

Breslau Mennonite Church

Annual Reports

2018

June 1, 2017 – May 31, 2018

June 3, 2018 BMC Annual General Meeting

Worship: 9:45-10:30

Meeting 10:45-12:15

1. Opening time for prayer and reflection
2. Review of 2017 Annual General Meeting minutes
3. Review of reports -- celebration of building community and the work we do
4. Covenants in gifts of pastoral ministry -- renewal of covenant with Pastor Eleanor; covenant with interim Youth and Children coordinator
5. Striving and the work of BMC
 - Review of Mission and Vision statements
 - BMC as an important assembly of pieces that stretch and grow -- the work of striving
6. For review and discussion:
 - To add to our understanding of “welcome” at BMC, we want to work in increasingly affirmative ways toward welcome and to add clarity with the statements that follow:

We are committed to the transformative and ongoing work of nurturing a church where God’s love transcends all barriers. We believe that every human being is created and gifted by God. As people of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, we affirm LGBTQ+ persons in church membership, baptism, marriage, congregational leadership and pastoral ministry. We seek to love all as Christ first loved us.

We acknowledge with gratitude the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishnawbe, and Neutral peoples upon which we gather. We seek a new relationship with Indigenous peoples, one based in honour and deep respect.

7. Other business
8. Closing prayer and reflections

Our Mission

*We strive to be a welcoming community of faith and worship
Supporting each other as we learn and grow
Extending Christ’s peace, love and justice
With our community
With the world*

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**Breslau Mennonite Church – Annual General Meeting
June 18, 2017**

Attendance: 68

1. Review of 2016 Annual General Meeting minutes
 - 55 people were present
 - reports presented by committee heads and officers
 - finance was discussed regarding audits – changed to notice to reader
 - bylaws now state we don't need an audit but require a "checking in"
 - review of land sale

Motion to accept minutes: Mike Strathdee

Seconded by Pat Klassen

Carried

2. Review of Reports – viewed as an expression of community
 - Dorothy Horton asked that Historian's report be amended to include Robyn Gossen graduated from the University of Waterloo in
 - Neither Art Klassen is part of the Student Aid committee
 - Jean Lehn Epp explained the "BMC Buddy" program – opportunity to attend outside church events of and connect with young person in the congregation – connect with, be present for, and support events in their lives
 - Pat Klassen indicated her name should still be part of Fellowship Committee

Motion to accept reports: Dale Wombwell

Seconded by Fred Neufeld

Carried

COFFEE BREAK

3. Imagining Community
 - Phil mentioned Jesus' references to the Kingdom of God, much like a community of God
 - Community of God present here now and part of it we're growing into
 - Phil gave time to reflect on when and how we each experience the community of God within the church
 - Imagine what community might be able to be – where is God calling us to be community?
 - Papers for this brainstorming collected to be reflected upon
4. BMC Personnel Committee Report
 - Mark Epp brought highlights
 - Karen Good agreed to be part of Adult Ed team
 - Fern Balzer now Council secretary
 - On Church Council, we now have a youth rep, Alex Charette

Motion to accept reports: Byron Good

Seconded by Carolyn Strathdee

Carried

5. Other Business - nothing brought forward

WORSHIP

Worship Committee Report

*“We strive to be a welcoming community of faith and worship
Supporting each other as we learn and grow
Extending Christ’s peace, love and justice
With our community
With the world”*

The Worship Committee continued to use BMC’s mission statement as an overarching theme or focus for our worship services this past year, with special emphasis on our relationships with and in the global community and the Church’s response to injustice. Throughout the year, we continued to review each worship service and consider feedback from congregational members.

We gratefully affirmed Pastor Eleanor’s leadership in worship, in providing meaningful teaching and preaching as well as worship leading. We also appreciated Pastor Sara’s sermons this past year. We were blessed by a wide range of speakers from within the congregation including Chris Steingart, Dorothy Hadfield, Jean Lehn Epp, Phil Martin, Kyle Gingerich Hiebert, and Lily Hiebert Rempel.

Pastor Eleanor also worked creatively to incorporate short reflections or personal faith stories from three or four members of the congregation, such as Janice and Jonathan Klassen, Sherrie Tiessen, Jean Lehn Epp and Mark Epp, Karl and Erin Braun in our summer worship series on “Rest for our Soul”. Others who participated in this way throughout the year include Corrie Brubacher, Linden Gossen, Alice Roeder, Justin Martin, Kristen Berg, Mike Strathdee, Scott Bruinsma, Alex Charette, Sara Jane Friesen, Alice Gasho, Linda Bender, Katherine Charette, Floyd Gingerich, and Daryl Good.

Speakers from outside our congregation included Allen Sauder (MEDA), Wanda Wagler Martin (Shalom), John Neufeld (House of Friendship), Marcus Shantz (Conrad Grebel University College), and Steph Chandler Burns (Preachers in Exile).

We are grateful for the visual enhancement of our worship space, with the creation of a new banner of praise. The Worship Committee commissioned the creation of this new banner in celebration of our church “striving to be a welcoming community of faith and worship”, created by Art Klassen and Dale Wombwell.

Thank you to Chris Derstine for assuming the role of sole chair of our committee in Luann’s absence from September to December, 2017. We will continue to encourage us at BMC to be a professing, faithful church through meaningful, spirit-led worship together.

Sharla Braun
Chris Derstine (Co-chair)
Luann Good Gingrich (Co-chair)
Eric Hiebert Rempel
Justin Martin
Dianne Shantz
Eleanor Epp-Stobbe (Pastor)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & NURTURE

Adult Education

The job description for the Adult Christian Education (ACE) committee declares it is our goal to help participants realize their potential as children of God and become faithful disciples of Christ. We have pursued these broad objectives during the 2017-2018 church year by planning a varied schedule of topics for discussion that we perceived to be relevant to the needs and interests of our church. Several of these topics were explored in series that spanned two or more Sundays. Multi-week themes included our relations with indigenous peoples, anxiety and mental health, raising our children in the faith, atoning for historical wrongs, and the value and implications of vulnerability. We aimed to balance exploration of issues of overt spiritual and social concern with presentations from speakers representing outside organizations and opportunities for practical learning. We are pleased with how the year turned out.

