

Cemetery Board Meeting
Minutes May 14, 2025

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

Meeting called to order at 9:35

Devotion-Prayer, Jamie read a prayer from the Book of Common Prayer

Brad's update, when he arrives, discuss communication, specifically:

- Maintenance issues:
 - ✓ Water lines, how do we want to repair the current leak and begin talking about a plan for the future: Everything is working except for the line that runs under a road. Brad can rent a boring machine to go under the road and fix the problem. He estimates the cost to be around \$2,000 including the rent of the boring machine. The line that is leaking is the main line that feeds the back of the cemetery and the old section. A motion was made by Marilyn Pearson to have Brad fix the leak. The motion passed unanimously.
 - ✓ Vedder is repairing the electrical in the basement that was flooded. What is the overall state of Electrical in the cemetery building? Electrical is being fixed as we are in our meeting. Only the garage was previously rewired. The office and the basement have not been upgraded.
 - ✓ A dead pine tree needs removing. The dead pine tree in Block 10 is not hurting anything so we could wait until fall or we could see if we needed any other tree work done. We will put together a tree plan to discuss at next month's meeting.
 - ✓ OTHER? Susan Irwin brought to our attention that one of the support columns in the garage has a rusty pole holding up. This supports the attic. Discussion for the June meeting.
 - ✓ Jamie asked if it would be ok for her to check around and find out what it would cost to get a Porta-Potty set up in the cemetery. Some of the board members were not sure this was a good idea but told Jamie to go ahead and get prices.
 - ✓ The Veterans will be coming on the 22nd with the flags for the veteran's graves.
- The board would like to be made aware of any upcoming internments, as soon as this first call comes to Brad for such. Brad leaves a text to our group text. How is this working and how can the system be better? Madeline Kitchel's burial in the Memorial Garden will be on May 22nd.
- Each month, we should have confirmation from Brad if he has had additional work/off contract, he needs to be paid for, and report with receipts for incidental supplies or repair items he purchased: Fenceline work done for \$1000 and billed. Mulch done and billed. Fabric and stone added to beds at entrance. Brad has done the fence line work and the mulch around the columbariums and in the Memorial Garden. Brad says the stone for the front and inside the gate will cost around \$2,000. The stone is a mix of 2 to 4 inches. Brad mulched around the flagpole, but if we want stone instead, Brad can switch it out.

Misc updates and questions, Enkemann, Dexter Cemetery, request for flowers from a long-distance person, agreement on response to Emanuel Church's 4 spaces they wish to sell, and what else?

- Mary Jean reported that Margery Dixon wrote to Attorney General Genera to see if the Enkemann case can be closed since he has paid, but she has not heard back yet.
- Dexter Cemetery court case: Brad received a phone call that the subpoena against him has been dropped. The Dexter Cemetery is suing the family to give back the grave, but the family does not want to as the daughter's DNA is still in the ground there (this was a natural burial).

- Norton delivered the flowers ordered by out-of-town family member and left them by the door. They were then placed on the grave.
- Emanuel church – Karen Samford wrote up a paragraph about the graves and Mary Jean sent the information to Jane Finkbeiner, so we think this is done.

Approval of Apr 2025 minutes, both regular board meeting and special meeting: Jamie Dylenski moved to accept the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Apr 2025 financials, Matters needing review or approval in first four months of the calendar year

- The Cope Estate donation has now been posted in QuickBooks. Shannon met with a CPA to get some directions on how to post this.
- Mary moved to approve with one spelling correction. The motion passed unanimously.
- Jamie's update on completion of Lutz-Vogel Endowed Fund, and related activity. AAACF wanted the church to sign the endowment document or have Jim Rowan and Jamie Dylenski both sign it. They said the interest would be deposited in our cemetery checking account. But then BOAA said they could set up the endowment (have the funds transferred from AAACF to BOAA). Jamie feels we could go with the endowment at BOAA and keep this endowment separate from the church. AAACF says they are estimating a return of 12%, where BOAA is getting around 4%. Is it worth losing the higher percentage? We are going to table this until Jamie gets the language from AAACF and we need to call another meeting before June 1st while we are still under the current bylaws.

Church By-laws, questions or issues on the final proposed document? Annual meeting Sunday June 1, 2025
We received the proposed By-Laws by email yesterday.

Marilyn reported on Jannette Johnson ashes: The daughter requested her mom's ashes be moved.

Tabled: We do not have, but should have DBAs for Bethlehem Cemetery Ann Arbor, and Bethlehem Cemetery Ann Arbor Association. The registration Forms are readily available online and the registered agent needs to sign.

