

Rochester Area Mennonite Fellowship

March 24, 2013

Present: Aaron, Rachel, Ben, Megan, Austin, Ron, Anthony, Stephanie, Ray, Dan, Teresa, Gail, Deanna, Kristeen, Jason, Amy, Kathy K., Kathy S., Bob, Wendy, Rob, Samantha, Chrissie, Judy, Christin, Bryan, Jen, Drew, Walt, Mark, Roger, Melissa

Facilitating: Jason, Amy

Notes: Rachel

Worship: Bob

Music: Roger

- Reviewed *draft* Ground Rules
- Scripture, prayer, hymn
- Reviewed *draft* Consensus Process
- Mark presented history of history of name discussion
 - 2006-2007: Development of proposal for sign for new building, discussion of possible name change. Decision made to revisit within 5 years.
 - 2012: Issue brought up at Cong. Mtg., committee formed
 - 2013: Discussed at cong. mtg.
- Name change - Group discussion
 - 1. Does our name adequately describe us?
 - Original name – nobody lived in Rochester, it was a casual gathering
 - Original group did not live in Rochester
 - “Area” superfluous
 - Geographic location – not necessary?
 - Now more geographically centered than we used to be
 - Yes, but is that enough? Adequate, but not fully descriptive
 - Technically describes us, but don’t necessarily like it, too clinical/dry
 - A name can’t capture everything
 - Acronym doesn’t describe us, not aesthetically pleasing. Not all have a problem with acronym.
 - Is fellowship the right word? We do more than just fellowship (worship, evangelize, pray, break bread, etc). Church may not be fully adequate either?
 - Does “fellowship” convey “church?”
 - Fellowship conveys what we do, avoids some of the negative connotations of church
 - “Fellowship” can be confusing, not necessarily welcoming
 - “Fellowship” more welcoming than “Church”
 - “Fellowship” indicates flexibility, inclusiveness
 - Church is synonymous with building for some
 - Indicates that we’re the only Mennonite church in town
 - Name is identifier, not description

- Who is the name for? People driving by thought we were a social service agency based on sign
- 2. Reasons to change
 - No longer accurate
 - Difficult to say, understand
 - Acronym has another derogatory meaning (shows up in Google)
 - Acronym is problematic – racial slur
 - Too long, leading to use of an acronym
 - Some people feel strongly about changing it – concern for offending should be honored
 - Not sure that removing “A” makes acronym ok. Seems unlikely we would use “RMF” anyway
 - How well does name align with core values?
 - Questions of church/fellowship
 - Who is the name for? Most important for outreach
 - Cumbersome? Four 3- syllable words – leads to use of acronyms
 - Acronym is problematic - sounds like a swear word / racial slur
 - “Rochester Area” sounds like other organizations
 - Area can be confusing with neighboring groups
 - Mennonite can be confusing – confused with other Mennos in the area (horse & buggy)
- 3. Ideas of what to change it to
 - Drop “Area”
 - Hillside Mennonite Church / Fellowship
 - Get confused with Hillside Children’s Center?
 - Geographical / theological tie-in
 - Values based name - Peace / Community
 - Peace connection in name (Peace, Shalom, Bethel, Eden, Agape) and/or community connection
 - Tree of Life, Living Tree
 - Some connection to who we are
 - Cobbs Hill Mennonite Church / Fellowship
 - Verb/action – fellowship viewed as action vs. church as static (redeem church?)
 - Mennonite – good identifier for outsiders
 - Rochester Mennonite Church / Fellowship
 - Fellowship of Rochester Mennonites
 - Covenant Mennonite Church/Fellowship
 - Is the name for us or for potential visitors / “outsiders?” We want the name to be welcoming & clear for others
- 4. Issues with changing
 - Time
 - Cost
 - Paperwork, mail, stationary, signage, incorporation, website

- Need approval from conference or MC USA?
- Known widely by current name? Will this confuse people?
- Familiarity with current name
- Continuity of identity – would seem like a break from the past
- Losing “Mennonite” could have an effect on identity
- Some would have problems if no change, others would be fine
- Change, emotional connections
- Many opinions / perspectives
- Concerned about caring for each other
- Being aware of how long it could take
- Review new acronym!
- Any direction could be alienating for some
- Welcoming and clear for others
- May want to vote once we have a few names to see where we are? Consensus preferred but may not be possible for final selection
- Core values acronym
- New Committee?
 - Ben, Amy, Kathy K., Teresa, Judy
 - Premature? Keep it with LT for now.
 - Jen interested in helping to discern
 - Need to decide whether to make a change
 - Poll/survey?
 - Leadership team will process information gathered, possibly working with people listed above to discern next steps
- Scripture reading
- Affirming delegate to MC USA in Phoenix – Austin
 - Special offering to help with costs – first 2 Sundays in April
- Immigration Scholarship – for Arturo
 - Strongly affirm
 - Open for other people in the future?
 - Based on guidelines, need formal criteria, application, not specific to one person
 - How frequently do we do special offerings? In the past we did one every month – backed off recently to only hold them when we have something important to us.
 - Wendy & Jen will work on formal criteria – draft for May meeting
 - Colleges want to know by March 1, will accept later also, need money by August 1
 - We affirm the direction, and will leave the details to Wendy & Jen and the scholarship committee

Treasurer’s Report 24 March 2013

As approved at the January congregational meeting, Samantha, Kathy, and Jen of the Finance Committee have been pursuing new accounting software. Together with the input from the

congregation at our last meeting and with Mark we arrived at a list of criteria and questions. Mark took that, did more research, and found "Aploss" software for us. We gave it a 15 day free trial. At the end of the trial, we liked it enough to subscribe. With the features that are important to us it costs \$24.99 per month (~\$300 yearly).

The biggest compromise we made is on accessibility. The program currently (they improve it over time) offers different levels of access to write and delete entries. However, anyone with any access can read everything including donor information and donor details. We assume the congregation does not want these details shared at large so unfortunately at this point ministries will still need to request budget information from Jen or Kathy. This information will be displayed with more clarity than before and be available whenever Kathy or Jen has secure computer access.

We're very much looking forward to using the new Aplos program! Thank you Mark for finding it!

I have set up the structure for all our budget categories and entered all the starting data. Kathy entered our approved FY2013 budget numbers. I have entered all the accounts and entries from the beginning of our fiscal year to the present. I still need to add December 2012 and January 2013 data for future reports.

As of 1 April 2013 (no foolin') we have \$14,251 in our General Fund, \$1,143 in Sharing Fund, \$10,081 in Education Fund of which \$2000 is earmarked for two scholarships contingent on the students' matriculation, \$5,312 in our Capital Fund Certificate of Deposit, and \$9114 in our Savings.

In addition to bills, we have paid a number of our annual charitable contributions.