

Cemetery Board Meeting
March 12, 2025
Minutes

Present: Mary Jean, Raab, Mary Friend, Susan Irwin, Marilyn Pearson and Shannon O'Reilly

Meeting called to order at 9:40 am

Devotion – Mary Jean read “Light as a Feather” from the UCC Daily Devotional

Brad's update - Discuss communications from Brad: He was unable to attend this morning's meeting.

- A plan to respond to the Hay request for a Family Columbarium. Personal columbariums must fall within our rules and regulations on monument size, shape, and placement. The number of burial rights need to match or be greater than the number of niches on the selected columbarium and the burial rights must be designated for this purpose and not used for in-ground burials. The charge by the sexton to place ashes in these niches is the same as the cost to place ashes in a community columbarium. Under no circumstances may a family member or person with burial rights be allowed to intern ashes. Mary Jean will talk to Brad so he can communicate with the Hay family. When we update our rules and regulations, we should include wording about personal family columbariums.
- Jay Katz – Marilyn Pearson talked to the VA and approved that the veteran's medallion can be put on the stone that Jacquie has previously paid for and has been installed.
- The board would like to be made aware of any upcoming internments, as soon as this first call comes to Brad for such. Brad should send a text to our group text.
- Each month, we should have confirmation from Brad if he has had additional work outside of his contract that he needs payment for. He should report this with receipts for incidental supplies or repair items he purchased and will be reimbursed. Are there any expenses for the basement flood, or anything else?
- Discuss the proposal for the basement door replacement from Kevin at Ames Construction of \$750.00. A motion was made by Mary Jean Raab to approve this expense contingent on Brad's approval of the contract and how the work will be done. We will ask Jamie to talk to Brad. The motion passed unanimously.
- Gurk – Family has eight spaces. The son is in his 90's and his daughter had power of attorney and has given permission for Chris and Barbara to have their cremains also buried in these spaces.

Approval of Feb 2025 minutes: Corrections: Mary Jean used the cemetery debit card not the church debit card to purchase rock salt. On page 2, the Certificate of Interment should be Certificate of Right to be Buried. Marilyn Pearson made a motion to approve the February minutes with the above corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Feb 2025 Financials: The payment for the Finkbeiner funeral was \$25 short (used last year's prices). Do we contact Phillips funeral home in South Lyon. Marilyn will reach out to them. Did Phillips give the family the incorrect price or did Brad quote the wrong price? Susan Irwin made a motion to approve the financials as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- Any actions that happened in 2024 that were not completed by 12/31/2024, or any other year-end matters needing review or approval? None.
- Review and approve minor corrections in 2025 price lists. Commissions on Babyland – Since we do not have many burials in Babyland we will leave the pricing as is until we write up Brad's new contract in September and then we will review.
- Thank You notes for donations, and Shannon's reconciliation: We need the list from Gwen quarterly (dollar amount should be quarterly also). Then we can send out acknowledgements. Is the list in excel? If so, we can sort by donor if they have made more than one donation.

Website updates and any related changes: Jamie is out of town. When she returns, Declan needs to issue a work ticket.

For the church meeting hosted by Dawn on assets are there any materials we should have ready?

General Liability Insurance update: Tabled until next month when Jamie can be here and involved in the discussion.

March 18 meeting at the AAACF, progress on Barbara Cope Endowed Trust: We have a meeting scheduled with the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation (a philanthropic organization) on the corner of Main and Miller. 301 N Main St, Ste 300 at 2:30 pm on March 18th. This will give us the necessary information to determine if we want to put the Barbara Cope Trust money with them. They will tell us what we need to know to set up a fund with them.

Trust Document for the Perpetual Care investment: BOAA says they do not have a copy of the trust. The first page and the signature page have also been misplaced, both at BOAA and the Church office/files. It would be ideal if we could find the document so that we know the exact provisions set forth when the account was set up at NBD and then again at BOAA. If not, do we need to create a new document? The original may go back to 1982 and there may have been changes to banking laws/rules since then. This has been tabled for a future agenda.

Enkemann – MJ has reached out to attorney Marjory Dixon to assist in response preparation to the Attorney General on the matter of non-payment of burial fees for interment of ashes of John Sr and Doris Enkemann on October 5, 2024, in spaces owned by the departed John and Doris. John Enkemann Jr, acting on behalf of himself, believes there

are no fees due, and that they were included in the purchase of burial rights. We have not heard from the other three siblings, and we have documentation from three past interments handled by John Sr and Doris that fees were paid, and services were handled by Muehlig Funeral Chapel. While these outstanding fees are long overdue, we have just been notified officially, and the response is due in 10 days.