Jamie, website updates and any related changes, answers from Declan, or new questions from anyone? Tabled for now.

General Liability Insurance update, Jamie report, and next action? Jamie will try to get a meeting with church leadership to add the columbariums to the insurance policy.

Block 18 our natural burial area: Discussion has been tabled.

Review of what is on the June To-Do Calendar, sent out by Susan: It is time to schedule any necessary road work and check with Avery Oil to see if we qualify for the price cap. Susan will reach out to the milling company for areas that need to be repaired.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 am

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon O'Reilly, Secretary

FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM – BUCC
Meeting Minutes of 5/20/2025

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

Call to order: 3:30 pm

Review of Minutes of 04/15/2025 Accepted as printed.

Financials, budgeted & unbudgeted: the overall amounts are appropriate for this time of the year.

BUILDING MANAGER:

- a. Bill continues to wash A/C filters for the chapel and lounge and change filters monthly.
- b. He mows, weeds and waters the lawn at the church as needed.
- c. He mows the Hewett parsonage lawn as agreed to with the renters.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Steve and Jim met with Vedder's; awaiting bid for additional surge suppressor dedicated to the line that powers the organ.
- b. The Finance Team and LC are close to finalizing the investment plan for the portion of the Barbara Cope endowment fund designated for Facilities.
- c. Ron supplied a sample of fabric suitable for recovering the sanctuary pew pads. Facilities approved the fabric and color and wish to go ahead with the work as soon as possible. Based on the cost of fabric and the anticipated labor costs, we proposed a budget of \$5,000.00. Jim will inform LC at their meeting Thursday, 05/22/2025.
- d. Eleven people helped with the clean-up day 05/17/2025.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Corporate Cleaning quoted \$2,405 to strip and refinish the FH floor. The bid was approved; Gwen will contact them to schedule as soon as possible.
- b. Safety tape has been applied to the stairs inside the 5th Avenue entrance in response to the fall that occurred recently. Gwen also suggested that the light at the landing outside the salad kitchen door be made an "always on light"; we agreed.
- c. The support pole for the canopy on Fifth Avenue was damaged by a car backing into it. A new pole has been ordered. The repair will be paid for by the Buddhists rental group.
- d. John alerted us to the fact that there appears to be some new issues with the ceiling plaster inside the north sanctuary entrance at the top of the stairs.
- e. The entrance door at the 4th Avenue canopy entrance still does not always latch properly when people exit.

PARSONAGES:

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE TASK LIST:

- a. Team: keep drain on flat roof clear through fall

ADJOURNMENT: 4:25

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, June 17th at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Loukotka

Minutes

Bethlehem UCC Leadership Council

May 22, 2025

Zoom meeting

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Opening prayer – Pastor Dawn - 6:05 pm

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

Old Business

- 1) April minutes – have been approved
- 2) Organ repair – update – Vedder Electric checked. There is some surge protection, but they can add more, which they recommend. Rough estimate \$600. Pending formal estimate.
- 3) Trust – Barbara J. Cope Endowments – update – Jim has gotten additional feedback which he'll review with Tom and P.J. to make a final recommendation. The open issue is flexibility at the bank and whether we would need to use an attorney to set up the specifics of the endowment. This likely wouldn't be needed if we proceeded with the AAACF.
- 4) Pastoral funds for ministry – update – Gwen agreed that it should be possible to get a debit card for this purpose. Jim will clarify that P.J. recommended it be on the McKay checking account, not on the general account to save some bookkeeping transactions.
- 5) Pastoral Search – update – We have a committee. Kurt Schmerberg, Dani Webb, Sue Buday, Dan Foster, Pat Huibregste
- 6) Bylaws task force – update – the 2024 "original" was not correct. It was a pre-2020 version, so some small updates were missing. That has now been corrected.
- 7) Stewardship Campaign - update – 44 pledges have been returned for total of \$112k. Per pledge is roughly the same as last year, but we need more pledges.
- 8) Proposed budget – P.J. will communicate some slight changes to Tom.
- 9) Annual congregational meeting –
 - a. Dawn will open and close but not have a specific agenda item to speak.
 - b. We'll ask for a motion for the proposed bylaws to be approved, followed by a second, any (brief) discussion. Vote.
 - c. Zoom settings will be tested on Sunday 5/25
 - d. P.J. and Jim will work on the PowerPoint presentation.
- 10) Nominations – update – No candidate for VP, Worship chair, and Pastoral Relations chair
- 11) Financial Account Review – schedule
- 12) Church social networking/communication – LC agreed that the communication page can be shut-down/hidden. No longer needed.

