

**Elizabethtown Church of the Brethren
Church Board Minutes**

September 14, 2020 6:45 PM via Zoom

In Attendance: Joe Detrick (Moderator), Paula Burke (Chair), Pastor Greg Laszakovits, Pastor Pam Reist, Pastor Josh Tindall, Pastor Jason Haldeman, George Snavelly, Carroll Kreider, Duane Hernley, Amy Karr, Beth DeGoede, Kathy Nornhold, Jordan Eberhart, Glenn Book, Frank Rhodes, Karen Ungemach, Alyssa Cross (Clerk)

I.	<p>Opening Prayer Pastor Greg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflection on finding God in wilderness experiences. ● Wilderness is a repeated Biblical theme; in Exodus, God's people seeking freedom in the wilderness, Prophets seeking safety in the wilderness, Religious leaders seeking the mountain or wilderness for space to experience God. ● In wilderness moments - when we're not sure where we're going or what's next - God makes God's presence known and we find our way out of the wilderness.
II.	<p>Discussion and Approval of 07/13/2020 Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approved as submitted.
III.	<p>Recap of action via email between July and September Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pastor Vacation Time Recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HR Committee recommends that the Board allow the pastors to carry over any unused vacation from calendar 2020 to 2021. Pastors should still take vacation this calendar year when able to and should use the carryover vacation in the first half of calendar year 2021. ○ Proposed amendment from Carroll Krider, seconded by Duane Hernley: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pastors should take vacation this calendar year when able to and may use the carryover vacation in calendar year 2021. ○ Action: Unanimously approved with amendment. ● Pastor Greg's Sabbath Rest (9/28-11/30) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Executive Committee voted unanimously for the proposal. ○ A coverage plan has been established and affirmed by the pastoral team for making sure Pastor Greg's duties are covered during his Sabbath Rest.
IV.	<p>Treasurer's Report Frank</p> <p>1. Review of Income Statement as of 08/31/2020</p> <p>After eight months, operating results remain positive, with revenues exceeding disbursements by \$17,899 (at the end of last month the net position was \$18,874). Revenue to date at the end of August is under budget by \$80,108 (\$528,094 received versus \$608,202 budgeted). Revenue is \$10,601 behind where we were a year ago. Regular offerings, at \$479,901, fell short of the budgeted offerings of \$535,535 by \$55,634, and are \$17,471 below last year's amount of \$497,372. A month by month summary of offerings is provided in the graph entitled "ECOB 2020". August giving (\$55,540) was below budget, but was better than August 2019 giving (\$49,565). A 5 year history of general fund offerings compared to budgeted offerings is also provided in the graph entitled "ECOB YTD 8/31 COMPARISON." We are in a similar position as we were in 2017.</p> <p>Disbursements after eight months are under budget by \$98,007 (\$510,195 actual spending versus \$608,202 budgeted spending) and \$65,161 less than last year. Most notably, Resources spending is well under budget and significantly less than last year.</p> <p>Overall, as of 8/31/2020 we are in a net operating gain position of \$18,874, with income below budget and expenses well under budget, and expenses much less than a year ago.</p> <p>2. Cash Position, Building Project, and LT Investments at BFI</p> <p>Our cash position at 8/31/2020 is \$1,359,836. This compares to our cash position a year ago of \$423,683. The large increase in cash is primarily due to Capital Campaign contributions. Just over \$1,231,000 of this cash is invested in a money market fund.</p>