It is not possible in a brief report to represent the richness of discussions in our ACE classes. The committee was pleased by the turnout for most sessions, which in some instances filled the library. There was great interest shown for the fascinating session on Mennonites and the the Holocaust in the Soviet Union led by guest speaker Aileen Friesen. The four-week series on “raising our children in the faith” had lower attendance than normal, suggesting the topic had less general appeal than anticipated. However, it attracted a number of parents of young children who demonstrated a strong interest in the topic, as well as some older participants who shared valuable perspective. (The series stimulated a desire to initiate a support group for parents of young children, which we hope will take shape.) The anticipated interest of the congregation, the passion of the committee and facilitators for particular topics, and the availability of leaders and resources are among the considerations that factor into our decisions as we try to put the education hour to good use.

The ACE committee met three times over the year to plan, in September, November, and March. It would assist us to receive feedback from the congregation, whether it is about specific topics and themes you would like us to address, or thoughts about our broader vision for Adult Christian Education. One way to respond is through the survey that the ACE committee distributes in late spring. In previous years we have received just a handful of replies. All committee members would also welcome comments or suggestions in person.

A concern that we discussed at our last committee meeting was the problem of when to start ACE sessions. There is a tendency for people to trickle slowly from the gym or foyer into the library or sanctuary, making it difficult for class leaders to know when to start. This can be disruptive, and is especially disrespectful to guest speakers. In addition to the announcements over the PA system that encourage people to move into the meeting space we have begun printing in the bulletin an 11:10 start time, but we will need the cooperation of the congregation to make this happen.

As always, the ACE committee is very grateful to members of the congregation for their active participation, and especially for responding positively when invited to contribute as speakers and leaders. We are fortunate to have in our congregation so many people willing to share their experience, expertise, and energies.

Karen Good
Linden Gossen
Jeremy Wiebe
Eleanor Epp-Stobbe – Pastor

Sept. 10, 2017	Video, "The Neighbour" – facilitator: Pastor Eleanor
Sept. 17	Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights – video and discussion
Sept. 24	Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights – guest facilitator: Kandace Boos pilgrimage walker & Mennonite Central Committee Ontario Indigenous Neighbours Program Animator
Oct. 1	Sharing stories of communion – Linden Gossen
Oct. 8.	Mennonite Church Canada Future Directions – Kyle Gingerich Hiebert and Bryan Berg
Oct. 15	Helping ourselves and others experiencing mental illness – Amanda Snyder
Oct. 22	Anxiety & Mindfulness – Hannah Snider
Oct. 29	Anxiety & Depression – Wanda Wagler Martin, Director Shalom Counselling
Nov. 5	BMC Cemetery History & Cemetery Walk – Maryanne Szuck
Nov. 12	<i>Fellowship time – No Adult CE</i>
Nov. 19	Mennonite Economic Development Associates – Alan Sauder, President
Nov. 26	Wills and other legal matters to get in order – Ted Giesbrecht facilitator; Eleanor Epp-Stobbe introduces the BMC Funeral Planning Guide
Dec. 3	Abundance Canada, Gift & Estate Planning – Marlow Gingerich; Choir practice
Dec. 10	<i>(Choir practice & Fellowship Time – No Adult CE)</i>
Dec. 17	<i>(Choir practice & Fellowship Time – No Adult CE)</i>
Dec. 24	<i>(Choir practice & Fellowship Time – No Adult CE)</i>
Dec. 31	<i>(Fellowship Time – No Adult CE)</i>
Jan. 7	<i>(Fellowship Time – No Adult CE)</i>
Jan 14	Raising our children in the faith – Jeremy Wiebe
Jan. 21	Raising our children in the faith – Jeremy Wiebe
Jan. 28	Raising our children in the faith – Jeremy Wiebe
Feb. 4	Raising our children in the faith – Jeremy Wiebe
Feb. 11	The roots of poverty – John Neufeld, House of Friendship
Feb. 18	Atoning for Historical Wrongs – film Reserve 107 – Bryan Berg
Feb. 25	Atoning for Historical Wrongs – film Reserve 107 – Bryan Berg
March 4	Mennonites and the Holocaust – guest speaker: Aileen Friesen
March 11	Sermon and worship discussion – Eleanor Epp-Stobbe
March 18	TED Talk, Billy Graham on technology and faith – Daryl Good
March 25	<i>(Choir practice & Fellowship Time – No Adult CE)</i>
April 1	<i>(Fellowship Time – No Adult CE)</i>
April 8	Marcus Shantz, President Conrad Grebel University College
April 15	Vulnerability – Dave Gingerich
April 22	Vulnerability & Restorative Justice – Dennis Gingrich
April 29	Vulnerability & Restorative Justice – Dennis Gingrich
May 6	Vulnerability & Work – panel with Lily Hiebert Rempel & Nick Betik
May 13	Vulnerability – Dave Gingerich
May 20	<i>(Fellowship Time – No Adult CE)</i>
May 27	Report on MEDA trip to Africa – Mike Strathdee
June 3	<i>(BMC Annual Meeting – No Adult CE)</i>
June 10	To be determined. (Last class before summer break.)

Children's Ministry Team

This year's Jr SS enrollment consisted of two groups with 13 kids ages 2-4 and 9 kids SK- Grade 4
Teachers and Helpers: Jillian Burkhardt, Heather McGill, Jen Martin, Stacey VanderMeer, Sharla Braun, Linda Bender, Kathy Friesen, Justin Martin, Amanda Snyder, Jeremy Wiebe, Mark Epp, Joel Klassen, Deb Detweiler

Sunday School Curriculum: Illustrated Children's Ministry in the fall, and Shine Curriculum in the Winter/Spring. Shifted to sharing the Bible story through short videos, with the purchase of a T.V. for room 100.

