

**Congregational Meeting  
Minutes  
January 21, 2018**

In attendance: Aaron and Rachel Stuckey, Tammy Wright, Ron Lugbill, Rob and Wendy Shelly, Eloise Schrag, Kathy and March Shelly, Walt Nickeson, Jen and Bob Carter, Melissa Carlson, Gail and Anthony, Judy Bernhart, Billy Dickerson, Kathy Kern, Nancy Price, Chrissie Walls, Amy and Jason Durkee-Poole

Devotional led by Kathy S.

**Visioning Process**

1) Historical Overview of our church

2) Personal sharing: Everyone present answered the question, "When did you come to RMF and why/what was happening for you?"

We heard the following themes:

Came for work or school, visited and liked what experienced, so stayed

Came after retirement, visited because on their street, liked what experienced and stayed

"felt like home" "felt genuinely welcome" "wanted Mennonite/Anabaptist"  
"warmth" "these people like really like each other!"

wanted accountability, commitment to following Jesus

"these people don't just know each other well, they know each others' families! Like small and personal.

3) We listed congregational celebrations:

MVS Unit for 5 years

Jason and Amy first wedding in our building

Beaver Camp every year – important community building event every year

Christmas Eve service

"I miss Snow Day" – was a day to play together

Chris' memorial service was beautiful

Youth campouts at Rob and Wendy's

Getting to be a sister congregation with Sojourners – gave us some likeminded folks, able to offer counsel to others

Small groups were important part of church life at one point. Was meaningful

We built this building together!

Ground breaking ceremony/dedication ceremony

Sonya ordained

Was a golden era for our youth (Thomas, Anna L., Ethan, Alex, Anna C, Evan)

Fundraiser for Gavin and Rachel

“Everybody shows up” to move our members  
Church Work Days  
Decision to become an open and affirming church  
Trans Clothing Exchange  
Terry Zehr – great skill in keeping NYMC together and how he supports us

4) We listed times of lament

Building the building took a toll on us  
The circumstances of Thom and Eileen’s departure. Still miss them, still feel sad that we didn’t have better resources  
Kurtz’s experienced a lot of hurt around the licensure/ordination process for Sonya  
Not a lot for our youth currently. “My son said once that he feels lonely here. That’s sad.”  
Painful process around the decisions to have a Safe Ministry policy and to change our name.  
Every time someone leaves, it’s sad. It leaves a hole.  
Lament those who are still in the area and yet left (Knapps, Browns, for example)

5.) We listed some bigger cultural issues and political issues that impact us

Trump election and how it’s changed our nation and world  
Rochester’s recognition of racial and economic injustice/violence and a move to address it  
PiRI brings a lot of people into our building who feel drawn here and want to have their events here. Restorative justice in Rochester is growing.  
How can we support/join?  
We have a building now – how can we use it?  
Immigration issues  
How to take a stand without taking sides?  
LGBTQ+ issues in society and in our denomination

**\*\*Break\*\***

**Small groups – Each group listed congregational strengths and areas for growth**

Group One

Strengths

- community that cares for each other
- we value the gifts of many
- culture of living out our faith in all areas of our lives
- Jesus focused and Bible-infused
- Anabaptist heritage peace church niche

Areas for Growth

- small groups to help people become more engaged in the community
- how to engage those outside our community (opportunities like those who come through PiRI and those in the Park Ave/Cobbs Hill)

## Group Two

### Strengths

- hospitality
- intellectual depth/passion/caring deeply
- broad participation

### Areas for Growth

- small groups or other ways to nurture our spiritual life
- growing in numbers, like connecting to people in this community and neighborhood. Could we be handing out info about who we are and what we aspire to – info in the physical building for those who visit through PiRI. Way to perhaps grow but certainly to join with others outside of our community
- reaching out to students (lots of us came @ a transitional time\_)
- how do we let others know who we are?
- info in building for visitors
- communicating to neighbors
- supporting people who are already here to make them integral; invitations to participate
- welcome to the neighborhood/brochures, special Sunday, open house, festival
- articulating our vision for families and kids
- joining broader church/faith communities/organizations that are like-minded (Unitarian, PiRI, RocACTS, Gandhi Institute)
- Shared spiritual practices/small groups

## Group Three

### Strengths

- Culture of generosity (money, time, etc)
- hospitality

### Areas for Growth

- engaging with younger people in congregational life and in leadership
- identifying, teaching, encouraging and strengthening gifts in our members from the time they first join us

## Group Four

### Strengths

- caring about and investing in and supporting one another from time enter the door
- sufficient/enough financial resources for what we want to do
- wealth of knowledge, skills, competencies for church life (theological, musical, financial, building maintenance, education, worship leading, etc.)

