

West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship
Church Council Meeting
Wednesday, October 10, 2018

Attendance: Pastor Lorie Hershey, Amanda Esh Bouwman (Elder), Tim Martin Johnson (Council Chair, HRC), Rebecca Weber (Deacon), Matt MacNeill (HRC), Jeff Knightly (Deacon), Ethan Tan (Elder), Elaine Shenk (HRC), Laurie Callan (Elder), Sheldon Rich (Elder), Dorianna Lordi (Administrative Assistant)

Absent: Mark Michalovic (Elder), Carol Buhrman (Deacon)

Minutes recorded by Administrative Assistant, Dorianna Lordi

- Tim Martin Johnson began meeting at 7:11 p.m. with a reading from Acts. Tim shared that council members should be open to hearing from others and considering available options. Council was then encouraged to listen well to each other and seek the Spirit and then prayed.
- At the last meeting, council discussed the building search and issues of the building. The goal of *this* meeting is to decide on the next steps to take rather than further discuss problems.
- It was noted that since the last meeting, the nursery has been unusable for weeks because of mold and other issues. CCCC had laid down linoleum that was donated but is not working, so they ordered new tile linoleum. There appears to still be mold in the corner of the nursery and spots from potential moisture higher up on the wall. Additionally, the exhaust fan does not appear to be working because it should be constantly running and it was off. CCCC's administrator, Kari has been informed of these concerns.
- Tim handed out a document and discussed the process of this meeting, everyone will have a chance to share and a chance to respond to one another. Asking members to write down questions. The meeting will conclude with open discussion and hopefully clear direction will emerge out of this meeting.

A summary of the following options was suggested for council to review and share their thoughts

- Number 1: We continue the process by laying the groundwork for congregational consensus. This will require that council propose some parameter for when we will move. As well as meet with congregation to share our reasons for wanting to move. Keep our discussion open with The Common Place and other possibilities.
- Number 2: Call off the building search for now and plan to stay at Calvary for the time being. Discontinue communication with The Common Place and others. Deacons will explore opportunities that may arise but will not continue to actively

search for building options. Council advocates to Calvary Center for Culture and Community (CCCC) to address concerns. After a year or so, we will consider where we are with CCCC.

- Number 3: We take the whole matter to the congregation – informing them of all concerns and present the option of moving to an evening service. We would have to design the meeting in such a way to get direction and provide council with a good sense of where the congregation is at.
- It was noted that congregation may be unaware of many of the ongoing issues and consensus will need to be built.
- Council took three minutes to individually consider the three options and what to do next. Council members then shared individually where they best aligned and their thoughts.
- Council members thoughts included contemplating the personal impacts of relocating, realistic timeframes, gathering more information from potential landlords, importance of informing congregation of process, what may be required from WPMF if we stayed at CCCC, impact on congregation, etc.

Council then moved on to a time for questions

- Council members discussed next steps, and many noted the importance of communicating with congregation. It was noted that the office and worship have different needs and concerns. Council considered what and how to share with congregation about the building. It may be necessary to suggest a solution so that the congregation has clearer aspects to consider. It may need to be discussed with the congregation that if we choose to stay at CCCC then we may need to participate in physically addressing issues. Rent is reasonable at CCCC. Some congregants may be confused about our plans and think that we are moving soon. A congregational meeting is necessary to better understand where the congregation is coming from such as their expectations and needs regarding a building space.
- It was also noted that the last congregational meeting did not provide a concrete direction. As well as considering where the Holy Spirit is directing council. The congregation may need to consider what kind of church we are, who we want to be, and what we need to be. A concern from the congregation may be about the uncertainty about where we are going and not necessarily why we would leave.

Next Steps

- Tim proposed that counsel prepare a written, formal, report that gives the history/background of why we are in our current situation. The report will discuss what happened last year and the reasons behind council's decisions regarding

meeting spaces. As well as generally outlining the problems with our current space and specifics about the search. May also be necessary to provide the congregation with the criteria for the building search.

- Council agreed that Tim will write a draft report within two weeks and send it to council to review. The report will then be distributed to the congregation prior to the congregational meeting. Report will be distributed by November 4th and congregational meeting will be on November 18th at 11:45 a.m. This meeting will not be a decision-making meeting.

Tim Martin Johnson concluded meeting with prayer at 9:08 p.m.