Music Assembly Time 11:00-11:15 - camp songs led by Chris Steingart, Jeremy Wiebe and Justin Martin

Offering projects:

1. Nutrition for learning
2. BMC refugee family

Contributions to Sunday morning worship: December-all children sang 2 carols

Worship Bags: restocked and available by gym entrance

Nursery Helpers: arranged by Patti Hobler

Weekly snacks in room 100: supplied by parents

Summer Camp: to be held Monday, July 23 - Friday, July 27 (more volunteers still needed)

BMC is privileged to have a growing number of young talented children. May their presence be both a blessing and a challenge in our spiritual journey.

Krista Burkhardt
Sarah Hilker
Stacey VanderMeer
Angela Wise
Sara Erb – Pastor

Youth Ministry Team

The Youth Ministry Team actively seeks to support the youth and Jr youth ministries of BMC. The committee is comprised of youth, youth sponsors, a parent representative (currently Marlys Neufeldt), our youth pastor, Sara Erb, as well as a chairperson. At our quarterly meetings we reflect and plan ministry with youth holding before us the vision of growing faith in God through doing, feeling, thinking and reflecting. This year most of the planning for Jr youth has been done directly with families who have Jr. youth participating.

For the past year youth and Jr youth have done a number of events together as well as separate events for both groups. This year youth and Jr. Youth participated in our Sunday School ministry as separate groups. Together they have been hosting soup lunches, building community with games nights and rock climbing as well as engaging the larger community through the garage sale. The Jr youth served through volunteering at Thrift on Kent and the youth volunteered monthly with Suppers at Stirling. A highlight for the youth was a learning and service trip to Ottawa. Both Jr youth and youth continue to engage in the life of our church by serving in worship, the nursery, BMC's Summer Bible Camp as well as our community garden project. In the wider Mennonite community our youth joined other youth from MCEC for a winter retreat at Silver Lake Mennonite camp.

To celebrate Sara's gifts and calling to ministry the youth enthusiastically planned and participated in a meaningful ordination service and reception for Sara. She will be missed and we wish her well in whatever new ministry she is called to. We are also grateful for the support of our dedicated sponsors Floyd, Daryl, Serena and Kristen. We are also grateful to the Jr. Youth buddies who have been connecting with our Jr youth and their families throughout the year.

Thank you for your encouragement and prayerful support.

Jean Lehn Epp – Coordinator
Kristen Berg – Youth Sponsor
Floyd Gingerich – Youth Sponsor
Serena Gingerich – Youth Sponsor
Daryl Good – Youth Sponsor
Sara Erb – Pastor

Young Adult Ministry

Young adults at Breslau Mennonite Church continue to find connection both within this congregation and in whichever community they are in over the year. The goal of young adult ministry is to support and love young adults wherever they are and whatever they are doing: attending college, university, travelling, working, apprenticing, exploring, living close to home or far away.

Many thanks to Kathy Shantz and Reg Good for their many years of coordinating activities and connecting with the young adults at Breslau! These events have included delightful brunches throughout the year, Rangers Games, Blue Jays Games, and BBQs. Other connections points include joining the Sr. youth for activities, including a lock-in and retreat, gathering to play games at the BMC Games Afternoons, and encouraging young adults to participate in BMC activities.

The Young Adult Care Package tradition continues. Girls Nite Out Group generously donated goodies for the care packages and they were distributed Easter Sunday. This year 22 packages were given to young adults up to age 23.

Sara Erb – Pastor

55+ Group

This past year the 55 + group consisted of the following activities:

- Celebrating Canada 150 and Strawberry Social at Paul Rappolt and Giselle Maerz`s home
- Tour and visit to Castle Kilbride Museum and Prime Ministers path in Baden followed by lunch at Schmidtsville Restaurant in Wellesley
- Safety and Fraud issues presented by the Waterloo Regional Police Service at First Mennonite Church
- Christmas party & carol sing
- Music from the 40s to the 70s by the Horton Brothers - Paul (guitar) and David (keyboard). Lunch prepared by Dorothy Horton and Eleanor McKee.

This is a time of fellowship, fun, and food.

Thanks to Paul and Giselle, Paul and Dorothy for arranging the seniors events this past year.

Maryanne Szuck

PASTORAL CARE & FELLOWSHIP

Elders

The team of Elders at BMC strives to nurture all in the congregation through a variety of activities and traditions.

Elders update the seven Care Groups each fall and assign an Elder to them. This person often organizes food for grieving families, and for those experiencing health challenges.

Elders are thankful for the Visitation Team who faithfully spends time with those who may not get to church regularly and/ or those who live in retirement apartments. These people who visit are further appreciated at a summer meal hosted by the elder team. Those who make food and store it in the freezer for special situation/visits are appreciated too.

Milestones including marriages, anniversaries, birthdays, baby dedications, and baptisms are important to acknowledge at BMC. Cards, contributions of money, quilts & prayer shawls (made by Creative Hands), Bibles, hymn books, MCC kits etc. were given to babies, children, teens and adults this year. Cakes made by two of our teens have become part of the celebrations as well.

We celebrated a marriage between Thomas McGill and Alex Byrne, and the dedication of a first baby (Jackson) with Amy and Daryl Good.

At Christmas, poinsettias and hand-made cards were given to those who experienced loss of a spouse, child or parent in the past year. Approximately 20 poinsettias and cards (made by Janet Charette) were distributed.

A family meal was offered at funeral time for the Gingrich family.

Communion approaches, traditions, and personal reflections were discussed at some of our meetings. Tara led a Maundy Thursday activity/potluck, which was appreciated especially by young families.

A successful initiative called Table Talk was organized by some young adults. It was appreciated by those who participated, as a new way to interact with others at BMC.

In June, Erin Braun, Alex Charette and Luke Gingerich will become new members of BMC. Elders met with them and are pleased they have chosen this path in their spiritual journey.

The Elders are honoured to be able to serve the congregation. We concern ourselves with the well- being and spiritual growth of all as God has directed.

Tara Gingerich Hiebert

Dorothy Horton

Ken Martin

Art Mueller

Lynn Romagnoli – Chair

Levi Tiessen

Eleanor Epp-Stobbe – Pastor

Fellowship Committee

Fellowship Committee strives to welcome by providing food and beverages for a variety of events within our church community.

