

RAMF Congregational Meeting

21 March 2003
House of Klassen

Present. Michael Brennan, Janna Buckwalter, Rachel Buckwalter, Bob Carter, Amy Durkee-Pollock, Kathy Kern, Nathan Klassen, Sue Klassen, Victor Klassen, Dennis Lehmann, Eileen Metzger, Thom Metzger, Eloise Schrag, Kathy Shelly, Mark Shelly, Sonya Stauffer Kurtz, Walt Nickeson (recorder).

Proposal on meeting time. The Leadership Team presented the following proposal:

LT proposes that worship end between 10:45 and 11:00 and that Sunday School will run from 11:15 to 12:00.

The proposal was adopted.

Vision exercise. Roger Kurtz and Sonya analyzed the self-assessment undertaken by the congregation in the Adult Hour sessions of 2 and 9 February and concluded that RAMF is pretty healthy. (A short version of the results was distributed with the agenda before the meeting.) The Leadership Team considers this exercise to be finished, and the results able to stand as a resource or inspiration; the Team does not plan to amend our vision statement or create a new one using it. Perhaps the exercise can be done again in a few years as an ongoing state of the congregation project.

Michael asked: Given the importance RAMF attaches to its Peace Position, what is our corporate peace witness? In the ensuing discussion, some ideas emerged:

- Have a worship service at the Federal Building
- Have a hymn sing at the Federal Building
- Make more use of the sign that Dennis created that names RAMF
- Sponsor a potluck
- Find some people willing to engage in civil disobedience
- Write letters of support to those recently arrested at a protest at the Federal Building
- Whatever we do, keep it consistently Christ-centered, so we are not just another voice in the crowd

While there was widespread support for the idea of conducting a worship service at the Federal Building, some reservations were expressed:

- The outdoors is acoustically dead
- Some people do not wish to engage in protest or confrontation, and would likely not attend

The idea of having a service separate from the normal Sunday morning service was accepted. Michael and Dennis will plan such a service for 9:00 on Sunday, April 6, to last half an hour and be followed by our normal worship time.

Colombia sister church proposal. Kathy Kern spoke about the sister church relationship between the Mennonite Churches of Colombia and the United States and wondered if RAMF would like to be in such a relationship with a Colombian church. It would mean some political advocacy on our part in response to kidnappings or death threats to Colombian Mennonites. At least one Spanish-speaking person in the participating congregation is desired; Joanna Heatwole has agreed to be that person. Kathy was not sure if any financial or material aid was involved. Since she did not have the materials describing the program with her, she said she would distribute information to the congregation later.

Retreat committee. Kathy Shelly, Sonya, Thom, and Amy will be the new Retreat Committee. Since this year's Retreat will not involve outside leadership, the real work will come in planning next year's Retreat. An idea for a person for next year: Lynn Miller. An idea for activities this year: The "Ropes Course" for everyone.

Leadership team report.

- Upcoming Adult Hours will include a four-week session on the book of Acts and the early church, as well as more sessions on the question, "Where have we been?"
- The Team is investigating getting an interpreter for Chris Passonneau.
- Breakfast in the Park is set for June 22 at Mendon Ponds Park.
- Tadelech Matewos has passed on our invitation to Bethsaida to have their children attend worship and Sunday school with us.

Treasurer's report. The treasurer has not done much since the January budget meeting; a more thorough report will appear in May.

Potluck with the Quakers. Although the Leadership Team agreed to sponsor potlucks with the Quakers, the Team thought it should check with the Congregation. The Quakers were thinking that this event would happen monthly or bimonthly, and the commitment expected from us is at least two people to help clean up afterward. The next potluck is on April 5. Michael is willing to be the liaison between RAMF and the Quakers.

We decided to do this once a month for six months and then evaluate it. We also want to recommend that the potluck be on the first Saturday of the month.