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3 **Bethel College Mennonite Church Board Minutes**

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5 *Pending approval at the November 2022 Board Meeting*

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

9 **Board Members Present:** Ada Schmidt Tieszen (Moderator), Brad Kohlman (Moderator-
10 elect), Mary Ann Boschmann, Judy Friesen, John Kliewer, Karen Penner, Lois Preheim,
11 Adam Robb, Bill Swartley, Margaret Toews, Jon Zerger

12 **Board Members not present:** Tim Hodge

13 **Staff Present:** Nathan Koontz (Pastor), Todd Schlosser (Interim Pastor), Mike Claassen
14 (Finance Manager)

15 **Staff not present:**

16 **Others attending:**

17
18 **1. Welcome and Centering Prayer** – Because October is Pastors Appreciation Month,
19 refreshments were offered and Ada Schmidt-Tieszen especially thanked Nathan, Todd
20 and Mike for their work. Ada offered a centering prayer to begin the meeting.

21 **2. Consent Agenda.** Online minutes of commissions and committees, pastors' reports,
22 and September 1 board meeting minutes were presented. **Judy Friesen moved to**
23 **approve the Consent Agenda and John Kliewer seconded the motion; approved by**
24 **consensus.**

25 **3. Financial Report for September, 2022** - The Treasurer's Report was emailed prior to
26 the meeting. Income was higher than expenses again in September. Finances
27 continue to move in a good direction. **Lois Preheim moved to approve the Financial**
28 **Report. Jon Zerger seconded; motion carried.**

29 **4. Review and Approval of Salaries and Insurance for Annual Budget.** Mike Claassen
30 presented proposed salaries and historical insurance premium information for board
31 information as the Finance Committee continues to develop the annual budget. The
32 Music budget is reduced because of shortened schedules for some of the choirs.
33 Salary proposals include two options. The first option (continuation of current
34 practice) assumes each pastor pays self-employment tax of 15.3 percent on their
35 salary. 15.3 percent includes the half typically paid by the employee plus the half paid
36 by the employer. The second option (new for this budget year) increases pastors'
37 salaries by 7.65 percent to reimburse them for the employer portion of the tax. **Bill**
38 **Swartley moved; Jon seconded the motion which reads: The board affirms a 7.65**

39 percent salary increase for pastors to reimburse them for the employer portion of
40 the self-employment tax on income beginning in the 2023 budget year as
41 recommended by the Finance Committee.

42 5. **Proposal for Staff Reviews** - Without an official Lead Pastor, Nathan, Todd and Ada
43 propose that Todd complete staff reviews this year. SCRC is in support of this
44 proposal for this year with review for coming years. **Judy moved to accept this**
45 **proposal; Lois seconded. Motion carried.**

46

47 6. **Interim Congregational Care Position** – A proposal has been developing to hire an
48 interim/temporary .5 FTE lay person to work in the areas of visitation, welcoming new
49 attendees, and other congregational care. Todd suggests that a coordinator of these
50 efforts in congregational care will help with our large congregation. This is a time to
51 try out and explore the position while we are in transition. Because more pastoral
52 time might be needed as we try to implement changes Credence may recommend,
53 the congregational care position can help reduce the load on pastors. **Brad Kohlman**
54 **moved that the board approve continued pursuit of this proposal. Jon seconded;**
55 **motion carried.**

56

57 In addition, the board made the motion **to affirm Nathan in his current work and**
58 **additionally to affirm his decision as to his preferred level of FTE. In this time of**
59 **transition and increased workload, the board wants to communicate its support of**
60 **whatever level of FTE Nathan feels is healthy and appropriate for him. This**
61 **affirmation was made unanimously.**

62

63 7. **Reflections on the October 1 Meeting with Credence and Company: The Work**
64 **Ahead** – Ada asked the board to break into small groups and answer questions such
65 as 1. What stood out for you; 2. What remains puzzling; 3. What hit home; 3. What
66 surprised you; 4. What questions do we have for the consultants. Responses included
67 the following:

