

MINUTES FOR ASSEMBLY MENNONITE CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING (DRAFT)
SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2023, 7pm

Agenda

- 2nd reading of Montessori school proposal
- 2nd reading of elder selection process
- 1st reading of 2023 spending plan

2nd reading of Montessori school proposal

- **Caleb Morris** shared about the project. It is recommended that Assembly become a sponsoring church for Montessori Christian School. Why? Because Assembly values sharing resources, Assembly has classrooms that can be used for childhood education, Assembly has leadership resources, Assembly has a good relationship with the school, Assembly families have sent children to the preschool and have had good experiences, preschool is one way that Assembly can offer resources to the broader community.
- The preschool would continue to operate as a separate nonprofit corporation with its own governing board. The Assembly leader selection committee would select the majority of school board members, and Assembly can veto any school board member selection.
- The preschool will include in all of its literature: “a ministry of Assembly Mennonite Church”.
- What has changed since last reading? Clarification on what role the congregation plays regarding the preschool.
- **Scott Coulter** says there is no data as of yet as to what insurance will cost. Increasing liability insurance, especially sexual abuse coverage, is recommended. The church has applied for that, and the church is doing a general review. The school has its own insurance that is being reviewed.

PASSED/APPROVED

2nd reading of elder selection process

Eric Yordy shared:

- Right now there are 25 small groups and 25 small group reps, and there are many qualified people who would like to be elders. The current elder selection process can be vulnerable, and people who are not selected may feel hurt.
- Small groups will continue to nominate two people to the position, and Leader Selection Committee will ask those nominated if they are willing to be an elder.
- Proposed change: Two quick questions: Are they well-qualified, and are they a good fit in this current time and with this current group. The key is having two-thirds of small groups agree that they are well-qualified and a good fit. Then, people’s names would go into a random draw of sorts, so people who were not picked would not know if they were rejected or if they were not picked because of “luck of the draw.”
- Concerns regarding diversity on the elder team, randomness, confidentiality and vulnerability, and difficulty in understanding the process were discussed and addressed.

PASSED/APPROVED

1st reading of 2023 spending plan (John Nafziger)

- Based on pledges, 2023 looks really good.
- We made a big kind of aspirational budget this year, and pledges more than cover that.
- Four more people pledged this year than last year; 12 of the pledgers have not pledged before.
- We are on pace to pay off the mortgage way early—March of 2026 with only minimum payments, but could pay off this year or even next, depending on what contributions we have.

Budget: Larry Gautsche

- Budget cuts from 2019 into 2020, so the new budget is trying to get back to 2019 levels.
- Increased funds to MCUSA and Central District Conference.
- Moves funds for local needs into spending plan to make room in 2 percent fund for reparations giving.
- 50 percent increase for the total of missions beyond Assembly.
- Supportive Communities Network (SCN) and Anabaptist Disabilities Network funds were left at 2022 levels—there were no requests from those groups.

Concerns

- Are we paying down our mortgage too quickly?
- Cost of natural gas has increased; money budgeted for natural gas may be low.

Respectfully submitted by Jeannette Hughes

Approved by LG on 2/7/23