Visitor Article: Writeup about Memorial Day donations to the cemetery, new block number signs and date to remove items from grave sites.

Review what is on the March-April, To-Do Calendar

Adjourned at 12:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon O'Reilly, Secretary

Cemetery Board Special Meeting
March 27, 2025
Minutes

Present: Jamie Dylenski, Mary Friend, Susan Irwin, Marilyn Pearson, Mary Jean Raab and Shannon O'Reilly

Meeting called to order at 10:10 am

Where should we place the Barbara Cope bequest: The proposal is to set up an endowed fund at Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation (AAACF) by April 1st. Under the current by-laws, it is the responsibility of the Cemetery Board to manage all cemetery funds, including the investments. After discussion, Marilyn Pearson made a motion that the money from the Barbara Cope Bequest be invested as an endowed fund with AAACF and if the funds are not readily available from the church checking account, we will borrow from ourselves until such time as the money is available from the church.

The motion passed with 5 yes and 1 abstention. Mary Jean will call Jim to let him know what we are doing, and Jamie will email Jim Rowan, PJ Lindemann and Tom Krell. Shannon will let Gwen know that we need to transfer the money from the church account to the cemetery account.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am

FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM – BUCC
Meeting Minutes of 03/18/2025

Team: Steve Darr, Randy Schneider, Ron Dechert

Invited Guests: Jim Rowan LC, Gwen Mayes, John Irwin, Dani Webb, Michelle Loukotka

Advisors: Jim Stadel, Bob Loukotka

Absent: Dani Webb

Call to order: 3:30 pm

Review of Minutes of 02/18/2025 accepted as printed.

Financials:

- a. The overall amounts are appropriate for this time of the year.

BUILDING MANAGER:

- a. Bill continues to do chores from the current Essential Maintenance List.
- b. Gwen will also have him keep the weeds down on the “triangle” garden at the 5th Avenue entrance.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Renaissance Organ has proposed that they install refurbished circuit boards that are the same as those currently in place. They would recommend a different manufacturer’s circuit boards as a better solution but until the power surge issue is addressed, this would be less costly. It was suggested, if it is feasible, the organ simply be unplugged when not in use.
- b. Jim Rowan updated facilities regarding the status of the Cope funds. Currently, Leadership Council and the Cemetery Board are discussing investment strategies to optimize financial returns for COPE perpetual accounts.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. A spring clean-up day is scheduled for May 17th.
- b. John Irwin has put together a preliminary budget request for 06/01/2025 through 05/31/2026. A few suggestions were made; he will include these and submit it to Finance Team soon.
- c. The pew cushions in the sanctuary are showing considerable wear. Ron suggested forming a committee from the congregation to look into a project to undertake ourselves.
- d. There are two light bulbs in the gym that need to be replaced. Gwen will have Bill do the one in the alcove off the gym floor. The second one is in the ceiling and will require access from the attic.
- e. The floor tiles on the second floor are starting to break and need to be replaced.

PARSONAGES:

- a. The Hewett Road parsonage is being rented month-to-month at this time.

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE TASK LIST:

- a. Clean the moats at spring clean-up day

- b. Have Boiler Backflow test done for the City
- c. Bill: drain boiler and blowdown pipe

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday. April 15th at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Loukotka

Agenda

Bethlehem UCC Leadership Council

March 27, 2025

Zoom meeting

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Attendees: Jim, P.J., Barb, Teresa, Dawn, and guest Mary Jean Raab.

