

2014 Elders Minutes

January 8, 2014, 7 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Bill Hochstetler chaired this meeting, due to Dave Sickle's absence.

Mag led our meditation by sharing from her prayer experience at St. Francis woodland on Mt. Subasio and hearing God's voice say: "I have the final word, and it is 'Yes!'"

2. Personal and pastoral sharing was followed by prayers.

3. The Dec. 11 minutes were accepted.

4. Thought was given to expanding existing small groups to include persons who may be interested in a fellowship group. A hymn-singing small group will be started this month as well.

5. Suggestions were made to:

a. audio-record and/or take notes during the panel discussions of the Sunday school interterm Jan. 12-Feb. 9.

b. ask the Mission Commission to include a report from Immigration Task Force during a Sunday morning Moment in Mission spot.

c. schedule a new round of GriefShare sessions led by Marian Schwabbauer and Marilyn Rose this spring.

d. attend to several of the needs expressed in the 2012 senior survey around parking, elevator use, and other issues.

6. The next meeting is on January 22. Karla will bring devotions.

January 22, 2014, 7 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Mag Richer Smith, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1 Karla led us in thinking about the great part a sense of community plays in our experience of God and the church. How might the Holy Spirit be calling us to provide for this need among young adults, as well as all ages in our congregation?

2 Personal and pastoral concerns were shared, followed by a time of prayer.

3 Minutes of the January 8 meeting were accepted.

4 There was a brief report on several additions to small groups.

5 Consideration was given to needs expressed in the 2012 survey of senior members:

- We suggested a sign be posted alerting people that hearing devices are available and also that large print bulletins are available.
- Three large print bulletins will be given to the usher at each door to hand to persons who need them.
- Dave will call Shirley Stutzman, greeter chairperson, asking her to assign one of the greeters each week to operate the elevator. A bulletin announcement will alert people that an elevator attendant is available each Sunday morning.
- Dave reported that the trustees are continuing discussion of how to revamp parking areas.

6 There was brief discussion of a possible Wellness Commission for our congregation, and the addition of a heart defibrillator in the building. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

7 The next scheduled meeting is February 12, 2014. Dave will bring devotions.

February 26, 2014, 7 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Cathy shared images of Mennonite Brethren believers in southern India from Paul and David Wiebe's new book, "Behold the Love of God", inspiring us to remember and pray for our faith family around the world.
2. Personal and pastoral concerns were shared, followed by prayer.
3. Minutes of the Feb. 12 meeting were approved.
4. Julie Bartel and Dianne Brenneman have agreed to serve on a Wellness Committee that will promote holistic health in our congregation.
5. We discussed issues raised in the recent intergenerational Interterm sessions.
It was agreed to offer a big thank you to the Education Commission for arranging the interterm.
6. Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting is on March 12, after the Lenten service.

March 12, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Our devotional time was provided by the Lenten service.
2. We shared personal and pastoral petitions, and offered prayer.
3. Minutes of the Feb. 26 meeting were approved.
4. Additional names were suggested to serve on a Wellness Commission for FMC. Marian will make a contact.
5. A suggestion has been received to designate a "mutual aid coordinator" to link church people having practical skills and services to other members who need those services. Bob will explore interest in this position with the person who made this suggestion.
6. We discussed a need that has arisen for funds from the Community Compassion Fund. It was agreed to disburse \$400 in the next two months to meet the need.
7. A few minutes were taken to note ways that our goals for the year are being met within the congregation, for which we thank God.
8. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting is on March 26, after the Lenten service.

March 26, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Our devotional time was provided by the Lenten service.
2. We brought personal and pastoral concerns and prayed together.
3. Minutes of the March 12 meeting were approved.
4. Marian reported that Bob Summers has agreed to serve on the Wellness Committee. She will invite the group of three: Julia Bartel, Dianne Brenneman and Bob Summers to meet with the pastors and elders at a future meeting.
5. Bob will continue to work on the "mutual aid coordinator" concept, linking FMC people having practical skills and services to other members who need those services.
6. There is ongoing need for resources from the Community Compassion Fund.
Mag will inform generous donors who have been contributing to meet these needs that they are now being welcomed to contribute through the congregation's Community Compassion Fund.
7. The meeting concluded at 9:00. Our next meeting will be April 8 (Tuesday) at 7 p.m. Noreen will bring devotions.

