

Cemetery Board Meeting

February 12, 2025

Minutes

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

Also attending: Brad Bouchie, Sexton

Devotions: Jamie led us in prayer, "A Prayer Before Reading the News" by Rabbi Keller

Brad's update:

- Standing meeting agenda items, contacts, problems or issues we need to be aware of, and issues we need Brad to be aware of, and a plan to respond to the Hay request for a Family Columbarium burial: The flood in the basement may have been caused by pipes freezing and then defrosting when the temperature warmed up. Brad has removed some pipes and blocked off others that are not needed or used any longer. Jamie will contact a door person she knows about replacing the door at the bottom of the stairs in the basement. The flood also floated the old pressure tank to the top so Brad and his guys could pull it out of there. We are almost out of rock salt. Mary Jean will call Site One and order a pallet of rock salt using the cemetery debit card and Brad will pick it up. We have one open niche in Columbarium #2. We had taken this columbarium off the price list as we thought it was full. Previously the cost for niches in columbariums 1 – 3 was \$625.00. The shed floor is rotting and needs to be replaced. We will talk about this at the next meeting. The fence line along the houses needs to be cleaned up also. The brush needs to be cut back. This was done about a couple of years ago. The board approved up to \$800.00 for the additional work by consensus. Brad asked where he can see the cemetery maps on the new website. It does not show maps under locate-a-grave. Mr. Hay is asking about a personal family columbarium. Brad has given him prices for 4, 6 and 8-space personal columbariums. We will talk about this next month.
- The board would like to be made aware of any upcoming internments, as soon as this first call comes into Brad for such. Brad will leave a text message in a group text with the burial information. Currently there is a burial scheduled for Willie Cozart on Saturday 2/15/25 at 12:30.
- Each month, we should have confirmation from Brad whether he has had any additional work/off contract that he needs to be paid for, and report with receipts for incidental supplies or repair items he purchased, so he can be reimbursed. *Brad emailed a bill for \$300.00 for sign installation and \$300.00 for the basement leak.*
- MJ updated us on the Carol Carzon plot that they want to keep. Carol's daughter Kristin will be responsible for the \$900 for the opening/closing. The family has ordered a stone from Arnett's. Brad had previously told them it had to be a flat stone.
- Mary Jean has gathered the documents she needs to be sent to Mr. Enkemann but she has not sent it yet. We have not received any money for the burial.
- Gurk burial rights – They have room for 16 burial rights, 8 for caskets and 8 for cremains. 8 caskets are buried so 8 sets of cremains can be interred. David Gurk looks like he is buried outside of the 8 spaces, but Brad will verify this in the spring. The bottom line is that 8 caskets are buried, so only cremains can now be buried in these spaces.

Approval of December 2024 and January 2025 minutes: Jamie Dylenski made a motion to approve both months minutes as presented, and the motion passed.

Approval of December 2024 and January 2025 Financials:

- Any actions that happened in 2024 that were not completed by 12/31/24, or any other year-end matters needing review or approval? Shannon still needs to review 2024 general ledger entries for accuracy.
- Review and approve minor corrections in 2025 price lists. This is tabled until the March Board Meeting.
- Thank you notes for donations: We have information from Gwen for the cemetery donations for 2024 that came into the church. Do the amounts and names tie out to the undesignated funds transferred by Shannon from the church checking account to the cemetery checking account? Shannon still needs to review the donation list from Gwen against the donations posted to see how closely they tie out.
- The Monument Repair fund in the chart of accounts will be renamed to Historical Monument Repair Fund.
- Marilyn Pearson made a motion to approve the December 2024 financial reports, and it passed.
- Mary Friend made a motion to approve January 2025 financial reports, and it passed.

Website updates and any related change orders: Jamie would like to expand the search capability for the owners. We can search for who is buried, but not the owners. To add this would be a cost of \$750 - \$1200. Brad said it would be a big help to him to search for owners. Do we have the right to include the owner's names in a format that anyone can see. Susan and Mary don't think the general population needs to know who owns the burial rights. Someone could search for what burial rights they own by searching by their last name. Would anyone really try to search for anyone else's burial rights. If someone searches on their last name, it will either show what they have burial rights to, or if nothing comes up an email or phone call to the board could be made to find the information. Is it legal to publicize owner's names in a searchable database? Marilyn moves we add the functionality of adding the owners to the website up to \$1200. Passed (with one abstention). Jamie will talk to Declan about the locate-a-grave functionality that Brad is requesting.

