Cemetery Board Meeting
Minutes
June 10, 2026

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

Meeting called to order at 9:35 am

Devotion-Prayer led by Jamie Dylenski

Brad's update, when he arrives and discusses communication: Brad is not in attendance this morning, but Susan Irwin reported on her conversations with Brad. There is paperwork on the desk that Brad needs to complete.

- Issues pending since the last meeting
- Cemetery maintenance - Spigots are on hold for now. Is the labor for maintaining the spigots included in his contract? We would need to pay him for materials.
- Tree planting process, requests, approval, tree selection, planting, payments, dates associated, etc. - Dirt and seeding around tree areas needs to be done. The dirt is about $1,000 per load and Brad will get one load. He thinks it will take about 2 days. Marilyn Pearson made a motion to approve the cost of $1,000 per load of topsoil and have Brad purchase the topsoil. The motion passed unanimously, but we would like to know how many yards are in a load of topsoil. We will ask Brad to submit a request for the hours he feels he needs to spend. Some of the headstones have been moved from where they were originally (pushed by the falling trees) and Brad will need to determine where the stones belong. We have 5 pending requests from people who want to purchase a tree. For a memorial tree, the person who makes the request needs to pay for it. We need to honor the memorial requests but replacing the trees damaged by the tornado could wait until next year when all the tornado repairs are completed. Mary Jean will check with Kevin Elminger to see when he needs the orders and finalize the schedule for delivery and planting. We talked about a small plaque on a post to say it is a memorial tree.
- New priorities, and unfinished jobs
- Upcoming burials, and past burials with unfinished paperwork - There are 2 niche burials coming up this week. Richard and Marilyn Miller have 2 niche open & closings and Suzanne Smith has 1 niche open and closing.
- Brad's paperwork status and review of submitted invoice for work in previous month, not included in the contract - There is paperwork on the desk that Brad needs to complete.

Election officers for our Bethlehem Association Cemetery Board from our governing body elected members for the next church fiscal year - The current board officers have agreed to stay in their current position for another year. A motion to accept the officers was made by Susan Irwin. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of May board minutes: Jamie Dylenski made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of May financials: After discussion about the financials Jamie Dylenski made a motion to approve with corrections –

An Invoice from 3.7 Design for $630.00 has been received. Susan Irwin made a motion to approve this invoice, and it passed unanimously.

An invoice from Amstutz for $8.000.00 for stump grinding has been received. There is enough left of the $50,000 transferred from the investment account to pay the additional storm bill. Jamie Dylenski made a motion to pay this invoice, and it passed unanimously. Amstutz still has a couple of trees in the front that they need to come back and take out. Mark from Amstutz will come walk around the cemetery with Brad to see What needs to be finished up that would cost around $10,000.00
Kleinschmit Roofers – Kleinschmidt has added $100.00 to their proposal for the shed roof for a total of $745.00. Shannon O'Reilly made a motion to approve up to $1,000.00. The motion passed unanimously.
All Arbor Custom Fence – We paid a $3,000 deposit so they could order the materials. They said they could come this week to fix the fence. There are wires hanging on the outside of the fence and on our side of the fence. Tonight Comcast will be shutting down all the power and they will be out tomorrow to repair their lines. Because of the wires, Susan told All Arbor Fence that they cannot do repairs to the fence until the wire issue is corrected. Some of the wires are probably phone and maybe electric.

Acknowledge and accept final Church Mutual insurance payment to us as outlined in their letter of May 21, 2026 and Linda Plum re the bench: Jamie said insurance could cover the bench, but Linda Plum needed to tell us what she needed and the cost. Linda has not gotten Back to Jamie, so we will not be able to submit anything to the insurance company now that we have received the check from Church Mutual. Linda thinks her son can make a cement slab and repair the bench (that her father built when she was a young girl). The check from Church Mutual was deposited on June 4th.

Website update, if any, and invoices to approve if any-Jamie - John Samford asked for different verbiage in the deeds, but Jamie said we were going with the current version without any more changes.

