

Minutes for October Church Board Meeting
Eighth Street Mennonite Church
October 13, 2021 – 7:00 pm via ZOOM
Draft – to be approved at the November meeting

Present: Chair – Laurie Nafziger, Executive Committee – Joel Short, Christian Education Commission – Stacie Short, Congregational Care Commission – Betty Schrag, Fellowship Commission – Jay Hochstetler, Mission & Service Commission – Brian Wiebe, Trustee Commission – Mel Friesen, Worship Commission – Leonard Beechy, Treasurer – John Nyce, Pastors – Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau and Julia Gingrich, Administrative Assistant – Rita Herrmann

Absent: Executive Committee - Doug Liechty Caskey, Stewardship Commission – Leanne Schertz

Eighth Street Vision Statement

With courage and humility,
we strive to more fully celebrate the image of God in all persons
and we commit to building relationships with our neighbors near and far
by finding common ground and removing barriers to loving every body.

AGAPE Vision Goals:

Across cultures
Generational interaction
Accessibility and Sustainability
Peace and Justice
Engagement with the neighborhood

1. Opening – Laurie shared Julia’s Church at Prayer scripture and prayer based on Colossians 1:15.
2. The Church Board minutes from the September 15 meeting were reviewed. Brian Wiebe made the motion to approve, and the motion was seconded by Mel Friesen. September minutes were approved by the Board with no changes needed.
3. Treasurer’s Report (John Nyce) – Income: Year-to-date (YTD) giving continues to be generous and is very close to budget – only \$813.53 below, as of Sept 30. We need to average just \$143 more giving per Sunday to meet the budget goal by December: we need at least \$7,485 weekly average to December and weekly average for this year is \$7,342. Expenses: YTD expenses are now \$34,521.42 below budget. So, if Commissions’ spending stays within budget during the next 3 months, we could have some surplus at year-end. With the news out today regarding Social Security increasing to 5.9%, there will be a possible increase recommended for staff in the upcoming budget proposal.
4. Returning to indoor worship on October 31: Brenda reviewed the indoor worship proposal being recommended by Executive Committee. Worship will remain outside through October 24th, followed by indoor worship starting October 31st and going through November 21st with two 30-minute services (at 9:00 and 11:00) to allow for social distancing in the sanctuary. The proposal details specific considerations that will allow for safe worship. The hope is to seat

potentially 70-80 people in each service, seating attenders in every other pew, but an overflow area in the fellowship hall will accommodate more people if needed. There will undoubtedly be some details that will need to be problem-solved as things move forward, but both pastors are confident that issues can be resolved. The Board affirmed the thoroughness of the proposal submitted and encouraged detailed communication be sent to the congregation soon.

5. The 2022 budget process is underway. Each commission should be reviewing their budgets and submitting them to Leanne by Monday, October 18th, so that they can be forwarded on to John. Thank you to the commissions that have already submitted their budgets. (Special note that Executive Committee was first. A virtual gold star has been awarded to them.)
6. The Commissions' annual review of by-laws were discussed by each commission during their individual reports.
7. Commission Reports -- *Living into our vision*
 - a. Christian Education (Stacie Short)
 - i. There are still a few openings for Sunday School teachers for the Winter/Spring quarters starting in January. They will continue to search for willing individuals.
 - ii. The budget will be submitted shortly once a few remaining questions are answered.
 - iii. No need for any changes to the bylaws for Christian Education Commission.
 - b. Congregational Care (Betty Schrag)
 - i. Work on the online church directory continues. People will submit photos to Rita to add to the directory. Someone from Eighth Street will be available to help those who need assistance with picture taking. Those photos will also be submitted to Rita for posting. This directory will be one that can be accessed on a computer, by mobile app on a smartphone or tablet. It is very user-friendly and comes highly recommended from Berkeley Avenue. Rita will connect with Berkeley Avenue about the steps they used when starting out.
 - ii. Poinsettia delivery to attenders 80 years and up is in the planning stages. There will be 32-34 households this year.
 - iii. There will be an addition to the Congregational Care bylaws that will mention subsidizing up to 50% of long-distance travel expenses for medical reasons to those individuals in need. Betty will send this to Rita.
 - c. Fellowship (Jay Hostetler)
 - i. Due to conflicts, there was no meeting this month.
 - ii. The budget proposal for Fellowship Commission will remain the same.
 - iii. The fundraiser for the Preschool was very well received. People enjoyed the space to talk and eat together, or to take food with them if they preferred. Special thanks to Alex and Emma Dugger and Buckley Watson for their work on this successful event. More than \$2,000 was raised for the preschool.
 - iv. The bylaws for Fellowship Commission need no changes.
 - d. Mission and Service (Brian Wiebe)
 - i. The commission will meet for their regular meeting tomorrow and discuss budget, bylaws and individuals to invite to serve on Mission and Service. The