April 8, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Present: Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler

1. For devotions Noreen offered thoughts from The Saints' Guide to Happiness by Robert Ellsberg and Matthew 11:28 on relinquishing concerns, burdens, pet obsessions, and dear possessions, with the promise of greater good to be gained.
2. We shared personal and pastoral concerns and prayed together.
3. Minutes of the March 26 meeting were approved.
4. Esther Johnson has agreed to serve as a mutual aid coordinator for our congregation, helping people who need practical services find other members who could offer those services. We will invite her to meet with us in May to discuss details.
5. We reviewed small group formation, and Bob will explore options with two people who may still be interested in a group.
6. The newly-formed Wellness Committee—Julie Bartel, Dianne Brenneman, and Bob Summers-- will be invited to meet with the pastors and elders at our April 23 meeting to work together on clarifying the committee's purpose and goals.
7. The meeting concluded at 8:30. Our next meeting will be April 23 at 7 p.m. Bill will bring devotions.

April 23, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Bill led us in thinking about restored health, reciting Mark 10:46-52, the account of Jesus healing blind Bartimaeus.
 2. At the beginning of our meeting we met with the Wellness Committee and shared ideas of what attentiveness to Wellness could entail. We blessed this new group of Dianne Brenneman, Julia Bartel and Bob Summers to be an envisioning group and to come back to us when they decide on areas where they will focus.
 3. Personal and pastoral concerns were shared and lifted to God in prayer.
 4. It was noted that Brian Rumsey has moved his church membership to Peace Mennonite Church in Lawrence, KS, where he and Chepina now live.
 5. We projected figures for the 2014-2015 Elder Commission spending plan
- The meeting ended at 9:00. The next meeting will be on **Thursday, May 15**, with devotions led by Larry

May 15, 2014, 7:00 p.m. at Karla's home

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Larry shared thoughts on listening in love to differing views, with an openness to adjust our thinking.
2. We lifted up personal and pastoral concerns in prayer.
3. Corrections were made to the April 23 minutes: Brian Rumsey will move his church membership to Manhattan (KS) Mennonite Church, where he and Chepina attend.
4. We began discussing what it might mean for FMC to declare itself as a welcoming, supportive congregation. We will read materials Mag will provide and continue discussion at our next meeting.
5. Elders and pastors will send Dave the dates they'll be gone this summer and he will select meeting dates for our June, July and August meetings.
6. The meeting adjourned at 9:30. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 28. Marian will bring devotions.

May 28, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Marian focused the devotional on Mark 6:7-11, Jesus instructions to carry the Good News to people. Are we willing to listen to Jesus' words of welcome, even though some will reject them? And shake off the dust if not received?
2. Prayers were offered for personal and congregational needs.
3. The May 15 minutes were reviewed and accepted.
4. Discussion continued from the last meeting on the possibility of FMC moving toward being a welcoming congregation for all.
5. The Community Compassion Fund has received a request, which was heard and approved.
6. Dates selected for the elder/pastor summer meetings and persons to bring devotions are: June 11, Mag; July 17, Bob; August 13, Karla; August 27, Dave.
7. The meeting adjourned at 9:15.

June 11, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Our devotions were led by Mag, reading Matthew 11:28 and inviting us to sing "Come Bring your Burdens to God" and to release our burdens as well as those known to us from among the FMC congregation.
2. Personal and pastoral needs were shared and lifted up in prayer.
3. Dates were noted in which pastors and elders will be out of town this summer and consideration given to providing pastoral care during those times.
4. The May 28 minutes were approved.
5. Discussion centered on planning for the coming year in the life of the church.
6. The meeting adjourned at 9:00. The next meeting will be on July 17, with Bob bringing devotions.

July 17, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Present: Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Bob brought an article by Richard Kauffman in *Leader* magazine for our meditation, describing authentic Christian community as agreeing on core values, accepting diversity, and finding ways to live in charity.
2. There was a time of prayer for personal and pastoral needs.
3. The June 11 minutes were approved.
4. We considered ways to support parents in our midst who offer foster care.
5. A request has come to our Community Compassion Fund for medical help, and \$100 was approved, which Karla will disburse.
6. Discussion continued on plans for the coming year in the life of the church.
7. Dates were set for the Elders' Picnic (tentatively August 29 at 6:30) and for the annual Elder Retreat (September 6, 9:00 a.m. at Bill and Rosie Hochstetler's home.) The pastors shared dates they will be on vacation: (Karla: July 23-29; Bob and Mag: July 31-August 9)
8. The meeting adjourned at 9:20. The next meeting will be on August 13, with Karla bringing devotions.

