

**Nurture Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**February 16, 2022 @7PM via Zoom**

1. Present: **Olivia Knight** (Chair), **Ellen Flury**, **Lois Herr**, **Bill Siler**, **Gina Strouse**.
2. January minutes—We reviewed the minutes as accurate.
3. Nurture Appointments—Finalized for now.
  - a. Historical Committee—This group has no convener, but Jim Hoffer volunteered to call a meeting at some point.
  - b. Post-High Group—**Olivia** will follow up with post-high leadership. She plans to contact Beth DeGoede.
  - c. 50+ and Prime Time—**Gina** has plans to meet with Deb Zeigler and Sam & Kathy Frankhouser from the Ephrata CoB about future options for these groups.
4. Virtual Game Nights—February 18th and March 11th. **Olivia** has everything ready, but there's not been much response yet. We discussed possibilities of promoting this via social media in the future.
5. Lenten Discussion Forum—
  - a. Dates are from Ash Wednesday, March 2nd, to Easter Sunday, April 17th
  - b. Brethren Press devotional booklet, *We Wait for Light*, is available now at church.
  - c. **Crystal** has set up the online forum platform for us. Thank you, Crystal!
  - d. **Ellen** will post on the forum on most days.
  - e. Olivia and Gina have lined up special guest commenters for specific dates, but we want to leave those dates and the identities of the guests as surprises to build interest. **Olivia** and **Gina** have an additional date to assign.
  - f. **Bill** and **Olivia** are preparing a video (with Jerry's help) to promote the forum. Thanks, Jerry! **Olivia** will add in a comment to her script about this being written and not on Zoom. We hope to have the video ready to show in worship on 2/27 and to post on the church's Facebook page on 3/1. Other social media? We will need **Crystal**'s help with implementing that video posting.
  - g. **Olivia** will ask the Pastors to include the forum in announcements during worship, including a clarification that this is not on Zoom.
6. Faith Markers—
  - a. We discussed the pros and cons of presenting these in church in person as we used to or through home visits and photos for a video presentation as we have done through the pandemic. We think people like to see the videos.
  - b. Lisa Rosenberger has graciously volunteered to continue to make the videos of these for Nurture if we submit the names/photos to her. Thank you, Lisa!
  - c. **Pastor Pam** will get back to us with the dates for the spring.

7. Church Picnic–
  - a. Ellen will reach out to Sandy Garman about her ideas on that.
  - b. We discussed dates to consider when planning–
    - i. The day before school starts may be a bit hectic for families with students (or teachers).
    - ii. The first day of school for 2022 is slated for August 23rd.
    - iii. Etown Fair for this year is slated for August 22nd to 27th.
  
8. Carol Sing–Perhaps we should wait to see what COVID is doing next winter before we finalize planning this event, including a date.
  
9. Goals for Nurture Commission–
  - a. Two driving questions–
    - i. What does the congregation need/want?
    - ii. How–right now–are we nurtured?
  - b. As the Deacons are restructuring how to handle their tasks, we should consider what we do as the Nurture Commission.
    - i. Deacons are voted in, but some tasks are now being handled by non-Deacons to help.
    - ii. Deacon tasks are being divided into 16 ministry teams.
  - c. Transitioning from pandemic to post-pandemic (at least, we hope so!)
    - i. Why are our events under-attended?
      1. People being unaware seems to be a problem, but church communication is thorough with our events. More social media?
      2. COVID could be part of it. Perhaps we need to be patient as people re-adjust to post-pandemic social freedom. Small groups could help bridge the transition from isolation to large groups.
    - ii. Post-pandemic does not necessarily mean we should be going back to the way things were before. Refer to the driving questions from above:
      1. What does the congregation need/want? and
      2. How–right now–are we nurtured?
    - iii. Maybe we should start with activities for small groups and then occasionally combine two or three small groups that share commonalities into a larger group.
  - d. Potential work in addressing bias in our church–Gina shared that the Racial Justice group wants to look at bias in all its forms. Our culture has so many biases. What is at work in our church? How do we operate in terms of bias? Gina suggested that perhaps the Nurture Commission could take a leadership role in a journey towards being bias-free.

## 10. Small Groups–

- a. We want to make sure that everyone is feeling connected—or has felt the outreach of welcome and knows how to be connected if/when they choose to be so. Perhaps we could have a spreadsheet showing the different small group circles in which people are connected.
- b. **Lois** spearheaded our discussion of having small groups of intersecting circles that can meet the needs of a variety of people—in-person, online, age-based, interest-based, spiritually-based, or community-based (book clubs, crafts, etc.) We like the idea of different structures and platforms instead of one structure for all groups.
- c. We discussed two different group times.
  - i. One kind of group meeting would be for a variety of times other than Sunday mornings. Meeting places, times, and frequency would depend on the group.
  - ii. Another kind of group could meet on Sunday mornings. These groups would offer *everyone* an opportunity to connect with a small group and have a place to “fit in” in the public church setting or online right away. (Meeting in private homes takes a bit more initiative.)
    1. Children’s Sunday School would remain the same.
    2. Divide the adult Sunday School time in half to about 25 minutes each half. One half would be for fellowship group sharing and praying for each other. We could start with phase-of-life groups, such as the following: young adult (~20s), parents of little ones (~20s-30s), parents of tweens/teens (~40s), empty-nesters (~50s-60s), seniors (~70s+). An additional Zoom option for the groups—or a Zoom group—would offer small group connections for the online attendees. We would need a facilitator for each group. The other half of the time would be for Sunday School electives, which could follow the same curriculum that we have now, just with a shortened time-frame for the lesson.
    3. **Olivia** will reach out to Christian Ed to investigate the possibility of planning Sunday morning time for small groups.
- d. All Nurture members—**Olivia**, **Ellen**, **Lois**, **Bill**, **Gina**, and **Pastor Pam** are asked to consider possibilities for structuring small groups and to bring those ideas to next month’s meeting.

11. Next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2022, at 7PM via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellen Flury