

West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship  
September 13, 2017  
Church Council Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Bryan Geib (Deacon), Elaine Shenk (HRC), Laurie Callan (Elder), Amanda Esh Bouwman (Elder), Rebecca Weber (Deacon), Dorianna Lordi (Administrative Assistant), Nick Lordi (Elder), Lorie Hershey (Pastor), Tim Martin Johnson (HRC, Council Chair)

Tim began meeting at 7:05 with a reading and reflection from Ecclesiastes 3 followed by prayer.

#### HRC

- Several ministry positions have been filled which includes fellowship meal coordinators, coffee/tea setup, and mentoring coordinators.
- HRC is seeking a third person to serve on their team.

#### Deacons

- Since informing the congregation of our budget concerns and deficit, we received an increase in one-time gifts. We are still missing budget, but are in a better position than before.
- Began process of training two people for custodian/sound staff position.

#### Pastoral team

- Nick is now licensed through Franconia Conference for a two-year period toward ordination. This will be recognized in the coming weeks during a Worship service.
- A small group survey was conducted and had 22 responses, Lorie briefly summarized some aspects of the survey.
- Dorianna will email out survey results to church council.

#### Anti-racism Trainings

- Pastor Lorie handed out letter summarizing some of the goals and purpose of trainings for the next few weeks. She also gave some background on this initiative.
- Since the Anti-racism training earlier this year, a group has met a few times to discuss. There has also been a movie and discussion group happen over the past few months.
- Group has been in contact with Kara from anti-racism training.
- Would like to have focus groups, as well as reach groups that are already meeting regularly.
- Would like to get a sense of how our congregation perceives WPMF and the larger society in relation to racism.
- Focus will be to gauge the congregation's desire and interest in evaluating how and if our practices and church structures contribute to racism.
- Goal is to have a facilitator and note taker for each group meeting.

- One suggestion was to work with a peer congregation from kingdom builders for support.
- Another suggestion was to discuss this at retreat.
- Council agreed to focus on this topic. They also agreed that the next council meeting would focus on discussing this as a small group.
- Some members of WPMF had participated in an anti-racism training over ten years ago and it was approached differently than what we are currently proposing.
- One comment noted that we need to focus on goals and not get caught up too much in talking.
- Council discussed how talking was a necessary and valuable step and many agreed that it is important to determine specific goals from upcoming discussions and discernment.
- The next council meeting will focus on anti-racism small group discussion on Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.

#### Conversation with Franconia Conference

- Tim explained that we sent a letter to conference informing them of our congregational decision in favor of our pastor marrying a same-sex couple.
- Tim spoke with conference minister and they shared the letter with other Franconia conference leaders.
- The next steps are to meet and discuss with conference leaders. Council will be informed of when this meeting will happen and invite them to participate.

Next council meeting is Wednesday, January 10 at 7:00pm

Tim concluded meeting at 8:25pm

Minutes recorded by Dorianna Lordi