

## Leadership Group Minutes

February 6, 2024

7:00pm at AMC

Present: Anna Yoder Schlabach, Scott Coulter, Cheryl Shreiner, Karl Shelly, Trevor Daugherty, Randy Roth, Leon Bauman, Alex Graber Neufeld, Sara Morris, Ben Sywulka, Becky Overholt (minute taker).

### Opening

1. Opening- Trevor
2. January 9, 2024 Leadership Group Minutes. *Minutes approved as amended.*
3. January 21, 2024 Congregational Meeting Minutes. *Minutes approved as amended.*

### Discussion/Action

4. Scott's Sabbatical
  - a. Approval was given for Scott's sabbatical from May 20-Aug 19, 2024. Scott will write something up to present at the April congregational meeting.
  - b. Some discussion re: if there isn't a fourth pastor by the time he takes his sabbatical. It would be good to discuss this again in April. If pastor interviews are taking place, PT would hope that Scott could come out of sabbatical briefly to be available to interview candidates, if needed.
5. Gwen Gustafson-Zook Information Sheet-The job description for Congregational Spiritual Director was presented. How do we want to utilize Gwen this year? We typically let the congregation know that she exists through an Aline blurb.
6. Leadership Group Spring Retreat
  - a. *When + where would we like to do a spring retreat?* April 20, 2024 in the late afternoon/evenings. Space: Basement of Dennis/Susan Landis' place.
  - b. *Might this be a good time for a Leadership Group Self-Evaluation (as a follow up from PCR Recommendations)?*
    - \*Vision for the next 3-5 years
    - \*Review LG role and structure - more needs to be done here, in terms of LG self-evaluation
  - c. *Who is willing to work on planning/organizing the retreat?* Cheryl Shreiner & Anna Yoder Schlabach have volunteered to coordinate logistics
7. LGBTQ+ Reparations First hour on April 7
  - a. What are the next steps? Initially driven by Norm Kauffmann's concern that some sort of response and apology be forthcoming. Karl has received some feedback that this may not be wanted by some individuals affected. It feels more complex now. Might Anna Beth Roeschley from BMC be willing to speak and/or provide counsel?
  - b. Who are we tasking with planning and leading this?Karl spoke of putting together an outline with a few others of what the service might look like and then go from there. The outline should be sent out via email to LG before the next meeting.
8. Next Congregational Meeting
  - a. *February 18, 2024 (7pm @AMC)*

*b. Agenda: 2024 Spending Plan (2nd Reading); Scott's sabbatical*

9. Conversation about Lisa Schirch's presentation

LG spent time talking about feedback they have heard and some thoughts. Some felt blindsided. Warnings about content would have been helpful. Others who weren't Mennonite wondered why we were doing this? There was no time afterwards to process.

### **Information/Reporting**

10. School Support Committee Update

We have made progress in putting together resources for an informational second hour on Feb 25 designed to get the congregation on the same page about the complex realities that touch on challenges to public education in Indiana as well as a basic understanding of how Bethany tuition works and the role of vouchers and church scholarship programs. We are having ongoing conversation about what we hope to accomplish in subsequent second hours. Discussion ensued on tending to this carefully.

11. Search Committee Update

The pastoral search committee has narrowed our focus to several applicants and is conducting initial interviews by Zoom. After the interviews, we are scheduled to meet as a committee on Feb 12 to map out next steps. A second round of interviews seems likely before identifying a candidate of choice. Our conference minister Doug Luginbill is not aware of others who plan to apply, though we can still accept additional applicants until identifying a candidate of choice.

12. Welcome Statement Committee Update

- In February, we will be sharing a questionnaire designed to collect congregational input and storytelling with small group reps, and with the congregation at large. We hope to attend the March small group reps meeting to hear some of the responses to the questionnaire in person. We hope to use the April congregational meeting for "Stage 3": presenting the resources we've gathered and sharing theological resources and questions from our resource gathering for congregational discernment. After this we would "hack together a draft statement as a committee, bring the statement to focus groups for revision, and then in a fall 2024 congregational meeting we hope to have a first reading on a new statement.
- Our committee also gave our blessing to Faith Mennonite to create an "inclusion pole" (like a peace pole) that would be located at the meetinghouse.

13. Idea Fragment: Monthly Ministry Team Reports

Idea fragment: Reaching out to all the ministry teams throughout the course of a year, and invite each to share an update to the Leadership Group. The hope is that this would be an opportunity to better connect with more ministry teams, and provide space for directly hearing more of what is going on within our community. Note: There are several groups we regularly connect with based on set agenda items, but there are many we don't hear from at all unless they reach out directly.

14. Pastors' Reporting

### **Creative Exercise**

15. Elder Selection Process + Leadership Group Gift Discernment

Ben Sywulka led the group in a creative exercise utilizing the 6 styles of leadership gifts represented by different colored hats. Ben reviewed the different colors & the style they represent. In groups of three, identify the different hats for the people in your group.

- a. What gifts are currently present among the Leadership Group team? Pretty well rounded in the current LG.
- b. Which of these gifts are continuing, being lost, needed? What we notice: Connecting to the older population. Need for female representation. Need people who are good at identifying risks and finding creative ways of doing things. We are lacking in representing families w/ teens. Thinking outside the box is somewhat lacking.

16. **Closing:** Karl Shelly closed the meeting with a prayer for the congregation

**Meeting adjourned at 9:40pm**

**Executive Session**

Minutes approved by LG on March 5, 2024