

**Bethlehem Cemetery Board Meeting
October 11, 2023
Minutes**

Brad's update: There was a leak. Brad thinks someone hung a watering can on a spicket and broke it. Picking up decoration starting Nov 1st, but flags will be left. We have plenty of salt for this winter. Are we going to plant trees this year? Will be planting a tree in Block 19 for someone who requested a tree. Several people with family graves here have asked for trees to be planted. Brad has a new sump pump and will install it in the next couple of weeks. Outside bathroom – Brad will pull toilet and cap off pipe. Brad will put plywood over the door and seal off that bathroom. Jamie has been talking to DTE about the lights and they asked her if anyone had checked the breakers. Brad will check the breakers to make sure none of them are tripped. In the past we have purchased the trees from Rushton Farms and Christianson's off their "sale" list. The lists are not published yet for this year. Jim Lutz moved that we approve \$500 for new trees from our tree fund and have Brad use his best judgement on what he can buy. Seconded by Mary Friend and passed unanimously.

Approval of Sept 2023 financials: September was a little slow. We had two sales and three burials. Burials are behind last year which is just the way things are trending. Investment funds have been up and down. Suan Irwin moved to approve financials as approved. Shannon O'Reilly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Sept 2023 minutes: Jim Lutz made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Jamie Dylenski seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Communication items needing follow up: Mary will take over the AT&T phone to return phone calls, so she does not need to use her personal cell or home phone: Brad brought the AT&T phone to Mary. Calls continue to come in.

Website update: A "donate now" button will be set up so people can click a button and fill out a form. Jamie is setting up a "Stripe" account to use credit cards for the donations. Jamie worked with Betty to set up the Stripe account and it has been finalized. The next step is to test it. Currently it is using the Church's bank account info, but when the website is up and running, we will need to change information to the cemetery's bank information. The cost for Stripe is \$450.00 for one time set up fee. Jim Lutz made a motion to add this cost to the website project. Susan Irwin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. We do not think we will be live on the website before the end of the year.

October Visitor Article: An idea for an article for the visitor was a reminder to people to possibly direct their RMD's to the cemetery. This could be added to the article or a separate box. Also we would like to publicize date for removal of grave decorations.

Bank updates: There have been many problems getting everything set up and scheduling a meeting with Jenna about our accounts. Mary Jean is going to send an email to the Finance Ministry to let them know and to see what we can do going forward.

Property lines: We can't find the previous survey. The city has us listed as having 20 acres and we think it's closer to 50 acres. We do need to know where our property lines are and how many acres we actually have.

New Business: Betty's resignation is at the end of the year. This does not give us a lot of time to look at getting candidates and get them on board and trained. Mary Jean would like to move from the church's software to QuickBooks. Shannon said that with her accounting background and knowledge of QuickBooks, she would be happy to help with the bookkeeping. Jim suggested we give Shannon a six-month trial to give us a breather. Does this present a conflict of interest since Shannon is on the Cemetery Board? We will schedule a working session on September 26, 2023, at 10:00 to come up with a game plan. We will need to ask Betty if she is planning to do the year-end accounting and reports. Should we pay her extra in December to cover this?

Karen and Susan have been working on the price sheets, and they are still working on wording and tweaking information. There might be changes in some of the pricing, but we will not need to approve the changes yet. Burials in Baby Land have been dropped from the sheets. There are questions about burying cremains – more than one in a grave or mixing ashes in one box. These are questions we need to address. The Memorial Garden is self-explanatory. The changes may be mostly in the wording. If you buy a niche, it includes the burial cost. Same for Memorial Garden and Baby Land. We need to find out if animal (pet) remains can be buried in our cemetery. Are there any state laws about this. Karen and Susan wanted to get this approved by the board at the November meeting.

