

Church Council Minutes

Belin Memorial UMC

Monday May 4, 2026

1. Opening Prayer – Valerie Richardson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Will Malambri opened with a prayer.
2. Devotion – Whitney Hawley provided us with a devotion
3. Approval of March 2, 2026, Meeting Minutes.

Motion was made to approve the minutes by Bucky Anderson, seconded by Barry Taylor.
Motion passed.

4. Invited guests

a. Kim Oakley – Kim went over her report that is in the packet. She highlighted the Lenten study with the kids went well. There were not very many kids who attended The Blessing of the Inlet due to the weather, but those present enjoyed it. Unfortunately, there was a problem with the electric breakers, so they closed a little early. The Summer Camps are filling up. Vacation Bible School registration has begun we have 35 children who have signed up and have places for 130. Once school is out, we expect the registrations should pick up.

b. Brandy Streett - Brandy reviewed her report that was in the packet. She also shared that she has 11 adults that are helping with the youth programs. This year they have a small confirmation class, and Confirmation will be held May 31st. End of the year celebration for all the youth will be May 17th at Brenda and Gordons house. They are planning to have Youth Group on Wednesday nights and meet ups at Chick-fil-a and Starbucks during the summer. There are youth going to Summer Camp and Creekfront Salkehatchie. There is a need for more men to help with the programs.

5. Discussion of Team Reports

Valerie read the following BCLC report since it did not get submitted in time to be part of the reports sent out prior to the meeting.

From Cindy Parsons, BCLC Assistant Director.

2 points of celebration:

1. We had an amazing book fair this month with over \$3,000.00 in book sales. Each classroom received \$127.00 from the book fair to purchase books for their room.
2. The school garden is coming along nicely. The children harvested the lettuce and some collards.

1 exciting (looking forward to)

Our four-year-olds will be graduating on Friday May 15th, 2026

Cindy Bush, Chair of Membership and Evangelism, shared that the young adults have met and are planning to meet again to possibly start a Pickleball night at the church. The staff have been discussing having a cooking with mom class or an adult cooking class.

6. Finance Committee – 2026 Budget Revision

Darrell Duggins went over the revisions in the revised budget. Some of the highlights were: in the first quarter of the year most expenses are in line with the contributions; there has been a reduction in income due to not receiving some of one-time contributions that we received last year at the beginning of the year and not again this year. The 2026 budget for interest income is reduced to recognize lower invested cash due to the initial \$1 million disbursement for Oliver's purchase. The recommendation from the Finance committee is to adopt the revised budget. No motion was needed and the recommendation was approved by the Church Council.

7. Mission and Vision Planning – Opportunities and Threats from January 2026 SWOT Exercise

Valerie listed some of the opportunities that were mentioned in January.

There is population growth in the Murrells Inlet area. There are people looking for a church. How can we reach those looking for a church or moving into the area? How does the community perceive our church?

A lot of things are already happening: the Membership and Evangelism committee members try to connect with new visitors and members by checking up with them asking if they have questions or need anything. If people call in and ask for information, Sandra Stevens Poirer will talk with them and then have Mary Mallick connect them with the person that can give them more information. Once a month they are invited to Starting Point.

A question was asked what happens to the Connect Cards? Does anyone follow up with them? Sandra contacts them by e-mail, mail or phone call and tells them about Starting Point. What are ways we can reach young adults? If BCLC has a PTO meeting, Kim could speak to them about the opportunities here at Belin for youth and adults. BCLC's newsletter shares details of upcoming events. When parents are dropping off their kids for basketball, VBS, or other activities staff or volunteers are going to try to talk with the parents.

Staff have been discussing ways to encourage parents to participate in activities with their children. Some thoughts are to have a fishing day, organize movie nights, or arrange youth group gatherings with other churches.

The Strategic Planning Committee is considering organizing focus groups for young adults, seniors, and other community members. These sessions will explore participants' motivations for attendance, their suggestions for improvements, and ways to better meet the needs of the community.

Threats- The pending litigation is the outside threat that was mentioned most often in our SWOT analysis. The court filings are available for public review. The church has filed a motion to

dismiss, which is pending before the court. The cost of litigation is currently covered by the church's insurance policies and the South Carolina conference.

8. Old Business

- a. Olivers Lodge – The demolition has been started. The group dismantling will be auctioning or selling parts of the Lodge.
- b. Summary of brainstorming SWOT weakness – Valerie will compile the information and send it out to everyone.
- c. Financial support for children's activities – the money for the blowups and other activities for the youth at the Blessing of the Inlet was donated. There was no cost to our youth.

9. New Business

The Blessing of the Inlet was a success even with the rain. The vendors and food trucks were pleased with the results. Not everything has been totaled but about \$1,400 was made with the money collected by the golf carts.

Church service attendance from January to April this year compared to last year is about 70 less.

Nominating committee is getting ready for next year.

10. Next Meeting: June 1, 2026

- a. Invited Guests: Debbie Leonard (Creekfront Salkehatchie Leader)
- b. Mission and Vision Planning – Wildest Dreams (Homework for next meeting.)

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Bret English, seconded by Whitney Hawley, motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Sandra concluded the meeting with a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Kathy Fox