

Bethel College Mennonite Church Board Minutes

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), Mary Ann Boschmann, Judy Friesen, John Kliewer, Lois Preheim, Adam Robb, Margaret Toews

Board Members not present: Brad Kohlman (Moderator-elect), Tim Hodge, Karen Penner, Bill Swartley, Jon Zerger

Staff Present: Nathan Koontz (Pastor), Roger Neufeld Smith (Interim Pastor)

Staff not present: Mike Claassen

Others attending:

- 1. Welcome and Opening Prayer** – Ada opened the meeting with a prayer.
- 2. Consent Agenda** – Online minutes of commissions and committees, pastors' reports, April meeting minutes were presented. There were no questions. **Judy Friesen moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mary Ann Boschmann seconded the motion; approved by consensus.**
- 3. Financial Report** – The Treasurer's Report was emailed prior to the meeting. Mike was not able to attend but sent a note with data from previous years which shows income and expenses roughly in line with previous years. A question was raised about the point on page 2 of Mike's report which mentioned a negative balance in the Sanctuary Screen fund. Several board members understood that the screen fund had more than enough in its balance to cover expenses. Margaret will email Mike for clarification. **John Kliewer moved to approve the Financial Report. Adam Robb seconded; the motion carried.**
- 4. Committees Appointed by the Board** – New members have been found for several board-appointed committees.
 - Gifts Discernment Committee (2 members) – not complete
 - Bethel College Relations Team (2-3 members) – not complete
 - Education and Service Scholarship Committee (1-2 members)
Beaty Robb, Karen Ediger, Margaret Toews
 - Facilities Committee (1-2 members)
Abe Turner, Jim Mueller
 - Finance Committee (1 member)
Jeanette Leary
 - Staff Congregation Relations Committee (1 member) – not complete**Lois Preheim moved to approve the new members of board-appointed committees listed above. Judy Friesen seconded. The motion carried.**
- 5. Recommendations from Faith Formation Commission Concerning Staff Contracts**

Brad and Nathan have talked to Jill Robb and George Leary who are willing to continue in their respective roles through the 23-24 school year. Jill would like to carry on through this coming summer. The board affirmed the continuation of both Jill and George with a start date and duration specified in an upcoming recommendation by Faith Formation Commission. Budget considerations will be worked out once the recommendation is received.

6. Review Work of Credence Report Work Group (Adam Robb, chair)

- Report from April 23 discussion of job description and CIF

Adam reported on the SS hour meeting – He reported 20 – 30 people attended. Some board members have heard concerns that the culture of the congregation should be worked on or changed before a pastor is chosen. There were comments during the meeting about a more welcoming nature in the church more recently. The board should continue to make congregants aware that culture is changing. Examples are church-wide social gatherings at people's homes, new energy in the Faith Formation Commission, new energy in Creation Care, new energy in the Task Group for Indigenous Justice. We want to welcome new and unusual ideas and shouldn't be afraid to listen. Culture isn't dictated from on high – it has to be a community effort. When we name the changes that have happened, it helps the congregation to understand that culture is changing. There has been some feedback questioning the choice of co-pastor on the job description.

- Multigenerational Initiatives (Brad Kohlman)

Brad and Adam will meet with commissions to listen to ideas about making commissions be more intergenerational

- Update on Supervision and Structure (Roger Neufeld Smith)

Roger distributed two flow charts for Staff Recruitment and Support Processes; one representing the BCMC constitution and bylaws, and the other representing Current Practice. The chart representing Current Practice highlights an emphasis on more final decisions at the board level. In order to spread the responsibility the church needs strong commissions and needs people with passion for the commissions task. What if we can't find them? Could a distinction be made as to those tasks which are special, one-time tasks; as opposed to monthly or regular tasks?

7. Congregational Meeting on May 7: Final Plans – Start time will be 10:45 in the sanctuary. Adam's phone number will be used for those zooming in who would like to participate in voting by texting him their vote. The meeting will be carried live on YouTube but will be available only for the duration of the meeting.

8. Reports and Announcements

- **Orientation:** There is often an orientation for new commission members who will take their positions on June 1. This year's orientation is scheduled for June 18 during the SS hour. Ada is willing to offer additional training on how to make a group function well (possibly focused on chairpersons) later in the year.

- **Structure:** Judy Friesen shared that she is willing to continue work on policy and would welcome other people to work with her. The task is to eliminate discrepancies between what policy says and what the practice is. These documents need to be a flexible work-in-progress.

- **Creation Care** is passionate about solar – working with Bethel or in some other way. As this initiative develops and financing is considered, does the policy of tithing (as was done for the sanctuary screen project) apply in this case?

- **Thanks** - Adam thanked everyone for a great weekend at Mennoscah April 29-30 with Halstead Mennonite. Appreciation was expressed to Adam and Nathan for a successful weekend including two

baptisms in the Ninnescah River. Approximately 60-70 people from the two churches spent the night and around 115 people were at the combined Sunday morning service.

9. Executive Session 9:03p – 9:13p

10. Meeting adjourned at 9:13 pm. Next meeting will be held June 1, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by Margaret Toews, clerk

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