

SALFORD MENNONITE CHURCH
CHURCH BOARD – Minutes
October 6, 2020

Members Present: Darin Benner, Ron Freed, Chris Miller, Becca Nagy, Randy Nyce, Hannah Richter, Jane Ruth, Dean Wimmer, Margaret Zook

Absent: Chris Miller

Also Present: Brad Alderfer, Maria Hosler Byler, Beth Yoder, Dorcas Lehman

1. **Devotions:** Hannah Richter led the board in a time of devotion. Hannah is recognizing the heaviness of the news and the political divide of the moment. She shared a blog post from Red Letter Christians. Hannah is recognizing in herself a loss of compassion for others since she has been isolated due to covid. Hannah read a passage called Fire in the Sky. The author shared the story of viewing the Perseid meteor shower while camping while at high elevation. Her neighbors near their campsite appeared to be from a different political perspective, but were very excited to learn about the meteor shower when she informed them what to watch for. The neighbors were very grateful for the experience and the author reflected on the pain and concern of the moment, and the call of Jesus to love even those who hate or persecute us. We will all need to forgive eventually if our country is to survive.

Hannah led the board in a time of prayer.

2. **Fiduciary:**

September Minutes: The September congregational board minutes were reviewed. The minutes were approved as presented.

Financials:

- A. **Church August 2020 reconciled and September 2020 unreconciled income & expense reports and balance sheets** – The September 2020 unreconciled financials show income moderately behind the same time 2019 year to date, but expenses are significantly behind 2019 year to date due to one unfilled staff position, PPP loan proceeds covering some expenses and reduced expenses due to the Covid shutdown. The board approved the August financials as presented.
- B. **Child Care balance sheet** – See update in later section.

3. **Discussion Items:**

- A. **Congregational LGBTQ+ Survey Summary:** A board member generated a summary document of the survey results with a few edits included by a few individuals along the way. The board reviewed the current version of the survey summary. The board affirmed the document for presentation to the congregation. The survey summary will be mailed to regularly participating members and attenders in the coming week. There will be an invitation in the newsletter to request the survey results summary if not received in the first mailing. Any questions on the survey results, or requests for further information from the survey should be directed to Board Chair or Vice Chair Dean Wimmer or Randy Nyce.
- B. **Leading and Ministering in a time of Great Polarization:** In the past two months the Pastoral team is increasingly aware of discontent and possible distancing from the congregation on the part of some, particularly around political differences and disagreement with the perceived direction of the congregation. Beth invited board members to reflect on their personal experience in this regard. Members see things being labeled as politicized that were never questioned before. Partisanship has become a challenge and divisive. How do we seek to be a witness for Jesus and to have a prophetic voice while honoring and receiving each other in care? The staff is considering how to structure worship with this tension. Beth is hoping to have some public conversation with differing viewpoints displayed in worship. Could safe conversations be had in multifaceted small groups? Is there a way to focus on a peaceful worshipful Sunday morning rather than a focus or connection to the news cycle? Is this a time to focus more on the hope of salvation through Christ and a daily walk with Jesus? What may inspire hope and comfort in one may be the opposite for another. It's the messiness of our time.

- C. **2021 Budget Update:** The board reviewed the budget draft for 2021 and advised no changes at this time. The board will do one more review of the 2021 budget draft at the November meeting when one additional month of 2020 financial information is available, and will approve the final budget draft for presentation to the congregation at this meeting.
- D. **SMCCC Finances:** Executive Director Christina Lynch reports that Child Care enrollment and staffing has recently stabilized at a lower level than before the Covid shutdown. There are presently 41 children enrolled, with 15 employees on staff. Funds in the balance sheet for Child Care have increased significantly with expenses and tuition income being balanced, but recent state grants received through the CARES act are increasing assets. Income and expenses were approximately equal for September 2020. The Child Care program has received \$66,000 in CARES act funding during the past three months. Christina believes that there will not be more CARES act funding available to the Child Care unless additional legislation is passed. Child Care does not have any additional financial requests from the Church at this time, and Child Care and Church have once again been sharing common expenses since July.
- E. **Crossroads Community Center Foundation Fund Request:** Crossroads Community Center, a Mosaic Mennonite Conference Related Ministry, has recently taken on Covid-19 relief response, focusing in the area of learning pods in the city of Philadelphia for children and families needing to be in virtual learning with limited or no internet access resources and supervision needed for working families. Crossroads submitted a foundation fund request for \$2,500 to support this effort. The board finance subcommittee made a recommendation to support the project. **The board affirmed supporting this request for Crossroad Community Center.**
- F. **Annual Fall Congregational Meeting:** The board discussed the need for a fall congregational business meeting. What should it look like in the time of social distancing and no large gathering? The suggestion is to consider a webinar format. What would be the option for those who do not have digital access? The board will review options and will consider what the agenda and budget affirmation ballot will look like at the November board meeting.
- G. **Guidelines for Calling a New Pastor:** The board began discussion on what the decision making process will look like for the board and congregation to approve a new pastor. The church bylaws do not specify a specific method of approval or a specific affirmation percent for a new Lead Pastor candidate. Co-chairs Randy Nyce and Margaret Zook suggest a group from the search committee will discuss possible affirmation models to present for further conversation and possible approval at the next board meeting. There is not a specific candidate to affirm at this time, but the hope is there may be in the coming months.

4. Reports/Updates:

- A. **Pastor's Reports:** Beth discussed the report of the most recent reopening committee meeting held on September 29th. **The board affirmed the opening of the building for groups of up to 25 for indoor events,** and for further staff conversation on opening up the sanctuary space for worship for larger groups.

5. Other Business: None.

6. Closing Prayer: Hannah closed in prayer.

7. Executive Session: The board met in a time of executive session following the board meeting.

Respectfully recorded by Brad Alderfer

Next Meeting: November 3, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.