



Congregational Meeting

October 26, 2008 4:00 PM

Agenda: First reading of the 2009 budget

Betty Jane Helrich, Congregational Chair, opened the meeting with a meditation and prayer.

Betty Jane also expressed disappointment at the low attendance at the meeting. There were fewer than 40 members present for a meeting that had direct impact on our congregational life together.

A new date for the next Congregational Meeting for the second reading of the 2009 budget will be set and announced. It was originally set for Dec. 14, but needs to be rescheduled due to leadership absences.

The first reading of the 2009 budget was presented by Tim Yoder, Finance Commission Chair. The 2009 proposed budget is up from this year's budget. He first reviewed the current fund balances with explanation of the individual fund accounts. We are, as of today's date, \$30,000 behind budget for this year, and this is a cause for serious concern.

Elvie Bontrager made the motion to accept the budget as proposed, and it was seconded by Matt Overman. Discussion and clarification followed the motion.

There was a request for clarification regarding the move of the Scholarship line item from the Finance Commission to the Youth Commission. The main issue regarding the move was whether it should be under Nurture Commission or Youth Commission. Program Team felt that Youth Commission is better suited to be responsible for accounting for the number of students attending which Mennonite related schools; Youth Commission will be report the student names and schools to the Finance Committee for budgeting.

The Scholarship Fund is \$33,000 for 2009 based on the number of likely 2008-2009 known Bethany Students and Mennonite colleges students.

Health insurance for the pastors is up \$11,000 over last year, due primarily to increase in premiums. A suggestion was made to look beyond MMA as the insurance provider and do some “comparison shopping” to reduce the insurance cost.

A question was asked whether Extension Commission has guidelines for determining who receives support from the Mission Fund subsidy (line J 17 in the budget).

Wilbur Hershberger moved to amend the motion on the floor to freeze the 2009 budget (currently at \$344,627) at the 2008 level of \$319,595.45. The amendment to the original motion was seconded by Jeff Kauffman.

The absence of commission and committee leadership was noted and disappointing. Given the questions and discussion of specific line items is expected at budget time, it would facilitate the budget process for the Commission and Committee chairs to be attend Congregational budget meetings to provide the necessary information and rationale for the budget line items they are responsible for.

Dan Steiner called for the question on the amendment to freeze the 2009 budget at the 2008 level.

The amendment was passed by a show of hands of 26 in favor, and 7 opposed.

Church Council and Program Team will meet together Monday night, November 3, at 7:00 PM to work on reducing the budget in preparation for the second reading.

Betty Jane Helrich
Congregational Chair