Fundraising to bridge the gap between the insurance payment and cost involved - Tabled

Future meeting agenda for the Executive Committee of the church and 6/26/26 leadership meeting including desired changes in by laws. We are requesting two DBA's for the cemetery, Bethlehem Cemetery Association Ann Arbor and Bethlehem Cemetery Ann Arbor. Mary Jean would also like to discuss the organization chart and determine how the cemetery should be represented on the chart. Do we report only to the governing body or to both the governing body and the executive committee (or leadership council). A big issue for the cemetery is that we have no help or support from the church staff, and we are running a "business". The cemetery is a very complicated business. We need to start brainstorming for the future of the cemetery.

New Business from our July meeting:

- Jamie would like to talk about pet burials
- Signage at the front
- American flag needs replacing. Veterans put this up the last time
- Increase for the Samfords

Review what is on the July To-Do Calendar, Susan will check with Avery to get the tank filled at the summer pricing. She will also get Tom Burke out to look over the roads and make recommendations.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:00

Respectfully submitted
Shannon O'Reilly, Secretary

Executive Committee Minutes
Bethlehem United Church of Christ
June 25, 2026 meeting via Zoom
7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

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

The Committee discussed a Call Agreement for Pastor Matthew and budget planning. PJ shared her calculations on salary and benefit details for a new Senior Pastor position, including annual salary and FICA considerations related to housing value. The Committee reviewed the various health plan options and other benefits. The Committee agreed that specific requirements should spell out that sabbatical request needs to be submitted to leadership one year in advance and must be for educational or refreshing activities that will benefit both the pastor and the church. The agreed upon details and terminology regarding compensation, benefits, sabbatical leave requests, health insurance, housing, pension, etc. will all be entered into the Call Agreement template document from the Conference and sent to Committee members for a final review. The plan is for the Executive Committee to approve this final document before Jim presents it to Matthew, possibly before the upcoming holiday weekend.

Auto allowances were also discussed along with Continuing Education expenses remaining unchanged from the previous year for both the Senior and Associate Pastor.

Ron shared recommendations from the Personnel Committee regarding merit increases for staff, as well as the provision of additional vacation days as a staff benefit in recognition of exceptional work. The recommendations were discussed and supported. The Executive Committee also discussed a specific personnel issue.

Finally, Jim mentioned that due to upcoming important decisions, along with the transition to a new Pastor, leadership groups may need to meet more often in the next few months to address matters in a timely way.

Meeting Adjourned - 8:30 pm

**FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM – BUCC**
**Meeting Minutes of 06/16/2026**

**Team:** Steve Darr, Randy Schneider, Jim Rowan LC, Gwen Mayes Office Manager, John Irwin, Dani Webb, Michelle Loukotka
**Advisor**s: Jim Stadel, Bob Loukotka
**Absent:** Dani Webb

Call to order: 3: 25 pm

Review of Minutes for 05/19/2026 were accepted as printed.

**FINANCIALS:**

a. We have no reports for last month.

**BUILDING MANAGER:**

a. Tasks under Gwen's supervision
b. Mowing at Hewett Parsonage and mowing and other grounds work at the church.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

a. The tuck pointing on the wall next to the flat roof has been completed. The repairs on the ridge cap have also been finished. Following the recent rains there has been no leaks on the second floor.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

a. The insurance company is reviewing our policy prior to renewing. We will complete the questionnaire and have the electrical inspection done as required.
b. The backflow test revealed a leak. Repairs will be made and the test will be repeated.
c. Corporate Cleaning's contract terminates July 9th. The new company will start the following week.
d. Steve will check with Dani to see if she is able to refinish the exterior doors at the front of the sanctuary this summer. If not, we will pursue other possibilities. They definitely need to be done this year.