New Business

- 1) IT Proposal – Need some updates, including removing server, using cloud storage. Gwen got an estimate of \$5,140. LC discussed and approved the expense, to be funded through a memorial account TBD.
- 2) Pew cushion covers – Facilities – Found someone who can do the work and found a fabric that will match existing, total estimate for \$5,500. Facilities suggested using Feldkamp funds. LC discussed and approved to move forward with this.

Reports from ministry team liaisons - none

Report from pastor

Adjourn 7:38 pm

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Member Care Ministry Team Meeting
Wednesday May 14, 2025, at 3:00PM

Present: Pastor Dawn Christenson, Judy Coucouvanis, Jenny Foster, Mary Jean Raab, Jacquie Katz, Cathleen Connell, Dindy Haab, Nan Lefton, Karen Goforth

Absent: Teresa Beagle, Pastor Diane White

Devotional: Pastor Dawn: Opening Prayer

Updates:

Prayer Chain: Dindy

- Carolyn Moehrle's granddaughter Madeline (Maddie) Kitchel passed away, 4/26/25, service is Saturday May 17, 2025.
- Marge Alber has been unable to attend church activities

Action items: Dindy will reach out to Carolyn to determine if family should be on the prayer chain and Jacquie will reach out to Marge Alber to offer her a ride to church activities

Leadership Council: Teresa via Email

- Needed organ repairs continue to be evaluated.
- By Laws updates and discussion sessions are done, feedback has been sent to the By Laws Committee to finalize and distribute before the Annual Meeting.
 - Packets will be mailed or delivered in person to Homebound Members
- Stewardship Campaign has started: events are done, pledge cards are being received, and information is being incorporated into the new budget.
- The Annual Meeting is June 1st. It is hoped that we will be able to setup as an on-line event for members who cannot attend in person.

Pastor Dawn:

- Permanent Pastor search committee: to be commissioned soon:
 - Kurt Schmerberg
 - Sue Buday
 - Dan Foster
 - Dani Webb
 - Pat Huibregtse

Card Ministry:

- Nan sent 7 cards this month

Action Item: Nan will send cards to the Kitchel family and Gary Rogers who recently lost his mother

Grief Series:

- Mary Jane is sending the series to 3 families

Action Item: suggested Mary Jean reach out to Gary Rogers due to loss of his mother

Pastor Diane:

- Pastor Diane is on an indefinite leave of absence due to her broken ankle, ways to provide support for her and Ron were discussed
- Reaching out to Homebound Members: Member care will send out handwritten notes notifying them of Diane's absence

Action Items: Nan and Pastor Dawn will reach out to Pastor Diane to assess ways church membership can help

Jenny will assign members to write notes using the script provided by Pastor Dawn

Graduate Sunday: June 8

Graduates: Katie and Carrie Schwartz, Brian Gotham

Gift ideas: soft bound Bible, journal

Note: thank you card received from Brian Gotham was shared

Action Item: Jenny is coordinating gift purchase Visitor: Information about Graduates

Father's Day June 15th:

Hugs and Kisses in cloth bags: to be distributed to the congregation

Action Items: Jacqui will purchase the hug and kisses and she and Karen will put the bags together, Mary Jean will provide the bags, Jenny will provide more cards: "Hugs and kisses to you on Father's Day from BUCC Member Care Team"

Mother's Day Update: Geraniums: Total cost: \$131.59

Continue discussion next May of whether to plant them outside or distribute after church service

Proposed Changes to the Bylaws: Pastor Dawn discussed the bylaw changes related to the Member Care team. The changes aim to differentiate between active and inactive members, with the latter being those unable to meet the responsibilities of attending, contributing financially, and participating in the church's life due to various reasons. Inactive members would forfeit their eligibility to vote in church matters. The team would make a good faith effort to communicate with inactive members to encourage their renewed participation. Inactive members remaining on the inactive list for a period of 7 years would automatically be removed from the membership rolls. However, former members desiring to resume participation in the church could return and restore their membership status through engagement in the church's life and a written request. The only people ineligible to return would be those who violate the safe church policy.

Mary Jean brought up that the current copy of the bylaws being distributed is not the most recent copy

Updating Member Participation Tracking System

Team discussed the need for a more accurate system for tracking member participation and contributions. Discrepancies in the current records suggest that the system needs to be updated to reflect changes in technology and participation methods.

Coffee hour: June 15th

Action Item: Jacqui and Jenny will host

Future Meeting Schedule:

- June 11, 2025

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Coucouvanis

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