

## Bethel College Mennonite Church Board Minutes

*Pending approval at the July 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, John Kliewer, Doug Penner, Karen Penner, Lois Preheim, Margaret Toews

**Board Members not present:** Jon Zerger

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

**Staff not present:**

**Others attending:**

1. **Welcome and Opening Prayer** – Ada S-T opened the meeting with a welcome to new member, Doug Penner. She reflected on memories of BCMC in her own childhood through grandparents and acknowledged the work and passion of so many in the life of BCMC. Ada followed the reflection with a prayer for the meeting.
2. **Consent Agenda** – Ada introduced a change in how the consent agenda will be handled moving forward. Although all board members are asked to read consent agenda items, one board member will volunteer each month to read all online minutes and reports and share a point or two from these minutes and reports. Online minutes of commissions and committees, pastors' reports, May meeting minutes were then presented. After brief discussion, **Judy Friesen moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Lois Preheim seconded the motion; approved by consensus.** (After the meeting, Margaret agreed to read consent agenda items for this next month's meeting.)
3. **Financial Report** – The Treasurer's Report was emailed prior to the meeting. Several issues were raised as follows:
  - The sanctuary screen fund received some donations but the rest of the cost is being taken from bequests. We need to clarify that this is what the Screen Committee understands. **Ada will visit with Bill Swartley about this.**
  - How are bequests used as funding for special projects? How can this be made more transparent to the congregation?
  - Why is Living Stones still listed on the annual pledge forms when it appears the projects have all been completed? **Ada will talk with the Finance Committee about what the current Living Stones pledges are used for.**
  - Creation Care Committee is talking about funding solar energy projects. Solar wasn't a high enough priority when the Living Stones campaign was started some years back, but is being considered by the committee again. The committee may suggest that the congregation initiate another special fund campaign to fund solar energy projects. The congregation may want to know the status of previous special fund campaigns (like Living Stones and the Sanctuary Screen project) and be clear about the criteria for using bequest funds before authorizing another fund raising campaign.

- Living Stones was a board appointed committee so the board should take responsibility for clarifying its status.

**Brad Kohlman moved to approve the Financial Report. Tim Hodge seconded; the motion carried.**

#### **4. Committees Appointed by the Board: Progress Reports.**

- Gifts Discernment Committee (2 members) – not complete: Brad has asked several people but has not been able to fill the positions for either GDC.
- Bethel College Relations Team (2-3 members) – not complete: Tim Hodge hasn't found anyone at this time. If no one says yes, Tim and Jon Zerger will fill the spots.
- Staff Congregation Relations Committee (1 member) – not complete: Brad has asked several people but has not been able to fill the positions for SCRC.

Roger Neufeld Smith reports that Hospitality Commission is also having trouble finding members.

Discussion followed around these points:

- We need to be able to be more dynamic and creative about ways people can provide leadership for church ministries without expecting extended attendance at committee meetings. People are reluctant to commit to a meeting a month for three years.
- We need to be ready to let some things go. Do we have to have a committee – could individuals commit to a portion of the tasks?
- People will be ready to do the work of the church if it looks different.
- SCRC may need a consultant more than they need a 4<sup>th</sup> member.

#### **5. Proposal Concerning New Artwork by John Waltner** – The board reviewed the request from the Art Committee and Inclusion Task Group for a new art installation for the lobby at the south entrance. A mobile with rainbow colors as part of its theme would be a statement about inclusive acceptance at BCMC. There would be no additional budget requirements. **Lois Preheim moved to approve the request. Judy Friesen seconded; the motion passed.**

#### **6. New Volunteer Orientation on June 18** – Ada asked for thoughts on what to be sure to include in the orientation. Elizabeth Schmidt will assist. Brad will do a specific piece. Discussion included these points:

- This is an opportunity to change culture of perfection.
- Don't necessarily follow the handbook – follow passion and ideas for a task.
- Commissions/committees should ask themselves how their tasks align with the church mission statement – not what has always been done in the past.
- When commissions make hard decisions the board needs to back them up.
- Orientation is an opportunity to be creative and help grow our church – use this training to invite passion.
- Find where your passion and the great need intersect.
- Make things less prescriptive.
- Should the GDC instead ask people – what would you like to do in the church? We will support you.

#### **7. Review Work of Credence Report Work Group** (Adam Robb, chair)

- Report about policy work (Judy Friesen) – Page 14, #9 of the Final Credence report talks about organizational structure. Judy reported that Ada, Richard Friesen and Judy met and discussed ideas along these lines:

- What do we need to be doing in light of our mission statement?
- how can we empower commissions – give them back the power to make decisions without requiring pastoral input – board needs to support commissions in their work
- should commissions be represented on the board – does that make too many meetings – is there a new model of a representative board that is more flexible
- this discussion is a start point

- Supervision and Structure (Roger Neufeld Smith) - Roger passed out draft 2 of an Interim Adjustment to BCMC Bylaws in the Absence of a Lead Pastor - a cover statement to say we're in transition right now. **The board should read through and get back to Roger within a week or so with any response.**

#### **8. Congregational Meeting on May 7: Review and Feedback. Postponed due to time constraint.**

#### **9. Reports and Announcements**

- Faith Formation staff contracts – SCRC drafted and approved MOUs for Jill (6/5/2023 to 6/9/2024) and George (7/17/2023 to 7/15/2024). Jill and George are glad to continue their staff roles at BCMC for another year. AMBS is offering practical leadership training modules. Is this a resource - a way to help people explore ministry? Jill and George are both working through the year although the current BCMC budget did not anticipate Jill and George working this summer. At a previous meeting, the board made the decision to go over budget in order to pay George and Jill for the summer months of 2023.

- Search Committee update - Ada was in contact with both Kathy Neufeld Dunn and Heather Zerger. Job announcement has been posted for several weeks. Kathy Neufeld Dunn reported to Ada that the Search Committee has done an excellent job and is in the stage of receiving Ministerial Leadership Information (MLI) forms from candidates. The board does not need to be involved until a candidate has been selected. Heather will provide a monthly update in the bulletin.

#### **10. Executive Session – entered 9:18 pm**

#### **11. Meeting adjourned – Judy moved; Brad seconded. Motion passed at 9:18 pm. Next meeting will be held July 6, 2023 at 7:00 pm.**

Submitted by Margaret Toews, clerk

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