Certificate of Right to be Buried: With Marilyn's help, we rewrote #10 and the wording now looks good. Owner's name is set up with last name first. Discussion was held about the signature date at the bottom of the certificate. Mary had been using the date of the signature, but John thought it should be the date we received the money. Board agreed that date should be the date the president signs the certificate. Jamie thinks there should be a separate certificate for each plot sold. In the past if more than one space was purchased at the same time, they were all combined on one certificate. We have discussed this, but the board has not yet come to a consensus on whether there should be individual certificates or can we combine more than one space on one certificate as has been done in the past.

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

General Liability Insurance Update: Jamie talked to the church's insurance representative, and he said if we had a separate insurance policy, we would need a separate 501c3. What is insured for the cemetery is only the building at 738 sq ft. We are paying for "functional replacement", so the building is not replaceable for a building like the one we have. The columbariums are not insured. To cover 5 columbariums would be \$1,125/per month. This was based on the cost of \$100,000 that Brad said Forest Hills paid for theirs. We don't know when the first three columbariums were brought or the cost. The last two were bought at a cost of \$70,000 each. Tree replacement is no longer included in the policy. Jamie will ask the insurance representative what the cost would be if trees were covered again. Jamie will get more information from Matthews about construction of the columbariums and what could happen to them if they were damaged. For example, if a tree fell on them due to a weather-related issue. She will pursue information about the deductible limits for trees and tornado damage.

Arnet's reached out to Jamie and asked if they could hold a preservation workshop at the cemetery. They worked with a company called Past Preservations to hold these workshops at other cemeteries account the state is willing to put on a preservation workshop in the spring. The event would be open to the public and will not cost the cemetery anything. The Board likes this idea, so Jamie will get back to them to let them know we are interested. The workshop will be held in the spring.

Progress on Barbara Cope Endowed Trust: This has been tabled until our next meeting.

We ran out of time at our meeting and did not get a chance to review the February-March To-Do Calendar.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon O'Reilly, Secretary

FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM – BUCC
Meeting Minutes of 02/18/2025

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: Ron Dechert, Dani Webb, Michelle Loukotka

Call to Order: 3:30 pm

Minutes of 1/21/2025 were approved as printed.

Financials

- a. Our budgeted and unbudgeted funds remain at appropriate levels for the year.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE:

- a. Bill is continuing with tasks from the Essential Maintenance List and any additional jobs assigned by Gwen.
- b. Sanctuary lights were recently replaced with the help of John Irwin, Jim Stadel and Jesse Wilcox.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. There have been no further updates from Renaissance Organ regarding needed repairs. Jim will continue to follow up with them. Steve will explore more options with regards to lighting rod installers.
- b. The church has engaged an estate attorney to review the Cope Trust and write guidelines, as decided by Leadership Council, for use of the Barbara Cope endowment.
- c. ADF group has expressed interest in renting the Youth Room to decide by March 11th if they plan to proceed with relocating their program to BUCC.
- d. ISKCON MI (Hare Krishna) group will start renting Youth Room on Sundays Starting March 2 for six months. Should they decide to renew the lease at the end of the lease, they will renew for 12 months.
- e. SRCC has requested to add additional use of Fellowship Hall on a once monthly basis.
- f. New closing mechanism installed on 4th Avenue door. Wood frame may need additional repair.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. It has been decided to not install a new controller on the sprinkler system as well as eliminate annual start up and close for the 2025 season. Fourth Ave lawn will be manually watered should it be necessary this summer.
- b. We have received several alarms originating from the F1 (GroundCover) room over the past few weeks. It is believed that the banner hanging over one of the windows triggered the motion detector when the heating vent came on. GC removed banner as well as decorate items suspended from ceiling.

