

## **Rochester Mennonite Fellowship Congregational Meeting Minutes, May 22, 2016**

**Devotional** (Sonya): Ephesians 2: 19-22. 5 things that shape a church's mission, drawn from this passage. Hymnal Worship Book #322, "Strangers No More."

### **1. Review of Administrator position**

Administrator Position Evaluation by Amy Durkee:

#### **Time Commitment**

The agreement with RMF was with the understanding that the position would average no more than 10 hours/week. This has been a reasonable expectation. I've been averaging significantly under the max most weeks, but wouldn't want to lower the hours allotted because this year I have been doing the bare minimum due to other constraints in my work and home lives. I anticipate I'll be putting in more hours this coming year.

#### **Tasks**

I am still sorting this out -- I find it takes at least a full year to really figure out a job -- but so far I see no problem areas.

#### **Communication/relationships**

It would be helpful for each ministry and/or committee to have a point person with whom I can communicate - someone who will communicate to his/her ministry or committee and respond to me promptly. This currently happens with some ministries but not all.

Congregational Feedback/Discussion: Presence of Administrator position has not seemed to decrease congregational participation in the life of the church. Individual ministries could increase use the Administrator's assistance for organizational tasks. Coordinating use of the church building has been a useful and effective Administrator function.

### **2. Delegate Assembly report**

Rachel Stuckey attended the April 16 Delegate Assembly of NY Mennonite Conference. One bylaw amendment was approved: to add a member at large to Coordinating Council to increase diversity of perspectives within this body. Bawi Lian from the Buffalo Chin congregation was elected to this position. NYMC seeks input from constituent congregations on themes for future "Celebration" conferences that would be of interest to them.

### **3. Finance Ministry year-to-date budget (Kathy Shelly)**

Recalling that we approved a mildly ambitious budget for 2016, we examined our first year-to-date statistics closely and at the end of our first quarter (30 April) our income and expenses are in line with expectations to be able to make our budget. No congregational revisions of the budget are needed. Account balances (18 May 2016) are as follows:

Checking account: \$24,590. This includes our General Fund \$14,440. Our Mennonite Education Fund \$7,081. Our Sharing Fund \$1,913. our Special Fund \$630 which includes money donated in memory of Chris Passonneau and not yet forwarded to Beaver Camp, our Immigrant Education Fund \$526., and the MVS Fund \$1124.

Savings: \$9,129

Certificate of Deposit: \$5,332.

Last fall when Finance ministry prepared the budget, we considered opening another CD in June to have staggered maturity dates. We decided to delay this conversation to November or January when we can better project how this fiscal year will end.

The finance ministry appreciates the feedback given at the March congregational meeting re: fiscal priorities. In light of the feedback given, we will begin keeping the notebook of receipts accessible year-round in the hope that more people will be able to take advantage of viewing the acknowledgements/ thank you's from organizations which we currently support.

With plans to create a draft fiscal year 2017 budget for approval at the November congregational meeting, we will offer pledge forms in September. As usual around the same time we will ask ministries for their input into the budget. Hopefully this input will reflect a rejuvenated outreach ministry and the congregation will be considering/ discerning how to include some additional organizations or initiatives in our budget.

Lastly, Jen anticipates stepping down from the treasurer position in the next 1-2 years. She is hoping a new treasurer will emerge who would like to serve as co-treasurer their coming year to learn the ropes. A job description is available for anyone considering the position. It is about a 5 hour per week job, with more hours needed at budget time and end-of-fiscal year.

Any questions, please ask. The current Finance Ministry is Jen Carter as treasurer, Aaron Stuckey, Tim Armstrong, Tammy Pedersen, and Kathy Shelly as chairperson.

#### **4. Election of a new Trustee**

Trustees serve a 3 year term. Bob has 1 year left, Wendy has 2 years remaining and Kathy's term is up. Walter Nickeson was unanimously affirmed to serve a 3 year term as Trustee.

#### **5. Retreat Committee report by Kathy Shelly**

Reminder that the dates for our church retreat in the fall at Beaver camp are September 23-25. In mid- summer I will send out a registration sheet to help determine how many people expecting to attend. On that registration, the committee also asks who else would like to help with the details either the several weeks before retreat or during the weekend.

2 weeks ago Jeff Raught (along with his wife Cindy and young adult son, Ed who lives locally) attended our worship. Jeff works with Ted Swartz, whom several have heard either

at Laurelville or large Mennonite assemblies, using humor and professional storytelling to talk about issues of faith and social justice through live shows, DVDs, digital videos, scripts, discussion guides, and more.

