

Witness Commission meeting, Wednesday April 4, 2018, Pastor Greg's office
Meeting start time: 9:07 a.m.

Present: Peg Over, Sam Epps, Michelle Clapper, Paula Knudsen Burke & pastoral team, Jason Haldeman, Greg Laszakovits

Absent: Peggy McFarland, Peg reported travelling

(BOLDED ITEMS WERE DISCUSSION ITEMS)

- 1. Springtime Devotions, Psalms 96, from New Community Project – Peg**
- 2. Review April 2018 minutes – no corrections**
- 3. Pastor Jason – Proposal – Camp Swatara staff (from Etown COB) subsidy from O&M**

Jason said Camp Swatara hires summer staff but it paid \$240/week (when Jason was there), so not a lot of money. Some congregations would support young adults from the congregation to make it financially feasible. He doesn't have hard numbers but could get them. To support regular attenders with either a lump sum or a weekly contributing stipend to help defray costs. Personally, it's an incredibly great place to work and for young adults to share faith. He said he's seen first-hand the benefits. Chiques COB for years would match camp's salary and other congregations would do the same. Like lump sum of about \$1,000 from Hempfield COB to Jason. Showing support from congregation to those working in that ministry would boost them and would encourage youth to encourage that as a viable option. Peg asks if we have ever done. Jason and Greg said not that they know of. Nate DeGoede and Alex Mora are both planning on working there this summer and possibly a third young person. He said there could be the option of pulling from the O&M fund. Greg asks how many weeks. Jason said about 10 weeks at camp. An extra \$100 week would work out to about \$1000 for the summer. Greg said he's supportive of the idea in general and fits the parameters of O&M. Greg says it's Outreach and Ministerial Education as the full title. Paula asked for clarification about what we give to Camp Swatara already and if it is from O&M or the other budget line (it's not from O&M). Greg says how would \$3,000 affect Witness goals on O&M. Michelle said the big picture discussion about goals of O&M hasn't happened in depth yet. Peg said ministry money is now being paid out for Jason, Rose & Naomi, so those are "fixed" costs. Peg asks if we want to talk about money now or wait. Agreement that will talk about the big picture O&M in May. Greg says we should ask Bob Hollinger about where money was given in the past. Peg says she has that and will bring it in. Sometimes Witness gives out to five priority areas or twenty smaller grants. Peg says Run for Peace money was taken out of O&M and put into regular budget. We're supposed to be giving O&M money to groups not regularly budgeted for.

- 4. Pastor Jason – set date for SS youth/children to help with CWS hygiene kits.**

Jason said they could work into BLAZE curriculum. Michelle said the original idea would be a churchwide assembly. Jason said everyone could be down there. It could be done in 5-10 minutes. Michelle asks if there could be education built in. Paula said we could invite Church World Service person to attend. Peg said start advertising in May for collection and supplies. June 10 is the date. Paula will reach out to them about coming during Sunday School. 9:15 a.m. possibly adults and children.

5. **Witness Handbook (in CCB file)** working document and new Witness list in directory. Groups “under Witness umbrella” are very active. Peg said this goes hand-in-hand with the new directory. The Witness Handbook used to have a description of each thing and that changes every year with name, so now it is only the description.

6. **Pat Leiter- we approved via email request to solicit/collect items for Children’s Disaster Response comfort kits** – Peg said a request came in from Children’s Disaster Service suitcase that it was OK for them to collect materials, they were not asking for money. Michelle said if we’re not involved in the action, should we be approving as something under Witness Commission. Paula said if we are approving action by someone, shouldn’t it be included as one of the groups. Peg agreed that we would put it under the description of the Appointments of the Witness Commission. Since it is a newly-reinvigorated group (Paula said she thinks a lot of activity in this area would have been in 1970s and/or 1980s), Peg said it should be added back in. Peg said it is challenging to keep track of all the wonderful volunteer activities going on. Michelle said we should have a balance between making people wait a long time, or a discussion. Paula said she is looking forward to a discussion in May about priorities. Sam says in May we can talk about the distinction between the terms “blessing” and “approval” when someone comes to Witness.