PARSONAGES:

- a. Hewett Dr. parsonage lease expires in April. Tenant will continue on a monthly basis until June or July.
- b. 437 S 4th Avenue tenant has resigned their lease through March 31, 2026.

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE TASK LIST

- a. Bill: drain boiler and blowdown pipe now through April
- b. Bill: maintain snow removal supplies in the building

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, March 18th, 3:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Gwenda Mayes

Minutes
Bethlehem UCC Leadership Council
February 20, 2025
Zoom meeting
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Attendees: Jim Rowan, P.J. Lindemann, Barb Schenk, Teresa Beagle, Pastor Dawn Christenson

Opening prayer – Pastor Dawn 6:05 pm

Old Business

- 1) Approval of January minutes – P.J. will send out with December and February.
- 2) Rental update -Friend Ship Adult Day Treatment Program—no update; Hindu organization – no update; Groundcover – small increase in their share of rent from \$70 to \$90, P.J. mentioned that we could increase the total rate if the FMV is higher than the total \$690 and pull more funds from McKay to cover the in-kind donation to Groundcover. Solid Rock would like a few extra hours a week for bible study - details TBD.
- 3) Organ repair – update – Still waiting on the quote from the organ company. Steve Darr has identified a second company that does storm protection and will contact them for an estimate.
- 4) Trust – Barbara J. Cope Endowment – letter of appreciation/processing funds – The letter of appreciation has been sent. Jim met with an endowment lawyer last week. Michigan law regarding endowments has recently been updated. It allows for latitude in setting up conditions for the endowment. Jena at BOAA mentioned to P.J. that it would be good to not make it too restrictive. Council believes leaving the funds at BOAA is our best option. Jim will look into the next steps for setting up the endowments.
- 5) Upcoming church activities related to transition/pastoral search
 - a. Transition Workshops – An Asset Mapping workshop, the fourth of six transitional workshops, is scheduled for this weekend. Pastor Dawn considers it a very important workshop.
 - b. Pastoral Search – Pastor Dawn updated her efforts to assemble a pastoral search committee.
- 6) 6) Bylaws task force – update – The bylaws committee met on 2/20 to review and integrate changes that were proposed by Leadership Council. Tonight, discussion focused on the internal complexity of the bylaws, and how this makes it difficult to share the proposed bylaw changes with the congregation a section at a time, as had been planned initially. The committee has started to create a summary of changes that can help guide the congregation in reviewing the changes. The importance of having workshops for the congregation to review and discuss the proposed bylaw changes, ahead of the congregational meeting, was emphasized. LC also briefly reviewed proposed changes involving meeting procedures.
- 7) Pastoral funds for ministry – deferred
- 8) Church social networking/communication – deferred
- 9) Refrigerator for Youth Room – purchased – Unbudgeted funding request was approved. It's nice to have a functioning refrigerator again when we have meetings with food.

- 10) Stewardship Campaign and budget construction – There is a stewardship webinar next Wednesday; Jim will attend. Jim will start working on stewardship with assistance from a couple of members, and will let Tom Krell know that we need to start working on the new budget. We need to schedule a meeting with LC and ministry team leaders in the near future.
- 11) Nominations – Leadership Council will need to take responsibility for nominations, and there is currently not a nominations committee. Jim will review the list of offices and identify which ones will need to be filled in the next election. Some discussion ensued regarding approaching nominations in light of the proposed bylaw changes.

New Business

- 1) Financial Account Review – schedule – P.J. shared the final version of the resolution for the signers on the investment account, along with the Beneficial Owners form. Both need to be signed and returned to the bank. We'll try to get all signatures on 2/23. Once P.J. is added, then we can schedule the meeting.
- 2) Holy Week ad in Observer – LC discussed placing an ad in the Ann Arbor Observer for Holy Week services. It was believed that this information is already being placed in the Observer. Jim will check. LC did not support paying for an ad.
- 3) Reports from ministry team liaisons – Teresa reported that Member Care was expressing concern about proposed bylaw changes related to membership definition and membership review. It appeared that some of these concerns were related to bylaw changes that had been provided to the congregation last April (i.e., Articles I through V), and that opportunities for input on these changes had been provided to the congregation at that time without response. However, it was acknowledged that the complexity of the bylaws requires that the bylaws document be reviewed as a whole. The congregation will be given the opportunity to do so in upcoming workshops (as noted above in Old Business item 6).
- 4) Report from pastor – contained in the above discussions of workshops and pastoral search committee.