Follow up, parking lot items Future agendas:

- Both trees and roads are common topics and both candidates for a longer-term plan, perhaps five years. This has been in minutes for years, but yet to be done.
- Gelman water quality report: Finding the background information on the reports we receive from them annually.
- Start communicating with the 600 most recent people who purchased from us, and we have their addresses, first communication a general one and asking for their updated information, phone, email, current address, etc.
- Fund Raising, should we wait for the new website? MJ
- Storm damaged trees were covered in our insurance policy for years, but are not now, should they be, and the cemetery pay the rate?

Next meeting is October 11, 2023

Meeting adjourned at 11:43 am
Submitted by Shannon O'Reilly

**Bethlehem Cemetery Board Meeting
Special Board Meeting
October 26, 2023
Minutes**

Present: Board members, Jim Lutz, Mary Jean Raab, Mary Friend, Susan Irwin, Jamie Dylenski, and Advisor Marilyn Pearson.

This meeting was called by president Raab, for consideration of the following two subjects, with a 10AM start.

MOTION To hire Shannon O'Reilly as an independent contractor, to be the book keeper/accountant for Bethlehem Cemetery for the calendar year, 2024. She will be responsible for all of the duties performed currently by Betty Clark, and will be paid \$300.00 a month.

Major functions include AP, depositing monies, preparing and delivery monthly P&L's to the Cemetery Board before the monthly board meetings with accompanying reports, reconciliation of all bank accounts, utilizing QuickBooks, and providing end of calendar year financial statement to the CB and then BUCC leadership. Shannon is a member of BUCC and an elected member of the CB. Shannon and the rest of the CB are aware of the Conflict of Interest article in the church by laws, and will avoid her involvement in any actions which may be perceived as such.

Shannon will use all of her own technology, lap top, QB's, Internet, etc., for the functions of her job as book keeper/accountant.

Motion was made by Jim and seconded by Jamie and passed.

Further, a MOTION was made by Jim to pay Betty an additional \$300 in Nov and \$300 in Dec for her additional work to train Shannon, motion seconded by Susan, passed.

Having DTE replace all existing street lamps with LED lights, and the recommendation of, the recommendation was made to add an additional pole with LED light in the Southeast part of the cemetery property, to further increase the safety and security of the property, at a cost of approximately \$1000. MOTION to accept this proposal made by Jamie and seconded by Susan, motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 on a motion by Mary and second by Jim, motion passed.

FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM - BUCC
Meeting Minutes of 10/17/2023

Present: Steve Darr, Michelle Loukotka, Ron Dechert LC, John Irwin IG,
Absent: Tim Schenk, Gwen Mayes

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm.

Minutes of 09/26/2023 were approved as printed.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: All accounts are at appropriate spending levels for this time of the fiscal year.

Bill will be asked start on buffing the floors if he has not already done so. He is still doing yard care at the Hewett parsonage. He will also be asked to purchase and install a simple padlock to the exterior of the door of the old men's room outside the FH.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. We will check with Gwen when she returns as to the status of refinishing the 4th Avenue doors. If it has not been done, we may need to wait for next summer due to weather.
- b. Jim Stadel is still trying to get new bulbs for the can lights above the cancel.
- c. The toilet in the old men's room outside the FH has been cleaned, the water turned off, and the door marked "Out of Service".
- d. We will check with Gwen regarding repair of pipe on the boiler and whether the CSD1 testing has been scheduled or has been finished.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. CMR needs to be scheduled to inspect the heat pump and the A/C in the FH.
- b. Vedders should be scheduled to turn on the heat tape in November.
- c. The gutters and downspouts on the 4th Avenue house need to be cleaned; the Hewett parsonage may not need cleaning as it was done earlier this year. Ron verified that Reinhart will do this at both 4th Avenue and Hewett.
- d. The insulation on one of the large pipes in the FH pantry has come un-taped. John I. will repair that.
- e. We will check with Gwen about the status of replacing the signage on 4th and 5th Avenue.
- f. One of the posts on the 5th Avenue grounds has come loose; it leans into the play yard and causes a portion of the fence to droop. Steve thinks he has a solution for the problem.
- g. The Buddhists renting the Upper Room were allowed to install a window A/C this summer. They wish to remove it for the winter; Jim Stadel will put the window back in place.
- h. The cast iron pipe serving the bath in the 4th Avenue house rusted through Monday night requiring replacement. Reinhart has taken action and a temporary fix is in place. The total cost is anticipated to be about \$2,400.00. This will be deducted from our rental income.

