

West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship
Church Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 15, 2017

Present: Lorie Hershey (Pastor), Bryan Geib (Deacon), Amanda Esh Bouwman (Elder), Nick Lordi (Elder), Dorianna Lordi (Administrative Assistant), Mark Michalovic (Elder), Tim Martin Johnson (HRC), Reuben Wetherbee (HRC, via conference call)

1) Began meeting at 7:04 p.m. with prayer

2) HRC

- Brooke has decided to step down from deacon. Her term was up in May, 2017. HRC is working on finding an immediate replacement, as well as filling the three-year deacon term that will begin in May.
- Mark has decided to renew his term as Elder. No upcoming open elder positions.
- Reuben has completed 6 years of serving on HRC, therefore his term is up in May 2017. One open position on HRC beginning in May.

Deacons

- Bryan gave an update from deacons. They are working on some ways that will foster a more effective team.

Elders

- Lorie shared about the elder's recent retreat. Noting that they discussed small groups and worship service focuses.
- They discussed the possible need for a part time youth and small group pastor. Acknowledging some financial barriers and exploring some alternative ideas.
- They discussed some options for support for families and couples, such as the marriage retreat that they plan to have again.
- They also discussed the current political climate, discussed some ways that the elders can be supportive and caring to the congregation during this time.
- Would like to conduct a survey to get a feel of needs and desires for small groups and possible ways that we can foster a healthy faith community.

3) Building

- Tim found one member of WPMF who is interested in exploring the possibility of being on Calvary Center for Culture and Community's board. This individual is in the process of reaching out to Calvary to find out more information about board responsibilities.
- Lenny did assemble two people in addition to himself who are willing to explore possible building options. No update on how the process is going.
- Bryan reached out to Calvary regarding an emergency contact or go-to person for Sundays. Calvary discussed this but has not decided what to do or set up a contact.

- Council shared thoughts and discussed building concerns for several minutes. Many of the same concerns discussed at the last council meeting are still apparent.
- Calvary is currently updating the women's bathroom, largely due to one family's donation. Calvary center will continue to be without a handicap bathroom. No known plans for a handicap bathroom at this time.
- Tim, Lorie, and Bryan will meet with Calvary to discuss some concerns and next steps.
- Council set a deadline for the end of April, for the group who is looking at other possibilities.

4) Report of Pastoral/Congregational Review

- Church council discussed the Review results summary that was sent to council via email.
- Most aspects of the review were positive.
- Review team plans to share specific comments with relevant teams.
- Council discussed the last section of the review, specifically regarding Lorie officiating a same-sex marriage. Pastoral Team will work on a process to engage a larger discussion and discernment with the congregation.
- Typically, our review summary is sent to Franconia conference.
- 27 people completed the review.
- A topic that arose in the review was a desire to explore sexual ethic guidelines. This topic has also been brought up in past reviews.
- Council discussed next steps to address sexual ethics. It was decided that the Pastoral team will discuss it further.

5) Politics in worship discussion

- Bryan shared about Powerlinks relationship to social justice, some feel that we may be committing too much time to this during worship.
- We may need to spend more time on self-care and focus on faith.
- Some feel that politics or social justice are a central part of worship while others may feel differently.
- Plan to have an adult Sunday school class in May to discuss this topic further and give worship committee more direction.

6) Next Meeting – Wednesday, June 14, 2017

Tim closed meeting at 8:33 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Dorianna Lordi