This year we had involvement with:

- * Gathering Sunday
- * Easter breakfast
- * Assisting with funerals
- * Serving cake for special celebrations
- * Working alongside committees who request our assistance

We cleaned and organized the kitchen. We continue to stock the kitchen with staples required for all who use this facility.

Linda Bender
Candy Dettweiler - Chair
Serena Gingerich
Pat Klassen
Coleen Snyder

Creative Hands

Creative hands this year has 10 members has had an average of 7 out at each meeting. If you equated this to number of hours of work that would be 456 hours of stitching.

- * Our Relief Sale item this year was called "Colour My World", a queen size quilt.
- * We were able to provide lap quilts or prayer shawls to six members.
- * This year we were especially excited to welcome nine babies with hand or machine quilted crib quilts.
- * Eighteen knotted comforters were taken to MCC.
- * We gave Mennonite Central Committee the large comforter with two matching pillows we had made for the refugee family and made two other small ones for the family.

So many creative hands and such a wonderful group to work with. Please come join.

Dale Wombwell – Coordinator

MISSION & SERVICE

Missions Committee

Missions Committee's role is to raise awareness and create opportunities to support service in the areas of social concerns, creation care, peace and justice.

As a committee, we endeavour to align the focus of our work with BMC's vision statement balancing local, regional and global needs.

Activities, events and endeavours this year included:

1. **Fall Food Drive** for the Food Bank of Waterloo Region, collecting 524 lbs. of food
2. **International Potluck** with Ken Martin sharing about his overseas volunteer experience in Africa building a hospital
3. **Share the Warmth** winter clothing drive in partnership with the Salvation Army
4. **Thrift on Kent** volunteering
5. **Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Fall Conference** attendance and reporting to our congregation
6. **Mission Committee's Primary Functions and Procedures** revising, updating and defining an area to work on
7. **MCC Christmas Giving** project, 12 relief kits were packed for families whose lives have been disrupted by war and disaster
8. **Christmas Eve giving** for the House of Friendship, \$1,095 was received
9. **House of Friendship Potato Lunch** raised \$971
10. **Shout Sister concert** proceeds to support Food 4 Kids Waterloo Region

This year, Moment in Missions got a name change to 'Talking About Service' which we felt better defines the purpose of this monthly part of our worship service. The intent of Talking About Service is to share information about organizations and projects that BMC supports, to bring awareness of how people within our congregation are engaged in serving others and to show how we are living out our mission statement of "extending Christ's love, peace and justice with our community and with the world".

In keeping with BMC's vision and mission statement, agencies, groups or work that BMC supports directly or indirectly include:

Abundance Canada, Bloomingdale Breslau Mennonite Church Sponsorship Group (Alasaad family), BMC Summer Camp, Canada Food Grains, Fraser Lake Camp work weekend, House of Friendship, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Mennonite Coalition For Refugee Support (MCRS), Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), Mennonite Economic Development Agency (MEDA), Mennonite World Conference, Relief Sale Strawberry Pie Project, Shalom Counselling, Waterloo Region Food Bank.

Mission Gift Fund (a fund designated for service work which is to be determined by the Missions Committee) gifted \$300 to Amanda Snyder for Camp Marafiki Pamoja – Friends United, Kenya

As a committee, we look forward to continuing our work to extend Christ's love, peace and justice with our community and with the world next year.

Janet Auger

Eleanor Epp-Stobbe – Pastor

Patti Hobler – Co-chair

Nick Martin – Co-chair

Dale Wombwell

Community Garden

Breslau Gardens, the community garden operated and managed by the church has been a great mission that is well supported by the congregation, and community. 2017 was the third year of having a garden on church property, with interest steadily increasing in the community. While the plot size remained the same as 2016, we also offered half-size plots, which were of interest by many. In total, 17 different families were involved, compared to 12 in 2016. Plots were 10'x15', and cost \$30 each. All funds are placed into a separate account, with the intention to use this money to fund garden infrastructure (both current and future) as well as various community events. The intention is for the garden to be self sufficient, not requiring money from the church budget.

Garden members requested their plots in April, and we met with everyone in early May to review expectations and get to know each other. The garden committee organizes community events including a group planting, and a final event to wrap-up the season. Gardeners are encouraged to get to know each other, with the intention to build community between neighbours, and the church. We have received lots of positive comments on how the garden has helped people to get to know their neighbours.

In the upcoming 2018 year, we look forward to offering the same size of garden we did in previous years, keeping the same number of plots. The garden committee is working with the seniors' housing project to relocate the garden for the 2019 growing season.

More information can be found at the garden website, breslaugardens.wordpress.com.

Alex Charette - Chair

Mark Epp

Eleanor Epp-Stobbe - Pastor

Robyn King - Community Member

Paul Rappolt

Refugee Support Committee

This year, our sponsorship journey with Bloomingdale Mennonite church was characterized by preparing, waiting and receiving. In November 2016 our applications for the private sponsorship of the Alasaad family - father Jamal, daughters Rania and Safaa, son Khalid and grandson Hamza, were submitted to the Canadian government. Processing of the applications began on March 6, 2017.

While we waited, our committee:

- met with 2 other sponsorship groups to learn from their experience
- collected furniture from both congregations
- prepared a family budget
- opened an account for the family at Kindred on Kent
- explored housing and cell phone options
- enlisted the help of a volunteer interpreter
- located resources
- researched committee tasks that would need to be done once the family arrived
- organized drivers

In March 2018, Jamal made the hard decision to travel to Canada without his oldest daughter Rania and her son Hamza as their sponsorship was delayed pending further scrutiny. After Jamal informed the Canadian embassy of his decision, their application process began to speed up.

At the same time a lovely 3 bedroom apartment became available on Morgan Avenue in Kitchener, across from Howard Robertson Public School where Hamza could attend and not far from Eastwood Collegiate where Safaa as a new Canadian would be going. The apartment is also close to shopping, buses, a community centre and Jamal's brother Omar. In a few weeks we had it ready for the family.

