

Rochester Area Mennonite Fellowship

NOTES FROM A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

May 22, 2011

Present: Chrissie Walls (worship leader), Rachel Stuckey, Nancy Price, Jen Carter, Bob Carter, Kathy Shelly, Mark Shelly, Dan Price, Walt Nickesen (facilitator), Ron Lugbill, Anthony Ricciuti, Rob Shelly, Jeffery Weaver, Drew Langdon, Wendy Shelly, Teresa Nickesen, Jason Poole, Sonya Stauffer Kurtz, Judy Bernhardt, Roger Kurtz (note-taker).

Opening Worship

- Song: *Sing the Journey* #81
- Chrissie: God is calling all of us, as a group and as individuals (reading from Henri Nouwen).

TRUSTEE ELECTION (Walt)

Bob Carter's 3-year term as trustee is ending. Kathy Shelly (1 more year remaining in term) and Walt Nickesen (2 more years) are continuing as trustees. Bob Carter volunteered to serve another term. Kathy Shelly nominated him; he was approved by unanimous acclamation.

GIFT PLEDGES (Walt)

Walt expressed thanks to all who signed up on the gift pledge forms for tasks in the upcoming year. This is a "floor, rather than a ceiling" in that people can contribute more if they wish. A list of pledge results is attached as an addendum to these minutes.

Walt also noted that by June 1 we need to have a new Leadership Team. Each Ministry Team is to select one of their members to serve on LT.

Question: What if a ministry does not select an LT member?

Walt: That happened on occasion this past year, and it did not work.

Kathy: It's not impossible to deal with, but it does leave a gap in communication.

Walt: It also leaves LT short of members.

Walt: Are two people enough for Outreach Ministry? This is not a question to be answered right now. Another issue: What is the mission of each ministry? Should it be up to each team what it does, or should we as a larger group define what is expected? This is also an open question for the future.

Reading of gratitude and appreciation for all who are sharing their gifts: SJ #148.

MINISTER CONGREGATION RELATIONS COMMITTEE (Bob)

The MCRC (Mark, Jason, Gail, Bob) continues to meet with Sonya. They have decided to delay the congregational discussion about her ordination and requested a one-year extension of her license from NYMC Leadership Commission, which was granted. This gives us time to continue working at our core values and leadership values before we address the question of whether to ordain her.

The MCRC also wanted to gather any additional follow-up questions following our overseer Terry Zehr's March 22 visit, when he discussed how ordination works within the Mennonite tradition. Are there any additional questions about this question or for the committee? (Walt indicated he has the written materials that Terry Zehr sent, and can re-distribute them.)

No immediate questions were raised. Anthony noted that he found Terry's discussion very helpful.

Song: HWB #362 Help us to help each other

MENNONITE COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS (Jen)

Jen distributed a sheet explaining the history and function of the education fund (which is attached as an addendum to these minutes). She also distributed a draft proposal, which suggests that we increase the grant amount to \$1000 per student (from \$750), that we broaden the number of institutions that are eligible, and that we institute an application process.

There was general support for the proposal. Discussion centered on the application process and how necessary it is for students who have been attending RAMF for many years. The question was also raised about how much money might be needed for it. It was also suggested that we clarify who is decision-making body in this regard.

The education fund is funded as an above-budget item through additional giving. At the moment there is about \$5,000 in the fund.

The budget committee will take these responses and draft a final proposal that will be brought to the congregation at the fall business meeting. Additional comments should be directed to the Budget Committee before then.

REPORTS

Treasurer (Jen):

- Mortgage rates have dropped, so because we are maintaining our monthly payments on our building mortgage, there is slightly more being applied to the principal each month.
- Reminder: Sharing Fund is administered by Pastoral Care and funded by special offerings.
- Reminder: Special Offerings are not being done every month, but rather on an ad hoc basis. We have had fewer of these recently. If you have suggestions for special offerings, inform Budget Committee or Leadership Team.
- RAMF closed its fiscal year on 31 January 2011, having disbursed additional money as agreed upon at our January congregational meeting: \$2872 to NYMC for support of Tadelech and Ephraim, and \$2000 for mortgage principle.
- Our General Fund Balance was \$1665, which is \$1 greater than at the close of the previous fiscal year.
- As of 6 May 2011, our checking account balance was \$17,352. Of this \$1826 is Sharing Fund, \$5881 is Education Fund, and \$1144 is Building Fund.
- Savings and CD have had no activity except interest added. They stand at \$9100 and \$5278 respectively.

- We have paid all bills that have come due and we have sent out some of our annual budgeted giving donations.
- We sent \$2556 collected as a special offering for disaster relief in Japan to Mennonite Central Committee.

Library (Kathy):

- There is a library committee (Gail, Drew, Kathy K., Chrissie). Thank you for the 16 responses to survey so far. If there are any more, please send them in soon. Results will be reported.
- The latest volume in the believers' bible commentary (1, 2 3 John) just came in.
- Question: Does the committee accept donations? Answer: Yes, although these will be screened and not everything will necessarily be included in the library collection.

Leadership Team (Sonya):

After our discussion on leadership at the April 30 meeting, Alan Newton suggested a 2-pronged plan of action for us that he will coordinate:

- 1) Alan will set up a process for a restorative conversation with Thom and Eileen Metzger. He hopes to convene this meeting in June. If you are invited to participate or wish to participate, you may be involved. This is to be a confidential process. Anyone who will be part of that process will meet with Alan ahead of time.
- 2) Alan is setting up a "third way" or "noble experiment" group to look at alternative models of leadership for our congregation. Volunteers for this group have included Nancy, Amy, Jen, Rob, Bob, Mark, Aaron, Gail, Jason, Ben and Walt.

Announcements:

Kathy noted that the Fall congregational meeting will be Sunday, October 2 (the Sunday after our fall retreat at Beaver Camp).

Closing song: HWB #434 *Thuma Mina*