### Areas for Growth

- Leadership/followership; (need for a “shepherd”)
- Less cerebral and more spirit-led in our discernment

## **Ministry Reports Congregational Meeting January 21, 2018**

### Worship Ministry

Worship team is putting together plans for Lent using the resources available in the Leader. There are great pieces that you can access for your planning. We are also in need of worship planners and leaders for the season of Lent. We are currently working through a "between time" as we prepare for the Lent season. There are plans in the works for Ash Wednesday. We may have a Maundy Thursday service on Thursday, March 29. Stay tuned for updates. Also check the church website for the wide variety of worship resources that are available.

### Pastoral Ministry

We used \$92.00 of our discretionary pastoral care money for outsiders to send a young lady home to York Pa after she made a bad decision to move up here and move in with a guy she met on line. He turned out to be very abusive. We had several phone conversations with her and Nancy met with her at the House of Mercy. She was very grateful for the ticket. I talked with her a bit about the value of having a church community for support and told her to look up one of the three Mennonite churches when she returned to York.

### Education Ministry

From January 28 – March 4, Gail will lead a series on a book about the Sabbath. On March 11 and 25 we will be doing a "getting to know you" series where people describe their faith stories/life stories. If you are interested in helping us get to know you better, contact Mark.

April 8 - May 13, we read and discuss "The Upside-Down Kingdom", an Anabaptist classic. See Kathy Shelly if you want to order a book.

From May 27- June 17, we will look at materials from Mennonite Church USA on the future church summit.

Please feel free to join on any of the Sundays, even if it's for the first time or you haven't read ahead of time.

### Stewards

\*We got tree maintenance done in December. Planted a new dogwood to replace the Brett memorial tree

(thank you, Lori Ducharme!)

Our beloved cherry tree needs to come down. We are asking Pastoral Ministry to help us all with processing that, while we stewards take care of it's actual removal.

\*we had good clean-up day help in November. We will stick with the 2-day clean-up day approach we tried this Fall, as it seemed to make it easier for people to participate.

\*We will replace sanctuary lights with LED's at spring clean-up

### Outreach

Deborah was in hospital for 2 weeks for mental health, but is back home now.

Melissa wants to take the little girls sledding and she thinks they need boots, mittens, hat, snow pants. She's looking for old ones you can share.

### Leadership Team

The Leadership Team (Amy, Aaron, Melissa, Ron, Kathy S.) continues to coordinate with the various ministries the activities for the life of the church as related to worship, education hour, potlucks and special services. We are also:

- seeking to find ways to address the issues and concerns expressed at the November congregational meeting
- looking for people to work on this year's autumn Beaver Camp retreat planning team
- starting to prepare for Leadership Team selection process that will happen this spring
- considering a short trial of having Education hour prior to Worship and will be talking to both Worship and Education ministries as well as Sunday School teachers prior to implementing the trial.
- working along with the REVIVE team (Bob, Chrissie, Aaron and Kathy S.) as we look at the next steps in the Vision Process

### Finance Ministry Report

Our fiscal year will close on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January. Jen is busy wrapping up final year-end numbers, generating donation thank you letters, and issuing 1099's for Ephraim & Amy, our two paid contractors. It seems likely that we will have some extra money in our General Fund over our opening balance from the beginning of our fiscal year, but we will not know until we close the year. Year-end numbers and the narrative highlights will be published either as an attachment to midweek announcements or as a separate communication in mid-February.

The Finance Ministry will be meeting in early February once year-end numbers are finalized. If needed, they will make a proposal regarding any excess or deficit funds. This will be shared with the Leadership Team in mid-February and put on the agenda for our next Congregational Meeting.