

## Blooming Glen Prayer & Business Meeting

April 21, 2024 | 10:30am

1. Opening Prayer: Tamara Denlinger
2. Stewardship Report: Matt Rittenhouse
  - a. Matt thanked the congregation for continued giving to the church.
  - b. Matt shared year to date income and disbursements, noting that we are ahead of where we were last year and on track to meet our 2024 spending plan.
    - i. Income: \$195,000 (\$166,000 is 2024 Income; \$29,000 is 2022 Carryover)
    - ii. Disbursements: \$239,000
    - iii. Deficit: -\$44,000
  - c. We will likely be hiring additional staff this year but are still projected to meet our proposed disbursements and expenses.
  - d. Matt reminded the congregation that electronic giving can be arranged through the website or by contacting Conrad Martin.
3. Trustees Report (Barn Proposal): Daryl Derstine
  - a. Daryl reviewed the history of the 1860 barn, which was officially acquired by Blooming Glen in 1981. Refurbishments including a new roof were done in 2001. No use other than storage has been made in the time BG has owned the barn. Daryl also outlined efforts made in the last five years to determine a future for the barn, which have not led to any unified vision.
  - b. Daryl shared with the congregation the recommendation made by Trustees to CLB in 2024. In this proposal, trustees are seeking authorization from CLB to proceed with dismantling the barn.
  - c. Daryl also noted that trustees are attentive to upcoming needs related to east wall & 1930 windows.
4. Prayer: Libby Hollenbach
5. CLB Report/Pastoral Search Recommendation: John Derstine
  - a. Recap: John reminded that the search process lasted 21 months, beginning August of 2022. The group aimed to do the work of the congregation and to seek God's will. The CLB allowed the group latitude to seek not only *who* God had for Blooming Glen, but *what* God had for BG. John reminded us of Steve Kriss's advice at the beginning of the process to seek not just transition, but transformation.
  - b. PSC Findings:

- i. PSC affirms Jeff Wright's intentional interim leadership and feels a readiness for implementation of the work we have done as a congregation.
    - ii. We desire a transformation at BGMC that we all must be accountable to.
    - iii. We need commitment to a continual succession planning process.
  - c. PSC Recommendations:
    - i. Offer Jeff Wright a 2-year term as lead pastor.
    - ii. Begin an immediate focus on congregational priorities and core ministries.
    - iii. That there be a commitment to succession planning for future leadership transitions.
  - d. The CLB recommends to the congregation: (1) that Jeff Wright be offered a 2-year term as Lead Pastor, (2) with an immediate focus on BGMC's Core Ministries and Congregational Priorities, and (3) a commitment to a continual succession planning process.
  - e. The CLB is grateful to the PSC for presenting not only a candidate, but a plan for transformation to be implemented over the 2-year period.
  - f. Proposed timeframe:
    - i. April 21: Prayer and Business Meeting; lunch with conversation with leaders around tables
    - ii. May 17-19: Weekend Discernment sessions with Jeff Wright, CLB, Elders and Pastoral Search.
    - iii. June 2 or 9 (tentative): Congregational vote

6. Closing Prayer: Kathy Kennel

**BLOOMING GLEN MENNONITE CHURCH  
TRUSTEES | BARN RESOLUTION PROPOSAL  
FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance of and care for the physical assets of BGMC. We act at the behest of the congregation through the CLB.

We continue to be concerned about the deterioration of the barn. It has been on the radar since 1998 when it appeared on the plans to be dismantled. A number of trustees and others were interested in keeping the barn for historical reasons. Volunteers painted and built a new door. The crumbling barn hill was removed as a safety precaution. A new roof was added in 2001 at a cost to the church. No significant expenditure has been made since that time.

Since 1981, when BGMC took possession of the barn as part of the purchase of the 11-acre property, and since 2001 when it underwent repairs, no significant use has been made of this BGMC asset. Now, after another 20+ years, we are at a crossroad. The foundation of the barn is crumbling. Major action is required soon.

In July 2022, the congregation was asked to give opinions on the barn. Twenty-nine responses were received. No dollar figures were discussed. Opinions varied from “tear it down” to “save the barn.” A significant theme was “show me that the money spent would give us an asset that enhances the mission of BGMC, and I can support it.”

In August 2022, a group of well-intentioned members concluded that BGMC had four options varying from a full restoration to a repurposing of the materials by others, elsewhere. The leader of the group suggested that finding a use for the barn should be the task of another committee.

In December of 2022, a task force job description was developed, asking for the canvassing of the congregation seeking all persons, groups, or “missions” that had interest in utilizing the space created by a rebuilt barn. The task force concluded their work in August 2023. Their report mentioned no expressed interest by the congregation in utilizing the barn.

The trustees have been in discussion about the barn for several years now and we have concluded that the process of bringing the issue to a close has been good. Voice has been given to interested members. We are in favor of repurposing the materials and making them available to others. We anticipate reaching consensus, seeking a quote for dismantling the barn, at our April meeting.

We recognize and affirm the nostalgia some people feel when they walk around the barn or ascend the stairs and view the exposed beams. In fact, many of the trustees on the current board at one time supported the effort to save and find a missional use for the barn. Now, however, it has become apparent that the cost of that restoration is too great and the benefit too small for the purposes to which our congregation feels called.

On February 6, 2024, the Trustees unanimously affirmed a recommendation requesting that the CLB authorize the Trustees to proceed with the actions necessary to have the barn dismantled.

The trustees are open to any communication from members. If anyone has an interest in any of the materials from the barn, please let it be known as soon as possible. All questions or interest should be made in writing and emailed or mailed to the church by March 31, 2024.

Thank you for your help.  
The Trustees