

Nurture Commission Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2022 @7PM via Zoom

1. Present: **Olivia Knight** (Chair), **Ellen Flury**, **Lois Herr**, **Pastor Pam Reist**, **Bill Siler**, **Gina Strouse**, Donna Hollinger (Vice-Board Chair)
2. Reminders from the Board via Donna:
 - a. There is a board meeting on Saturday, January 22, 2022.
 - b. Two representatives from the Nurture Commission should attend board meetings—usually the Chair and the Vice-Chair. These are important opportunities to vote and be the “voice” of the church.
 - c. There is a **board retreat on Saturday, February 19, 2022. All Nurture Commission members are invited to attend the retreat.** (The retreat is rescheduled from an original date of Jan. 22nd.)
 - d. Nurture minutes should be sent to Crystal in the church office.
3. Roles: We introduced ourselves and determined our roles in the commission.
 - a. Chair—Olivia Knight, who can attend board meetings
 - b. Vice-Chair—Gina Strouse, who can attend board meetings as long as there is a Zoom option (or COVID is eradicated)
 - c. Secretary—Ellen Flury
 - d. Pastoral Liaison—Pastor Pam
 - e. Lois Herr
 - f. Bill Siler
 - g. **Olivia** and **Gina** both plan to attend the board meeting on Saturday, January 22, 2022.
4. Appointments:
 - a. Historical Committee—**Gina** will contact Suzanne Taylor, who is new to the Historical Committee, to see if she will consider being the Convener. Continuing members declined the Convener role when asked last fall. Gina also mentioned that the Racial Justice Committee is looking to interview some Historical Committee members, so her contact can possibly serve two purposes.
 - b. Prime Time Group—We discussed the possibility of sponsoring this new group for senior citizens, flexible ages but around 70+. **Gina** will investigate spearheading this group, based on a recent article in *Messenger*. Sam & Kathy Frankhouser from the Ephrata CoB would be good contacts for information.
 - c. Fifty+ Group Leader—**Gina** will contact Deb Ziegler, who has led this group in the past, to see if Deb is interested in continuing to lead and also to explore the possibility of expanding this group to combine with the Prime Time group mentioned above.
 - d. Post-High Group—**Olivia** will contact Beth DeGoede to get information about the past purpose and role of this group in order to pursue leadership.

- e. Winter Walking Group—This group started last December under the leadership of Rose Baer. We have placed it on our list of appointments. Ellen will contact Rose to let her know that her group is under the Nurture umbrella.
5. Fostering Church Community: We discussed how we can foster church community in a world in which COVID continues to be unpredictable:
- a. Pastor Pam suggested this **driving question for the Nurture Commission: “What does our congregation need—in building connections with both God and each other?”**
 - b. We need to reach out to both in-person and online attenders.
 - c. Can we identify who is tuning in online? An announcement from a pastor asking for newcomers/visitors to sign in on the chat may help. Or, perhaps there is a way to have a link in the YouTube comments so that people could sign in without their contact information being public.
 - d. We could send out a poll to attenders to ask what they feel as a need/want.
 - e. An internet search could reveal ideas for building online church communities, such as an “usher” who greets people as they enter the online space.
 - f. How can we reach people who used to tune in online but no longer do so? We mentioned, specifically, families with young children.
 - g. Is there a way to reach people online with shorter “snippets” of presentations? Some people watched the sermon previews but not the actual services. Several of our members commented about so many announcement slides and emails/newsletters that are so full they can overwhelm the readers. So, while it’s great that there are so many things going on, how can we present the information in a more “digestible” format?
 - h. How can we better use social media to promote/advertise events and opportunities?
 - i. Perhaps in the future there could be a staff member hired to handle online technology, including social media.
6. Online Discussion Forum for Brethren Press 2022 Lenten Devotional
- a. We reviewed participation in the Advent Discussion Forum, which was not as diverse as we had envisioned. Over 1,400 views included only a handful of people who posted.
 - b. We reflected that some people may be intimidated to post because their names are presented publicly and because they may not feel confident about their writing skills.
 - c. Pastor Pam reminded us that new ventures often need to have about seven opportunities before things catch on.
 - d. We decided to continue the discussion forum with the Lenten Devotional.
 - e. Olivia will again administrate the forum.
 - f. Ellen will again facilitate the discussion posts.
 - g. We could, perhaps, entice more participation if we invite “guest” writers, perhaps on Saturdays. Olivia and Gina will brainstorm additional names and will reach out to invite guest participants. We brainstormed some potential names:

