

**Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA
Ministry Development Team Meeting #2
August 20, 2013
Central Mennonite Church, Archbold Ohio**

Private

Present: Dean Beck, Sherah-Leigh Gerber, Wes Graber, Kevin Kanagy, Rachel Kauffman (chair), Tom Kauffman, Judy King, Ann Leaman, Randy Murray, Mary Newcomer, Ralph Reinford, Dana Short, Wanda Stopher, David Tijerina

Absent: Lois Bontrager, David Elkins, Tim Zuercher

- M18. **Devotions.** Randy Murray taught us a song, "Taste and See." He has been challenged by Dave Eshleman's devotional book, noting that every encounter that we have is an opportunity to share Jesus. The Holy Spirit is with us to prompt us. Randy shared a personal story of how God's presence and protection was with his family during a trip to Mexico.
- M19. **Sharing time.** Each member shared how they have experienced God's presence in their lives since the last time we were together.
- M20. **Surplus Funds Grant Requests.** The guidelines for submitting requests for these grant funds were reviewed and each request was considered.

Adriel – They are wanting to purchase equipment that would make it easier to bring in new groups and programs for their "Adriel Live" program. It would improve a continuing program. Have already raised some funds. This amount supplements and enhances what has been done.

Inlet – Salary for an associate. Background was given for establishing the congregation. Do we pay/hire people to do this kind of thing or do we empower the people to do it? We try to stay away from salaries from grant monies. That is an ongoing need.

Berean – Looking for someone to help with music, paying the salary for that person. They are doing all they can to reach out to a younger congregation. After the consultation with John Powell, (which Conference helped pay for) they decided to continue on. This was not a recommendation that John made. They are looking to a technical solution for a broader problem. Tom noted that they *can* relocate. Doesn't really fit our criteria.

Bethel– Potter's Place pizza oven. It was noted that this will involve persons that are not usually involved at church. It would be reaching out to neighborhood persons. It meets the criteria.

Camp Luz – VBS Resource Team. This group would partner with congregations, especially small ones that otherwise find it difficult to do VS on their own. It supports young adults interested in ministry. What curriculum will be used?

Central Christian – Intro to Bible for foreign students – When does this course happen? An admirable idea.

Friendship – we funded City Fresh last year, but the grant is for funding a different aspect this year.

Hillside – To fund an electronic sign. This may be more appropriate for the loan fund to consider

Open Arms – Scholarships for students to go to Central Christian School. This is an ongoing need; not what these funds were intended for. We denied a tuition request last year.

Orrville/Chestnut Ridge/Crown Hill – Funds for a new meeting place and to support youth who could not otherwise participate in retreats, etc.

Peace – Community Garden – The quoted price for the shed seemed high. Good project.

Salem – Mission trip to Mexico. Second trip. Same request as last time?

Shine curriculum – Ohio Conference is one of the larger users of this curriculum.

Sonnenberg – Community Carnival. It took place in August. An outreach to the community.

Springhaven – Assessment tools for Marital and Parental Relationships. This would provide a missing piece, an evaluation piece that they don't have available.

Walnut Creek – Scholarship for Value-Based Leadership program This request is more appropriate for the Credentialing Ministry scholarship funds.

Lighthouse Ministries – Connecting Urban Youth to God's Story (Storying curriculum). They applied last time for funds to purchase a van.

M21. **Lunch.** A delicious lunch was prepared and provided by Dean Beck.

M22. **Thank you note.** A thank you note from Camp Luz was read for the donation we made as a thank you for letting Ohio Conference groups use their facilities at no charge.

M23. **Everyday Missionary Project.** Sherah-Leigh reported that in checking with the Goshen College group, a one-day session to record all the stories would cost around \$2,000. These videos will be posted on the Conference website. Additionally, to ensure greater use of these stories in our congregations, it was suggested that we also provide these stories on DVD format and give one to each delegate at ACA.

Action. That we move forward with the Everyday Missionary project, approving up to \$2,500 from the MDT budgeted funds, in order to both post it on the Conference website and to provide DVDs for delegates to take with them at ACA.