On April 25 we received word that Jamal, Khalid and Safaa would be arriving on May 29 after travelling to Beirut for Canadian culture orientation. Unfortunately, Rania and Hamza will remain in Tripoli with Jamal's uncle until the Canadian government approves them for travel.

Once the Alasaad's arrive, our committee will be busy orienting the family to life in Canada, going to appointments and applying for Canadian documents.

As sponsors, we are responsible for ensuring that our newcomer family understands Canadian laws and their rights and responsibilities in Canada. Our guiding principal is to empower the family's independence and self-sufficiency by gradually transferring responsibility and ownership to them. We view our sponsorship as an opportunity for mutual learning.

We are thankful for the kind and generous support of our church communities and to the Creative Hands group for their gift of 5 knotted comforters and for prayer shawls the family will receive at the airport from Bloomingdale Church.

Our committee members include:

Education - Marie Anne Le-Doare, Lee-Anne Palmer

Employment Support - Sherrie Tiessen

Family Finances - Laurel Fretz, Ruth Konrad

Healthcare - Kathy Friesen

Housing - Lois Weber, Kathy Shantz, Art Klaasen

Life Support - Linden Gossen, Lorna Aberdein

A Little Bit of Everything - Patti Hobler

We have missed Chanel Cressman and Jeremy Roth who had to step back from their involvement in housing do to health related issues.

Our committee is grateful for the opportunity to share our love, time and resources as we welcome the Alasaad family to their new Canadian home.

With thanks,

Co-ordinating committee:

Kathy Shantz - Breslau

Art Klassen - Breslau

Patti Hobler - Breslau

Laurel Rounds Fretz - Bloomingdale

Lee-Anne Palmer - Bloomingdale

"It is both our great responsibility and our great privilege to invest in the lives of others."

- unknown

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Trustees

BMC is looking forward to a major change in our neighbourhood in 2018-19. There will be several impacts on our outdoor spaces with the Reid's Heritage Homes 55 plus apartment building becoming a neighbor.

The parking lot will be adjusted, the community gardens will relocate for 2019, sewer hookup and tree removals are imminent. Perhaps-a new events sign!

Inside the buildings we should look at renovating several areas of use.

Number one on the list is the washrooms. Suggestions from the congregation are encouraged in order that the BMC supporters can develop and prioritize a list of wishes that can become a let's do project.

We cannot predict our weather expenses. This winter costs have been higher. The useful life spans of BMC's buildings should be reviewed. We do have some contingency replacement funds set aside.

The title "Trustees" should be reviewed to adequately describe the role performed in the BMC Community.

Ken Bender - Head Trustee

Scott Bruinsma

Chris Dettweiler

Matt VanderMeer

Seniors' Housing Development Committee

Status on the Senior's Housing Development

Things continue to progress along the road to rezoning approval of the subject property being sold to Reid's Heritage Homes (RHH). On March 31 2018, the tentative sale agreement was extended for another six months, which hopefully will provide more than enough time to receive the rezoning, easement and severance approvals from the Township of Woolwich.

To date there has been good support from the Township planning staff, who have continued to reflect and interpret the intent of the Breslau Secondary Plan for the property, to our neighbours, who have been strongly opposed to almost any type of development. Every reasonable accommodation has been offered by RHH and in fact the Township planner has remarked that BMC and RHH have gone well beyond what most parties would have done to; meet, hear, discuss and offer mitigating measures.

At present, a Committee of the Whole meeting (debate) is scheduled for June 19 and will be open to the public and delegations. This will be followed by a Township of Woolwich decision on June 26. The committee and RHH are cautiously optimistic that things will proceed accordingly.

Concurrently, BMC have assisted by signing an easement agreement, that RHH have been agreeable to, in enabling BMC at a future date, to connect our sanitary sewer directly into the municipal system, via the same outfall route as the proposed apartment building. When that occurs, the existing septic tank and weeping tile bed can be discontinued.

In the meanwhile, the committee continues to meet and discuss as needed, details relating to the proposed apartment building, and have offered many 'good' suggestions that will hopefully reflect a 'seniors' focused building. Some suggestions so far have included issues relating to interior and exterior amenity spaces and

facilities that would support a 'senior's community' environment for those living in the building. Other considerations such as accessibility, both within and outside the building, also includes reasonable access to BMC through a connected sidewalk from the first floor level, without the need of stairs.

If things continue to proceed according to expectations, a tentative move-in date of late 2019 is the current schedule. Persons who might want to be contacted by RHH for more information as things progress, should provide their information to either Lynne Hoffman or Maryanne Szuck.

Art Dettweiler
Lynne Hoffman
Ray McEwan
David Romagnoli - Chair
Maryanne Szuck
Matt VanderMeer

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

Stewardship & Finance Committee

The role of the Stewardship and Finance Committee is one of “budget planners” and “congregational stewardship educators”.

The Committee desires to promote and teach about stewardship of all of BMC’s resources in support of our congregation and God’s work beyond BMC. In carrying out our committee’s mandate, we seek collaboration with other BMC committees to inspire, encourage and support stewardship initiatives.

As it relates to BMC’s finances for 2017, BMC operated with a congregational approved operating (income/expense) budget of some \$312,750. Actual FYE 2017 income and expenses were realized as follows:

- Income = \$334,842 ... includes Interfund Transfer of \$15,431 (capitalization of 208 Woolwich Street property)
- Expenses = 302,005
- Excess/Surplus = \$32,837

In addition to the operating income/expenses the following “funds” were in place at the end of 2017:

- General Fund = \$23,554
- Special Reserve Fund = \$34,346
- Capital Reserve Fund = \$73,370
- Cemetery Operating Fund = \$26,401
- Cemetery Care and Maintenance Fund = \$41,265
- Net Capital Investments = \$711,150

While not included in the 2017 operating budget, the BMC Solar PV Panel system generated some \$6,271 in revenue that was applied to the ongoing operating expenses and offsetting the loans received to facilitate the system installation.

We are pleased to advise that the financial affairs of BMC appear to be in good order and a fiscal approach to the operations of the church is solidly in place.

