

## **Annual Business Meeting Minutes – January 10, 2024**

**Opening and Devotions:** Church Chair Jerry Reimer called the meeting to order on Wednesday, January 10, 2023 and 7:00 p.m. with 34 members present. The lamp was lit, symbolizing the presence of God at the meeting. Sarah Regier led the group in devotions and an exercise in spiritual rituals and practices focusing on God's Blessings in the past year at FMC.

**Meeting Minutes:** The minutes of the 2023 January 11 annual meeting and special meeting from September 10, 2023 were printed in the report and accepted as printed.

**Deacons Report:** Don Esau said his past three years as a deacon were a meaningful experience. He thanks the congregation for their prayers and guidance as the Deacons work with Pastor Josh. He gave the Deacon's Fund report. Through the congregation's donations and a grant from Everence, they've been able to once again help with needs in the community.

**Deacon Election:** The nominee for Deacon is Don Esau for his second 3-year term. A ballot vote was taken and he was elected unanimously as Deacon for the next 3 years. Tallying votes were Brett Esau and Brad Thimm.

**Main Ballot:** Nominating Committee Chair John Thimm presented the slate of nominees and ▲moved that it be accepted as presented; seconded by Dorothy Zimmerman. With no floor discussion, a voice vote unanimously accepted the presented slate.

**Committee Reports:** The Annual Report contained the committee reports. There were no questions or comments from the floor.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Josh referred to his report in the Annual Report, adding that he is looking forward to what God has planned for FMC in the next year both at church and in the community.

**Treasurer's Report:** The treasurer's report is included in the Annual Report and was presented in the absence of Treasurer Mike Goossen.

**2024 Budget:** The proposed 2024 budget was printed in the Annual Report. The budget includes some of the expenses for a half time Associate Pastor of Faith Formation position. The congregation approved this position at the September 10, 2023 special meeting. The Western District Conference formula for salary was used in calculations for this position. The proposed salary is \$35-36,000 per year with a flexible 20 hours per week. The presented 2024 budget includes \$15,000 for salary. The Church Board recommends that up to \$20,000 from undesignated funds be used, if needed, in 2024, to meet the expenses of the added position. ▲Vern Jantzen moved to authorize the use of up to \$20,000 from undesignated funds in 2024, to meet the expenses of the Associate Pastor position, if needed; seconded by John Penner. **Motion discussion:** Kathy Casey asked if the new position came with benefits. Chair Reimer stated that according to WDC, the position qualifies for benefits but it is at the discretion of the employer to offer them. He stated the church board is still in negotiations with the candidate. The vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

▲ Vern Jantzen moved to accept the 2024 budget as presented; seconded by Sue Gerber. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Everence Report:** FMC Everence Advocate Vern Jantzen gave an overview of the many products and programs Everence has. Currently the Everence Sharing Fund is allocated to churches by the percentage of members participating in Everence products. In the future, they will no longer use the percentage equation and just allocate each church \$3000. The Everence Sharing Fund money is added to the Deacon's Fund. All are encouraged to talk to Vern with Everence questions.

**Other Agenda Items:**

**Associate Pastor of Faith Formation:** The church board is in negotiations with a candidate for the position and hopes to make an announcement regarding that soon.

**The WDC listening visit** will be March 3 or 10, 2024. A WDC representative will visit during worship and discuss how FMC can be better served by WDC and field questions about what WDC provides for member churches.

**The 2024 WDC Annual Assembly** will be held August 2-4 at First Mennonite. Plans for that will begin this spring.

**Cemetery addition of fence or trees:** John Regier, Building Committee Chair, presented quotes to place a sturdy American brand white PVC two-rail fence with gates. The fence would be 400 ft and go around the southeast corner of the cemetery. Materials quote is \$3,300; installed quote is \$12,307. He also presented a quote from Envision Landscape in Beatrice on maple or oak trees being planted along the east half of the south edge of the cemetery. The cost for five trees ranges from \$1,650 to \$3,300, planting will add an additional \$1300. Some discussion was held on the practicality of mowing around a fence or trees. John Regier proposed a referendum to first decide if anything needed to be put in place of the removed trees and fence. Paper ballots revealed that 16 people said yes, something has to go in their place; 15 people said no, nothing has to replace the fence and trees. Following the vote, ▲ Doug Casey moved that a vote be taken as to whether the Building Committee should proceed with the fence or trees; seconded by Brett Esau. Motion passed. A ballot vote was taken with 4 votes for 400 ft of fence and 27 voting for planting of five trees. The Building Committee will proceed and funds from the Cemetery Fund will be used for this project.

**Adjournment:** With no further business, Pastor Josh closed the meeting with prayer and Chair Reimer adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m. The lamp was extinguished, symbolizing that God remains not only in this place, but goes with us into the world.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Frerking, FMC Administrative Assistant