

Faith Mennonite Church

Annual Church Financial Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2022

In Attendance:

John Hershey, Moderator	Dick Westby	Karen Wiebe	Thaine Dirks
thom bower, Pastor	Melissa Hochstetler	Matthew Hendricks	Del Seitz
Leslie Minkler	Andi Kuenning	Dan Gerber	Tyler Zabriskie
Donna Stucky	Dan Leisen	Elena Vidas	Bob Mack
Hermann Weinlick	Mary Friesen	Donna Minter	Rudy Okerlund
Alisa Bardo-Martinson	Kristi Zabriskie	Glenn Geissinger	Travis Lusk
Miriam Augsburg	Candace Lautt	Darrell Martin	Bruce Brunner
Gregg Richardson	John Ratigan-Green	Rachel Geissinger	Roberta Malles
Beth Richardson	Jenny Wandersee		

- 1. Call to Order:** John Hershey called the meeting to order. He opened with a prayer and an acknowledgement that our church is located on the ancestral lands of indigenous people.
- 2. Moderator Report:** John H. referred the congregational to his report on the church website, as well as to the commissions' reports there. He stated that these are our two points of emphasis as a congregation:
 - Where are we going in our search for a settled pastor?
 - What are our core values and beliefs? And tied with that, whom do we give to? (There's a document on our website with details on our giving.)
- 3. Pastor's Report:** thom said there are 5 main milestones for the pastoral search team:
 - Calling and forming the Pastoral Search Team (PST).
 - Completing the Congregation Information Form (CIF) and getting it approved by the Conference.
 - Going through the pastoral profiles of candidates and doing the first round of interviews.
 - Focusing on one candidate.
 - Presenting the candidate to the congregation.thom says we're between the first and second milestones, and the process is going well.

We continue to be in ongoing transition. We are having conversations about values and we're moving toward, what is God calling FMC to do? What are your visions for ministry and what is your spiritual strategic plan to fulfill that call? What are the tasks that need to be completed before a settled pastor arrives?
- 4. Christian Education (CE) and Faith Formation:** thom reported that we do not currently have a CE commission. If we repopulated it right now, would that team come together quickly enough to provide programming? This is not to say that faith formation isn't happening; Greg Renstrom has started a Bible study on the Psalms of Ascension. Missions & Service is talking about a service project that could be an intergenerational faith formation activity. Deacons are considering a Lenten film series.
- 5. Settled Pastor Search Team (PST) Update:** John H. noted that the PST reports to church Council, not to him or the trustees. Rachel Geissinger reported they're starting on completing the Congregation Information Form (CIF) and will soon be meeting with various groups to ask the groups what they got right and what might need to be changed. They hope to have a final version to be approved for our April 24, 2022 annual church meeting. Then Central Plains will need to approve it.

6. **FMC Budget:** A schematic was shared on the screen that summarizes financial for 2020 and 2021 and the budget for 2022. Beth reported we owe roughly \$92K on the roof replacement. We have about \$175K in cash because the Calvert fund is doing very well. Rent income has stayed largely the same at \$43K. Local giving (offering) went up by \$7K in 2021. For the 2022 budget:

- Programs: \$10K
- Structure: \$79K – It is high because we need to redo the bathrooms in the education wing.
- People (Includes pastor, 15-hr/wk admin, janitor): \$166K
- Giving to Conference, local and national non-profits, and refugee families: \$38K

Beth said it has become clear that we are asking one pastor to do a two-person job. We may need to make adjustments to the budget. Donna M. asked what the strategic plan is for the migrant fund going forward. Beth said the trustees made a decision that the fund should be incorporated into the budget. Andi said the goal is to have the families become self-sufficient. We have been decreasing the amount given to them as they have found jobs and are working. We are checking in with them and making adjustments as needed. Donna S. said that in terms of the migrant fund, we're hoping it can go to zero for these families, but in light of the world situation, we might want to keep a migrant fund going. Dick W. asked about the rationale for remodeling the bathrooms now, when we're not using them? Beth replied that they haven't been updated in 75 years and they're not handicapped-accessible. As landlords, we have a responsibility to provide decent bathrooms for our tenants. Darrell added that the project was first considered a couple of years ago, and costs keep going up each year. It becomes more expensive the longer we wait to do it. Hermann asked if we've completed our spending on technology for hybrid worship. Beth replied that we don't know yet. John H. said he doesn't anticipate that we'll need to upgrade from what we have now, but he can't say for sure. The budget was approved by all.

7. **MCUSA Conference.** Dick W. reminded the group of the upcoming national conference. He said we need to begin the process of planning and learning about the conference. There's a proposal to remove wording that is harmful to people we love (LGBTQA+). Dick stated that we need to take a strong stance and decide who will represent us at the conference. Leslie asked what the best committee is to go through to get some action going. John H. said he hopes interested people will form an ad hoc group to talk this over and bring a structured proposal to council. The proposal would include: what do you support; whom would you like to send; how much will it cost; is the person going to support one issue, or will they participate in all of the conference? Leslie, Dick, and Roberta agreed to be part of the group. Leslie emphasized the need for the group to include heterosexuals, because it's a heterosexual problem. Donna M. also volunteered to join the group. Dick said he has talked to some people who are interested. John encouraged them to ask him for the help they need and he will do his best to make sure our church provides it.

8. **Church Structure:** Dick W. said it seems there are more needs in terms of how we serve the young people, for CE. We have an opportunity to change how we support Missions & Service. I'd like to have a few more opportunities to talk about how we structure our church. John H. replied it's a great point and the conversation about giving will go forward this spring. We're also beginning discussions about how we're organized and how we work. Those are matters we'll continue to consider and bring to the congregation for a larger discussion.

9. **Adjournment:** Donna M. moved to adjourn; several others seconded it. All were in favor of adjourning.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Wandersee, FMC Church Council Secretary