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Bethel College Mennonite Church
CHURCH BOARD MINUTES—to be posted
April 8, 2021 7 pm online via Zoom

**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: Elizabeth Schmidt (moderator), Pat Friesen (clerk), Erin Brubacher, Glen Ediger,
Judy Friesen, John Kliewer, Cynthia Linscheid, Bill Swartley

Board Members Absent: Dale Schrag,

Staff Present: Dawn Yoder Harms (pastor), Renee Reimer (associate pastor), Mike Claassen (financial manager)

Others Present: Heather Esau Zerger, Ron Peters

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1. **Welcome and Centering Prayer** (Elizabeth Schmidt)

Adapted from a worship resource in the new hymnal, *Voices Together*, Elizabeth read a prayer praising God as gardener.

2. **Consent Agenda.** The March 4, 2021 board minutes, pastors' reports, and online minutes of commissions and committees had been distributed electronically. **All received unanimous approval shown with a “thumbs up” on the screen.**

3. **SCRC Report on Staff Annual Reviews** (Heather Esau Zerger) – **Action: Bill Swartley moved, and Glen Ediger seconded to accept the report. The report was received with unanimous approval shown with a “thumbs up” on the screen.**

Heather presented the process and conclusions of annual pastoral staff reviews which SCRC has conducted.

There is universal affirmation and support for Pastor Dawn as BCMC lead pastor. Also, SCRC reports strong affirmation for the work of Pastor Renee and Pastor Nathan. SCRC notes strong support for the team approach which pastors are developing together. SCRC has also reviewed and affirmed positive staff reviews for the rest of BMC staff.

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4. **Columbarium Expansion Task Group Report & Proposal** (Ron Peters) – **Action: John Kliewer moved to approve the committee’s recommendation; seconded by Judy Friesen. Unanimous approval by show of hands on the screen.**

Glen Ediger began the report by sharing architectural drawings and estimates via his computer screen.

Ron explained that the group is proposing a site which is at the south end of the current columbarium, going to the east. It would look good to have the wall extend the entire distance of the concrete pad - about 12' long.

For visual balance, a slightly thicker and taller pillar at the joining of the two walls is recommended. The Everest Company no longer offers the metal niche covers but supplies stone faceplates now. A dark brown color is compatible with the previous niche faceplates already installed.

These plans were presented to Facilities Committee and they encouraged installing all structures now for a wall encasing a double set of niches, with 72 niches purchased now. A cost savings will be realized because the same drawings from the original double wall will be used. A discussion concluded it would not be prudent to prepurchase all niches now.

Action: John Kliewer moved to approve the Task Group’s recommendation to construct a double wall, placed at 90 degrees to the existing wall, and purchasing one set of 72 niches. The motion was seconded by Judy Friesen, receiving unanimous approval by show of hands on the screen.

Ron thanked the board for their approval to continue their work and promised to keep the board updated on progress.

