Cemetery Board Meeting
Minutes
July 8, 2026

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

Meeting called to order at 9:35 am

Devotion-Prayer led by Jamie from When Faith Happens at Night by Sam Houser

Brad's update, when he arrives and discusses communication, specifically – Brad will not be at our meeting today. Various board members made the following report.

- Issues pending since the last meeting – Karen was trying to do a deed and worked with Brad to get that worked out. Brad told Karen that he is having trouble getting the transit form for cremains, and he does not turn in the paperwork until he has this form. Brad needs to make sure that he has a contact number and phone number when he fills out the paperwork. Can we add something to our website telling people what they need to bring with the cremains. We have contacted funeral homes for copies of the transit forms after the burials. Karen said they were able to get into the office computer but the google email they use has been hacked and they were unable to get to old cemetery files in a google drive. The church has assigned them an email. Awhile back, Mary asked Karen for the passwords for the cemetery computer records so the board would have them also.
- tree planting process, requests, approval, tree selection, planting, payments, dates associated, etc.
- New priorities, and unfinished jobs, including pinning 20 spaces in the center of Block 18, wait till mowed in the fall. – Mary Jean followed up with Brad about pinning graves, and they agreed to discuss with the board about pinning one row of 20 spaces that would be a little larger at 5-feet wide. The pinning would be in the middle of the block and then work our way around them towards the roads. Brad wanted to wait until fall when they mowed the grass. It will make it easier for Brad to do the pinning if the wildflowers are not tall. Initially we would use every other space. Spaces will not be sold ahead of time. It will be treated the same as the Memorial Garden. The price would be the same as current space amount ($1,900.00) and current opening/closing cost ($1,775.00 for a weekday, higher costs for Saturday morning or afternoon). A funeral home must be involved in the green burials. Spaces could be identified by a flat stone. We would need to investigate what stone materials would work if we burn the wildflowers. Mary Jean will write this all up and we can compose a letter that can be sent to the funeral homes. Midwest used GPS pinning and Mary Jean will check with them to see what the cost would be.

- Upcoming burials, and past burials with unfinished paperwork - Full burial tomorrow for Barbara Mesnard, July 31st Schwartz mother in memorial garden, July 22nd is Gary Dean's cremains to be buried.
- Review submitted invoice for work in previous month, not included in the contract – Brad has not submitted an invoice yet, but has about $1,000 in labor for putting down dirt where stumps were, and $500. In materials for repairing spigots.

Approval of June board minutes: Shannon –

- May 6 minutes will be approved at the next board meeting – will approve at the August meeting.
- Jamie Dylenski made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 10th meeting as presented. The motions passed unanimously.

Approval of June financials – There were correction of typos. Sales are down. There were 2 months this year with no sales at all. Burials could match last year as we are only 6 months through the year, and we had many burials in the latter half of 2025. Investment reports are available as of this morning so Shannon will update the reports and send them out. Susan Irwin made a motion to approve the financials with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

Review, and/or approval of any invoices not paid, or those paid with past approval – All invoices were approved previously.

Bronze plaque – back in 2017 a niche was purchased for Theodore Pomarole, but the bronze plate was never ordered. Nothing was written on the purchase agreement about the plate. The man has died and now there is no nameplate. His sister made arrangements to bury him in the Memorial Garden. They paid for the memorial garden, but we are holding the check as we realized that he had a niche. Brad talked to Nie and said he has a niche, so the sister agreed to have his cremains in the niche. So now who is responsible for paying for the nameplate. The board decided it was our responsibility to pay for the nameplate as it was never ordered when it should have been.

Website update, if any, Jamie – Nothing this month

Roads proposal from Tom Burke - When trees fell, several of the roads had damage along the edges. Tom Burke sent a proposal to Susan for $16,110.00 for these repairs around Block 14. Susan asked for an estimate to replace the section that we planned to repair this year and still do the overlay to repair the road between Bocks 14 and 15. Tom really feels we need to sealcoat all the roads to protect them. Susan thinks we should do the repairs for $16K and then we could sealcoat later this year so we can get on a schedule instead of doing it piecemeal. We could have a conference call special meeting to approve $16,110.00 for repairs and overlay the 2 options are to do the repairs and overlay between Bocks 14 and 15 or replace the roads in Block 14. Then the whole cemetery needs to be sealcoated. We will have a special meeting to talk about the road repairs.

Tornado Cleanup

Fundraising to bridge the gap between the insurance payment and cost involved in the – Shannon put together a report of donations received for the year and categorized by type of donation (maintenance, storm clean up, etc.). Jamie would like to reach out to the Greek church to tell them what it has cost us for the tornado and what we have received in donations and ask them to publicize this information and possibly get donations from them.

Future meeting agenda for the Executive Committee of the church target date of Sunday 8/23/26 after church. Including our request for two DBA's.

- Bethlehem Cemetery Association Ann Arbor
- Bethlehem Cemetery Ann Arbor.
- Discussion of future meeting with Executive Committee on August 23rd

Review what is on the August To-Do Calendar – Avery to fill the propane tank.

