

**College Mennonite Church**  
**Minutes – Congregational Meeting**  
**May 13, 2018, 6:00 pm, Fellowship Hall**

1. **Opening:** Joe Springer opened the meeting at 6:01 p.m., and reviewed the agenda for the evening.
2. **Review of Minutes:** Bill Clemens reviewed the minutes of the March 18, 2018 and April 22, 2018 congregational meetings. There were no corrections, and those minutes were approved.
3. Rosemary Rupp led us in singing the hymn “Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God” in English & Spanish.
4. Richard Kauffman led in a meditative exercise based on Ephesians 1: 15-19, inviting us to reflect on the meanings of words/phrases/images in that passage for ourselves, and for the congregation at this point in its history. He closed with a prayer.
5. **Calling of David and Madeline Maldonado:** Joe reviewed the steps and developments that brought us to this time of decision, beginning with the congregation’s identifying as one of 3 strategic priorities: “We will embrace diversity & improve our practices related to welcoming and actively including & inviting others into our physical space & spiritual community.” He also went over the basic plan for using the Maldonados’ gifts over the 3-year period should they be called.

Joe moved the recommendation: **That College Mennonite Church call David & Madeline Maldonado to serve a 3-year term as pastors of community outreach.** Max Mertz seconded. We then had a time of general discussion concerning the proposed action [*recorded here as summaries not exact quotes*]:

- Rachel Hartzler: David’s honesty on his position is a gift to us.
- Theron Schlabach: Think of the wide range of gifts that the Maldonados can bring to this congregation.
- James Horsch: What is the definition of the community that we are trying to reach?  
*Joe Springer response: Not narrowly defined, but basically the community of Goshen. This includes the GC campus population.*
- Kent Beck: I have struggled with this. My concern is over the timing so soon after adopting our Welcome Statement. I could welcome them as participants. Calling them as leaders is a different matter.
- Sandra Shenk Lapp: What constitutes a positive vote for a call?  
*Joe Springer response: We have not had formal discussion of that. We will discuss that internally and with the Maldonados after the vote. 51% would not be adequate.*
- Liz Nussbaum Gonzalez: Will we know the percentages needed before we vote?  
*Joe Springer response: No, we have not determined percentages.*
- Liz Nussbaum Gonzalez: What would be the percentage of time the Maldonados would spend with GC students and with non-GC students?  
*Joe Springer response: Their primary focus would be on community outreach and we have included the expectation of some outreach among GC students and their families. Their ministry description does not define a percentage of time for student outreach. It is designed to permit experimentation and their expertise to shape what actually happens.*
- Liz Nussbaum Gonzalez: What does the \$250,000 in New Ministries funding cover? Does it also include funding for their seminary training?

*Joe Springer response: New Ministries funding would cover most of their salary/benefits and some incidental costs related to their ministry. It would not cover AMBS costs. CMC's student aid policy states the intent to cover AMBS tuition for any CMC member enrolled in a degree program. We do not yet know what aid might be available from AMBS itself.*