Opening prayer – Pastor Dawn

Old Business

- 1) February minutes - approved prior to meeting
- 2) Rental update - Groundcover contract – rent increased by \$20 a month and change in cleaning agreement
- 3) Organ repair – update New circuitry recommended, used but refurbished & tested circuitry is available for free for a short time, but we need to update our storm protection first. We still need a quote from the organ company for new circuitry, and Steve Darr is looking for a second company to quote the surge protection.
- 4) Trust – Barbara J. Cope Endowments – invited guest, Mary Jean Raab, Cemetery Board – Bethlehem received funds from the Barbara Cope estate for two endowments - \$151k for facilities, and \$50k for Cemetery historic maintenance. Mary Jean indicated that the cemetery board is very excited to receive such a generous gift. The cash has been in the general checking account since it was disbursed in November. The Cemetery Board would like to set up the endowment at the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation by April 1st. LC discussed and approved the transfer of funds from the general checking account to the cemetery account before April 1st, to be used as proposed.
- 5) Upcoming church activities related to transition/pastoral search
 - a. Transition Workshops – review - The series of six workshops is now complete. Dawn has been compiling and distributing the data obtained from these workshops.
 - b. Pastoral Search – 3 people have committed to serve on the search committee. Dawn is in conversation with a few more people. The ideal size of the group is 5 people.
- 6) Bylaws task force – update – The bylaws task force will send out the current and proposed bylaws with a summary of changes. There will also be a PowerPoint with slides showing the differences between the current and the proposed bylaws. There will be 3 meetings to

present the information to the congregation prior to the annual meeting. The first of these is scheduled for April 27th.

- 7) Pastoral funds for ministry – Jim will ask Gwen to check with BOAA to see if we can get a debit card issued for the McKay Checking account and if so, what is the process for doing that.
- 8) Church social networking/communication - deferred
- 9) Stewardship Campaign and budget construction – The stewardship committee has been established. The committee is currently working on stewardship materials to be sent out in mid-April. In terms of budget construction, Tom Krell has requested budget info from ministry teams, with some response so far. He has made a first draft of the budget for next year.
- 10) Annual congregational meeting – Jim will look into scheduling on June 1st. P.J. isn't available on the 8th. Jim isn't available on the 15th. Jim will send out a request for annual reports from everyone.
- 11) Nominations – Proposed bylaws have fewer elected positions than the current bylaws. Ron Dechert is completing graphics that outline this comparison. We will need to be flexible with nominations, given the possibility of adopting and transitioning to changes in governance structure. .
- 12) Financial Account Review – schedule – Waiting on P.J.'s approval from the bank (government process they need to follow)
- 13) Holy Week ad in Observer – update – Jim checked and got more info from the Observer. Print ads seem to have limited value. Gwen will submit our Holy Week services to be posted online for free. She is also checking on advertising Holy Week services in Groundcover. Jim will check to see that our Holy Week information has been entered onto our website and public Facebook page.

New Business

- 1) Coffee hour in the Youth Room? Several people have asked if we could regularly have coffee hour upstairs in the Youth Room. It's a brighter and more comfortable environment. It seems more conducive to people staying and talking. LC supported the idea. Jim will check with Katie Rowan to get a sense as to whether there are any logistical issues with doing this.

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- 2) Immigration meeting – safety and security measures – Update from Dawn after attending a Washtenaw County Sheriff’s meeting. She asked the sheriff how we can protect our immigrant congregants. The following options were shared: 1. Post signs on external doors reading, “No firearms permitted in this facility”. 2. Post signs on sanctuary (and chapel?) doors reading “Private worship area”. 3. Should authorities gain entry, they must provide a lawful warrant with a judicial signature. 4. If anyone is questioned by ICE agents, they need to request an immigration lawyer. Leadership Council supported signage indicating “Private worship area”, but with wording also indicating a welcome to worshippers - Dawn will work on the wording for such a sign.

Reports from ministry team liaisons

Member care – Cathleen O’Connell has joined the Member Care Ministry Team. Member Care is asking why we no longer have a grief support team, and if we could start it again. Also, asked if we could make the Stephen Ministry more visible. LC discussed resources within and outside the Church for addressing bereavement needs within our congregation.

Adjourned 7:52 pm

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Member Care Ministry Team Meeting
Wednesday March 12, 2025, at 3:00PM

Present: Jenny Foster(Facetime), Mary Jean Raab, Jacquie Katz, Cathleen Connell, Teresa Beagle, Pastor Diane White, Karen Goforth, Dindy Haab, Nan Lefton

Absent: Judy Coucouvanis

Devotional: Pastor Diane: Poem: "Weary to the Core"

Updates:

