

Faith Mennonite Church Church Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday, December 14, 2022

In Attendance: Donna Minter, moderator; Andy Martinson, moderator-elect and Search Committee; Thom Bower, transitional pastor; Amy Bradshaw, Trustees; Andi Kuenning, Missions & Service; Bruce Brunner, Missions & Service; Karen Wiebe, Deacons; Matthew Hendricks, Fellowship and Search Committee; Thaine Dirks, Finance team, Jenny Wandersee, council secretary

1. Donna opened the meeting with a prayer. The group took turns reading FMC's Communal Values and did check-ins.
2. Affirmations:
 - Thom Bower and Tyler Zabriskie for facilitating the leadership retreat
 - Darrell Martin, for all of the work he does behind the scenes
 - Andi Kuenning, for her interpreting skills in M&S's work with our migrant families
 - Miriam Augsburg, for recruiting musicians for the recorded Christmas service
 - Thom Bower, for organizing the service for remembering parents
 - Those who organized, participated in, and attended the talent show
 - Newer members who are stepping up to take part in worship

 - Bruce Brunner, Andi Kuenning, and Roberta Malles for all their work with our migrant families
3. November minutes and tonight's agenda were approved.
4. **Budget.** Darrell's summary of our finances was shared on screen. Thaine noted that total offerings were at about \$120K through November and are now at \$133K. \$155K was budgeted for the year, which is a bit of a stretch. Darrell believes we can meet our financial obligations, it is unlikely we'll meet our plans for giving to outside organizations. Bruce asked if our expenses are down commensurately with our giving? Thaine said not enough to make up for the shortfall in income. Donna reported that per Darrell, it's possible that we'll bring another \$7K by the end of the year, which we should keep in mind when talking about giving.

Donna proposed making an announcement next Sunday about where things are at with our finances. Bruce said it was a good idea because we'll probably have a shortfall of \$15-20K this year, which will mostly come out of our giving to other organizations. Council approved Donna's proposal to make an announcement this Sunday. There was some discussion about how to handle people's potential questions about finances and giving. Andy asked if we've ever missed our budget before, and Bruce answered that in his experience, we have not. Amy suggested using an approach of empathy as opposed to logic in response to any questions.

Karen pointed out that our Calvert Fund went down and we went \$30K over the amount to spend on our building, which contributed to the shortfall. Donna reported we have about \$8,500 in the migrant fund, after giving each family \$500 for Christmas. Each family will be given at least \$4K as a final sum. Thaine shared the proposed budget for 2023. Local budget is projected at \$145K and rent at \$50K. There were some minor adjustments in other categories. \$10K is budgeted for finishing the library, a tech cabinet, and unexpected expenses. Total income is \$195K and expenses are \$203K, which is a shortfall of about \$8K. There is a higher discretionary amount for capital improvement and giving. Amy asked about the \$600 for when the pastor is on vacation. Thom explained that it's for four guest preachers. We have one guest preacher each month, but most guest preachers come from within FMC

and are not paid. Matthew commented that the amount budgeted for pastor's salary is within the range expected for when we have a settled pastor.

5. **Migrant Fund.** The plan is to give a final sum to the migrant families to end the fund on Jan 31, 2023. Depending on what the families want, Darrell can set it up to pay it to them all at once or spread it out over a number of months. The amount given by a few non-FMC donors is about \$45/month. Donna is preparing a letter that Darrell will send to the migrant fund donors to let them know that we are ending the migrant fund, and if they'd like to continue giving to the families, they can do so directly. Andi suggested letting the donors know they may contribute to the lump sum before the end of January 2023. She said both families are currently doing well financially and are appreciative of the support we've given. Nuria's older son, Daniel, wants to work, but needs a work permit first. Donna said the plan is to invite the congregation to contribute to the final sum through January 2023. Donna brought up having a celebration during a Sunday service, though Andi said it can be difficult for some of the migrant family members to attend because of their work schedules and energy levels. Thom suggested having the celebration in February even if the families can't come, and having a litany for the congregation, because it's been important to FMC's shared identity for four years. Donna suggested figuring out the celebration at our next council meeting, after the final appeal. Council voted to move forward with ending the Migrant Fund on January 31, 2023. Council approved to have Missions and Service Commission will make final verbal appeals via Sunday announcements and written appeals in the Midweek Updates and Bulletins throughout January 2023. Missions and Service will also find out from each family whether they want the final amount in a lump sum in February 2023 or spread out over a couple of months during 2023.
6. **Missions & Service giving.** Bruce presented the amounts we gave each organization last year for a total of \$6,500. This year we decreased the number of organizations we give to from 13 to 10. He went through the list and read the amounts planned to give this year. If the total amount available falls short of what's budgeted, the amounts given to each organization would be prorated accordingly. Council voted to move forward with this plan.
7. **Fellowship.** Matthew reported they had a successful pie social and talent show. Alisa is spearheading a cookie social this Sunday. They're planning a game day on January 8, 2023 and a winter day at the lake on February 12, 2023.
8. **Deacons.** Gifts Discernment: A list of proposed deacons and moderator-elect was shared. Karen reported they'd like to have three more deacons and shared a list of potential deacons. Andy expressed a concern about piling too much onto new attendees. Thom said if they don't feel ready to be deacons, it probably wouldn't scare them away. Jenny commented that several of the people listed already are involved in multiple things. Donna said the idea is that if they agree to be deacons or moderator-elect, they could step down from other commitments as needed. There was a discussion about potential moderators consulting with current and past moderators to help them decide whether to take on this shared leadership position.
9. **Worship.** Jenny reported they've been finding people to take part in the recorded Lessons and Carols Christmas program. Karla Hovde will be doing the editing. Thom has already started planning Epiphany and Lent.
10. **Covid Committee.** Thom reported on their behalf that the first "extra caution Sunday" went off as planned. They're keeping an eye on the numbers.
11. **Adjournment:** Donna at 9:03pm

12. Closing. Thom closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Wandersee, council secretary
Approved by Council on 1/11/23