August 13, 2014

Present: Bob Smith, Mag Richer Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber, Cathy Gingerich, Marian Schwabbauer, Bill Hochstetler, David Sickles

1. Sarah Kanagy Gingerich presented the new FMC website. She walked the group through the navigation of the website showing us its various features and capabilities. The pastor/elder team was thrilled with this new mission tool. And we are excited about this website's potential to build community and facilitate communication. We are very grateful to Sarah for the time, passion and energy she had given to the website's development.
2. Personal joys and concerns were shared. Congregational joys and concerns were shared all were lifted in prayer.
3. Minutes of the July 16 meeting were approved.
4. Bob gave a brief report/ update on the wellness committee and will email a document to each of the elders. The wellness committee will meet with the elder body in a Sept. meeting.
5. Bob passed out questions for the elders retreat for us to review, with changes or additions to be made at the next meeting.
6. Pastoral salaries were reviewed and approved.

Next meeting is scheduled for August 27.

August 27, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Present: Cathy Gingerich, Noreen Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Mag Richer Smith, Marian Schwabbauer, Dave Sickles, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Larry Swartzendruber

1. Devotions were led by Dave; he read from an article in Mennonite World Review reminding us that true discipleship may well include the ultimate price, our very lives given in death as Jesus died.
2. Personal and pastoral concerns were shared and we joined in a time of prayer.
3. The August 13 minutes were approved.
4. Preparations were made for the annual elder/pastor half-day retreat (Sept. 6, 9:00 a.m. at Bill's home) by reviewing questions to guide the time together.
5. We reviewed several of the 2013-2014 goals for pastoral care in our church family and ways we tried to reach those goals.
6. Dates were noted for annual church retreat at CCC Camp (Oct. 18 and 19), and various dates that the pastors will be away: Karla: Sept. 19-21 (AMBS workshop) and Oct. 24-26 (friend gathering); Bob and Mag: Sept. 29-Oct. 3 (silent retreat), October 4-5 family celebration and undetermined dates in November (surrounding the birth of their grandchild).
7. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.
8. The next meeting after the Sept. 6 retreat will be on Sept. 10 with Cathy bringing devotions.

September 10, 2014

Present: Mag Richer Smith, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Dave Sickles, Cathy Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Marian Schwabbauer, Larry Swartzendruber, and Mim Miller.

1. Devotions: Karla
2. Wellness Committee: Bob Summers and Dianne Brenneman explained the ideas of the Committee for involving FMC participants in various wellness activities. The elders and pastors affirmed the Committee members for the excellent work done so far.
3. Personal and Pastoral Sharing: The elders and pastors shared happiness and concerns in their personal lives. The elders reported on pastoral visits and other matters. There was a time of prayer.
4. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the elders' meeting on August 27 were approved.
5. Chair and Secretary: Dave Sickles agreed to be the chair for the coming year. Bill Hochstetler agreed to record the minutes.

6. Immigration Task Force: There was a discussion of the need for a chair and additional members for the Immigration Task Force. Dave will make some contacts on behalf of the elders.
7. Goals for 2014 – 2015: The notes from the elders retreat (September 6) and an initial set of suggestions from Mag were reviewed (focus on leaning). The elders and pastors will consider this further at the next meeting.
8. The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 24.

Sept. 24, 2014

1. Karla opened the meeting with a prayer
2. The Pastor / Elder group met with conference pastor Tim Detweiler.
3. Personal and congregational joys and concerns were lifted up in prayer
4. Sarah Gingerich was approved as the contact person to be listed on the State of Iowa Articles of Incorporation.
5. Meeting adjourned 9 PM
6. Next Meeting Oct 8, 2014

October 8, 2014

Present: Mag Richer Smith, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Dave Sickles, Cathy Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Marian Schwabbauer, Larry Swartzendruber, and Miriam Miller.