7. FYI – Roger Killian - SERRV workday in New Windsor- Thursday September 6

8. FYI – Karen Ungemach – SERRV sale on April 22 as well as Adult SS presentation this Sunday April 8

9. FYI – Run for Peace – Saturday June 9 – support to PIRC this year

10. FYI – Judith Gible agreed to serve as UCEA representative along with Beth DeGoede and Pastor Pam

11. **May is our food bank month.** Publicize, set up table, transport items. Peg said since May only has 4 weekends she was thinking of starting in April. Peg said she may need help in transporting stuff. She will check on times and let group know about when she needs help.

12. Crop table will begin in May (through October)

13. **Sanctuary Team proposal** – request by Immigration Support Committee (new name) to distribute money to families. Peg says this would be a conduit. They’re not asking for money from Witness or O&M. They would solicit funds from the congregation. People in the congregation would donate to a line item. Paula asks if this would be like when we collected money for the tractor. Greg said same accounting idea. Greg says the board would have to approve. He says this is a pretty common request, such as National Youth Conference, which is

perpetual. This is similar to that. Tractor project was a discrete, limited conduit, Greg says. Greg says this is another appeal that is going out, so we should consider all the appeals that are going out. Paula said she likes the idea of different appeals that can provide avenues for donation. Greg said people can choose to opt in and doesn't hurt church's budget. Sam says it's more flexibility. Greg said historically there were waystations along the way from Central America to Canada. Our current immigration issues aren't calling for that kind of response. The committee is wondering what we can do to support vulnerable people. Providing monies for expenses such as legal fees would be a way to help, is part of the committee's thinking, Greg says. The committee has also learned from the immigration community that the church can help them feel like they're not part of a shadow community. Paula motions to approve the concept as forwarded by the Immigration Support Committee. Peg said we will get financial accounting every year and check requests will be co-signed. Greg says we'll still have oversight. Michelle says it is important to know what our role is. Greg said we can recommend to the board that we open a conduit. After discussion, Paula amends motion to recommend that the board approve opening a conduit for the Immigration Support Committee (not Sanctuary Committee). Michelle says she's not sure if we should have vote process. Greg said it would greatly help the board to have a recommendation. Greg said there isn't often consistency with how decisions are made. By consensus, rather than motion and vote, the request is approved to forward to the board as our recommendation (see motion above). Peg will put in the board meeting report with the language change.

14. John David Bowman – proposal/request- Forwarded email

Peg reads email from John David about play proposal. Greg says he told John David to approach Witness Commission. Would Witness be interested in sponsoring a matinee/evening presentation? He's asking us to consider. Greg says that John David called him out of the blue. And Greg said we were just talking about this during Witness Commission meeting. Peg said we really had a lengthy conversation about this at our last meeting so it caught her attention. Sam says interesting because the play is ½ hour long and the discussion would go a lot longer, so it would be hard to do during Sunday school. Maybe matinee would be better? Peg said he was suggesting matinee or evening, not Sunday School. Paula said we use the space for other theatrical performances, such as Into the Woods, or the cabaret, so it would seem a natural extension to use the space for this kind of performance. Peg said mid-to-late May is what he was thinking. Paula said even if it was small it would be helpful to process emotions. Sam said a time when students would be around would be good, so maybe beginning of the semester. Peg said if we decided we wanted to do it, see how it goes, maybe college would be interested in on-campus event. Peg said she would get back John David and ask for more details. Michelle asks if we can know what his vision in.

15. Paula – Follow up on PACC Poor People's Campaign –

Paula said she would report back in at the next meeting about any needs, we could potentially put on the Witness action alert.

Meeting concluded at 10:40 a.m.

Next meeting will be at 6:30 on May 2, 2018, location TBD.