

Rochester Mennonite Fellowship

Congregational Meeting

15 March 2026

Minutes

Attendance: Billy, Rachel Sherman, Ben, Nancy, Julio, Daniel, Anthony, Gail, Eloise, Carol, Melissa, Tom, Walt, Izzie, Amy **(recorder)**

- 1. Welcome and devotional** (Eloise) - theme of being community and feeding and caring for each other
- 2. Report from the Treasurer** and presentation of proposed disbursement of the 2025 budget surplus, led by Tom. (Report attached)

Discussion of Report: Participants invited to share questions and comments

Rachel Sherman asked about using some of our surplus to increase the amount in the Sharing Fund. Tom recommended that we leave it for now and have a special offering in a few months to replenish. He also noted that we could appropriate funds from the General Fund to the Sharing Fund at a later date if approved by the congregation.

Change to proposal for disbursement of surplus: Tom requested to add The Corinthian Plan to the list in the attached proposal, as we used to give to this project annually and had to cut back when our revenue dropped. After discussion, those present agreed to add a donation of \$900 to the Corinthian Plan. This brings the 2025 surplus giving to a total of \$9,700.

3. Discussion of our masking policy

Leadership Team has been asked if the congregation could revisit its masking policy. This policy was adopted in May 2024 (a record of the discussion at that meeting is in the minutes, available on our website) and is as follows:

Masking is strongly encouraged, but not required, on the first Sunday of each month. If a member requests that the congregation masks (for themselves or on behalf of a guest, another member, etc.) we will agree to wear masks that particular Sunday. This request should be made to the Administrator no later than Wednesday night before the Sunday service so that plans can be made for accommodation. If the person does not attend in person on the requested Sunday we can feel free to take off our masks. In addition, we should agree to stay home when sick.

Rachel presented the proposed new policy drafted by the Inclusion and Anti-Racism Ministry Team.

Participants discussed the proposal. This included a discussion of the impact of masking on those with hearing impairment. It was noted that several improvements have been made already to assist people with hearing and that individuals are expected, if comfortable, to take their masks off when speaking at the podium.

The Inclusion and Anti-Racism Ministry Team will revise the proposal in accordance with the feedback given today, and present it for discussion at a future congregational meeting. Feedback to be included: 1) Clarification that there will be no policing of masking; 2) Masks expected to be worn only during worship, not during adult hour, coffee hour, etc.; 3) Congregants can still request masking for other Sundays per current policy. If the requester is unable to attend on the Sunday they requested, they will notify the administrator and the administrator will notify the congregation that masks are no longer requested for that Sunday.

4. Ministry reports

Stewards

- New phone service provider is Ooma. Saving \$100/month now.
- The Children's School of Rochester No. 15 (next door to the church) will use our building if there is a lockdown. They have their own door code which will be changed annually.
- The Golden Link Folk Singing Society, which meets here on Tuesday evenings, is thinking about getting a rollator to store in our building (either paid for by Golden Link or by RMF).
- We agreed to try moving the piano to an inside wall to help protect it from temperature changes on the outside wall.

Leadership Team: Working on getting an AED. Looking for grant funding for this. Asked if anyone is certified in CPR. No one raised their hand.

Pastoral Team: Pastoral Care Ministry (Eloise, Nancy, and Teresa) try to be alert to needs within the congregation: physical, emotional, financial. One of our functions is to administer the Sharing Fund, which is a one time per year \$500 gift which depending on the circumstances may be matched by Everence (Kathy Kern is our Everence delegate who would apply for an Everence matching grant). This is all quietly conducted. We aren't always aware of need, so we ask if you know or suspect someone who could benefit from this fund or is in need of conversation or prayer, please let one of us know.

Worship Team: Faith Journey series starts up again after Lent/Easter. Please let Worship Ministry Team know if you're willing to share.

Library Committee: Spanish bibles available now. The Believers Church Bible Commentary on the book of James was added to the library. Billy is researching for a new Bible with both Spanish and English to keep up front for reading during worship.

5. Other items

It was confirmed that the building is available for parties for members. Members should use the form on the church's website to request use of the space.