

RAMF Congregational Meeting

21 January 2005

House of Shelly

Present: Kathy Kern (facilitator), Michael Brennan-Burke, Bob Carter, Sylvia Klassen, Victor Klassen, Roger Kurtz, Chris Passonneau, Kathy Shelly, Mark Shelly, Chrissie Walls, Walt Nickeson (recorder).

1. Seminar reimbursement proposal

Leadership team proposes RAMF pay the registration fee for RAMFers who attend MCUSA and NYMC conferences such as Delta Lake, Biannual Mennonite Church USA convention, and Laurelville Worship Leaders training. In cases of financial need, assistance with lodging, travel, and food costs would be decided by leadership team on a case-by-case basis.

Although RAMF has often paid registration fees for members attending conferences, workshops, etc., such reimbursements were not given consistently. The purpose of the proposal is to have the policy formally adopted by the congregation, applied consistently, and inserted permanently into the budget (although it is recognized that it is hard to estimate a correct amount to budget each year). A secondary goal is to encourage the attendance of these meetings by members.

◆ The proposal was adopted as presented, with the understanding that it applies to those attending the Delta Lake Seminar this fiscal year.

2. Mileage reimbursement proposal

LT proposes RAMF pay mileage for speakers and resource persons who travel from outside Monroe county at the rate set by the Federal Government (currently .40/mile). Mileage reimbursement for members of the church to attend church related meetings would be decided on a case-by-case basis, generally for financial hardship.

RAMF has never adopted the full mileage allowance as set by the U.S. government, although New York Mennonite Conference has.

◆ The proposal was adopted as presented.

3. Budget (Victor & Kathy Shelly)

RAMF received approximately the usual rate of return of pledge forms. The total pledged was down from last year, although adding in pledges made to the Building Fund resulted in a significant (perhaps by as much as 50%) increase in total congregational income.

To maintain giving in the Sharing category at last year's amount, the budget line for Facilities was reduced. Any excess monies over actual expenses in that category will be put toward initial mortgage and utilities payments on our new building, as we hope to have moved in before the end of the fiscal year. Some surplus may be possible as the Quakers are charging us less than we had expected, and we may realize some savings by meeting elsewhere (e.g., at parks) during the year.

Victor noted that we should be prepared for sticker shock next year at this time, when mortgage and utilities payments will be added to the budget, and spending on ourselves (the "local" category) will become perhaps the largest section. How to make cuts in other areas will require much thought and discussion. Bob suggested this discussion occur sooner than next winter.

The treasurer reported that the change from a monthly to a weekly offering has not made a discernible difference in giving to RAMF.

Current balances: General (checking + saving): \$10,197; Building fund: \$44,026.

For the current fiscal year, the line for seminar assistance will be exceeded. The congregation decided to leave to the Leadership Team how to handle any deficit in that area.

◆ The budget was adopted as presented:

Income	\$33,520
Outflows	33,760
Local	7,675
Worship	6,945
Sharing	19,140

4. Quaker Meetinghouse Guidelines

The Guidelines were presented for consideration, with the admonition for us to not get too wrapped up in the details, as we may be able to change things we don't like later. Points to emphasize:

- The main entrance door has a sensor on the inside that will unlock the door if a person stands before it long enough. To maintain security, we should not stand directly in front of the door on the inside for more than a few seconds.
- "No food and beverage allowed upstairs" is an absolute rule, and covers water bottles and finger snacks for toddlers. Discussion on how to handle snacks for the children resulted in Michael volunteering to coordinate a short snack time (5 minutes was suggested) between singing and Sunday School.

◆ The guidelines were approved as presented.

5. Potlucks

Noting that potlucks have become stressful for some families, and thinking about how our practice might change at the Quaker Meetinghouse, we decided:

- our potlucks will continue as true (i.e., minimally planned) potlucks
- we will not use any of the Quakers' things
- the Carters will take care of coffee and tea.

6. Easter

Leadership team proposes a joint Easter worship service with the Quakers led by RAMF, 9:30-10:30am. Quakers invite us to stay for silent meeting 11-12, with a joint potluck following.

◆ The proposal was approved as presented.

7. Ash Wednesday

An Ash Wednesday service will be held at the Shellys. A meal of soup, bread, and fruit will begin at 5:30, the service following at 6:30, to conclude at 7:30.

8. Leadership Team report

Only one adult hour option will be offered for the time being. Although having two classes has worked, it has proven hard to sign up leaders, and the question of continuing to offer two options should be reconsidered at the next Congregational Meeting. In addition, some upcoming topics are of interest to the whole group.

On February 20 the adult hour will use *In Tune with God*, an 8-chapter study guide. Those wishing to purchase a copy should talk to Kathy Shelly.

9. Retreat Committee report

The Retreat Committee needs another member to join Amy Durkee-Pollock and Nancy Price.

10. Building Committee report

The Committee hopes to finalize the site plan very soon to submit to the city, which may require a month or more to review it. The architect is going ahead with drawing up the plans. A meeting with a candidate for our contractor is set for Jan. 24. Our mortgage application to Mennonite Mutual Aid Association has been approved and we have received a letter of commitment. Our application to Mennonite Financial Federal Credit Union is near approval. We are reviewing the mortgage commitment already received last year from Eastern Mennonite Missions.

11. Tenebrae Service

Some people have said they would feel the lack of a Tenebrae Service on Maundy Thursday, traditionally hosted by Dennis Lehmann. Hopes were expressed that someone would volunteer to coordinate it this year.