

Bethel College Mennonite Church Board Minutes

Pending approval at the March 2023 Board Meeting

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: Ada Schmidt-Tieszen (Moderator), Brad Kohlman (Moderator-elect), Mary Ann Boschmann, Judy Friesen, Tim Hodge, Lois Preheim, Bill Swartley, Margaret Toews, Jon Zerger

Board Members not present: John Kliewer, Karen Penner, Adam Robb

Staff Present: Mike Claassen (Finance Manager), Nathan Koontz (Pastor), Roger Neufeld Smith (Interim Pastor)

Staff not present:

Others attending: Dorothy Nickel-Friesen, Elizabeth Schmidt

- 1. Welcome and Opening Prayer** - Ada Schmidt-Tieszen lead the group in a time of silent mindfulness and closed with a prayer.
- 2. Consent Agenda** – Online minutes of commissions and committees, pastors’ reports, and January board meeting minutes were presented. **Judy Friesen moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Tim Hodge seconded the motion; approved by consensus.**
- 3. Financial Report** – The Treasurer’s Report was emailed prior to the meeting. Mike Claassen talked through the report. Giving in January is down a bit compared to previous years but is not too unusual. There were no questions. The Facilities Committee reports that there will be a large expenditure (\$10,000 to \$15,000) to address a fire alarm issue. Bill Swartley will attend the Facilities Committee meeting Monday evening to find out more. **Tim moved to approve the Financial Report. Judy seconded; the motion carried.**
- 4. Credentialing for Elizabeth Schmidt** – Elizabeth was present to discuss her desire for credentialing. She also responded to questions and comments about her report and her first month in the Congregational Care position. Elizabeth would like to pursue a path to being credentialed by Western District Conference for the specific position of Congregational Care. She has already met with a discernment group of Patty Shelly and Dorothy Nickel Friesen who offer affirmation for her skills and motivation for credentialing. **The board, as representatives of the congregation, unanimously moved to affirm the recommendation that Elizabeth pursue the process of credentialing through Western District Conference for the specific role of Congregational Care Coordinator. Ada will write a request letter to WDC as the next step in this process.**
- 5. Recommendations from the Worship Commission Task Group** – Dorothy Nickel Friesen was present to answer any questions from the board about the work of the task group. Discussion followed around the questions of the 1) role of Worship Commission in our church and 2) how to make it a sustainable and productive commission. Could members of the task group transfer some of their knowledge and passion to the new Worship Commission? Perhaps members of the task group can offer orientation at the first meeting of a new commission. The board thanked the task force for its excellent work and detailed reports. This type of re-evaluation of the work of a commission may be a model for work in the future as recommendations made by Credence are considered. **Bill Swartley moved to accept the recommendation**

of the Worship Commission Task Group to ask Gifts Discernment Committee to appoint members to a new Worship Commission. Judy seconded; the motion carried.

- 6. Corinthian Plan** - Since Elizabeth Schmidt is not credentialed and is only half time she cannot get health insurance through the church plan under the current arrangement BCMC has with the Corinthian Plan. **Margaret Toews made the motion that BCMC pay Elizabeth Schmidt's health insurance premium (\$871.10) to her on the first of each month starting in February 2023 until she is credentialed or until October 2023 when Elizabeth makes decisions regarding Medicare. This is an exception to our typical process but is recommended by SCRC. Jon Zerger seconded; the motion passed unanimously.**
- 7. Questions from the Pastoral Search Committee** – The Search Committee will soon need to know 1. A job description with titles and duties; 2. The number of pastors we are seeking; 3. Does the number of active members (those attending on Sunday morning) play a role? If we expect our pastors to have a role in the community – Bethel, etc.—does that make a difference? Could SS classes discuss these questions and give us feedback? Discussion around these questions and a timeline to answer them followed.
- 8. Reports and Announcements**
 - a. Pastoral liaison structure: Roger Neufeld Smith distributed copies of his Report on Liaison Relationships Between Staff and Commission/Standing Committees. He also distributed a draft of items from the SCRC job description related to possible revisions in the areas of hiring and supervision/evaluation. To be discussed at next meeting.
 - b. Credence Report Task Group – This group is still being formed.
- 9. Executive Session – Brad Kohlman moved; Tim seconded to close the regular meeting and move to Executive Session at 9:10. Closed at 9:30.**
- 10. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm. Next meeting will be held March 2, 2023.**

Submitted by Margaret Toews, clerk

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