Adjourned at 11:35 am

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon O'Reilly, Secretary

Cemetery Special Board Meeting
Minutes
July 12, 2026

This special meeting was called by Mary Jean Raab on Saturday evening to be held the next morning at 11:30 AM, the rear of the sanctuary, for the sole purpose of considering proposals dated 6/22/2026 and 7/8/2026 to repair roads in the cemetery submitted by T Burke's Asphalt & Concrete Paving Inc.

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

A first proposal was discussed at the regular board meeting on 7/8/2026. Mr. Burke was asked for additional work to be quoted, that was received and forward to board members, and hence the called meeting, rather than waiting for the regular meeting in August.

Susan Irwin working with Mr. Burke spoke to the combined purposely encompassing Pulverization an area of nearly 11,000 square feet and another area of approximately 2,365 sq. ft. where a 2" layer of asphalt would be overlaid on exiting road.

Jamie Dylensik made a motion that the T Burke's proposal for $53,077 be approved, and money drawn from the Bethlehem Cemetery Association investment account to be used. After more brief discussion the motion passed unanimously. The first payment is due upon pulverization. This will be scheduled and we will have notice to withdraw the funds.

The Cemetery Board is aware the roads specific fund has no balance, and awareness leading to donations needs communication.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Minutes submitted by MJ Raab

Executive Committee Minutes
Bethlehem United Church of Christ
July 8, 2026 meeting via Zoom
5:00 p.m. – 6:05 p.m.

Attendees: Jim Rowan, Ron Dechert, P.J. Lindemann, Teresa Beagle

Executive Committee Meeting – started at 5:00 p.m.

The Committee met via Zoom specifically to thoroughly review and discuss the final draft of our Call Agreement to Pastor Matthew Hogue-Smith. The group then finalized the Call Agreement.

Jim will update and send the finished Call Agreement to Pastor Matthew.

The next step will be for the Executive Committee to meet with Pastor Matthew (via Zoom) to review the Call Agreement together and clarify any issues and/or answer any questions Pastor Matthew may have for us or that the Committee may have for Pastor Matthew.

Committee members determined that either Saturday morning, July 11th, or Sunday afternoon, July 12th, would work best for all of us to meet together with Pastor Matthew. Jim will inquire as to Pastor Matthew's availability on those dates, and then let the Committee know which date works best for Pastor Matthew.

Meeting Adjourned - 6:05 p.m.

Executive Committee Minutes
Bethlehem United Church of Christ
July 12, 2026 meeting via Zoom
1:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Attendees: Jim Rowan, Ron Dechert, P.J. Lindemann, Teresa Beagle

Invited Guest: Pastor Matthew Hogue-Smith

Executive Committee Meeting – started at 1:00 p.m.

The Committee met via Zoom with Pastor Matthew Hogue-Smith specifically to review and discuss our Call Agreement. The terms of the Call Agreement were found to be acceptable to both parties. We also discussed Pastor Matthew's anticipated time off through the rest of the calendar year and how that would be accommodated. Pastor Matthew's paid time off clock will reset as of January 1, 2027and continue going forward on a quarterly basis as specified in the Call Agreement.

Jim will sign the Call Agreement and return a copy to Pastor Matthew. He will also send a copy to the Conference for their review and approval. PJ will confirm with Gwen the financial details for salary and benefits for Pastor Matthew's start with BUCC. Jim will contact the Pension Board to facilitate the transfer of benefits. Pastor Matthew commented that there is a 30-day window to handle this.

The Committee then discussed a small reception on August 2nd, Pastor Matthew's first Sunday at BUCC, after the morning service. The official "Installation" needs to be coordinated with Reverend Richardson at Conference and Jim will handle setting up this date. Once we have that date, we can plan a Press Release and other public notices to announce our new Pastor and get community involvement.

Ron let Pastor Matthew know that the Personnel Committee would like to meet with him in August. He also informed Pastor Matthew that the Safety and Security Committee is planning a joint meeting with other local churches in October, so that group would like to meet with Pastor Mathew in September.

The Committee asked Pastor Matthew when he thought he and his partner, Travis, would be moving into the parsonage so we can be sure it is clean and ready. He replied that currently they are planning to move in on July 29 and 30. The Committee recommended he look into securing the services of a local moving company.

Pastor Matthew then informed the Committee that he has already updated the BUCC Google Drive containing the liturgy for Sunday services through August. Also he has several ideas regarding building relationships with church members, e.g. a "Bethlehem Brunch Bunch", as well as a worship committee to assist with Communion Sundays (it was mentioned that we do have a group already involved with this).

He would like to assist with the Press Release on his new position at BUCC and would like to host an Open House near the end of August.

At 1:35 p.m., Pastor Matthew left the Executive Committee meeting.

The Executive Committee then proceeded to review the following issues:

Cleaning the parsonage: Jane Schmerberg recommended her professional cleaner to do this cleaning. The Committee approved this and will facilitate access for the cleaner with John Irwin.

Jim will notify the welcoming committee of Matthew's move-in dates, pending confirmation of a moving company's availability and acceptable estimate.

Cemetery Board request for Bylaw changes – Leadership Council and the Cemetery Board will meet after church on Sunday, August 23, to review this request.