chair position will need to be filled for next year. Dave Gerber will continue to serve on Mission and Service, just not in that role.

- ii. "Eighth Street Engaged" was introduced last Sunday with individuals already signing up. Eighth Street Engaged's goal is to do collective work together in the community and to facilitate more action. They will work with three groups that are already well established and active in the community: Poor People's Campaign, Cosecha, and Faith in Action. There will be quarterly gatherings where members of Eighth Street Engaged can share, reflect and strategize. Julia plans to send out monthly emails to those who sign up about current events in the community around us.

e. Stewardship (Brenda on behalf of Leanne)

- i. Names taken from the Gifts Discernment survey were distributed to each commission.
- ii. Work continues on the budget for next year.

f. Trustees (Mel Friesen)

- i. The bylaws will be reviewed in the next Trustee meeting.
- ii. The position of Trustee Chair for next year still needs to be filled.
- iii. Furnaces – Two fellowship hall furnaces were replaced in the past month and the preschool furnace will be replaced during the preschool's fall break next week. The bill has been submitted with funding coming from accumulated savings. No additional money will be requested from the congregation to cover this cost.
- iv. The removal of the oil tank will be done by a local company on November 9th. It should take a day to complete and then the area will be cemented shut later in the week.
- v. All building Wi-Fi will be installed sometime next year. This will include the adult Sunday School rooms, the preschool area and the sanctuary.

g. Worship (Leonard Beechy)

- i. The budget proposed will be lower for the coming year.
- ii. There will be a bylaw change to the Worship Commission. The proposed change will be sent to Rita.
- iii. The "With Courage and Humility" series has begun. The focus will be on our convictions and who we are. There will be two Sundays spent on each principle, and it will conclude prior to Advent.
- iv. Shirley King will give a recital to celebrate the return to indoor worship on October 24th at 4:00 p.m.

8. Pastors' Reports

- a. Julia shared two examples of Eighth Street neighborly love that she witnessed recently. In her recent meeting with Chandler Elementary staff, a request was made for help feeding teachers and staff during parent/teacher conferences. Eighth Streeters quickly volunteered and provided a potato bar. The staff was so appreciative of the generosity. Additionally, Julia shared that Don French is someone who works with a reentry housing program for individuals coming out of Elkhart County Jail. This week, he reached out to Eighth Street for help with lawn care and deck issues at a house that will be needed for

this program. Julia's request to Eighth Streeters was promptly answered, and all needs were seen to quickly. This coming week, Julia will travel with her family for fall break and is looking forward to time together.

- b. Brenda shared that due to fall break, there will be no Second Hour for children this Sunday as most will be traveling. There will be a special in-person delegate session for Mennonite Church USA on May 24-27 in Kansas City to discuss resolutions that were not addressed during the virtual sessions earlier. Eighth Street will need to decide who to send in these three delegate roles. Brenda also shared that she is happy to have Rita back after her medical absence and hopes for a speedy and complete recovery.

Next meeting: November 17, 2021 – 7:00 pm – via Zoom