- 51 5. **Finance Report. Mike Claassen**
52 One unanticipated expenditure during the pandemic, not included in the budget, was for licenses permitting
53 online display of musical scores. This will be including in music budget requests in future years.
54 **Cynthia Linscheid moved to accept the financial report; Erin Brubacher seconded; unanimous approval by**
55 **show of hands on the screen.**
- 56
57 6. **Finance Committee Recommendation for PPP balance – Action: Bill Swartley moved to adopt the Finance**
58 **Committee recommendation establishing a new fund, the “PPP Reserve Fund.” John Kliewer seconded the**
59 **motion; unanimous approval.**
- 60 **Notice to the Church Board:** We have been advised that our Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan of
61 \$62,000 has been forgiven and will not need to be paid back. The Finance committee proposes that we use
62 part of the PPP fund (\$25-26,000), to replenish the plant fund that was depleted to cover the expense of the
63 elevator repair. The remainder we want to hold in reserve but need the Church Board to create a new
64 designated fund, titled “PPP Fund” to hold this money in reserve. --Al Peters, chair
- 65 7. **Appointments for Board-Appointed Committees**
66 Updates were reported and ongoing searches for replacements were requested to be completed and
67 reported to Elizabeth Schmidt before the congregational meeting, May 2.
68
- 69 8. **Inclusion Task Group – Joining Supportive Communities Network - Congregant Survey Results and Next Steps**
70 Final results from the congregational Joining SCN Survey are: 131 participants: 121 yes (92.4%) 10 no (7.6%)
71 **Action:** Based on last month’s board motion, the survey results confirm the congregation supports joining the
72 Supportive Communities Network (SCN). Elizabeth will write a brief bulletin announcement to the
73 congregation. Elizabeth will also work with Pastor Nathan and the Task Group to officially complete the
74 congregational membership process. Mike Claassen will work with Pastor Nathan and the Witness Commission
75 to determine where in the church budget this cost will be incurred.
76
- 77 9. **Technology Task Group - sanctuary screen discernment process - Action: Bill Swartley and Dale Schrag will**
78 **present an informational report at the congregational meeting, May 2.** It will include reporting the positive
79 responses already received from committees and commissions. The church board will review questions and
80 comments received at or after the presentation, and then determine at its June meeting whether additional
81 ways to engage the congregation are needed before a final vote of approval is held at the September
82 congregational meeting.
83
- 84 10. **Date change for spring congregational meeting.** Since scheduling the spring congregational meeting for April
85 25, we learned that Leonard Pitts will be presenting KIPCOR's second 2020-21 peace lecture at 2pm, April
86 25. To allow everyone to attend this event, **a motion proposing that we move the congregational meeting**
87 **to Sunday, May 2, 1pm, via zoom was emailed by Moderator Elizabeth Schmidt to all board members on**
88 **March 24. All board members replied approving this date change.**
- 89 11. **Finalize Spring Congregational Meeting Agenda – May 2, 2021, 1 pm, Zoom**
90 - Welcome and Opening Prayer – Voices Together resource
91 - Approve Minutes of 1-31-21 Congregational Meeting
92 - Election of Church Board Members and Commission members
93 - **Invitation to members to submit nominations “from the floor” will be announced when the slate**
94 **is sent out. Any additional nominations must be submitted via email to Elizabeth Schmidt before**
95 **May 2.**
96 - Vote by online poll
97 - Commend Gifts Discernment Committee, and those completing terms
98 - Reports
99 a. Booklet reports/opportunity for ?’s

- 100 b. Report from Abuse Prevention & Response Committee by Jill Robb, committee chair on past
101 timeline of policy development and upcoming process for congregational review/approval)
102 c. Living Stones II – Renovation report. Annette Lamp?
103 d. Financial Manager’s Report
104 e. Re-opening Church Task Group report
105 f. Technology Task group – Bill Swartley and Dale Schrag
106 - Other items
107 - Closing Prayer & Adjournment
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109 **Elizabeth commended Pastor Renee and the committee on their careful thought in the process of moving the**
110 **Abuse Prevention and Response process along.**
111

112 **12. Website – update** (Elizabeth and Cynthia)

- 113 a. Elizabeth Schmidt and Cynthia Linscheid reported back to the board after agreeing to study how to
114 grant access to all interested church members and active participants to the meeting minutes currently
115 posted online behind a second password protected firewall. Flint Hills Design, the church webmaster,
116 has advised that removing the second layer of password protected access to board and group minutes
117 would be labor and time intensive because of the coding and encryption involved, as well as the posting
118 process used by the church office manager. Therefore, the recommendation is that:

119 **Any church member and active congregant asking for access to the content currently protected**
120 **by the "second-level" password simply be given the password. If there is a question about the**
121 **request being made, that can be discussed with pastoral staff and/or moderator.**

122 **A quarterly reminder will be published of the Guidelines for Confidential Communication in our**
123 **Handbook:**

124 **Minutes from church board, commission, and committee meetings submitted to the**
125 **church office are viewable on the BCMC website. If you are responsible for submitting**
126 **minutes, please take care that they do not include confidential information or names of**
127 **children under 18 and check any questions with the church office. Thank you!**

- 128 **b. Action: Pat Friesen moved adoption of these recommended changes. Judy Friesen seconded;**
129 **approved unanimously.**
130

131 **13. Ordination Discernment Process for Pastor Renee – Update (Pastor Dawn)**

132 Process and timeline were reported by Pastor Dawn.
133

134 **14. Renovation Project - Regier Construction – Update (Pastor Dawn)**

135 The project is nearing completion. Small groups have begun meeting in Fellowship Hall. A full report will be
136 given to the congregation at the May congregational meeting.
137

138 **15. *Introduce Congregational Project Tithe concept for future board meeting listening circle**

139 **Action: Item Tabled.**
140

141 **16. Other business. None.**

142 **17. Executive Session. Entered 8:46 pm.**

143 Adjourn time: 8:48 pm

144 Next Meeting: May 6, 2021, 7:00pm
145

146 Respectfully submitted,

147 Pat Friesen, Clerk
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