Jeff will be our resource person for the retreat weekend and we wanted him to be with us before retreat to get to know us and us him, and also for as many that could to talk individually with him. The retreat committee had only been meeting with him remotely prior to that, and this also gave us a chance to sit down with him.

We are working with Jeff on plans for our Saturday morning time. One of the plans is to take a short passage or story from scripture and write it from the perspective of characters who might have been in the scene but aren't written about in the Bible. This workshop could result in writing a reading or skit for a future Sunday's worship- learning another way to bring scripture alive. Another part of our plans is to have a "coffee house" Saturday evening in place of the annual variety show. If anyone is already planning their performance for the variety show and is disappointed hearing about this, we have a few spots still available for an opening act. 😊

As has been the policy in the past, if there are new people visiting or attending RMF in the few weeks prior to the retreat date, please speak to someone on retreat committee about the possibility and availability of space for them to join us rather than inviting the person(s) yourself. Having only Retreat Committee members making the invitations and checking with Beaver Camp with regard to space decreases the likelihood of confusion for all involved. One of the reasons we have been doing this way in recent years is to be respectful of the Beaver Camp staff regarding last minute changes.

If you have any questions, see the retreat committee who is myself, Juli Amy and Jason. (If you sign up on the gift pledges that are out now you are actually planning for retreat 2017.)

More about Jeff:

Jeff Raught is a storyteller at heart. Seated at the piano as a musician, or on stage as an actor, he brings his love of story to a unique artistic dimension. Because it matters how the story is told. Jeff has been faithfully noodling in and around humor, music, theatre and stories for many years. His work as a composer has taken him deeper into these stories in ways he didn't expect. He has performed in various theater productions but most recently has co-written music and shows with Ted Swartz/Ted & Co - See more at: <http://www.tedandcompany.com/cast/jeff-raught/#sthash.Si0ADpS6.dpuf>

## 6. Ministry reports

Education (Mark): Other fellowship members are encouraged to consider joining the education ministry, leading an adult hour, or contributing ideas for future adult hour topics. June 19 is the last day of this Sunday school year.

Stewards (Aaron): Lawn mowing schedule is in place. Spring work day accomplished needed tasks. Please bring maintenance needs to the attention of stewards as they arise.

Pastoral (Teresa):

Our driving force has waned a bit the last few months. When Kathy K is out of the country, it is just Nancy and Teresa. We've tried to keep on top of issues and concerns of the congregation.

A major life event occurred, Chris Passoneau's passing. Pastoral Care helped facilitate getting news to others and doing what we could to inform and help.

We are planning a going-away event for the Weavers on Sunday, June 1. It will be a potluck after church.

We talked about special offerings.

Worship:

Worship Ministry is looking for worship leaders to coordinate individual services over the summer. A World Refugee Sunday service will be June 5. We plan to also have a special offering for refugees during June. Materials are available for the summer series, beginning June 12, on the parables of Jesus. The parable series will continue until the end of August. We plan to get together with Sojourners Fellowship in late August. The Anabaptist Icons art work created by the EMS grad will not be available to us this year due to the artist's pregnancy and change in family plans.

During the summer, the song leader rotation will not be organized by Worship Ministry, so worship leaders should contact Ben, Roger, or Billy to help lead singing.

Worship ministry hopes to have another series in the fall which links our worship and adult education. It felt good to have the chance to dig deeper in adult hour after experiencing our prayer series this month.

We are regretfully saying farewell to Anne Weaver after 7 years assisting with Worship Ministry. We are looking for some new people to join us in the fall.

As always, thanks to everyone who has contributed to worship in the last quarter!

--- Musical Interlude: "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness" [Sing the Story #1] ---

**7. Introduction to a Local Giving/Community Outreach Discernment Process** (Amy)

It has become clear that there is a desire in the congregation for more investment in the Rochester community, both financially and in terms of outreach. Leadership Team introduced a form for fellowship members to use to propose specific local community efforts to support with our time or financial resources [**see attached**]. Proposals should be submitted to Outreach Ministry by July 10, 2016. Several options for efforts we might support were discussed briefly, including Trinity Emmanuel Church Foodlink Project, Mary's Place, and the Eastern Service Workers Association. We closed with a time of prayer for our fellowship's discernment regarding local community involvement.

**Next Congregational Meeting:** September, 2016, date to be announced