

Congregational Meeting
Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster
September 14, 2014

Facilitator: Don Hess

1. **Opening**—Milton Lehman led an opening hymn
2. **Leadership Slate**—Leadership Selection Committee presented a proposed slate for church year 2014-15. Sandy Miller and Gladys Horst listed as leaders of Mennonite Women should not be included. Deb Roedema and Deb Kraybill were added as leaders of Venture Club. Congregation affirmed the slate as presented. Thanks were extended to selection committee for their excellent job in filling positions.
3. **Budget**—Treasurer Phil Weaver and council chair Julia Schrock Rosenfeld presented a proposed budget for adoption.
 - a. \$15,000 for insulation upgrade and \$30,000 for new staff position were deleted from the previously published proposed budget because proposed revenue is down from last year. These items are on hold.
 - b. While our income last year was significantly less than budget our expenditures for 13-14 will likely come in around \$445,000 with income lagging at about \$439,000. We have about \$60,000 in reserve.
 - c. Outstanding principle for our mortgage on the Christian Ed wing is \$209,000 and will be paid off by December, 2019. Outstanding principle on the mortgage on the Grant Street property is \$129,000 and will be paid off 2026. Our monthly mortgage payments total \$4750.
 - d. Congregation approved the 2014-2015 budget as presented.
4. **Grant Street**—Steve Walter gave an update on the Grant Street project. Demolition of the rear part of the building should happen sometime this winter and parking lot construction should begin next spring.
 - a. While the project is definitely go, there are three stages of approval of design completion that will be coming from the city: First stage is when 60% of the design is completed, second when 90% is completed and final at 100% benchmark.
 - b. Building demolition will be done by BR Kreider. Tellus360, Penn Stone and Habitat may salvage some building materials but we will not receive any income from this.
 - c. Funding from PennVEST and money in our building fund left over from the fund drive for the dental clinic should cover the expenses of the project.
5. **Congregational Visioning, Restructuring and budgeting**—Council chair Julia Schrock Rosenfeld reported that council has finished a process of updating our structural document so that it reflects more closely how we actually conduct our affairs. We have also finished a congregational assessment that has helped us understand how we have changed and has given us a better idea of our current congregational profile. Council will look at ways we will need to change our structural document and reorganize staffing needs to better serve us. Julia asked for input from the congregation as to what we perceive as needs and priorities.
 - a. Volunteer “coaching”—how to use volunteers most effectively.
 - b. Worship Leading—focusing on ways to maintain a one congregation identity with two services.
 - c. Elder and general pastoral care—need for pastoral care and services to a growing and graying congregation that is facing more health and personal challenges.
 - d. Burial and memorial options—need to make some definite plans for a memorial garden or some physical way to remember those who have died. Also education on options of green burials.
 - e. Leadership terms of service—some terms of service for volunteer positions may be too long
 - f. Transportation system for members who do not drive.
 - g. Programming for young adults .

- h. Need for comfortable chairs in the sanctuary.
- i. Need for sound absorption in Parrot Gallery/Fellowship Room.
- j. Articulate welcoming for LGBTQ and other diversity.
- k. Leadership for Junior Hi and Senior Youth—need to foster relationships with our young people and connection points between them and the congregation
 - i. Youth pastor position as an option
 - ii. Venture Club and Junior Youth in danger of “falling through the cracks” due to lack of leadership
 - iii. Critical need to help young persons to build relationships among themselves and the congregation; need for interim plan until leadership structuring is worked out—perhaps assigning this to a current staff person.
 - iv. *Questions:* Where has discussion need for a youth pastor been coming from? Just parents? Why has the process not been more transparent? Why is it only coming before the congregation now? If we are to move on this, there needs to be congregational buy in.
 - v. *Response:* A task force has completed work on assessing the need for youth leadership and has made the recommendation to Staff Relations Committee. Staff Relations Committee agreed to the need and has passed it on to council. Council is the body that ultimately needs to consider budgetary implications and make a recommendation to the congregation. Chris Hoover Seidel will post findings of the task force in the Christian ed wing.

The current discussion is for the purpose of soliciting ideas and sentiments from the congregation so that there indeed will be buy in for whatever decisions are made.

- vi. Additional professional staff vs. Youth Pastor specifically—The original intent of council to float a budget line of \$30,000 was for the congregation to consider additional staffing in general which may or may not be specifically a youth pastor.
- vii. Buy in needed now (from concerned youth parent)—We are looking for buy in for youth leadership now. Volunteers from CMCL church community are not able to take on the responsibility. No one is looking at programming. Many children are coming into the age of Junior/Senior Youth. It’s insane to try to get volunteers to make long term commitment to be youth leaders. Needs are being addressed patchwork which is not sustainable.
- viii. *Question:* Is there nothing in current job descriptions to address the needs of youth? If we are to increase staff we have to justify what is or is not being done. Is current staff truly doing what they were hired to do? Does Staff Relations fully support the expressed need for additional staff?
- ix. *Response:* Director of Children and Youth job description does not include reasonability for Junior/Senior Youth programs. Both lead pastor and associate pastor job descriptions have notations of supporting youth programs with the idea being that the support would be for persons filling volunteer positions. Staff Relations does support the idea that additional staff is needed but recognizes that it is council (and ultimately congregation) that makes the decision, not Staff Relations. Once a decision is made for additional staff, Staff Relations takes on the task of finding someone for the position.

6. Conclusion—Julia thanked everyone for participation in conversation, particularly around the question of additional staff person. Visioning will be the main agenda item at council’s September meeting. Julia welcomed emails, calls, questions or comments from the congregation prior to that meeting. Council tries hard to be transparent and keep congregation up to date on what is going on.

7. Kudos to Don Hess—Julia thanked Don Hess for his three years serving the congregation as Congregational Convener.