- Pastor Diane and Jenny welcomed Cathleen Connell, our new member, to the meeting, and assured her that "new ideas are always welcome."
- Pastor Diane reported that Harriette Ehnis is at Kresge Rehabilitation Center, but expects to be home by next week. Mary Ann Folk is moving into Assisted Living at the facility where she currently resides at Clarendale(formerly known as Balfour.) Ruth Williman is at the Redies Center. Kathy Cole is still in rehab at the Regency Bluffs; she is making progress. Pastor Diane has ordered cards for the Homebound people, and she has been sending notes to people who have not been in attendance at Bethlehem for a while. When she visits the Homebound people she takes a copy of the Lenten Devotionals. She recently visited Judy and Doug Barnett, who have been in their condo at Oakbrook, 449 Sumark Way, all winter. She also visited Evelyn Mulread, who worked in the church office some time ago.
- Dindy's recovery from surgery is slow, but she is doing well. She reported that Marcus, the young man who received a kidney transplant, is back in the hospital with an illness.
- Jacquie said that Seetha is going to see a Cancer specialist in the month of April for another opinion about her cancer.
- Mary Jean reported that Jane Belcher has passed away. Nan will send condolences to Debbie Belcher and Sheri Belcher-Tribble. (Jane was the step-mother to Debbie and Sheri.)
- Pastor Dawn's wife, Beah, has had a second cataract surgery, and is doing well.
- Fritz and Evelyn Port have moved to New Mexico, to be near their daughter. Jacquie might be able to get their new address.
- Leadership Council: Teresa
 - A Hindu organization will meet in the Youth Room on Sunday evenings.
 - Organ repair work: waiting for quotes
 - The Stewardship Campaign is currently getting organized and Teams will be asked to submit their budgets to Jim Rowan.
 - A schedule of Bethlehem services during Holy Week will be advertised in the Ann Arbor Observer.
 - Bylaws review completed by LC and returned to the Task Force to prepare for sending to members prior to the Annual Meeting. There will be a discussion of the changes in the Bylaws to be scheduled soon.
- Mary Jean: Asked if anyone wanted to read the Journey Through Grief series; she has extra copies. She will send a copy to Sheila Payton in South Carolina. Cathleen suggested that we connect with people who have lost loved ones to ask if there was interest in joining a support group. It would be wonderful to have a person from

Bethlehem to mentor a person who has experienced loss through the journey. Teresa suggested that Stephen Ministers could conduct grief counseling. Kurt Schmerburg has taken the lead in this, and would have a complete list of people from Bethlehem who have been trained. Jenny will ask Jim Rowan to get this group revitalized and going again.

Coffee Hour:

- March 16th: Judy Coucouvanis and Jacquie will host.
- Discussion followed about how to proceed when attendance is small, and we have such difficulty getting people to host it. Teresa said that it seems to make a difference where it is held in the building. People are more likely to attend if it is not held in the Fellowship Hall in the basement. Cathleen suggested having it in the sanctuary, which has been done in the past. One issue about having it there is that it is difficult for people to juggle a cup of coffee and dessert while seated in the pews; it's more manageable if people can sit at a table.
- April 27-Jenny and Jacquie will host Coffee Hour.
- May 11 is Mother's Day; May 25 Memorial Day
- May 18 – Cathleen and Nan will host Coffee Hour.

Budget – Tom Krell

- Our current budget is \$850; we have spent \$586. It was suggested we request at least \$1,000 for our budget

Lent

- Devotionals were received (paid for with McKay funds) and will be distributed to Homebound and available for members
- Easter cards: Jenny, Judy and Jacquie will send cards to Homebound members on our list

Misc. Discussion/Suggestions from MC members:

- If anyone wants to provide a write-up about Membercare for the Visitor, please notify Jenny.
- Discussion Group for members with focus on current political environment in context of Christian faith: Pastor Diane will discuss this idea with Pastor Dawn
- Suggestion Box and/or Message Board: continue discussion
- Jenny suggested we have a Task Force to collect Ideas and Issues we are facing. She is still in Arizona, and will be there until April.
(This writer agrees that this would be a good idea. When making suggestions the task force would present information as to what resources would be needed to accomplish goals.)

Future Meeting Schedule:

- April 9, 2025, 3:00pm
- May 14, 2025
- June 11, 2025

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20pm.

Planned Activities for 2025: (copied from previous minutes.)

- Work with Young Adult Ministry Team to Coordinate Care Packages/gift cards for college students in spring
- Mother's Day: Geraniums
- Father's Day: Kisses and Hugs Chocolates
- Graduation: Gift for High School Students and Recognition of any High School or College Graduate
- Totenfest: seed packets
- Advent: Devotionals and Calendars

Respectfully submitted,
Nan Lefton

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