Time was then devoted to discussion of a personnel matter.

Next the Executive Committee discussed concerns that the church building may not be fully vacated of visitors following Community Time. Suggestions for dealing with this, as well as general building security, were discussed. The possibility of setting the Sunday motion detectors to activate earlier than the currently set 11 p.m. time should be reviewed, along with the logic of how late is reasonable with currently scheduled activities in the building. Notice would then need to be given to all key holders as to when they are allowed access into the church property.

Meeting Adjourned - 3:15 p.m.

FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM – BUCC
Meeting Minutes of 07/21/2026

Team: Steve Darr, Randy Schneider, 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 06/16/2026; CORRECTION**: Absent: Jim Rowan and Dani Webb.**

Financials:

a. We have not received reports for June

BUILDING MANAGER:

a. Bill continues to mow and do grounds work at the church.
b. Additional tasks under Gwen's direction.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. The member who requested an additional bike rack may suggest a location; our team did not find a place where it seemed feasible.
b. The kitchen cleaning has been completed. The project was paid from Feldkamp monies.
c. Work on the flat roofs and the ridge cap have been completed. Feldkamp funds were used to fund this work.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. John Irwin led a discussion of the form we must fill out by May 2027 for Church Mutual Insurance company.
b. Jon Brooks has been asked to submit a bid to refinish the two doors to the sanctuary on 4th Avenue.
c.

PARSONAGES:

a. Pastor Matthew will be contacted about whether he will mow grass and do snow removal at the Hewett parsonage.

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE TASK LIST:

a. Team: clear the drain on flat roof

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday. August 18th at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Loukotka

Leadership Council Minutes
Bethlehem United Church of Christ
July 23, 2026 meeting via Zoom
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Attendees: Jim Rowan, Ron Dechert, P.J. Lindemann, Teresa Beagle, Jenny Foster, Judy Coucouvanis, Diana Slaughter, Kurt Schmerberg, Katie Rowan, Michelle Loukotka, Mary Jean Raab

Absent: Steve Darr, Pastor Dawn Christensen

Old Business

1) June Minutes – approved with amended wording on #6, will be sent to Gwen Mayes.
2) Pastor Dawn's departure – At her last service on July 26, Rev. Lawrence Richardson will be there from the Michigan Conference and Jim will make a few comments at the beginning of the service. After the service there will be a special reception for Pastor Dawn. Gifts and cards will be presented as well as a meal. Jenny Foster and Jan Eadie are planning to check out the Fellowship Hall tomorrow in preparation for the reception. (Solid Rock has been informed and will be taking down their items tonight. It was noted that Bethlehem members need to be out of the Fellowship Hall space by 1 p.m. on Sunday for our renters to hold their services.)
3) Pastor Matthew's arrival – A) Kurt reported that the parsonage has been cleaned up. 12 people worked two days to weed flower beds, power wash the patio, clear brush, trim tree branches away from the garage roof, spray a wasp nest and fill/remove a dozen plus bags of yard waste. The interior was cleaned by a professional service and one bedroom repainted. Paper products have been dropped off. In summary, the parsonage property is now in good shape thanks to the efforts of many – especially Kurt and Jane Schmerberg. A few things remain to be taken care of: another house key should be made and perhaps all the doors rekeyed, one threshold still needs to be replaced and a new fire extinguisher put in the house. B) A reception for Pastor Matthew is being planned for Fellowship time after his first service at Bethlehem on August 2nd which will be held upstairs in the Youth Room. Jim mentioned that we need to be mindful of the number of times we ask Solid Rock to take down their set-up to accommodate our functions. Also, Jim reported he has been in regular communication with Pastor Matthew, the Conference and the Pension Board. The transition is going smoothly so far. Regarding parsonage expenses, Jim stated that the church pays the gas, electric and water utilities as well as basic cable. Pastor Matthew will be responsible for mowing, snowplowing, internet and anything more than basic cable service.

4) Funding of parsonage utilities – As this item was not in the new Budget, it was suggested that a monthly variance be carried until the end of the fiscal year. Jim will inform Steve to do this with the Facilities budget.

New Business

1) Football parking – the need for a better arrangement was briefly discussed.
2) Education and Outreach – Diana Slaughter reported that this year's schedule for collection of school supplies begins earlier than in previous years. They will also try to tally items received and what is still needed so they can update the congregation weekly. The collection of school items ends August 23rd.
3) Pastoral Relations Committee – Jim reported that Rev. Lawrence Richardson emphasized the importance of this Committee and that it needs to be up and going from the start of Pastor Matthew's tenure. Kurt stated that per our By-Laws, this Committee's Chair is elected (that is currently Kurt). Steve Schwartz has been appointed to represent Pastor Diane White and another member will be appointed to represent Pastor Matthew. Kurt will discuss the Committee's composition with Pastor Matthew. Finally, a representative from the Executive Committee also serves on the Pastoral Relations Committee to be the liaison.

Next Meeting: the Executive Committee members only will meet with the Cemetery Board after church services on August 23, 2026. Therefore, Jim thought Leadership Council would probably not meet in August.

Meeting Adjourned – 7:00 p.m.