PARSONAGE:

- a. Brooks painting has started on refinishing the kitchen cabinets. John I. is following this and has been assured that it will be completed by the November 1st deadline.

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE TASK LIS

- a. John I. will check with Bill regarding draining the boiler and blow down pipe October through April and adding salt to the water softener as needed. John I. will instruct him if he is not already familiar with the procedures.
- b. The outside spigot at the church has been turned off. John I. will contact the renters to get access to the outside spigots at the 4th Avenue house.
- c. We also need to verify that Bill has changed the batteries for the fire emergency lights in the 5th Avenue hallway.
- d. During the October 28th clean-up day, the leaves will be cleared from the drain on the flat roof. The supply of salt for ice and the supply of snow shovels will be checked that day. Supplies will be moved to the appropriate areas of the church.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.

NEXT MEETING: November 21st at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Loukotka

BUCC Leadership Council Meeting Minutes
October 30, 2023
ZOOM meeting
04:00pm-05:30pm

Attendees: Ron Dechert, Jim Rowan, P.J. Lindemann, Pat Huibregste, Pastor Dawn Christenson.
Absent: Barb Schenk, Dindy Haab

1) Open prayer- Pastor Dawn

2) Pastor Dawn request to purchase Zoom Pro subscription – LC approval not required, but she wanted to be transparent. Cost is \$149.95 annually. Would use a general Bethlehem email. LC discussed and approved a motion to go ahead with this.

3) Electronic meeting by-laws/policy/procedure – This still hasn't been formally updated in by-laws, and per latest Roberts Rules (11th edition), we need to specifically include it in the by-laws. We need to **briefly** include it in the by-laws, and then establish policies & procedures, including how/if to vote electronically. Considerations – camera on, more than one person on a device, recording, voting.

4) Anniversary committee update, additional plans

- Need to have a follow up meeting. Ron suggested November 12th, to update the committee.
- Next Bethlehem Through the Ages is November 12th
- Archive committee – committee has reconvened and are planning to create a display in the Gallery, found a second display space in the archive room. Target to have display ready by November 12th, to be viewed during coffee hour. Coffee to be set up outside the Gallery. Potentially could change over time, things added or removed.
- Ron to include an announcement in the Friday Blast, possibly billed as a Sneak Preview, if it's not completely ready.
- All of this could be a standing part of our service plan on the second Sunday.
- Will plan for a Chili Cook-Off sometime in January (rather than with the Advent Workshop.)
- Further plans will be worked on, including the community event in the summer.

5) Possible request for Youth Room rental – Mennonite group looking for a space for Sunday services, approximately 35-50 active members, up to 100 for special services. They looked at several areas, but are coming back this Thursday to take a look at the Youth Room. Interested in multi-year contract. We'd have to move some things out of the youth room, possibly to the back of Fellowship Hall. LC discussed and agreed that we need more information on exactly what their needs are, including time of day, before making any recommendations.

6) Groundcover issues and concerns

1. Issue over use of main floor restrooms (women's room, since the men's remains locked,) person became belligerent when they were told they couldn't use it. We identified him through video review, and he was spoken to. He apologized to the office.
2. Groundcover let in someone known to them, but not a Groundcover person, to heat up food; this person subsequently engaged in an altercation with a Groundcover member outside the church. Police and EMS were called. No charges were filed. The Groundcover member has decided to stop participating.
3. Cleaning person discovered cigarette butts in the women's bathroom, and it smelled like smoke. We were unable to identify who it was.

