

WHAT DIRECTION WOULD WE LIKE TO BE GOING? Listening report, June 16, 2019

HOW WOULD WE LIKE TO PROCEED? POINTERS FOR OUR FUTURE:

- We wish to be more intentional about integrating new people into our Congregation, people who are not from Mennonite/Anabaptist background, or of no faith background at all, or people from the community who have very different social/cultural backgrounds, or who have no 'relational' connection with anyone already in the church. Many people feel 'welcomed', but not emotionally 'included'. How can we include the persons, who may have come from very different lifestyles or backgrounds?
- We wish that we could somehow find the way to make church a higher priority for families, and lessen cultural influences that keep us so busy, and demand so much time/energy/resources
- We wish that we would expand our sense of 'Church as Family', to be a safe family setting for all
- We want to be an inviting place for Young Adults to become involved
- We would like to see our Seniors, (62+y.o.), be more 'connected and cared for' in the life of the Congregation, they have much to offer and want to be asked to be involved, heard, used, and valued. They now comprise over 25% of the Congregation, and are a rapidly growing and vital segment of the Church. They have much to offer the Church locally and beyond; acts of service, not just leadership
- We wish to improve our ways of 'serving' one another in the Congregation. Maybe find additional ways of keeping pastoral connection with everyone. The current elder groupings are too large for any person to adequately do it properly; or to expand our 'Sharpen' program of having persons available to do needed things around the house for any who have this need but unable to do it
- We wish to improve our reaching out to our community, to bring Jesus to our neighbors; to do more than just talk "Missional", but to find more ways of doing it, and involve more people in it. Could we find another word/phrase to describe our community outreach? ('Missional' might sometimes be perceived as ambiguous/confusing by some)
- We definitely want to keep our sound Evangelical/Biblical/Theological roots, but have concerns about how we can maintain our own integrity with MC USA seeming to be going in a different direction. We feel quite positive about strengthening our connection with Ohio Conference
- We would like to see the "Grove" become a vital, active, and influential center of programming and outreach in West Liberty, and beyond, for young and old alike
- We appreciate our blended style of worship, music, etc
- We want to continue being challenged in preaching to live closer to God, and faithful to Him; and maintain strong Biblical teaching in all Christian Ed and SS programs
- We want to strengthen our practice of hospitality, inviting Sunday worship visitors to lunch, and expanding our fellowship times in the life of the Congregation, be that in activities or meals; maybe re-invigorate our 'Family Life' committee to plan events and activities?
- We would like to see more people involved in small groups: Bible study, discipleship, fellowship, etc.
- We would like to see more active/vital prayer ministry within our congregation

SOME THINGS WE MISS ABOUT DICK NO LONGER BEING OUR PASTOR:

- His strong involvement in the community, he was an outstanding presence and 'face' for OGMC, and made many very significant contributions in his work as chaplain, and in the fire department
 - His excellent pastoral care for anyone who had a crisis or special needs
 - His sound Biblical preaching, and exemplary lifestyle of humility, faith and commitment
 - His calm, non-anxious approach to crisis; and his low-key type of leadership
 - His great organizational ability, and attention to details
 - His humor both in and out of the pulpit
 - His encouraging friendship with so many
- “THANKS, PASTOR DICK, FOR YOUR 16 YEARS OF FAITHFUL LEADERSHIP AT OGMC”**