68 Regarding Credence process and results:

- 69 ▪ A wish for more specifics showing how questions were answered by
70 demographic range – wanted more info from Credence
- 71 ▪ Strengths and challenges were the same thing
- 72 ▪ In what order do we think about moving forward – sequencing
- 73 ▪ Consult report was well researched and thoughtful – but not much in the way
74 of recommendations
- 75 ▪ When will a written report be available?
- 76 ▪ Not sure credence will make recommendations
- 77 ▪ How many recommendations can we expect to receive from Credence
- 78 ▪ Will we get more teaching about models?
- 79 ▪ Final report – give final report and they are done – what do we do
- 80 ▪ What should be the sequence of decisions

- 81 ▪ Recommendations – when do we get them?
82

83 Young families in our congregation

- 84 ▪ The why and how of the question of bringing young people into our
85 congregation
86 ▪ Don't have to have younger people around the table all the time
87 ▪ We can have advocates for the younger people
88 ▪ Younger folks need help – how to encourage younger people
89

90 Pastoral Leadership Models

- 91 ▪ Disappointed that there wasn't more about pastoral leadership models
92 ▪ Specific models were not presented
93 ▪ Do we need to decide on the pastoral model ahead of time
94 ▪ Find the best candidate – that candidate helps us figure the rest of the model
95 out
96 ▪ If we go with a flat model the board has a bigger role to play
97 ▪ Not sure BCMC has been well served by lead pastor model in the past
98

99 Pastoral Supervision

- 100 ▪ Pastoral supervision – big questions about how to supervise in a collaborative
101 model of pastoral staff. Includes questions about supervising other employees
102 of the church
103 ▪ What are models of supervision in the church?
104 ▪ Who's going to supervise who
105 ▪ What does healthy supervision in a church setting look like?
106

107 Who we are now

- 108 ▪ This congregation is a light – doing many things such as land
109 acknowledgement, marching in gay pride parade, abuse and prevention work –
110 let's not lose our nerve
111 ▪ Let go of old expectations
112 ▪ Weight -- festering wound of sexual abuse in our congregation
113 ▪ Find new ways to communicate some of the issues that come up in church –
114 announcements during church?
115 ▪ Who we are and who do we want to be
116 ▪ We don't have to be perfect – maybe we don't know who we are right now.
117 ▪ Are we healthy ?
118 ▪ It may be up to us to make the determination as to whether we are healthy
119

120 Next steps

- 121 ▪ What questions do we have for the consultants?
122 ▪ What works well in terms of processing with the congregation
123 ▪ What is it that we want to make sure we get from Credence
124 ▪ Vision statement leads to Purpose statement. Is purpose statement a stand-in
125 for a vision statement

- 126 ▪ Give us two or three concepts that we need to immediately begin work on
127 ▪ What are the things we must get done before we begin the search.

128

129 **8. Worship Needs in Coming Months (discussion if time allows). The board could**
130 **come up with an Advent committee, but Nathan is willing to do it. There is guidance**
131 **from MCUSA.** The easiest is for Nathan to continue with the help of a couple of
132 people to call people who will read scripture, give children's story, etc. **The board**
133 **affirms that Nathan will continue as worship coordinator through Advent with the**
134 **help of several people to call people for children's story and scripture reading.**
135 **Those people will be named around the end of October.**

136 **9. Reports and Announcements:**

137 **Interim Pastor position** – discussion in Executive Session

138 **Worship Commission Task Group** - A task group has been formed with the following
139 members: Adam Robb, Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Dale Schrag, and Patty Shelly. They
140 have held their first meeting and have others scheduled. They will consult
141 consistently with pastors. Thanks to Bill Swartley for his careful thinking and working
142 with me to find the group members.

143 **Search Committee** - Five congregants have agreed to be members of our search
144 committee: Heather Zerger, Doug Penner, Megan Kohlman, Lois Preheim, and John
145 Waltner. Thanks to Mary Ann Boschmann and Brad Kohlman for their work on
146 gathering these names and approaching these people.

147 **Upcoming dates:** Credence Report to congregation (October 16), Final Report
148 (November 13), Todd Schlosser's last day (November 20)

149

150 **10. Executive Session. Entered at 9:20 pm. Closed at 9:45 pm.**

151

152 **Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm. Next meeting will be held November 3.**

153

154 Submitted by Margaret Toews, Clerk

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