general fund budget.

In regard to item 10, he reported that parking is being addressed without being confrontational.

The minutes were approved as printed.

3. Election of Commission and Church Board members

John thanked Marilyn Schmidt for her six years of service as clerk. Pat Friesen is being submitted for the position to fill out Marilyn's unexpired term. John submitted the slate of board member nominations, which were then **approved by acclamation**. John opened the floor for comment on the appointments to the committees and commissions.

4. Reports

a. Booklet reports

Opportunity was offered for questions/comments on the printed reports, which present a summary of the service many people perform for the church.

b. Safe Sanctuaries/Leadership Group report

Patty Shelly reported that the Safe Sanctuaries Task Group has focused on developing a clear congregational policy for care and accountability for known sexual offenders in the congregation. The group has been reviewing materials relating to this goal, including a document from the MC USA Panel on Sexual Abuse Prevention as well as material from Dove's Nest. The task force leads a process that will result in a congregational decision on a policy that is victim centered as well as providing for accountability and care for the offender. The completed policy will be brought to the congregation for approval at the January 26, 2020 congregational meeting.

Pastor Dawn reported that the Leadership Team has focused on what has been learned from recent experiences and sharing learning opportunities for the congregation. During March and April after the Wednesday evening meals, educational sessions were held. The recorded questions and comments will be used for reflection. The team will work with the ongoing tension in hearts and minds of the congregation with the goal to protect those vulnerable as well as the perpetrators.

A congregational member responded to the above report with the comment that perhaps a disproportionate emphasis has been expended on the victim and others have been "hung out to dry." Two families have been "driven from the church."

John responded that the church is also concerned for the perpetrators.

c. Transition report – Dave Linscheid

Dave reported that 2018 and 2019 have been years of significant change. John Tyson left in 2018. In July Susan Jantzen began. Recently Susan Wheeler announced her retirement. Richard Friesen is leaving his post. Susan Jantzen will leave at the end of July. Transition also provides opportunity for change.

The members of the Transition Task Force formed in 2018 by then-moderator Sondra Koontz were Sondra, pastor Dawn, treasurer Richard Friesen, moderator-elect John Waltner, Ron Preheim from Church Board, and Dave as SCRC chair and later, Patty Shelly as current moderator-elect.

Dave related the process followed to respond to the changes, including updating statistics on the congregation and the toll of dealing with the revelations of sexual abuse by two of our members. In light of the latter and all the changes, SCRC proposed that the pastoral care position be increased from 40% to 50%, which was affirmed by the Church Board.

A subset of the Faith Formation Search Committee agreed to continue as the Pastoral Care Search Committee: Dale Schrag (Church Board), Carol Flickinger, Austin Prouty, and Dave Linscheid as Chair.

Change in non-pastoral staff situations has resulted in the creation of a Finance and Organization Manager position as suggested by SCRC and the Finance Committee and updating of Monica Lichti's job description and title to Office and Facilities Manager.

Scrutinizing the budget led to changing the health care coverage beginning January 1, 2020 to full single coverage but 50% for family. Money from the Frank Keller bequest established a fund for staff professional growth.

The congregation was thanked for donating generously for at the end of 2018 to end the year with bit of a surplus.

d. Financial report – p. 7 – Al Peters

Al Peters reported that the first quarter of 2019 was close to budget in expenses, but income was less.

After comparing the budget requests, analyzing the results of the Pony Express and reviewing past giving patterns of the congregation, a budget of \$529,607 was adopted. With 25% of the year completed, income is 20% and the expense is 24% of the budget. The financial position of the church is strong as are the bequests. However, a \$46,000 deficit is projected so Al presented a plea for increased giving.

e. Budget reflections – John Waltner

Transition has an impact on the budget. The Church Board is wrestling with the big picture and would like the congregation to feel involved. Our congregation is relatively small but generous. The budget for 2019 exceeds the intents by \$46,000. Over half of those committing to intents increased theirs over 2018. The generational mix is positive. Deaths affect income.

Current and future budgets provide opportunities.

- The Common Purpose was adopted. Three Priorities have been established.
- Focus on issues related to our congregation's commitment to provide safe space for children and vulnerable people among us
 - Expand and deepen our congregation's outreach to our community
 - Nurture vibrant faith and participation of children, youth, young families in our worship and community life.

5. Closing prayer and adjournment

Dawn led the congregation in ending with the prayer with which we began.

Meeting adjourned at 1:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Schmidt, Clerk