

AMC Congregational Meeting Dec 18, 2022 Second Hour

Anne Horst Hanby presented the proposal.

Karl invited small group discussion of the proposal.

Karl identified members of the working group here who can respond to questions.

Q: How long do we talk about this proposal before we test for consensus?

Karl: At minimum two congregational meetings for a proposal. Earliest we'd come to consensus would be January meeting. The preschool wants an answer by February.

Q: Cong has power to affirm/veto all members. Why is that necessary?

Scott: Cong would affirm whole board with rest of Leadership Selection Slate.

Q: "Christian" Montessori means what? How does the school's Christian identity play out in the school? How does that align with our beliefs? Does the school do evangelism of children?

Anne: Informally and in practice this program has always been a place I think AMC would be comfortable with. Many AMC families have had children there. This is an opportunity to align the preschool with AMC's vision: by putting people from the congregation on the board.

I (Anne) has been working as business manager, Sarah Horst is director, Molly Kauffman is a teacher, two other teachers from Faith Mennonite. I think the Faith perspective is very congruent with Assembly. Never intended to be a proselytizing program.

Caleb: School plans to drop Christian from the name. To avoid any idea that this is an explicitly evangelical, proselytizing school. No faith based curriculum currently. There are kids from variety of faith backgrounds that attend the school.

Q: Context for model of this relationship between congregations and preschools? Is this similar to other models we are familiar with?

Anne: We looked at 8th St Mennonite and Hively Ave Mennonite. They do not have a separate identity. They are even more closely aligned with the congregation than in this proposal.

CCYC and Walnut Hill are quite different, not frames of reference.

Q: Curious about \$300-400 rent. Will that continue? Can this be written into the proposal?

Scott: We haven't talked a lot about it. We plan to keep it the same as it has been. **Yes I agree it should be written into the proposal.**

Q: What does sponsoring the preschool mean? Is the teacher salary adequate?

Caleb: Salary is commensurate with other child care programs in the area. We try to keep the preschool tuition as low as we can. The preschool is a tuition based financial model.

Scholarships available for families not able to afford. 2-3 kids at this point, this is the first year we have offered scholarships. There is no financial obligation from AMC. GCMS is assuming it will continue to be financially self sufficient.

Q: Should AMC be more financially involved in sponsoring the school?

Caleb: that could be a later discussion. We are not making that part of this proposal.

Q: How large would the school board be? Is there a particular number of students we want GCMS to have?

Anne: Board minimum as 3, 3-9 board size range. 30-35 students right now in two classrooms. About \$70,000 annual budget.

Caleb: would intend 7-9 board members

Q: How would we serve the wider community? How would the church coming on board help serve more than 2-3 students on scholarships.

Caleb: this is a tuition led model. Scholarships are grant funded not part of tuition model. If more funding available through grants or the congregation then more scholarships could be offered.

Anne: Several from this congregation have served as subs and volunteers. We have students who are not first language English speakers. We are open to partnerships to serve students.

Q: Glad to see how this is unfolding. Affirm consistency with mission of Assembly. I feel conflicted about removing the name Christian. I support removing the name Christian if that's the decision. Another option would have been to breathe different life into the term Christian.

Q: Assembly historically like to invent things and develop them ourselves. A little part of us takes pride in that. GCMS has existed in other locations with other leadership. Now it has found a home with us. Maybe we have some suspicion because we didn't invent the school. We have spiritual work to do to be embracing this.

Q: I want this building used. It has long been a question why should churches own property? When Walnut Hill was here, I was happy that our building got so much use. The pandemic chased us out of the building. I'm all for thinking of how to use this building again.

Sandy: Agree it's sad we can't use Christian without it meaning something we don't identify with. I've filled in at the preschool 2 or 3 times. I think the Montessori model has Christian origins. Richard Rohr talks about perennial tradition. I see the preschool operate in a different way than in public schools. Montessori is less punitive, less saying "no" to children. I.e "walk slower please" instead of "don't run". I see this school as upholding our values in how children are related to and allowed to be who they are.

Q: What is the preschool 's relationship with special Ed coop, making sure kids are ready for kindergarten?

Anne: that formal relationship with special Ed coop does not exist. We do sometimes use Oaklawn as a resource. We have been relying on background of staff with social work and education backgrounds.

Q: How is the State of Indiana involved?

Anne: Indiana has variety of options for child care providers. Walnut Hill and CCYC and growing Kids are licensed daycare centers. Another type is a registered ministry. Then legally licensed

exempt providers, and child care homes. This particular model fits this preschool well. It would be possible to relate to the state not at all as long as we aren't open five days a week. We think AMC would not want that, this allows for some state oversight.

Karl at 11:50 noted the time, children coming out of Sunday school.

Karl: The working group will continue their work, bring proposal back to January meeting possibly with changes. We will then begin to see if there is consensus to move forward with this. If you have other questions please bring them to the working group.

Karl closed in prayer.

Minutes by Scott Coulter