

1 Video record: [https://youtu.be/wPxc\\_A70QR8](https://youtu.be/wPxc_A70QR8)

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3 **BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH**  
4 **Congregational Meeting MINUTES**  
5 **Sunday, May 2, 2021, 1 pm, via ZOOM**  
6

7 *Our faith in a God of love leads us, by the power of the Spirit,*  
8 *to follow Jesus in doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.*  
9

- 10 1. **Call to order and Centering Prayer** — Elizabeth Schmidt, moderator  
11 Elizabeth welcomed all who were in attendance virtually to what may become our last totally  
12 virtual congregational meeting. Elizabeth thanked Pastor Renee for hosting today's meeting, and  
13 Pat and Chuck Friesen for counting attendees to establish that a quorum was present. More than  
14 60 were in attendance; a quorum was present. Moderator Elizabeth Schmidt led all in an opening  
15 prayer.  
16
- 17 2. **The January 31, 2021 congregational meeting minutes were accepted as distributed.**  
18
- 19 3. **Financial Manager's Report** — Michael Claassen, Financial Manager  
20 Mike reported giving trends to date for 2021 comparing it to the average for 2016-2020. As of  
21 today, giving has dipped (as traditionally happens) and members are invited to support  
22 congregational programs through online donations or personal checks.  
23
- 24 4. **Officer/Board Member Election**  
25 Moderator Elizabeth reviewed the list of officers to be affirmed as printed in the Annual Report.  
26 The Annual Report booklet was distributed weeks earlier via email. Pastor Renee Reimer was  
27 hosting the Zoom today and posting the question, as well as voting results online. **Action: Vote via**  
28 **Zoom poll function, Yes to Affirm, No to Disaffirm** **There was a unanimous affirmation of the**  
29 **slate of candidates.**  
30  
31 Moderator Elizabeth extended a Thank You to all who have served and are completing terms of  
32 service for the congregation (p. 10 Annual Booklet). Faith Formation invites two members to join  
33 their commission.  
34
- 35 5. **Annual Booklet Reports** — Moderator Elizabeth allowed time for questions and comments. None  
36 were voiced.  
37
- 38 6. **Abuse Prevention & Response Committee Report** — Jill Robb, Chair  
39 Jill reported on the history and intent of creating a Policy for Preventing and Responding to Sexual  
40 Misconduct. She reviewed national statistics projecting 25% of the adults in a congregation have  
41 experienced sexual abuse or misconduct. Jill reported on the training and education that the  
42 committee has provided to date for the congregation, highlighting *Circles of Grace* within the Faith  
43 Formation curriculum for children and youth.

44 This committee was formed in Fall 2020 with the purpose of creating a new policy that is easy to  
45 understand and would allow others to quickly find information to provide victim assistance when  
46 necessary. The policy is victim-centered, challenging our church family and community to place  
47 value on victim support and care. Now that the policy is drafted the committee’s work will shift to  
48 education for the church through Sunday School classes.

49  
50 A copy of the proposed Policy will be sent electronically to members tomorrow, May 3, for study  
51 and feedback. Those who receive church communications by US mail will receive it by the end of  
52 the week. Hard copies will also be available in the gathering space in the church. Feedback can be  
53 provided through the Response section of the online survey. The committee will review feedback  
54 responses in June and July. Responses should be addressed to the committee, not any individual  
55 committee members. Other committee members are Bethany Schrag, Jim Robb, Yolanda Kaufman,  
56 Dale Schrag with Jill Robb as chairperson, and the pastoral team.

57  
58 Jill publicly voiced support for victims and apologies for any past missteps. Moderator Elizabeth  
59 hopes we all move forward into this difficult work with grace and wise hearts.

60  
61 **7. Living Stones II – Renovation Report** — Annette Lamp  
62 Annette thanked everyone for their patience in this extended process. The first tour of our new  
63 space was conducted this week. A new basement family restroom plus renovations of the  
64 basement hallway and Fellowship Hall are almost completed.

65  
66 Elizabeth thanked Annette for her service as liaison with the contractor for this extensive  
67 construction project. “Thank you for your persistence and tenacity to keep the project moving  
68 along during this pandemic year.”

69  
70 **8. Reopening Church Task Group Update** — Dawn Yoder Harms, Pastor  
71 Early this March 2021 marked one year of stopping our in-person worship because of the  
72 pandemic. At that time a survey was emailed to the congregation, asking them to share what have  
73 been losses or appreciations during that time. Pastor Dawn shared some comments from the  
74 survey about what we miss as well as what we look forward to after a year of remote worship due  
75 to COVID-19 pandemic precautions.

76  
77 Jill Robb thanked pastoral staff leadership and the Task Group for putting Safety First, an indication  
78 of their caring hearts. Moderator Elizabeth publicly thanked the Reopening Task Group: Doris  
79 Whillock, Barbara Thiessen, Jim Robb, Susie Swartley, Jeannette Stucky, Monica Lichti, and pastors  
80 Dawn, Renee, and Nathan. (Elizabeth Schmidt was also a member of the Reopening Task Group.)

81  
82 **9. Technology Task Group conversation** – Bill Swartley and Dale Schrag  
83 Last fall the church board appointed a Technology Task Group to address technology needs in the  
84 sanctuary. Technology Task Group members are: Bill Swartley, Dale Schrag, Ken Lamp, Doug  
85 Harms, and Dorothy Nickel Friesen.

86

87 Dale and Bill presented the possible installation of a projection screen at the front of the sanctuary.  
88 Opportunities the screen would provide, as well as changes to the visual appearance of the front of  
89 the sanctuary that would occur during use, were discussed.  
90



91 Moderator Elizabeth invited questions online. In conclusion, Elizabeth encouraged the congregation to  
92 consider this decision and share our ideas and feelings with the committee: Bill Swartley, Dale Schrag,  
93 Ron Preheim, Dorothy Nickel Friesen and Ken Lamp.  
94

95  
96 **10. Other items. None voiced.**

97  
98 **11. Closing Prayer** — Pastor Dawn Yoder Harms read from *Voice Together* #1068  
99

100 Moderator Elizabeth adjourned the meeting at 2:09 pm.

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102 Respectfully submitted,  
103 Pat Friesen, clerk