1. Devotions: Marian shared some writings about poetics and Pietism and also from the devotional book, *"Before the Door of God."*
2. Personal and Pastoral Sharing: The elders and pastors shared happiness and concerns in their personal lives. Reports on pastoral visits were shared and there was a time of prayer.
3. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the elders' meeting on September 28 were approved.
4. Immigration Task Force: Dave reported that Jim Grossnickle-Batterton agreed to chair this task force. Additional names were suggested as potential additional members. Dave will check about their interest in serving on this task force.
5. Goals for 2014 – 2015: Attached is a final draft for discussion at the next meeting of the Administrative Cabinet.
6. Delegates – 2015 Convention: Bob mentioned that we should be thinking about the appointment of 3 delegates to the Mennonite Church USA convention in July of 2015. The delegates are likely to start receiving materials in January.
7. Compassion Fund: A compassion fund need was discussed and approved.
8. The next meeting will be Wednesday, October 22, 2014.

October 22, 2014

Present: Mag Richer Smith, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Dave Sickles, Bill Hochstetler, Marian Schwabbauer, Larry Swartzendruber, and Miriam Miller.

1. Devotions: Larry shared a reading about the fall season, which led to a number of comments about seasons and the seasons of life.
2. Personal and Pastoral Sharing: The elders and pastors shared comments and concerns in their personal lives. The pastors reported on pastoral visits and other matters. There was a time of prayer.
3. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the elders' meeting on October 8 were approved.
4. Delegates – 2015 Convention: There was discussion about the need to appoint 3 delegates to the Mennonite Church USA convention. The convention dates are June 30 to July 5. The convention location is Kansas City.
5. The next meeting will be Wednesday, November 12, 2014.

November 12, 2014

Present: Mag Richer Smith, Bob Smith, Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Dave Sickles, Cathy Gingerich, Bill Hochstetler, Marian Schwabbauer, Larry Swartzendruber, and Miriam Miller.

1. Devotions: Miriam shared a reading from Martha Nobel – “God’s Opportunity to Bless” – a reflection on the opportunities offered when changes are occurring.
2. Personal and Pastoral Sharing: The elders and pastors shared personal comments and concerns. The pastors reported on visits, congregational concerns, and other matters. There was a time of prayer.
3. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the elders’ meeting on October 22 were approved.
4. Small Groups / Bible Study Groups: Responses from the congregational survey were reviewed and discussed. Suggestions were offered on how to facilitate and encourage the formation of Bible study groups and new small groups. Marian will create a survey for small groups and we will seek a leader for the Bible Study.
5. Pastoral Transition: Responses to the retirement announcement by Mag and Bob were discussed, along with thoughts about how their remaining time with us could be used best for them and the congregation.
6. Delegates – 2015 Convention: There was continued discussion about the need to appoint 3 delegates to the Mennonite Church USA convention. A few possibilities were discussed. The convention dates are June 30 to July 5. The convention location is Kansas City.
7. Town Hall Meeting: The “town hall meeting” hosted by Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church and led by Mennonite Church USA moderator Ervin Stutzman was discussed.
8. The next meeting will be Wednesday, December 10.

12/10/14

Present: Karla Stoltzfus, Bob Smith, Mag Richer Smith, Larry Swartzendruber, Miriam Miller, Marian Schwabbauer, and Cathy Gingerich

1. The meeting was led by Larry in Dave’s absence.
2. Meditation: Bob shared the editorial from 'The Leader' by Richard Kaufman about *letting go*, and holding out hope for a new future. We were encouraged to have the courage trust to do so. This is especially timely with Bob and Mag recently sharing the news of their retirement.
3. A number of personal and congregational joys and concerns were shared followed by prayer.
4. Marian shared with us the drafts of two surveys she has developed. One survey is for those in the congregation who expressed interest in a Bible Study, and one is for those who expressed interest in a Small Group. These will be sent out soon.
5. We discussed sending 3 delegates to the church-wide Assembly in Kansas City, as well as the financial reimbursement for our delegates’ expenses. The congregation will cover costs for registration, lodging, a stipend for meals, and transportation.
6. Time was spent discussing Bob and Mag’s remaining time and ending time with the congregation. This will be an on-going agenda item for us in the next months.
7. We spent a few minutes discussing the mutual aid fund.
8. The meeting was adjourned. Our next meeting will be 1/14/15 with Mag leading devotions.