M24. **Lenten Resources.** It was reported that the writers for the upcoming denominational Lenten resources are from Ohio Conference. We will ask the writers if they would make themselves available to congregations to help with using the materials. We will highlight in our publications who the writers are and that they are from our own conference.

M25. **Minutes.** The minutes from the April 9, 2013, meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

M26. **Regional Pastor Reports.**

Ralph Reinford shared the following:

- Men's Retreat. He has spoken with Don Yoder, coordinator of Mennonite Men. Don has been doing some work to rekindle Men's Retreats. He would like to see us encourage men's fellowship and revitalize our Men's Retreat at Camp Luz.
- He has a concern about how we are doing church planting. How do we support church planting? What resources do we offer?
- Some congregations are struggling with the membership question. Who is allowed a vote? Must one ascribe to all the tenets of the Confession of Faith to be able to vote? There are many questions. Sherah-Leigh and Ann are working to create a Resource Team to look at membership guidelines. An effort was made two years ago to do the same, but that group never moved forward.
- Some of his congregations are struggling with viability

Wanda Stopher reported that:

- As she has been transitioning to full-time regional pastor work, she recognizes that the work depends on building relationships. She has been initiating contacts with the pastors in her region.
- She is increasingly convinced that one size does not fit all when it comes to pastor peer groups. Bi-vocational pastor needs are very different from full-time pastors. Women in ministry have different needs. Some pastors are interested in deep theological discussions while others are interested in collegial relationships. Some just want a good book study.
- It has been mentioned previously that there is interest in some kind of theological resourcing for our pastors. Wanda is interested in this also and would like to work at it in ways that engage our pastors in conversations that grow out of our missional focus and centering on Christ in acts of worship, faith and witness.

- Pastoral searches and pastor peer groups take significant time!

- M27. **Finalize grant proposals.** The following congregations/organizations were approved to receive grants from the accumulated surplus funds:
- Adriel School – AV equipment for their “Adriel Live” program – \$1,500 approved
 - Camp Luz - Further information was requested regarding the creation of a VBS resource team (we will ask what curriculum they are planning to use, ask for a line item budget to support the large amount requested and ask if they have explored using an Ministry Inquiry Program person to help with staffing. We are setting aside \$4,000 for this grant request.
 - Crown Hill - Alpha course – \$500 approved
 - Peace - Water line and tiller for a community garden – \$2,000 approved
 - Lighthouse - Connecting Urban Youth to God’s Story (“Storying” curriculum) – \$1,300 approved
 - Bethel – Potter’s Place pizza oven – \$1,000 approved
 - Central Christian School – Further information was requested regarding an Intro to Bible class for exchange students. Since this is a one-time grant, we will ask how they plan to continue to fund after this year, when the course is being offered and how long the course is and for a line-item budget for the funds. We are setting aside \$6,000 for this request.
 - Friendship – City Fresh Management and Outreach Funding – \$1,300 approved
 - Orrville/Crown Hill/Chestnut Ridge – Combined youth group – \$1,000 to support youth needing funds to participate in retreats, etc.
 - Sonnenberg – Further information was requested regarding their Community Carnival. We will ask for the total cost of the carnival and how much of the total was not covered by donations from other sources. We are setting aside \$500 for this request.
 - Springhaven – Assessment tools for Marital and Parental Relationships – \$472 approved
 - MennoMedia – Shine curriculum – \$5,000 approved

Action. A motion was made that we approve the above list of grants (pending further information from several) for a total of \$24,572, to be disbursed from the accumulated surplus funds. M/S/P

The following requests did not meet the grant criteria:

Berean – Staff for outreach, music

Hillside Chapel – Electronic sign

Inlet – Associate minister staff

Open Arms – Scholarships for students to attend Central Christian School

Salem (Wooster) – Mission trip to Veracruz, Mexico

Walnut Creek – Values Based Leadership Program Scholarship

- M28. **Next meeting.** The next MDT meeting will be Oct. 20, 2013 at Beech Mennonite. The January meeting was set for Jan 7, 2014 in Bellefontaine, Ohio.
- M29. **Adjournment** at 3:30 p.m.