

BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH
Congregational Meeting Minutes
Sunday, May 7, 2023, 10:45 pm

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.

- 1. Welcome and Opening Prayer** - Ada Schmidt-Tieszzen, moderator, welcomed all in attendance in person and via YouTube. All present read the BCMC purpose statement together and Ada offered a prayer for the meeting.
- 2. Approval of Minutes, Congregational Meeting, January 29, 2023** - The minutes of the previous congregational meeting was included in the packet of information. Ada asked for questions or corrections of the minutes. There were none. Marlene Faul moved to accept the minutes as presented; Tim Hodge seconded. The motion carried unanimously by voice and text* votes.
- 3. Approval of Slate of Nominees for Commissions, Committees, Board (action item)**
Dale Schrag thanked the other members of the committee, Jerry Buller, Elaine Prouty, Jeanette Stucky and Fritz Toews, with Roger Neufeld Smith as staff liaison. Most people who were called said yes. There were two exceptions; 1) Mary Ellen Hodge will serve a 3rd term on Faith Formation Commission; 2) Only three candidates are listed for Worship Commission. They bring a passion to the work of the Worship Commission and it is felt that three candidates will be enough. Ada called for a vote to accept the slate of nominations. The slate of nominations passed by voice and text vote.
Dale asked for volunteers to be delegates for MennoCon, held this coming July 3-6 at the Kansas City Convention Center. We need 5 delegates and currently have one signed up.
- 4. Report from the Search Committee: Heather Zerger, Chair (no action needed)**
Heather Zerger shared an overall update, survey results, and asked for questions. The Search Committee members are Doug Penner, Megan Kohlman, Lois Preheim, John Waltner and Heather Zerger, chair. Heather shared a checklist of steps to prepare the congregation for a pastoral search. She shared attendance and demographic information about our congregation and mentioned that anyone is welcome to take a look at the Congregational Information Form that has been completed for Western District Conference. One question was asked about whether online viewers were counted in the attendance information. They are not because the count provided by YouTube is a count of views, including repeat views. There were no additional questions.
- 5. Report from the Credence Report Task Group - (no action needed)**
Adam Robb has agreed to be chair of this committee. Adam gave a history of our work with Credence with regard to who we are, where we are going. There are four areas of recommendations we are acting on; 1) increasing multigenerational interactions, 2) ongoing support of the APRC (Abuse, Prevention and Response Committee), 3) clarifying the gap between church structure as stated in bylaws/constitution and day-to-day practice, and 4) looking at our pastoral leadership model. One meeting has been held so far. The group plans to empower different groups such as commissions and committees to ask themselves how to incorporate congregants of many different ages into work they already do. Brad and Adam plan to build out this effort, for example hosting a service day with kids and adults, or having kids and adults serve

Wednesday night supper. Work has already begun on structure and policy, particularly in the area of staff and pastoral supervision.

6. The Multi-generational Initiative: Brad Kohlman (no action needed)

See item 5.

7. Report from the Indigenous Justice Task Group: Dale Schrag (no action needed)

About a dozen people have met monthly or so for the past year. The monthly land acknowledgement is not enough. The group wants to act in the spirit of repair by increasing awareness (the Turtle Island experience in January, a follow-up Three Sisters meal, a trip to the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma and two public vigils here in North Newton in support of Oak Flat). The group would like to move forward with joining the Repair Network, a largely anabaptist network of churches working to actively respond to ongoing systemic injustice in legislation and other areas. The Repair Network is holding their Annual Gathering at First Mennonite in Hutchinson July 7-10, concluding with a training in Hutchinson on the 10th. Members of the BCMC group are helping host lunch for the training on July 10.

8. Congregational Care Coordination – Elizabeth Schmidt

Elizabeth Schmidt reported on her work as Congregational Care Coordinator. She is working on a more coordinated way to share and reimagining the visitation committee. She challenged the congregation to think of ways to share; for example, bringing picnic food to those who can't make it to the picnic. We've been blessed and have an opportunity to be a blessing to others.

9. Other Business – Ada asked for other business. No other business was brought to the floor.

10. Adjournment – Ada thanked the congregation and adjourned the meeting at 11:50 am.

* "text" votes – For this meeting it was publicized ahead of time that members could attend this meeting via YouTube and text their votes to the phone number of one of the board members. The purpose of this is to try to make the meeting accessible to those members who aren't able attend and to give an opportunity to vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Toews, Board Clerk