

Pastoral Team Minutes from 5/29/17:

Present: Lorie Hershey; Laurie Callan, minutes; Amanda Esh Bouwman, time keeper; Nick Lordi; Mark Michalovic

Began with Centering and Prayer Time.

Updates:

*Franconia Conference Grant: We used some of this to pay for facilitator for church retreat (Mickey Scott Bey-Jones) and attenders of the recent Crossroads Anti-racism workshop (Nancy Geryk, Sherri Michalovic and Lorie Hershey). Lorie proposed using some of it to assist anyone from the congregation who is interested in attending the Prison Summit this summer, in Phila. Attendance is free, but it is during the week and some people may not be able to take off work, if not paid. We will put out an announcement, explaining we can help cover costs if someone wants to attend and see how many people could use funds. This will determine how much we can help each person with.

*Nick emailed Tim Martin Johnson, head of Church Council regarding the new process we now have for affirmations meetings, as a reminder.

*Pastoral Team letter has been edited and will go out in June to the congregation. It updates the congregation on our team retreat and what we are looking to work on in the future.

*Several elder teams are trying to schedule meetings for the beginning of summer.

*Reflected on our Spring Church Retreat. We liked how there were so many opportunities for group sessions throughout the weekend. These were well attended. Will keep this in mind for future retreats; giving various options for small groups of people to gather.

Laurie will email out an evaluation to the congregation.

Went over Worship and Politics Conversations:

An Adult S.S. class focused on this. All of the pastoral team was present for this.

We heard people saying that we shouldn't make assumptions about one another in the congregation; where they are at on the political spectrum. Also, there was agreement that those involved in an official capacity in the service, should not endorse or name certain political candidates that they endorse or don't endorse.

Worship committee has also discussed this and will be putting out guidelines for worship, song leaders and children's time leaders.

Discussed upcoming Congregational Meeting to discuss the congregation affirming the pastor marrying same-sex couples.

A letter went out to congregation about what Pastor Lorie's position was several years ago, when the congregation became welcoming and where she feels God has been leading her. Information about our relationship to Franconia Conference was also sent out, to help the congregation understand how we benefit from being part of a conference and what it would mean to be at variance with them.

Lorie feels that our question is not whether the congregation affirms her doing a same-sex marriage ceremony, but "Is offering marriage for same-sex couples by our pastor, part of our calling as a welcoming and affirming congregation?"

Lorie clarified that MCUSA polity is that if a pastor's credentials are suspended for disciplinary reasons (i.e. sexual abuse, misuse of finances), the pastor cannot move to another conference and have their credentials reinstated. It is unclear how this will play out for pastors whose credentials are suspended for officiating a same-sex marriage. There is a process to go through for congregations to change conferences.

HRC to lead/facilitate meeting, which will also have affirmation process regarding a new member of Deacons and HRC and will turn meeting over to elders to lead this discussion. Nick will lead for the pastoral team.

Discussed food and childcare.

Went over Pastoral Care Concerns and prayed.

Next meeting : TBD

Time Keeper: Laurie

Minutes: Mark