As we move forward with the balance of FY 2018, the congregation has approved a “balanced” operating budget (i.e. income = expenses) of \$335,000 representing virtually no increase over the 2017 actual income realized. Budgeted expenses are some 11% higher than actual expenses realized in 2017. The approved 2018 operating budget provides for the same general “level of service” as realized in 2017. Furthermore, the approved budget does not account for any “special” projects but does include a \$48,000 contribution to MCEC and Capital Reserve Fund contribution of \$8,650.

In closing, BMC’s Stewardship and Finance Committee work on behalf of Church Council and the congregation and I would like to personally thank each member of the committee for their hard work, dedication and valued insight over the course of 2017 and into 2018.

Submitted on Behalf of the Stewardship and Finance Committee:

Ted Rowe – Chair

Karl Braun – Treasurer

Corrie Brubacher

David Romagnoli

Phil Martin

Pat Klassen

Eleanor Epp-Stobbe – Pastor

Student Aid

For the academic year 2017-18 Breslau Mennonite Church supported three secondary school students attending Rockway Mennonite Collegiate. The per term bursary is \$560.00.

Student aid support applications are for students attending Mennonite church related high schools and post-secondary studies at seminary.

Ken Bender – Coordinator

ADMINISTRATIVE

Church Council

Council has met on the first Wednesday of every month since September with one meeting to bridge January and February. We started each meeting with a time to reflect on that for which we are grateful -- we call that time "Gratitudes". In our meetings, we were delighted to continually be reminded of the work in different areas of the church which we serve. The work of Council continues to focus on priorities brought to us through all the representatives on Council and also through any items that are brought to our attention from non-Council committees, members and adherents, in addition to items that may be part of our community at large. We are grateful for the vibrant community that is BMC and feel blessed for all the efforts that come together to help make BMC a great place to grow in faith and works.

This year, the work of Church Council has focused on the notion of "Strive" as taken from our BMC Values and Vision statement adopted in 2012:

We strive to create an open, caring community of faith and worship, supporting each other as we learn and grow; comprised of members who care for each other and are actively involved in our surrounding community. We welcome all regardless of age, gender, beliefs, social status, race, or sexual orientation; all are invited to participate and explore.

Council has been actively grappling with and receiving input on what striving means in light of our Vision and Values statements. There has been an acknowledgement of a position of growth in striving. Striving is different from arriving -- it indicates a status of being a work in progress. As a church corporate, we represent a wide range of stances in the living out of our Values and Vision. This diversity is what helps to make us rich.

We have been working to understand the work of welcome as it relates to inclusivity and accessibility and how to make BMC feel truly welcoming to all. We have been looking at the examples of other MCEC churches and local other-denomination churches for insights. We have strived as a Council to weigh what will move our work of welcome further. We have been happy to hear about the work of Adult Ed and the groups engaged in book and land exploration in relation to local Indigenous people. That learning and reflection around the past and present of local Indigenous peoples led to consideration of what it means to be a caring community of faith in relation to Indigenous communities on whose traditional lands BMC is located.

Other highlights of Council's work are as follows:

Council has been receiving updates regarding news around land development and considering best paths forward. We are grateful to all those involved in supporting that work. Council received Pastor Sara's desire for ordination with joy and were happy to be part of that process. Council also received an overwhelmingly positive review from the church for the work of Pastor Eleanor. We look forward to prospering with a further commitment from Eleanor. Council looks forward to welcoming an interim Child and Youth coordinator as we bid farewell to Pastor Sara. This year, we have benefitted from the voice of a member of Youth being present at Council meetings and are grateful for Alex Charette taking on that inaugural position.

Council looks forward to doing more good work

Dan Enns - Chair

Ministry Council

Ministry Council met approximately every 2 months throughout the year, checking in with both pastors and trying to provide support as needed. We reviewed the quarterly records of the pastors (documenting their holidays, continuing education and spiritual care activities) and completed the annual memos of understanding.

Ministry council was involved in the review process for Eleanor (Hannah Snider was a member of the review committee) and ministry council was involved in a supportive role for Eleanor throughout.

Ministry Council also played a role in supporting Sara throughout her ordination process. We will also be involved in an exit interview opportunity for Sara in June

Hannah Snider - Chair
Dave Gingerich
Brenda Hallman
Eleanor Epp-Stobbe - Pastor
Sara Erb - Pastor

Communications Committee

We continue to use Mail Chimp as the method of sending out weekly bulletins. The email has a consistent appearance and also has the advantage of being able to be sent from a location other than the church office. This would be used if there is an important issue that needs to be communicated to the congregation. Mail Chimp complies with anti spam legislation.

The "What's New" section of our website (accessible to the general public) is updated by the pastors approximately every 2 weeks.

The website contains much information about our church, our history, the weekly Order of Worship, a calendar showing all of the activities that happen in our church (including rentals) and much more. This information is open to anyone viewing our website. The Login Section contains Annual Report booklets back to 2012, Personnel Slate of Officers, congregational meeting minutes, an up-to-date phone directory, information on the land for seniors' housing, weekly bulletins, and our newsletter, The Branch, with issues going back to 2013. New additions to the log-in section are The BMC Funeral & Memorial Service Planning Guide and the committee job descriptions. If there are other items you would like to suggest we include in the log-in section or in the public section, please let us know.

We are grateful to Janice Klassen for her work in gathering information for The Branch again this past year. Fern Balzer is sent all of the articles and puts them into the finished format. As mentioned, it is posted online in the log-in section and looks great with all of the colour pictures!

A new photo directory by Life Touch is scheduled for Thursday, October 18, Friday, October 19 and Saturday, October 20. Our last photo directory was done in 2013. Appointments can be booked online or my phone to the church office, but we will be needing volunteers for various jobs during photography sessions.

If you don't know how to access our member section, please let us know. The website is a very useful tool in accessing information about our church.

