

West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship
Church Council Meeting
Tuesday, June 12, 2018

Present: Lorie Hershey (Pastor), Bryan Geib, Mark Michalovic (Elder), Ethan Tan, Elaine Shenk (HRC), Jeff Knightly (Deacon), Tim Martin Johnson (HRC, Council Chair), Rebecca Weber (Deacon), Amanda Esh Bouwman (Elder), Dorianna Lordi (Administrative Assistant)

Absent: Matt MacNeill (HRC), Laurie Callan (Elder)

Tim began meeting at 7:05 p.m. with Psalm 36 and prayer

Tim welcomed Ethan Tan who will tentatively be affirmed June 17th and Bryan whose term had ended on May 31, 2018

HRC

- Most volunteer positions have been filled, still need a Co-Sunday School Coordinator and 2 Coffee Servers
- Sheldon Rich and Ethan Tan as Elders and Carol Buhrman as Deacon.
- The congregational affirmation meeting for the three new council members is scheduled for this Sunday, June 17th, 2018
- Elaine will create an insert noting and thanking volunteers

Deacons

- Carol Buhrman has attended deacon meetings

Elders

- At visionary meeting they discussed small groups, working on places for congregants to make personal connections, creating spaces for youth to participate in worship, another parenting meeting
- Have been working on what it means to make commitments to LGBTQ community

Conference Update

- Tim gave update and briefly reviewed our process
- Tim updated council on connections he made with members of both Allegheny Conference and Atlantic Coast Conference
- Neither Allegheny Conference or Atlantic Coast Conference is geographically close to our area
- Lorie updated council on connections she made with members from Allegheny Conference and Atlantic Coast Conference
- Mennonite Church USA requires that pastors who perform a same sex marriage be reviewed by conference leadership
- Our congregation already went through the process of addressing and affirming Pastor Lorie officiating a same sex marriage
- Tim will make a brief conference update this Sunday

- Lorie will find out more information on next steps with Franconia Conference before moving forward with other Conferences
- Lorie will reach out to different congregations in the city
- Eventually we should invite Allegheny Conference and Atlantic Coast Conference ministers to a worship service to get to know one another

Building Space

- The deacons and some other volunteers attempted to reach out to about 70 different options and most were not possibilities for us
- There are two potential possibilities for building spaces; One option is The Common Place on 58th and the other option is a smaller church close to our current space
- The Common Place is involved in the community, new renovations, space for worship, Sunday school, office, 9:00 a.m. option for worship, and is a similar price to what we are paying now
- The Common Place is out of our current neighborhood, sanctuary slopes, and uncertain if piano is usable
- The other option is a church that is walking distance from Calvary Center and needs some work, parking is limited, small yard with fence, and it is also small but should still fit our congregation
- Other options will still be considered but the two that we discussed seem like the best possibilities right now
- Council members shared different aspects that congregants may need to know about new spaces
- These aspects are:
 - See the space
 - Hear reasons why a space is a good fit
 - The kinds of opportunities available to partner with members of the community
 - Community involvement
 - Explanations of why we should move
 - Hearing more about the community that the new space is in
 - Need opportunities to discuss and ask questions
 - If there is potential for new partnerships
 - How we reached the conclusion to look for new spaces or why we chose a space
 - Hear and learn about the process that led us to this decision
- Next steps: Briefly notify the congregation of these options at this Sunday's congregational meeting then address it further at the mid-year financial check in that will take place on July 22 or July 28

The next council meeting is scheduled for September 12th, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Time concluded council meeting at 9:11 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Administrative Assistant, Dorianna Lordi