- i. Walt Wiltschek, the devotional author—**Pastor Pam** will find contact information for him so that we may invite his participation.
 - ii. John David Bowman
 - iii. Jean Moyer
 - iv. David Leiter
 - v. Chris Bucher
 - vi. Greg Laszakovits
 - vii. Pastor Eric Landram
 - viii. Bill Puffenberger
 - ix. Rose Baer
 - x. Linda Hope
 - xi. John Hope
 - xii. Sandy Brubaker
 - xiii. Lois Herr
 - xiv. Judith Gibble
 - xv. Desiree Weaver-Spidel
- h. Word of mouth could help promote participation.
- i. Social media promotion can help motivate participation—for this and any/all events.
- j. We could create a brief promotional video on Zoom for the forum. The video could be played during worship and on the church's Facebook page.
 - i. **Olivia** will participate in and record the video.
 - ii. **Bill** will participate in the video.
 - iii. **Ellen** will contact Amy Carroll to ask her to participate in the video.
 - iv. **Ellen** will prepare a script to guide the video dialogue.
- k. **Olivia** will write up an article for the newsletter to promote the discussion forum.

7. Virtual Game Night

- a. **Olivia** offered to host this opportunity online again this year.
- b. We decided to offer pinochle again, as it was the most popular game last year.
- c. New games, in addition, will be Fishbowl and Broken PicturePhone, which Olivia and Ellen had played and enjoyed in a trial run.
- d. Game night will be offered for one Friday night in February and one Friday night in March from 7PM until participants choose to end. Dates chosen are as follows:
 - i. February 18, 2022
 - ii. March 11, 2022
- e. **Olivia** will write up an article for the newsletter to promote the game nights.
- f. Perhaps the pastors could announce game nights during worship.
- g. Perhaps Pastor Jason and Pastor Eric would do another promotional video of playing games.
- h. Perhaps **Olivia** (and **Ellen**?) could play again, and **Olivia** could take some screen shots to put on a promotional slide.

8. Faith Markers–Dates still need to be set. **Pastor Pam** will let us know about those at next month's meeting.
9. Scavenger Hunt–We will revisit that idea as a potential summer activity if/when COVID allows more interaction. We would need to figure out a way for people to submit their photos online.
10. Small Zoom Groups–We will continue discussion of this opportunity at next month's meeting.
 - a. **Pastor Pam** will ask Pastor Jason about any plans he may have for small groups so that we will know how we can proceed with planning on this idea.
 - b. **Lois** has many ideas as to how we can spearhead this venture, and we plan to have her address those ideas at next month's meeting.
 - c. Should groups be organized by phase of life or particular interests, such as crafting?
 - d. How do we offer a possible structure for the groups while leaving an opportunity for the groups to define themselves in ways that work for them?
11. Church Picnic–We will discuss this potential event at next month's meeting.
 - a. Do we want to have a picnic?
 - b. Should we look to the Hospitality Committee to run this event?
 - c. Dates? Traditionally, the picnic was the Sunday afternoon before school starts, which may be stressful for some families. Last year our picnic was combined with Lititz at Lititz and in September.
12. Carol Sing–We will discuss this potential event at next month's meeting.
 - a. Traditionally, this night involved a fellowship hall chili supper sponsored by the junior high group, followed by caroling on routes mapped out by Beth DeGoede based on lists from Vida Snaveley.
 - b. In 2021, due to COVID, we caroled around fire pits in the church parking lot while Nurture members offered hot water and cocoa mix. Whoever was so inclined brought cookies to share.
 - c. What do we want to do with this event in the future?
 - d. What date do we want to do it?
13. Outdoor Movie Night–We decided not to pursue this venture.
 - a. The event had been proposed for the summer of a previous year during the pandemic. People would have been separated by household to watch in the parking lot from their cars or lawn chairs. We would have needed to ask local congregationally-connected businesses to sponsor the event and would have asked attendees for donations.
 - b. The event did not come to fruition because of its expense and the fact that it does not really build connections among people as well as some other activities can.
 - c. After vaccines became available, this event did not seem to hold the same level of appeal for the cost because we could gather together more safely again.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Flury