Jim Foley
Dorothy Horton – BMC Administrative Assistant
Chris Steingart

Pastor's Report – Eleanor Epp-Stobbe

*For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid;
that foundation is Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 3:11*

Our church mission of *striving to be a welcoming community of faith and worship, supporting each other as we learn and grow, extending Christ's love, peace, and justice with our community, and with the world* reflects who we are and what we seek to become. Our mission statement reveals activity, a variety of ways of being and doing church. With a foundation of Jesus Christ, we are followers and seekers of faith active in service, through learning, and by our worship. We are different and diverse as a Body of Christ, yet with a common mission. We strive to be a visible expression of Christ's love, peace, and justice in the world. Church is a verb!

BMC extends and is the recipient of Christ's love, peace, and justice beyond and within our congregation in countless ways. Through the ministries of the regional church Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, nationally Mennonite Church Canada, and globally Mennonite World Conference. Supporting the work of Mennonite Central Committee with the New Hamburg Relief Sale, MCC Relief Kits shared through milestone celebrations and with our January "Kit Packing Party". "Talking About Service" in worship introduces and invites our service to local and global efforts such as MEDA, Foodgrains Bank, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Abundance Canada, Shalom Counselling, Food4Kids, House of Friendship, Share the Warmth, Food Drives, Table Talk (BMC small groups), BMC Summer Camp. We are growing in our compassion, justice and peace-making as we work together with Bloomingdale Mennonite Church to welcome the Alasaad family, in listening and welcoming neighbours, opening our doors to groups like Shout Sister, The Meeting House Kitchener youth group, local bands for practices and concerts. Table Talk, a small group pilot project, and Indigenous learnings were two new initiatives this year for BMC, increasing awareness and inviting intergenerational participation.

As a community of faith we celebrate the opportunities to invite, nurture, and share gifts with one another. With thanksgiving we offer our resources of time, talents, finances, and prayer support. We are a congregation that experiences seasons of joy and sorrow, forgiveness and grace. BMC actively supports one another through prayer, service, and compassion.

Breslau Mennonite Church is served by dedicated, wise, and caring congregational leaders, Council, committees, planning teams, and numerous volunteers. Our church is staffed by a capable ministry team: Esther Caron, custodian, Sara Erb, part-time pastor, Dorothy Horton, administrative assistant, Doris Gingerich, summer administrative assistant. This past April BMC celebrated with gratitude the calling to pastoral ministry of Sara. As our congregation sends Sara with our blessing later in June, I am thankful for her faithful service. This year has also been a season of reflection and evaluation as full-time pastor. I am appreciative of your care, support, and feedback.

I am grateful for the many ordinary holy moments in the life of our church – the blessing of new life and children in our midst, honouring the memory of loved ones and journeying with them and their families, celebrating Communion at our Lord's table in worship and in homes with congregants, sharing in our ministry of care to congregants and friends of our church, growing in faith and service locally and globally.

As we continue to be attentive to the nudging of God's Spirit calling us to extend Christ's love, peace, and justice may we respond with keen questions, deep thinking, and faithful service. May the peace of God bless us as a community of faith.

With gratitude,
Eleanor Epp-Stobbe
Pastor

Pastor's Report - Sara Erb

We began the 2017-2018 church year in the dirt. Preparing the soil, planting seeds, and watching sprouts form through our 'Growing in God's Love' summer camp with a focus on farming. Those themes of preparing, planting, and sprouting have been prevalent with us as a faith community this past year.

Preparing the soil

We have been intentionally preparing the soil as we live into our call to be a welcoming community of faith and worship. That has meant ensuring that Breslau Mennonite Church is both a safe community for all people and a place for everyone to find belonging. We revised our Safe Place Guidelines this fall to reflect best practice and to ensure that this continues to be a safe place for all. Events such as the Jr. youth BMC Buddies, youth events, young adult connection points, BMC games, Table Talk, and the children and family Maundy Thursday event offered opportunity to build faith relationships. Our soil is rich.

Planting the seeds

We continue to offer faith formation for all ages, sharing God's love and making room for questions. This year the children explored the Bible through colouring, videos, singing, and crafts. Jr. Youth researched and asked questions about different religions and Mennonites, and prepared to share a drama in worship about God's love. The Sr. Youth explored the beatitudes, loss and grieving, faith and violence, faith exploration classes during Sunday School as well as a formation trip to Ottawa to explore Mennonites in Canada. Seeds have been planted that will continue to offer life and questions.

Watching for sprouts

We continuously watch for God at work in the world around us and in our church community. This past year, we have seen God's work in our celebration of 6th, 12th, and 18th birthday milestones. We received the gifts of the children singing Christmas songs, the Jr. youth's creativity, and the youth's leadership and gifts in worship and in the planning and leading of my ordination service in April – for which I am deeply grateful!

As Breslau Mennonite Church moves into a time of transition, may you continue to see God's guiding light ahead of you, may you continue the good work of preparing soil, planting seeds, and watching for sprouts. May you know that God rejoices in who are you, and that I have been changed and encouraged by you all these past three years.

Thanks be to God!

Amen.

Sara Erb
Pastor

Historian's Report – June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018

Membership

June 1, 2016.....	236
May 31, 2017.....	235

Deaths

Gary Gingrich	March 17, 2018
Ira Roy Cressman Roth	July 27, 2017

Marriages

Thomas McGill & Alexander Byrne	December 16, 2017
Barrett Cressman & Karin Terluk	August 19, 2017

Births

To Krista & Nick Betik.....	Connor Michael Betik	July 24, 2017
To Chanel Cressman & Jeremy Roth	Ira Roy Cressman Roth	July 18, 2017
To Quinn Klassen & Matt Madigan	Imogen Patricia Madigan Klassen ...	Aug 4, 2017
To Laura & Dan Shantz.....	Owen Daniel Shantz.....	Aug 11, 2017
To Sara Jane Friesen & Jeremy Wiebe.....	Annalina Poppy Friesen Wiebe	Sept 9, 2017
To Sherrie & Levi Tiessen	Toby Marvin Tiessen.....	Sept 25, 2017
To Amy & Daryl Good	Jackson James Good.....	Oct 20, 2017
To Rachel Good & Mark Kehler.....	Elizabeth Marie Kehler	Nov 13, 2017
To Christina Dettweiler & Matt Giesbrecht. ...	Oliver George Giesbrecht.....	Apr 14, 2018

