

1 Video Record <https://youtu.be/PCvOZ2GBMs0>

2 **BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH Congregational Meeting MINUTES**

3 **Sunday, September 12, 2021, 1 pm, via ZOOM**

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

6 **1. Call to order and Centering Prayer:** Elizabeth Schmidt, moderator, welcomed all who were in
7 attendance virtually. She thanked Pastor Renee for hosting today's meeting, and Pat and Chuck
8 Friesen, now relocated to Nebraska, for once again counting attendees to establish that a
9 quorum was present. Slightly more than 60 voting members were in attendance; a quorum was
10 present. Moderator Elizabeth Schmidt led all in an opening prayer.

11 **2. The May 2, 2021 congregational meeting minutes were accepted as distributed.**

12 **3. Financial Manager's Report:** Michael Claassen, Financial Manager reported giving trends
13 through August 2021 and that income for fiscal year 2021 through August is effectively three
14 weeks behind expenses.

15 **4. Officer/Board Member Election:** Nominee Margaret Toews was elected to serve on the
16 Church Board as clerk beginning January 2022, replacing Pat Friesen for the duration of Pat's
17 term through May 31, 2023. John Kliewer will serve as clerk in the interim. Moderator Schmidt
18 thanked Pat Friesen for her service, Margaret Toews for consenting to replace Pat and John
19 Kliewer for serving as interim clerk.

20 **5. Abuse Prevention & Response Committee report:** Jill Robb, Chair and Pastor Renee Reimer
21 reported that the APR Committee is presently working to incorporate and reconcile suggestions
22 submitted by a church member into the Abuse and Prevention Response policy and that the
23 policy should be ready for a congregational vote prior to the end of 2021. The policy will give
24 pastoral staff guidance in the handling of future abuse events. Jill also reported that a fund of
25 \$12,000 has been approved by the Church Board and Finance committee for future
26 contingencies. Moderator Schmidt thanked all members of the APR committee for their work.

27 **6. Reopening Task Group update:** Pastor Dawn Yoder Harms reported that despite a majority
28 of congregants having been vaccinated against COVID-19, the current rise in cases due to the
29 Delta variant in our community places members at too high a risk to reopen without the
30 limitations of masks and physical distancing. For the present, masks and physical distancing are
31 still required. Moderator Schmidt thanked members of Reopening Task Group for their ongoing
32 discernment in midst of evolving COVID-19 strains and risks.

33 **7. Technology Task Group update:** Bill Swartley reported that while the group had come close
34 to making a decision on the installation of a screen at the front of the sanctuary, the
35 engineering and consulting firms associated with the project backed away from it due to
36 technical complexities involved. In view of this development as well as worship culture flux and
37 uncertainties during the COVID-19 pandemic, the task group has elected to postpone the

38 project. Moderator Schmidt thanked Bill for his report, and encouraged providing members of
39 the Technology Task Group with suggestions or ideas.

40 **8. Columbarium Expansion Task Group update:** Glen Ediger reported good progress consistent
41 with the original plan in the construction of the expanded columbarium and noted that the
42 progress can be viewed and monitored by the public because it is an outdoor as opposed to an
43 indoor project. An option to make the wall 10 inches deeper and provide opportunity for family
44 members to share a niche has been exercised at a moderate cost increase, still within budget.
45 This will enable provisions for 216 individuals as opposed to the original 144. Of historical
46 interest is the fact that this work is being done by Dana Orpin of Hesston and his brother whose
47 father and grandfather were the masons on the original BCMC church building.

48 **9. Other Business:**

49 Elaine Schurr, Witness Commission Chair informed the congregation that there will be
50 future changes made to the list of benevolences.

51 Moderator Elizabeth Schmidt expressed gratitude for prayers, cards, and expressions of
52 care and support during the illness and passing of her mother.

53 **10. Closing Prayer:** Pastor Dawn Yoder Harms led attenders in a closing prayer.

54 **11. Moderator Elizabeth Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 1:40 pm local time.**

55 Respectfully submitted,

56 John Kliewer, interim clerk