

Assembly Mennonite Church

Congregational Meeting 3/17/24 @ 7 PM on Zoom

Facilitator- Marshall King; Minutes- Scott Coulter

Two agenda items:

- Member Loans Report from Finance Committee (Larry Gautsche),
- Search Committee Report (Bethany Swope, Tom Kauffman)

Marshall opened the meeting with prayer, using the Prayer for the Faithful by St. Patrick

1. Report from Finance Committee (Larry Gautsche, chair)

- Thanks to two generous gifts and three loans from members, we were able to pay off the balance of our Everence mortgage as of March 15th. 100% of building debt now held by members of Assembly, totaling just over \$126,000. Effective interest rate of just over 1%.
- Balance in Capital Fund is currently approx. \$55,000. This gives us flexibility to address needed air handling improvements.
- Finance Committee anticipates ending 2024 with \$86,000 debt to members.

Marshall asked if there were any questions or comments. A participant voiced a “big thank you to donor and loaners!”

2. Bethany Swope and Tom Kauffman for the Pastoral Search Committee @7:06pm

- Tom named the members of the search committee: Bethany & Tom (co-chairs), Anne Horst Hanby, Kathy Meyer Reimer, Jonathan Schramm, Karl Shelly (pastor)
- As shared on March 10, Moriah Hurst is recommended for our candidate for Pastor of Child, Youth, and Adult Faith Formation. She has participated at Assembly in the past when a Goshen College student and AMBS student. She’s served internationally with Mennonite Mission Network and as a pastor in the US. She has about 12 years of pastoral experience. Moriah is currently Pastor of Nurture and Faith Formation at Park View in Harrisonburg, VA. In that role she has focused on children and youth, as well as general pastoral tasks shared with the rest of the team. Moriah served in Australia 2008-2015 with Mennonite Mission Network, where her ministry, teaching, and community work focused on youth and young adults.
- Bethany reported that the Search Committee sees in Moriah: a clear passion for faith formation, for incorporating children and youth in life of the congregation, love of rituals of the church, sense of faith formation as lifetime pursuit, keen interest in collaborative pastoral team. Her references have no concerns with her interactions with children and

youth. Moriah sees youth as not merely the future of the church but as the present church. She desires to integrate them fully into life of the congregation, and to invite adults in the congregation to collaborate in that process.

- Candidating Weekend is April 12-14.
- The congregation will formally test for consensus on whether to invite Moriah Hurst to join the Assembly Pastoral Team at a congregational meeting on April 21. (The announcement and candidating weekend count as “first reading” for consensus purposes).

Questions from the congregation:

- When is Moriah’s likely start date?

Bethany: To be determined. Her final Sunday at Park View is already scheduled. Moriah was already planning to move to Goshen area because of her marriage engagement. We hope to have information about her likely start date relatively soon.

- Jep Hostetler named that Joyce and Jep are fully affirming of Moriah’s coming and her marrying their ex son-in-law. They have no reservations about Moriah’s coming as our pastor.

Bethany clarified: Moriah is engaged to be married to Doug Kaufman.

- Bethany asked how many present in this meeting are already familiar with Moriah?

Tom shared: Moriah was baptized at Assembly, and also was ordained in this congregation when she went into ministry with Mennonite Mission Network.

Another participant shared: When Moriah was here before (as a college student?), she helped with the JYF program at Assembly. I enjoyed working with her and learned to know her pretty well during that time.

Moriah was an apprentice elder, an AMBS intern (for her ministry in the church year), and worked with the junior youth at Assembly.

- Timeline for beginning of small groups oversight committee?

Scott Coulter: Leader Selection Committee is working on that.

- Marshall: Thanks to those who joined us from GA, FL, and NM along with those of us in Goshen! Thanks to the Search Committee for the time and care they have put into their work!

- Question: Were there a good number of applicants for the position?

Tom: There are far more congregations looking for pastoral leadership in the wider church than there are candidates looking for opportunities. Even given the kinds of job description we had (not full time), we were blessed with probably more candidates than the average congregation would get. We had a couple of really good quality candidates which made our work a lot easier.

- Question: Karl and Anna had known Moriah before. Had Scott known her?

Scott: I had interacted with Moriah in wider church workshops, etc. But I hadn't known her personally.

Anna: I remember her from before, the pastoral team had a chance to interact on Zoom.

Karl: Remembers Moriah from being in small group with her.

Marshall noted: Scott will likely be on sabbatical when Moriah starts.

Marshall offered a closing prayer from Padraig O Tuama.