

# West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship

## Church Council Meeting Minutes

May 29, 2019

*All in Attendance:* Bryan Geib (HRC candidate, recording minutes), Jeff Knightley (Deacon), Ethan Tan (Elder), Tim Martin Johnson (HRC, Council Chair), Amanda Esh Bouwman (Elder), Mark Michalovic (Elder), Rebecca Weber (Deacon), Sheldon Rich (Elder), Pastor Lorie Hershey, Matt MacNeill (HRC)

Tim began meeting at 7:03 PM with prayer and a reflection on Matthew 6.

### **Committee Updates**

- HRC candidate to be affirmed at next congregational meeting Sunday, June 2.
- Elders are searching for a candidate.

### **Conference Affiliation**

- Tim MJ wrote a letter to Allegheny Conference. Allegheny received the letter with enthusiastic welcome.
  - We are invited to Allegheny Conference's yearly retreat at Laurelville Mennonite Retreat Center, Aug 2-4. Allegheny will introduce WPMF at that time but will not be voting on our official membership until the fall.
- Franconia Conference would like to talk further with WPMF leadership to kindly resolve our hurts and differences in the spirit of maintaining valued relationship and understanding. A date and time has yet to be determined.

### **Ad Hoc Building Committee**

- The Ad Hoc Building Committee was born out of a request by WPMF church council for volunteers who would be willing to represent WPMF within Calvary building leadership, such as the Trustees and the Calvary Center for Culture and Community (CCCC). This committee has joined with the building leadership in the decision-making process.
- The Trustees have designated an advisory committee, which has retained Partners for Sacred Places (PSP) to develop a research and study initiative and propose a plan of action for improvement, operation, and maintenance of the building and its programming.
  - The research and study of the building and programming, which will include interviews of building user groups, is to occur throughout Summer 2019, and findings and further recommendations are anticipated to be offered by early Fall 2019.
  - The recommendations will be evaluated by building leadership. Based on the choices made by building leadership in regard to these recommendations, a final plan will be developed and proposed by May 2020.
  - The UMC denomination has a voice regarding building management, and the ad hoc committee will continue to seek to understand UMC's wishes for the building and its use.
  - Building leadership is demonstrating understanding of the matters at hand, and is very likely to give serious consideration to the PSP recommendations.
- PSP has proposed the research and study initiative, which is estimated to cost \$20,000. To date, \$14,000 of this has been raised.
  - WPMF church council agrees to donate \$2,000 from the building fund that has been held in reserve for many years, and to extend to the congregation the opportunity for further contributions.
  - WPMF church council also proposes to draft a memorandum of understanding to document outstanding building issues of concern that have not yet been addressed

-Tim MJ will send out a congregational email containing a summary of the letter from PSP in advance of the congregational meeting.

### **Meeting Place Survey Results**

- The acoustics in the Common Place (CP) are challenging
- The evening services can be a challenge for families with children
- Neither option offers full accessibility
- The option of having Sunday school prior to the service may be explored
- Fairly strong positive and negative responses

### **Congregational Meeting 6/2/19**

- The intent is to capture all voices and responses, balanced with time for discussion among the attendees
- It needs to be stressed that we are not soliciting a vote on place or time of worship\
- Those who have not taken the survey are to be invited to speak first
- Ethan will prepare a word cloud of the survey results and summary graphics, which will be projected on the wall
- It should be emphasized that the letter from PSP to Calvary building leadership must be considered separately from the survey results and the conversation regarding the time and place of meeting.

The meeting will contain of the following parts:

- Affirmation of Bryan as a member of HRC
- Summary and Discussion of survey results for the Common Place
  - Begin with low charge questions: "What stood out to you?"
  - Ethan to present visuals of results
  - Invite congregational response and discussion
- Summary and Discussion of survey results for the evening service time
  - Begin with low charge questions: "What stood out to you?"
  - Ethan to present visuals of results
  - Invite congregational response and discussion
- Report on the Ad Hoc Building Committee and ongoing discussion
  - present the background on the formation and operation of the ad hoc committee
  - report on the ongoing conversation
  - report on the PSP proposal and the proposed contribution by WPMF
  - allow for responses and processing as a group.

Jeff will delegate a person to take minutes

Childcare to be confirmed

Snacks to be confirmed

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:50 PM