**PARSONAGES:**

**ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE TASK LIST:**

a. Team: keep drain on flat roof clear until fall.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday**,** July 21st at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Loukotka

Leadership Council Minutes
Bethlehem United Church of Christ
June 25, 2026 meeting via Zoom
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Opening prayer – Pastor Dawn Christenson - 6:00 pm

Attendees: Jim Rowan, Ron Dechert, P.J. Lindemann, Teresa Beagle, Pastor Dawn Christenson, Steve Darr, Katie Rowan, Jenny Foster, Diana Slaughter, Mary Jean Raab, Michelle Loukotka, Shannon O'Reilly, Kurt Schmerberg

Old Business

1) May Minutes – approved
2) Updated Leadership Roster – per Pastor Dawn this is in the process of being completed.
3) Pastoral Search – no exact date for new pastor's start (pending Call Agreement being sent and accepted). Discussion followed regarding need to inspect and clean parsonage and do any necessary fixes. It was recommended a cleaning group go in before the new pastor moves in. Jim and Jenny will discuss a "farewell" event honoring Pastor Dawn (potentially on July 26, if that's her last Sunday). Pastor Dawn said the Conference will send Dr. Lawrence Richardson to lead a Litany of Leaving during her last Sunday service. Once a Call Agreement is in place, various announcements and notifications can be sent out to the community at large and to specific organizations regarding the new pastor, the formal installation service date and other appropriate details. The idea of a "welcome basket" for the new pastor with suggestions about restaurants, shopping, activities, etc. in the Ann Arbor area was discussed. Jim will check with the prospective pastor regarding preferences for move-in assistance.
4) Rental Updates – Hewitt parsonage is currently unoccupied. Solid Rock lease has been renewed for the next year at a small increase.
5) Safety and Security Committee Update – Security improvements being looked into include additional lighting for the parking lot and more AED systems and First Aid kits. Additional barriers at Fifth Avenue will be reviewed at an upcoming Facilities meeting. Safety & Security hopes to meet with Pastor Dawn one more time before she leaves as well as shortly after the new pastor arrives to review current responsibilities and procedures. BUCC will be hosting the next Safety Workshop in October.
6) Personnel Subcommittee Activity – Ron reported that they have been creating job descriptions for all staff positions; ensuring annual reviews are done, with completed evaluations placed in permanent personnel files; and recommending performance increases for staff. Next they plan to update the Personnel Manual. Currently the Committee is comprised of Ron Dechert, Ele Kotowski and Dindy Haab.
7) Stewardship Update – The new fiscal year has received an increase in the number of giving units and in the per unit donation (compared to the previous year).

8) Congregational Meeting / Annual Report Review – Jim briefly reviewed that the Annual Meeting took place on June 7, 2026 as scheduled. We had a quorum (in person plus on-line), the nominated slate was elected and the 2026-27 Annual Budget was reviewed and passed as presented.
9) Parking Planning for Events Involving the BUCC Lot:
    a. Football Saturdays – Diana Slaughter and Barb Schenk have agreed to co-administer the tasks and schedule and are/will be reviewing things with Jennifer Vasquez. They requested assistance for moving the heavy signs. A hand truck can be made available to help workers with this issue.
    b. Art Fair – Ron confirmed coverage for all shifts.
    c. Concert on July 24/25 – Jim will check with Gwen on how this was handled in the past.
10) Upcoming Leadership Meetings – Jim noted that there may be a need for more frequent Leadership Council meetings due to transition with a new pastor and other important decisions.

New Business

1) Proposed Cemetery Board changes – Mary Jean Raab presented two proposed changes to the Cemetery Board Bylaws: removing term limits and clarifying the reporting structure for the Cemetery Board. It was realized that the organizational charts need to be updated/corrected on church documents and on the website. Jim said he would follow up with Mary Jean and the Cemetery Board on setting up a meeting to review appropriate next steps/discussion of the requested changes.
2) Visioning for the Future – Church and Leadership – Jim Rowan led an introductory discussion regarding various strategies for church growth and visibility, increasing our on-line presence, updating/revising current activities, improved marketing for BUCC and better communication between members/groups. Comments were made for integrating children more into the church, adding programs to maximize attendance and community engagement. The installation service of our new pastor was used as an example of an event that should be announced and celebrated as broadly as possible within the community and Conference.

Reports from Ministry Teams:

Facilities – masonry repair is done. The change in our janitorial service will start on July 9, 2026. The deep cleaning of the kitchen is expected to be finished by the end of the week.

Outreach – the event for Habitat for Humanity still needs additional workers for August 8th in Ypsilanti.

Education – Diana asked Steve to check the puppet theater for safety and mobility, in preparation for use in Sunday School sessions going forward.

