

Rochester Mennonite Fellowship Congregational Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2016

In attendance: Judy Bernhart, Melissa Carlson, Bob Carter, Jen Carter, Billy Dickerson, Amy Durkee, Walt Nickeson,, Teresa Nickeson, Nancy Price, Gail Ricciuti, Anthony Ricciuti, Eloise Schrag, Mark Shelly, Kathy Shelly, Aaron Stuckey (facilitator), Rachel Stuckey, Chrissie Walls.

1. Proposed 2017 Budget brought by the Finance ministry. Members of the finance ministry include: Jen Carter, Kathy Shelly, Aaron Stuckey, Tammy Pedersen.
 - Jen briefly reviewed how the Finance ministry builds our budget by determining expected income based on gift pledges and projected other (mostly rental) income. For past 10+ years and since having a building, we see it important to plan carefully to hopefully avoid the church getting into a financial crisis.
 - Regarding our year-to-date numbers: we are $\frac{3}{4}$ through the fiscal year and are “on-track”.
 - Note that our budget does not cover Special Offerings nor separate funds (Education Fund, Immigrant Education Fund, Sharing Fund)
 - Jen referred to the document with the proposed 2017 budget highlighting columns of note:
 - 5007 MVS line eliminated as we closed our MVS unit
 - 5009 MMN was increased by \$500 (MVS is a part of MMN)
 - 5010 Added a new line item: Menno Media; one of the MC USA agencies
 - 5080 Outreach increased from \$400-\$1000
 - 5099 MC USA Delegate to convention– Travel, food and hotel expenses for our delegate; this meeting occurs every 2 years.
 - 5104 Retreat – We do not anticipate having a speaker in 2017
 - Jen asked if there were questions for clarification: 5052 Admin services was clarified regarding the # of hours Amy has spent and how she plans to spend a few more/week in the coming year, which is budgeted for but not used this past year.
 - No suggestions were made for changes.
 - Gail proposed we approve the budget; Mark agreed. A show of hands indicated all were in consensus for approving this budget.
2. New Special Offering Procedure: Kathy shared a description of how and to whom someone could propose an idea for a Special offering. The document will be attached at the end of these minutes. There will be a folder in the “Mailboxes” and it will also be available on the website. Lastly, Kathy showed a short video produced by the Gandhi Institute about their Nonviolence work with youth in the city schools, as they were recent recipients of a special offering.

3. Ministry Reports:

Pastoral:

Since our purpose as a team is to facilitate the spiritual, physical, and emotional growth of the congregation through prayer, fellowship and encouragement of each member much of what we do are natural consequences of everyday community life. Members of our community have experienced family member's death or significant loss lately and we have acknowledged those on behalf of the whole congregation. We also held a women's gathering to foster relationships, but also to work together on a service project called Sole Hope.

Education:

Starting next Sunday, November 27 and continuing for a total of 3 Sundays we will be studying the book *The Secret of the Strength: What would the Anabaptists Tell This Generation* by Peter Hoover. In January, Mark will coordinate a series that he is titling: The Sweep of Old Testament History. Come to adult hour and brush up your Old Testament Biblical Literacy for 4 weeks. During Lent, we are planning to do a 6-week series entitled *Love is a Verb*. This theme will be a focus at the Mennonite USA convention in Orlando July 2017 and the materials have been provided by MC USA. The first Sunday of Lent is March 5.

We are always interested in topic ideas, and people willing to help lead. The education ministry is: Gail Ricciuit, Ron Lugbill, Mark Shelly and Kathy Shelly.

Worship:

Advent begins November 27. Still need a worship leader for Sunday, Dec. 18 (This has been filled since the meeting)

We are planning a Christmas Eve Service for 7pm on December 24. If you'd like to bring cookies or a savory snack, please see Nancy.

Billy will offer an informal service at 10 AM on Christmas Day at church for those who are interested.

Our service on Sunday, January 1 will be at 11am instead of 10am and we will not have an Education Hour.

Outreach:

Outreach ministry continues to support 4 things: Saturday tutoring, Spiritus Christi Mental Health Center through an upcoming Special offering, Sweet Beez house, and Rochester Refugee Resettlement Services. We are currently in conversation with RRRS to find out what they need at this time and how we can be involved. We plan to keep updates on a bulletin board in the library.