Adjourned at approximately 7:50 pm

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Member Care Ministry Team Meeting
Wednesday February 12, 2025, at 3:30PM (via zoom)

Present: Jenny Foster, Mary Jean Raab, Jacquie Katz, Judy Coucouvanis, Teresa Beagle, Pastor Diane White, Nan Lefton

Absent: Karen Goforth, Dindy Haab

Devotional: Pastor Diane: Poem: “As I look at You”

Updates:

- Card Ministry: Nan sent 18 cards between 1/3/25 and 2/10/25; plans to update cards and will consider “Current Cards” as vendor for additional cards
- Homebound members: discussed updates; new list generated and sent via email
- Grief Series: Mary Jean is considering changes to the program and will present any recommendations to MC; funding for series comes from McKay funds or Stephens Ministry
- Leadership Council: Teresa
 - Adult Day Care: discussion ongoing
 - Organ repair work: waiting for quotes
 - Bylaws review completed by LC and returned to the Task Force to prepare for sending to members prior to the Annual Meeting.
 - New refrigerator purchased for Youth room
 - Rental Fee schedule updated and will begin in September

Coffee Hour:

- March 16th: Judy Coucouvanis and volunteer(s)
- Pastor Diane has supplied extra snacks located in the pantry

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

Annual report:

- Jenny and Judy would like to include numerical information in the report (i.e. number of cards mailed this year, number of individuals receiving Grief series, number of individuals on prayer chain, number of Homebound visits)
- MC would like to see Music staff, Technology staff and any other worship volunteers acknowledged in the Annual Report; Pastor Diane will discuss this with Pastor Dawn

Welcome: Cathleen Connell has joined our team and will begin to attend meetings in March

Membership Review: Ongoing discussion; will continue to update our list as more information is generated. Issue of how the revised bylaws may potentially impact MC duties to review the membership was raised; we will continue this discussion as more information is received about the revised bylaws

Misc. Discussion/Suggestions from MC members:

- 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

Future Meeting Schedule:

- March 12, 2025
- April 9, 2025
- May 14, 2025
- June 11, 2025

Planned Activities for 2025:

- 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

Ongoing/Future Agenda Items:

1. Church Membership review

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Coucouvanis

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

Outreach Ministry Team Minutes
February 23, 2025

Present: Katie Rowan, Jane Schmerberg, Barb Schenk - Council Liaison, Kurt Schmerberg - Guest

Council update:

Friendship Group rental is still pending.

Council is trying AI minutes.

Bylaws revision is progressing. Council has reviewed revisions and plans to give them to the congregation to review before the annual meeting.

The church has received a new gift from Barbara Cope.

The McKay funds are not all being spent. Kurt reviewed that there are 3 parts to the fund - congregational benevolence, scholarships, and community benevolence. Katie will ask PJ, and Tom K. about using the community benevolence fund.

Food Gatherers Volunteer Days:

We had 3 participants from our congregation on the Feb. 15 volunteer day.

Our next date is Sat. April 19, 1:00 - 3:30 pm. There is a sign up link in the Visitor, refrigerator page, and Friday email.

Lenten Project:

We will support SafeHouse for the EMT Lenten Project. This will be introduced to the Sunday School kids on March 2. They will make a donation box and announce to the congregation. We will keep the line item for SafeHouse on the online giving page of the BUCC website. Jane will publicize in the Visitor, refrigerator page, and Friday email.

The dates for Lent are Mar. 5 - April 17.

Habitat:

Our volunteer days will be Saturday May 3, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm and Saturday August 9, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. Katie will publicize in the Visitor, refrigerator page, and Friday email.

Habitat will hold a fundraising breakfast on May 21 at Webers. The breakfast is free. Reservations should be made by May 5.

Next Meeting: TBD - Avoid 4th Sundays and workshop days

Respectfully Submitted, Katie Rowan