Meeting Adjourned - 7:30 pm

Member Engagement Ministry Team Minutes
June 10, 2026

Present: Jenny Foster, Judy Coucouvanis, Jacquie Katz, MaryJean Raab, Nan Lefton, Rev Diane White, Dindy Haab, Beth Wenner
Absent: Cathleen Connell

Quick recap:
The meeting focused on pastoral updates, member concerns, and organizational planning for church activities. Diane led a devotional titled "Supported" from Psalms 73:25-26, emphasizing the importance of relying on God as a consistent support in life. The group discussed several member health updates, including those needing prayer support and cards. The team reviewed ongoing homebound visitation efforts, with Diane providing regular updates on various members including Marge Alber's 100th birthday celebration planned for July 31st, The conversation ended with extensive discussion about organizing leadership responsibilities for major church events, with team members volunteering to lead different initiatives.

Next Steps:
Pastor Diane:

- Lead planning for Heritage Sunday on August 30th
- Reach out to Chuck B's daughter to see if he/she would like to receive the Journey Through Grief Series
- Coordinate the Prayer Chain; Ensure Lisa directs prayer chain calls to Pastor Diane
    - Article for Visitor
- Announce Marge's 100th birthday open house (July 31st) in church announcements on July 26th and coordinate singing happy birthday, with Naki, to Marj at the 7/26/26 service

Jenny/Judy:

- Coordinate with search committee for Pastor Matt's meet and greet event on Saturday the 13th from 3-5pm in the fellowship hall
- Update leadership coordination list with team assignments
- Meet with Dindy after meeting to transition prayer chain coordination
- Continue following up on time and talent forms and organize responses
- Work with new minister on ideas for community time activities
- Judy will lead Pretzel Baking event
- Jenny will lead Mother’s Day flowers and Time and talent coordination
- Jenny and Judy will lead nominations in 2027

Jacquie:

- Assemble Father's Day cards and "hugs and kisses" with Beth's help
- Coordinate holiday cookie exchange event

MaryJean:

- Coordinate Totenfest Activities

Nan:

- Continue card ministry and send cards as directed
- Send a picture of quilts to the group and for inclusion in the Visitor

Everyone

- Review the attached list of yearly activities and consider leading/co-leading at least one activity for the upcoming year; communicate preferences to Judy or Jenny before or at the August meeting.

Devotional: Pastor Diane read a devotional reading from “Be Still and Know’
Updates:

- Nan provided updates on the card ministry, and she sent 13 cards since the last meeting. She is creating lap quilts as part of her ministry which have been well received by church members
- MaryJean continues to send the journey through grief series to 3 families
- Pastor Diane Provided updates on the health of various members
- Dindy provided an update on the Prayer Chain

Member Engagement Activity Planning/Organization
The team discussed organizing responsibilities for various church events and activities. (See attached list). MaryJean volunteered to coordinate the Totenfest event, while Diane will handle Advent and Lent devotionals and Nan will continue with the card ministry. Jacquie volunteered to coordinate the holiday cookie exchange and Father's Day. The group discussed plans for Heritage Sunday in August, with Diane taking the lead on organizing this year's celebration. The team acknowledged low participation in time and talent form submissions and discussed strategies to improve community time engagement, including potentially adding structured activities or discussion topics.

Upcoming Meetings
- Upcoming Meeting schedule: August 12th, September 9th, October 14th, and November 18th at 2:30 (NO JULY MEETING)
- Lunch on December 2nd from 12-2 PM.

Ongoing and Future Agenda Items:
- Pretzel Baking: Judy
- Coming Home/Heritage Sunday
- Community time
- Membership Review - Any updates to report?
- Choir Appreciation Sunday
- Grief group: Pastor Diane
- Suggestion box/board
- Current events discussion small group formation
- Care Card Ministry - Follow up on idea for Sunday school students to create cards (sign their names on the artwork)

Next Meeting Date: August 12th at 2:30 PM in the Lounge or virtually at

Zoom Meeting Link:
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85032853579?pwd=Jeq5efUbfzDSSlMsbMPpP4tEox4Cum.1

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Coucouvanis

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