Stewards:

Annual Fall workday was last Saturday. Currently the stewards are: Melissa Carlson, Tim Armstrong, Walt Nickeson, Bob Carter and Aaron Stuckey. If you see something that needs attention in the building or outside, please contact one of them.

No LT report was given, although a question was raised about the next step following the presentation 2 weeks ago from the Rochester Refugee Resettlement Services. There was much affirmation for supporting this organization following their presentation. The outreach ministry is working with them to find out how we can be involved/ what current needs they have.

4. Adult hour feedback - Christian Formation

Mark began this discussion by sharing how he sees formation as more than education. The education ministry wants to know what people are interested in when it comes to Christian formation and are there suggestions for a different format than one Adult hour?

Some of the responses included:

- Have adult hour around a quilt frame
- We want to hear other's stories
- Hearing personal stories and reflections helps us chew on what we read/ study
- Consider using Adult Bible Study guide – opens with sharing of stories
- Want more Bible study – helps to make sense of what we read in the Bible.
- Consider bringing back the informal group that met in the library and shared their responses to the worship service. (definitely some interest in this)
- Appreciate Bible study and also book studies
- Short discussion on +/- of people reading the book along with leaders.
- Education would really like ideas and feedback any time we want to offer it

2 other points:

- There was a plea for working on starting worship on time, so it doesn't go past 11 AM and then impact the start time of the Education hour.
- When Education Hour is displaced by other things (retreat, congregational meetings, etc), it negatively impacts the Sunday School experience for our kids. Missing Sundays is disruptive to the curriculum

5. Rochester Mennonite leadership structure

In preparation for Terry Zehr's visit on December 18, the Leadership Team wanted to elicit feedback on what direction people were interested in going regarding the topic of leadership, as this was the #1 topic of interest when asked at a recent congregational meeting. Aaron began by asking people to consider what we understand about our current leadership structure and what we understood to be the leadership model or structure of another church or group which was formative in our faith journey. We then were asked to list strengths and weaknesses of each and to discuss in small table groups. Finally, each group was asked to come up with 2 questions from their discussion that would describe leadership issues for our church to discuss. Answers were shared in the larger group and collected by the Leadership Team. Some of the answers were related to gift discernment, trust, and communication. These will be shared with Terry Zehr in preparation for his visit in 4 weeks, when he facilitates a Congregational Conversation during the Adult hour.

Rochester Mennonite Fellowship Special Offerings

A Special Offering is a “collection” we take for a special cause: a need or organization that fall outside our budget.

This could be of a pastoral nature, outreach-related or a need related to a group or organization with which we either have a relationship through one or more of our members, or is a group we are currently affiliated. At the minimum, it is one in which we share common values.

By having the suggestion/ request for a Special Offering go through one of our church’s ministries ensures at least a modicum of discernment and consensus before the request reaches the Leadership Team.

The following is a process for suggesting, deciding, communicating and sending these funds.

1. Submit requests for a Special Offering to the Treasurer or Finance Ministry (use the Finance Ministry mailbox or email to Treasurer@RochesterMennonite.org) Use the attached form to ensure these requests include:
 - Name of ministry that has endorsed the request
 - Several sentences about the request
 - The time frame the funds are needed
 - To whom the treasurer is to make the check payable
 - Where the treasurer will send the check.
2. The Finance Ministry will review the request for completeness of information and for approval. If further discernment is needed, the request will go to the Leadership Team.
3. The Finance Ministry will schedule the month in which the offering will be collected and communicate it to the Administrator by way of a written mid-week announcement submission.
4. The Administrator will communicate the approved Special Offering to the Leadership Team and will also add this information to weekly announcements to the congregation.

Special Offering Process

Name of person submitting request _____ Date _____

1. Name of group, organization or project needing support

2. If the recipient is unknown to Rochester Mennonite Fellowship, provide a brief explanation about the group and why the offering is being collected

3. Ministry of Rochester Mennonite Fellowship that supports this request:

4. Time frame in which funds are needed: _____

5. Our treasurer will make the check payable to:

6. Address to mail the check: _____

Submit to Finance Ministry for review.