Ron reviewed whether we have any kind of a contract with them. We do not, so we need to consider putting one together. Pastor Dawn suggested some kind of meeting with Lindsay and other members, perhaps during one of their team meetings, to try to be more inclusive and get to know them.

7) Cemetery board accountant/ accounting changes – Betty Clark is retiring in January, and the board is hiring Shannon O'Reilly. They will switch to QuickBooks. They have a separate checking account and accounting, so there shouldn't be any issues with moving off of the ACS software.

8) New business

- Reviewed and approved September minutes.
- Sidney Stites, BUCC member and Enrichment Director at Story Point senior center, requested to bring a group for a tour of the church on Thursday, November 16th at 1:30 p.m. Jim will facilitate.
- Parsonage updates are complete. Renters get the keys tomorrow, 10/31, and move in 11/1.
- Ron noted that per the interim agreement, there should be a 6 month review with Pastor Dawn.
- Schedule quarterly meeting with Ministry teams, plan for January meeting.
- There was an error in August financials in Visitor where column headings didn't match the data – It's not clear who includes that information. P.J. will talk with Gwen. P.J. (treasurer) should probably approve each month.
- Add standing item to LC meeting for brief financial update.
- Eileen Koprofski has stepped down as chair of Education committee.

9) Meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: December 7th, 6:00 p.m. – combined November/December meeting.

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Member Care Ministry Team Meeting
Wednesday October 18 at 3 PM

Present: Pastor Diane White, Jenny Foster, Mary Jean Raab, Dindy Haab, Judy Coucouvanis, Nan Lefton

Absent: Karen Goforth, Beth Wenner

1. Devotion- Pastor Diane opened the meeting with prayer.
2. Council Report: Dindy Haab. Dindy reported that the Council has not met since our last meeting.
3. Journey Through Grief Series: Mary Jean Raab: Mary Jean reported that no new members were added to receive the series
4. Pastor's Report – Pastor Diane continues compiling a list of homebound members. She is taking Mug Rugs prepared by Alice Dechert to the homebound members
5. Card Ministry Update, Nan – Nan distributed a copy of the spreadsheet she is keeping of cards sent.

Old Business

1. Totenfest November 5: Member care will serve Coffee Hour. Jackie Katz is organizing German cookies. Jenny and Judy will provide set up. Discussed ordering seed packets in cards to “plant a memory” of a loved one.
2. Radio Broadcast – BUCC is trying out a new initiative that involves providing interested members with a phone call automatically 5 minutes before the start of any service that is streamed. Members will then be connected to the service and can listen to it on their telephones. This option is significantly less costly than the radio ministry. MJ noted the possibility to record one’s attendance via a separate link when a member streams a service. Pastor Diane will discuss with Oliver.
3. Member Care members will welcome those persons entering through the church office entrance on Sunday morning when possible.

New Business

1. Advent:
 - a. Member Care will provide a coffee hour during Advent
 - b. Member Care will order 30 Advent Calendars (Jenny will coordinate with Diana Slaughter and SERRV) for homebound members
 - c. Member care will order 30 large print devotionals to provide to homebound members and 30 Still Speaking Writers Group Devotionals for interested members of the congregation. (Pastor Diane will ask Gwen to order these)

Our next meetings will be Wednesday, November 15 and December 6th in the Lounge

Ongoing/Future Agenda Items:

1. Set Meeting Dates for next year.
2. Visitor article for directory updates
3. Prayer Requests - review process and make changes?
4. Time and Talents form

5. Team Goals - what should Member Care team focus on this year? (bring ideas to the forthcoming meetings)
6. Mealtrain: Identify a Coordinator
7. Stephens Ministry status

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Coucouvanis

Cc: Gwenda Mayes, parishadministrator@bethlehem-ucc.org