

September 17, 2004 RAMF Congregational meeting minutes

Present: Victor (worship leader), Walt, Thom, Eileen, Nancy, Kathy S. (note taker), Bob (facilitator), Sonya, Chrissie, Chris.

Delta Spirit report: Eileen reported on continuing enthusiasm from the weekend at Delta Lake last February. We've been looking at how our structure will need to change as RAMF changes. We've looked at what various committees (LT, WC, etc) are already doing, especially revised/ or spelled out what leadership teams responsibilities are. New jobs will be required when we have a building. This past May we revised gift pledge form to spread out more of the existing jobs, and try to encourage people to use their gifts. We've been talking about the attendance at congregational meetings, talking about what we do at congregational meetings, how often we meet. Should we change the way we make decisions as a group? We've been thinking about RAMF's "mission". (The mission of a church is our purpose, and the vision of a church is how we carry out that purpose). We want to start looking at our vision more regularly. Sonya, Eileen and Kathy want to read the book *In Tune with God* and inviting others to join us (currently meeting Tuesday mornings.)

RAMF mission statement: Proposed statement is as follows:

"Growing disciples of Christ is the primary mission of the Rochester Area Mennonite Fellowship. As a Christian community in the Anabaptist tradition, we offer healing and hope to one another and to our world through worship and the practice of spiritual disciplines, by creating a supportive and welcoming community, and by offering a clear witness for Biblical peace".

The intent of a mission statement is to reflect who the group is right now, what we are about - not only who we should be. Our covenant is a little different in that it is what we agree to do together where this is hopefully a statement that will help us in our vision, now and when we have a building.

There was affirmation of the concepts....some suggestions on how to rephrase the first sentence. Decided to all think about it through the end of the Beaver Camp weekend and hopefully come up with a clearer first sentence.

Building committee update:

The actual floor plan has remained constant with the exception of adding 2 feet to the south end of the building. We have initiated some of the site plan development - paying a surveyor (topographical map) -layout of building, utilities, parking lot, etc. which is critical to get a building permit. Bob and Walt met recently with city planner and they felt the city seems positive about our plans. Suggestions given (by the city), overall encouraging. Hopefully the process of

obtaining the building permit will be a smooth process. The goal is to meet all the codes and not require a variance.

Probably will need a sprinkler system for the sanctuary to meet code.

The committee is also getting numerous estimates from contractors who are willing to work with volunteers. \$ 400,000 was the first estimate... Bob feels that that could be trimmed significantly by using volunteers.

The process from here - working on a building permit. Choosing a contractor before the site plan is complete is preferable. May need to call a special meeting to vote on a contractor, if we still want to try to put in the foundation this fall.

Fund raising letter to send to family and friends, describing the project, and appealing for funds has been drafted. Working on a list of people to send this too - want feedback soon so that can get sent off. This will be available Sunday and the next week(s).

We may be approved for a Join Hands grant - could be 4-5 years away, but it seems fairly certain. It would be helpful if more RAMF members/NYC members would join as members- it would speed up the time frame when we'd be approved. Brochures will be in our mailboxes. RAMF as a group could also join.

Temporary meeting place - We will need a need place to meet for worship by the end of January. Strong Ties is moving. We are hoping this process will not be as difficult, as we could be willing to meet in the afternoon, knowing this is a temporary situation. Creative brainstorming is needed. Another idea is possibly meeting in homes in smaller groups. One suggestion is to look into Charles Finney school (where Jake attends - in Penfield). Looking for a committee to work on this - Nancy and Bob are volunteering so far.

Small groups: We would like to encourage those not currently in a small group to consider forming a small group. Leadership team is proposing these groups form out of an individual's interests in a topic, book study, or activity that interests someone. Leadership team would help facilitate the forming of a group, but hope you will come up with things you are interested in -either short term or long term. Consider whether you want to be in a small group and talk to someone on leadership team (Sonya, Kathy K. , Bob, or Kathy S.)

MCC relief sale in Western New York. (November 12-13). Sonya talked to Linda Wideman about the sale. The organizers welcome donations, and would like to know ahead of time if you are planning to donate an auction item. They will have a garage sale table this year -preferable to have those items there Friday night, but also will be accepted Saturday. We will be doing a coffee booth, and a used book sale. Sonya would like us to have RAMF aprons for working at the coffee booth. Will be looking for anyone interested to help with that. Also, signups for working at either the coffee booth or the used book sale table will be coming.

Kathy Shelly is coordinating the used book sale and will accept your book donations up until the end of October. Also she is looking for volunteers to help sort through our current RAMF library books (mostly stored at the Metzgers).

Leadership Team report:

- Meeting with Milton every 2 months. Making connections with Williamson, and Bethsaida. Williamson is moving into their building this weekend, and may be inviting us for a dedication.
- Looking for adult hour ideas - things that interested you/ books you have read.
- Laurelville- The annual "Music and Worship Leaders weekend" is coming up January 7-9, 2005 and we have reserved place for 4 persons to attend. The theme is "A vaster reverencemaking space for the people's voice in worship". This has been a worthwhile conference in the past.
- New prayer diamond will be distributed.
- Strong Ties guidelines have been reviewed and will be in mailboxes. This came out of concerns that some adults have had about things they see children doing.
- Western NY responsible for planning Celebration next couple years.

Delegate assembly report - NYC passed another deficit budget. Will be having quarterly district meetings to look at this problem. A couple new congregations were welcomed - Community of Faith (Williamson) and Sojourners. Buffalo Westside doing better- using some interim pastors from Harris Hill periodically. Harris Hill stronger with Elaine and Joe Haines as pastor. People in the conference are aware of our building project and looking forward to helping.

Worship committee : Amy, Chrissie and Eileen met once as a committee so far. Positive feedback on worship. Their main concern is having trouble getting worship leaders to sign-up. Will be meeting again soon after retreat if there are any concerns or information for the worship committee.

Treasurer report: Balances in each account: Checking - \$ 4,590, Savings - \$ 9,489 and Building fund - \$ 33,036 Healthy accounts, most budgeted items (missions, boards and colleges,etc. are paid for the year.), Beaver Camp is projected to cost approximately \$ 1200 over budget. Kathy would like to switch banks - due to location not being very convenient for her. Would like feedback on changing banks.

Sept 11 - Peace Fair - Nancy went to it and wanted to encourage us to consider to have a booth next year. Lee is interested in helping with it.

Trustee report (Victor) - RAMF now has our own Employee Identification number, and will soon have our own NYS tax exempt number.