Graduations

Erin Braun	Grand River Collegiate
Devin Caron	Elmira District Secondary School
Noah Enns-Le Doaré.....	Kitchener Collegiate Institute
Melanie Foley	Kitchener Waterloo Collegiate Institute
Simon Epp.....	Anthropology; McMaster University
Josh Good.....	Master's of Health Sciences; University of Ontario Institute of Technology

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT 2018-2019

Notes:

- 1 or 2 indicates term # followed by the year the term ends, e.g. 1-19 means it is the person's first term which will end in 2019
- * denotes the Chair of the Committee
- **Names in boldface** indicate a person who will start a first term or who is willing to continue in the position for a second term starting in September 2018.
- _____ indicates a position still in process of being finalized by Personnel

WORSHIP

- Worship Committee: Luann Good Gingrich* (2-19), Eric Hiebert-Rempel (1-19), Justin Martin (1-19), **Sara Jane Friesen (1-21), Dorothy Hadfield (1-21)**, Pastor Eleanor Epp-Stobbe
- Head Usher: Andre Charette (2-19)
- Sound System Coordinators: Matt VanderMeer (4-21), Byron Good (2-21)
- Visual Enhancements for Worship: Kathy Friesen (1-20), Maria Klassen (1-20), **Lynn Romagnoli (1-21)**
- Welcoming Coordinator: Pauline Martin (1-20)
- Accompanists, Choristers and Worship Leaders: to be finalized with Worship Committee

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & NURTURE

- Adult Education Team: **Jeremy Wiebe (2-21)**, Linden Gossen (1-20), Karen Good (1-20), Pastor Eleanor Epp-Stobbe
- Youth Ministry Team:
 - YMT Coordinator: Jean Lehn Epp (1-19)
 - Youth Sponsors: Kristen Berg (1-20), Serena Gingerich (1-20), _____ (1-21), _____ (1-21)
 - Young Adults: _____ (1-21), _____ (1-21)

Children's Ministry Team:

- CMT Coordinator: Angela Wise (1-20)
- Team Members: Krista Burkhardt (2-19), Stacey VanderMeer (1-19), Sarah Hilker (1-20), Pastor
- Jr. Sunday School Teachers: To be finalized with CMT
- Nursery: **Patti Hobler (1-21)**
- Librarian: Art Mueller (2-20)

PASTORAL CARE & FELLOWSHIP

- Elders: Ken Martin (2-19), Dorothy Horton (2-19), Tara Gingerich Hiebert (1-19), Levi Tiessen (1-20), _____ (1-21), _____ (1-21)
- Fellowship Committee: Candy Dettweiler* (1-19), Coleen Snyder (2-20), Linda Bender (1-18), Serena Gingerich (2-20)
- Funeral Meal Coordinator: Candy Dettweiler (2-19)
- Table Set-up: Brent Dettweiler (2-19)

MISSION & SERVICE

- Missions Committee: Dale Wombwell (2-20), **Janet Auger (2-19)**, Nick Martin (1-19)*, **Patti Hobler (MCC/MDS rep) (2-21)**, _____ (1-21), Pastor Eleanor Epp-Stobbe
- Agency Reps:
 - Fairview Mennonite Home: Alice and Norm Gascho (1-19)
 - Mennonite Benefit: Ken Bender**
 - Mennonite Relief Sale: Vern Roth**
 - Rockway Mennonite Collegiate: **Janice Klassen (1-21)**
 - MCC/MDS: **Patti Hobler (2-21)** (sits on Missions Committee)
 - Kindred Credit Union Member Rep: Murray Shantz**
 - Women of MCEC: Carol Shantz (1-20)**appointed by agency

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

- Stewardship & Finance Committee: Phil Martin* (1-19), David Romagnoli (2-20), Pat Klassen (1-20), **Ruth Konrad (1-21)**, **Larry Shantz (1-21)**
- Church Treasurer: Karl Braun (1-19)
- Church Bookkeeper (paid position): Joyce Collard
- Student Aid Coordinator: **Ken Bender (2-21)**

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

- Trustees: Ken Bender* (1-19), Scott Bruinsma (1-19), Matt VanderMeer (1-20), _____ (1-21)
- Cemetery Commission: John Jonas (6-20)*, Ken Martin (2-19), Mary Anne Szuck (4-19), Byron Good (1-20)
- Facilities Booking Coordinator: Dorothy Horton (BMC Administrative Assistant)
- Custodian (paid position): Esther Caron
- Grounds Maintenance (new property lawn): Art Dettweiler

ADMINISTRATIVE

- Church Council: Dan Enns – Chair (1-19); Bryan Berg Vice-Chair (1-19); _____ – Worship; _____ – Elders; Nick Martin - Missions; _____ – Stewardship & Finance; Ken Bender – Trustees; **Lily Hiebert Rempel – Member-Advocate**; Alex Charette – Youth Rep; Pastor Eleanor-Epp-Stobbe
- Congregation & Church Council Secretary: Fern Balzer (1-20)
- Ministry Council: Hannah Snider* (1-19), Dave Gingerich (1-20), Brenda Hallman (1-20), Pastor Eleanor Epp-Stobbe
- Member-Advocate: **Lily Hiebert Rempel (1-21)**
- Conference Delegates: Pastor Eleanor Epp-Stobbe, Dan Enns (Congregation & Council Chair), Lily Hiebert Rempel (Member Advocate), youth delegate assigned by Youth Ministry Team
- Personnel Committee: **Mark Epp* (2-21), Candy Dettweiler (2-21)**, Linda Bender (1-19), **Doris Gingerich (1-21)**, Pastor Eleanor Epp-Stobbe

COMMUNICATIONS

- Communications Committee: Jim Foley (2-19), Chris Steingart (1-19), **Neil Snyder (1-21)**, Dorothy Horton (BMC Administrative Assistant)
- Branch Coordinator: _____ (1-21)
- Post Person: Maryanne Szuck (4-19)
- Marquee: Maryanne Szuck
- Historians: Dorothy Horton & Maryanne Szuck (4-19)