- Naomi Lederach: I am conflicted. I thought most of us had approved the welcome statement.
- Marilyn Graber Miller: I feel conflicted. We are selling the Hispanic/Latino community short here. Hispanic youth are very open and accepting. CMC could be a welcoming place for the Latino community. There is a difference between leadership and lay membership [and degree of acceptable variance]. A business would not hire a CEO who did not support its mission. We can have a vibrant outreach to the Latino community and still hold true to our welcome statement.
- Vic Stoltzfus: I am not sure what David Maldonado meant in his statement. What kind of homosexual acts would he consider immoral? People do change and develop over time. After all, Jesus built his church upon a disciple Peter whose ultimate Christian expression was not fully formed.
- LuEtta Friesen: At a later meeting, David explained what more about his position. He is honest about his position with church members but then still accepts and walks with them where they are.
- Mike Landis: Can we really view this as a business decision? Businesses usually have a singular reason for existence. What is our (CMC) singular mission? Is it that everyone agrees with everything? Our welcome statement is not the place to start picking sides.
- Phyllis Miller: Many of us saddened that congregations have left Mennonite Church USA because they could not agree. These next three years are a chance to see what is happens.
- Norma Keister: I was disheartened, but am now somewhat more supportive. I think we should have had more information earlier. I would encourage the Board to give us too much information, instead of not enough.
- Elaine Schrock: I am not aware that we made this a litmus test for our current pastoral team. Not fair to impose it on Maldonados if not already posed it to current team members, (and I am not suggesting that we do pose it).
- Pamela Yoder: I am influenced by Vic's statement. Let us, in the context of relationships, continue to help shape each other's beliefs and attitudes. My attitudes have shifted over time.
- Jon Smucker: I am distraught that my childhood congregation left its conference. I want to support what is decided here. The unity of the congregation is of the utmost importance. I hope we can continue to be in open relationship.
- Mary Bontrager: I was a fifth grade teacher, and saw a student's father ostracized because he was gay. I hope you show compassion.
- Higinio Luna: We previously experienced this problem in the Latino group and that time it initiated a rupturing of the group. Christ teaches us to accept everyone. We should be in agreement in the fundamental things, but in other things have dissent. Where there are 20 people there may be 20 (or 30!) opinions.
- Luis Tapia: As a church, we accepted undocumented people. A welcome statement isn't sufficient to be a welcoming to LBGTQ individuals. We need to practice it really

and flesh it out. So it is a good sign that David and Madeline, knowing our statement, still want to come here. We need to work in confidence and trust. I have an opinion also but it is different from David Maldonado's position.

- Sam Troyer: I am also conflicted. But I am convinced that we should invite them to come and let the Holy Spirit work through them.
- Ron Guengerich [IN-MI Conference coach/overseer]: We could all say that we are on journey. I hope we give the Maldonados a chance to journey with us. We need to have compassion and openness on our journey.
- John Hertzler: I am ready to vote.
- Kathleen Massanari: I don't think that any of us believe we have completed our journey. Until people have grown to the place where they are comfortable with this statement, we don't know how much harm will be done. If this is not a positive vote, there should still be a way to express support and interest for Hispanic outreach.
- Liz Nussbaum Gonzales: Because we have this statement, it is pretty fundamental. We wouldn't budge on peace/justice issues, so why budge on the welcome statement? Would we be happy with another church if they would assume they can change us, should we assume we can change the Maldonados?

6. Joe then led in a prayer for the congregation and the Maldonados.

7. The congregation then voted. Result: **156 in favor of the proposal, 46 not in favor.**

This was a 77.2% affirmative vote. (The number included 97 absentee ballots.) The vote results will be reported to the Maldonados, and the congregation will be kept informed of developments.

8. Joe introduced and briefly reviewed the 2018-2019 CMC Ministries Fund Proposal. Due to lateness of the hour, there was no time for initial discussion concerning the proposal this evening. There will be opportunities for open discussion between May 27 – June 10. Line item versions of proposal can be requested from the church office. Joe also encouraged members to review the table handouts providing draft ministry descriptions for positions of Church Administrator (0.8 FTE to succeed Marty Lehman) and the Director of Music Ministry (0.25 FTE, developed by Worship Commission to better support music in our congregational life).

9. Joe also summarized the various activities and initiatives related to "hospitality of place," that also important in implementing CMC's strategic priorities. Joe thanked Caryl Guth who has invested many hours in obtaining updated quotes and further design work for these proposals. (We discussed the proposals extensively at the January 22, 2017 congregational meeting in several other settings since then.) On display this evening were some design possibilities for enhancing the sign in front of the church. The CMC Hospitality Committee (Outreach Commission) has requested that an electronic sign be a top priority. (Traffic statistics show that 15,000 vehicles pass by our current sign daily.) We will provide additional opportunities for people to see and offer feedback on designs of several of the larger projects under consideration.

10. **Adjournment:** After offering a closing prayer, Joe adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.  
Attendance: about 120 [attendance sheets not available for several tables]  
Next meeting: June 17, 2018, 6 p.m.

Recorder: Bill Clemens