	<p>Contributions to the building project at 8/31/2020 totaled \$1,357,468 (\$214,185 in 2020). Total 2019 contributions through August were \$395,397. Non-operating budget building project costs to date are \$206,484 (\$79,354 in 2020).</p> <p>The market value of all long-term memorial funds invested with the Brethren Foundation as of 8/31/2020 was \$2,588,281, which is up \$116,815 from the beginning of the year market value of \$2,471,466, reflecting an investment gain, net of expenses, of \$116,815 (a total investment return for the year of approximately 4.7%). The investment return for July was +1.7%. As of 8/31/2020 our portfolio was invested \$1,308,239 (51%) in a Short-term investment fund and \$1,280,042 (49%) in a balanced fund (60% domestic stock fund, 40% bond fund).</p> <p>Questions & Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Finance Committee will be meeting with Brethren Benefit Trust on 9/15 to review long-term investments.
V.	<p>Personnel Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New Hire for Admin Assistant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Angela Hornberger begins part-time on September 21. ○ Action Item: Make an announcement on Sunday during the service and via the newsletter. ● Pastor Greg Sabbath Rest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aiming to recharge, reconnect, and rejuvenate by being outdoors and backpacking
VI.	<p>Possible District Action Paula</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possible action against Pastor Pam for performing same-sex weddings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The District Ministry Commission (responsible for ministerial ethics) meets tomorrow, 9/15. More to come following that meeting. ○ Outcomes could range from no action to a suspension or revocation of licensing.
VII.	<p>District Conference Paula</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District Conference is scheduled for the first weekend in October. ● Pastor Eric Landram has been asked to give the message for the worship service. Eric asked the District about working with Etown to host the worship service via livestream (using our building, equipment, resources, and volunteers). The District, breaking from tradition of a conference host welcome message, will not allow Etown to bring greetings (even with an offer to have the message pre-approved by the District), with specific mention that Pastor Pam is prohibited from giving any welcome message. The District is currently in the process of deciding if they want to take up the offer for Etown to host with the expectation of a welcome greeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action Item: Should the District choose to rescind the request to have Etown serve as a tech partner and host of the worship service in order to avoid a welcoming message from Pastor Pam, we will respond with a statement explaining how disrespectful that action is to Pastor Pam, to our congregation, to who we are as a people, to the LGBTQ+ members and allies.
VIII.	<p>Reopening Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outdoor evening service to be held on Sunday, 9/27 <p>Action Item</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board to revisit the re-opening options at our October meeting following the outdoor service at the end of this month. <p>Discussion and Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do we keep a pulse on who is engaged and connected? It may be time to do another round of phone calls to the congregation, as the Deacons and Nurture Commission did earlier this year.
IX.	<p>Pastoral Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jason <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trying to provide online opportunities for Sunday School. Bible Studies, Book Study, Anti-Racism groups all continue to meet.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Christian Ed is continuing to think of ways to reach out to families with children, in particular, to maintain connections. ○ Taking a preaching course at Bethany Seminary. ● Josh <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Getting back in action following paternity leave. ○ Thanks to Alex Mora for his service in his internship and to Pastor Pam for picking up some of the supervisor role ○ Will resume looking into potential video equipment upgrades ● Greg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food for Thought: there is an opportunity for us when the country reopens. We can explore what it might mean to be a different configuration of a congregation. How might we consider membership for folks who join us for live streaming and now consider our church their home? ● Pam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pastoral Care looks different without in-person visits. Lots of care via email, texting, and phone calls. Women's Bible Study has started via Zoom. ○ Trying to find creative ways to do things such as Rose Baer's ordination service. ○ The Ministry Calling Committee has been busy meeting with Alex Mora, Isaiah Lokai, and Desiree Weaver-Spidel.
X.	Commission Reports
	<p>Christian Ed Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We are seeking to offer opportunities for all age groups to engage in Sunday School ● Whenever we know we will be back, we will be recruiting teachers and helpers. ● Shout out to Karen Laszakovits for putting together drive-through kits for the Shine kids.
	<p>Expressions Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No report.
	<p>Nurture Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nurture discussed some ideas for on-line devotional resources and the possibility of hosting an outdoor Vespers Service at church. Nothing definitive was determined yet. Most people in the church have been contacted by the Nurture Commission to touch-base. Most expressed a desire to return to worship but acknowledged that now was not the time and live-streaming was a suitable alternative. ● We are looking into distributing Faith Markers for the 4-year-olds that were put on hold. We plan to recognize the 5th graders with next year's 5th graders. We are looking into getting Bibles to the 3rd graders.
	<p>Resources Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintenance has been done around the Memorial Garden. ● Anticipating some expenses coming up for the end of the year. The elevator is leaking hydraulic oil and since it will remain through the building project, it is prudent to address the issue. ● Looking to upgrade some of the classrooms, beginning with installing new children's toilets. Resources to work with Christian Ed ahead of meeting with the Building Committee on some details for classroom upgrades surrounding blackboard vs whiteboards, tech needs, storage units, window replacement, lighting, and ceiling tiles.
	<p>Witness Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working with Deacons to organize volunteer workers for the Lititz playground project and sponsoring a meal for a work day.
	<p>Deacon's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Deacons and Lay Visitors are continuing to do virtual visitation with members of our congregation. ● The Benevolence Committee is continuing to respond when requested to concerns and needs, especially prevalent during this time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Deacons will be providing lunch on September 24 to the workers constructing a community playground behind the Lititz Church of the Brethren. Thanks to Barbara Ellis for taking leadership.
XI.	<p>Building Committee Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee will be meeting on 9/23 with a representative from Resources (Barbara Ellis) and will be getting an update from the architects. More to come following that meeting later this month.
XII.	<p>Virtual Fall Council Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tentatively slated for Sunday, November 22 <p>The Ministry Executive Team has been considering ways to effectively conduct the Fall Church Council meeting (11/22/2020) and considerations consistent with Good Governance Principles during a Pandemic or other national emergency. Robert's Rules of Order (pages 97-99) give helpful guidance in expanding the definition of "present" to include other means of communication when conducting business – as long as people are able to participate by hearing and discussing the issues presented. The Team commissioned Joe and Paula to bring a specific proposal to the Church Board that will utilize electronic means and will assist the widest participation of church members.</p> <p>We propose utilizing ZOOM technology as the primary source of communication with the added capability of including Live Streaming on YouTube. The ZOOM format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can accommodate up to 100 email addresses Allows for greatest possibility to see and hear one another Comments can be made in the chat room Persons can call in and talk via telephone Designated persons can monitor the chat box and receive phone calls Opportunities can be provided for "trial run" with those unfamiliar with Zoom <p>If approved by the Church Board, a more detailed explanation and instruction would be presented in the upcoming Church Newsletter, preparing the congregation for the council meeting.</p> <p>Questions & Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a vote is needed, we can use Google Forms, as we did earlier this year. <p>Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board approves the use of Zoom for the Fall 2020 Church Council meeting.
XIII.	<p>Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 12
XIV.	<p>Closing Prayer Pastor Pam</p> <p>Pam shared a prayer by Paul Grout, ordained Church of the Brethren minister</p> <p>Oh God, we pray for birth -- for rebirth within our own lives and within the life of our community, our nation, and our world. Help us, oh God, to let go of what must now die. Help us to move from death to life, From emptiness to wholeness, From fear to trust, From hate to love, From discouragement to hope, From war to peace. Strengthen us in the truth that we seek to live within. Open our eyes, oh God, to the truth we have turned away from. And help us to want and work for that which you want for us. Help us to see what has true value Help us to recognize what truly lasts, oh God. We are a moment, we are a movement, and we are your people; Your people of peace and of love This night and all nights. Amen</p>

Respectfully submitted,
Alyssa Cross (Clerk)
October 3, 2020