

**West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship**  
**Congregational Meeting Minutes**  
Sunday, December 15, 2019

Attendance: Peter Horst, Linford Martin, Kathie Sauder, Liz Hamilton, Sherri Michalovic, San Juan Jones, Amanda Esh- Bouwman, Linda Esh, Mel Esh, Tim Martin-Johnson, Carol Martin-Johnson, Ethan Tan (Elder), Katie Tan, Sylvia Horst, Rebecca Weber (Deacon), Cindy Cassel, Mark Michalovic, Sheldon Rich (Elder), Tim Martin Johnson, Jeff Knightly (Deacon), Carol Martin Johnson, Drick Boyd, Linford Martin, Pastor Lorie Hershey (Pastor), Matt MacNeill (HRC), Bryan Geib (HRC), Carol Buhrman (Deacon), Brenda Rich, Alex Esh Bouwman (moderator), Heather Davis-Jones (Administrative Assistant, Minute Recorder)

Carol Martin-Johnson began meeting at 11:39 a.m. with a centering for 1 minute.

Alex briefly explained that the first part of this meeting will be a conversation about stewardship and the Bible. The second part will be a discussion about the budget.

**Part One: Stewardship Discussion**

**Alex reads from Everence: What's your generosity model?**

- If you can choose what to have for breakfast or lunch today, you are wealthy. – Many have just one choice of food – some have none.
- If you can choose which TV show to watch today, you are wealthy. – Many cannot afford to have a TV or have no electricity to power a TV.
- If you can choose which car to drive to work today, you are wealthy. – Many have no motorized vehicle or even a bike.
- If you can choose whether to take a sick day or personal day off of work today, you are wealthy. – Many have no job, or no benefits that go with a job.
- If you can choose whether to take a shower or bath inside your house today, you are wealthy. – Many have no clean water or indoor plumbing.
- If you can choose whether to use credit to make a purchase today, you are wealthy. – Many can't qualify for credit or have no need for a bank because they have no disposable income. • If you can choose whether to send your child to school today, you are wealthy. – Many parents have no school to send their child to.
- If more than half of these choices are available to you ... you are wealthy.

**Attendees break into groups of three to discuss giving models or work individually on "I Am From"**

**Poem:**

- First fruits model
- Tithing model
- Sacrificial giving model
- Freewill giving model
- Kingdom economics model
- The Paul/Macedonian model

Attendees return to large group to discuss group thoughts.

It is noted that:

- WPMF pays a full-time pastor, people did not want to come to a church where they were always being asked money.
- Deacons took donation box out of service.
- Lack of sermons about stewardship . It is an important discussion to have
- Talking about money in the sermon hasn't always been tied to the church
- Most of the tithing done to the church has been for our own pastoral care. Gifts should support needs outside of the church
- Operating on a "Love Offering" was wrong and a bad year for "farmers" was a bad year for the pastor.
- We should give tithes but also do justice.
- It's important to give the church and community, giving is important but tithing is more than money

### **Part Two: Budget Discussion**

Rebecca thanks everyone for coming. Explains that the budget is very similar to the current budget. Rebecca reviews proposed budget.

- Currently, we anticipate a budget deficit of about \$10,000.
- Hopefully in response to our year end appeal, church members and attendees will give even more generously than usual in December.
- Administration costs went down because:
  - New computer was ordered last year and won't be needed in 2020 budget.
  - New administrative assistant has lower pay.

Rebecca noted that WPMF follows Mennonite Church USA guidelines for compensation.

- The distribution of missions giving between conference and other organizations will likely change as a result of our conference affiliation change. More will be asked for Allegheny Conference. WPMF is a wealthier church in the Allegheny conference. Other churches have an assumption of higher giving. Also, churches in Allegheny conference are very small.

### **Attendees Break into CDMs**

Budget passed.

### **Carol thanked everyone for coming and led everyone in prayer:**

God, who cares for us,  
 The wonder of whose presence fills us with awe.  
 Let kindness, justice and love shine in our world.  
 Let your will be done here as it in heaven.  
 Give us the food and the hope we need for today.  
 Forgive us our wrongdoing  
 As we forgive the wrongs done to us.  
 Protect us from pride and from despair  
 And from the fear and hate which can swallow us up.  
 In you is truth, meaning, glory and power,  
 While worlds come and go.  
 Amen.

Meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m