

# Congregational Meeting Minutes

11/20/22

Facilitated by Jodi Beyeler on Zoom

1. Welcome, Introduction (Jodi Beyeler) Jodi started with a land acknowledgement and thoughts on gratefulness.
2. Second Reading & Consensus Decision: [Proposal to join the Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery Repair Network](#) (John & Lois Nafziger)  
John and Lois Nafziger presented about the Anabaptist movement focused on Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery. To continue the dismantling work, congregations are invited to join the network and our congregation's ministry team is requesting that the congregation join and work at the seven action steps listed in the proposal. More than a dozen people have expressed interest in working on the team.

There was general affirmation. One asked what connection we will have to Native groups and John outlined several possible connections. Norm Kauffmann's connection to the work in Shishewana was noted.

Consensus was tested using the poll feature on Zoom. The proposal was supported with all 5s by the participants.

3. First Reading & Discussion: [Proposal to change the elder selection process](#) (Karl Shelly)

Karl described the elder selection process a number of years ago, which was more public and very vulnerable. He said that the process is "Not something they do. It's something we do" and that's a core value. The process was changed to reduce the vulnerability and hurt by empowering small group reps to do the work on behalf of others.

Currently, consensus on elders is often difficult because there are so many good choices. Also, people often bowed out of the process after not being picked multiple times.

Questions & Comments:

- How does the proposal handle the question of candidates who are willing to serve as elder but not as chair, or willing to serve as chair? Answer: each position would be drawn separately.
- It was asked whether this will be taken to small groups in addition to the conversation in this meeting. This was part of a discussion at reps last year and has been on the shelf for a bit. Answer: yes, small group reps will be reviewing responses and providing feedback.
- After breakout discussions, one person said it's "odd" to elect people with lots and urged us to take it seriously but not too much.
- One rep said they love the reps meeting, but also struggle with how they have to parse and parse and parse. Something has to give and this is better.

4. Discussion on COVID-19 and current masking policy

Ways to be more inclusive of participants with a different calculation of risk in congregational life in light of COVID risks and current mask policy (Scott Coulter)

- For some of us, gathering in person with a mask-optional policy is a relief, joy.
- For others of us, joining in-person worship without universal mask requirement involves significant discomfort, ambivalence including those with pre-existing health conditions
- Difficult choices faced by those with different risk-consciousness
  - Am I going to join worship via Zoom this week? Although it feels like being on Zoom means missing out on things I deeply value about corporate worship.
  - Am I going to join worship in person this week? Although I'm concerned that in-person attendance without a mask requirement exposes me/my family to an uncomfortable degree of risk.

Recent pastoral team conversations:

- Are there ways to make worship services more inclusive and participatory for those joining via Zoom?
- Can we plan occasional services or events that would happen outdoors, or that would require universal masking?

This was discussed in breakout rooms.

5. Update: Goshen Christian Montessori School process (Scott Coulter)

A working group is drafting a proposal to bring to a December Leadership Group and congregational meeting.

6. Closing: Pastoral prayer (Scott Coulter)

Minutes recorded by Marshall King

Leadership Group approved these minutes at 12/6/22 meeting.