

MC Sask Ministries Commission Minutes

May 21, 2020

6:30 pm

Via Zoom

Present: Claire Ewert Fisher (Chair), Mark Bigland-Pritchard, Nancy Epp, Jeanette Hanson, Ron Nickel, Eric Olfert, Sharon Schultz (Council Rep.) and Josh Wallace (Church Planter and interim MC Sask Church Engagement staff)

1. Opening: Claire clarified that this is not intended as a regular meeting of the commission, but rather a **special meeting** to move forward some important and/or time sensitive agendas from our last meeting. We will not be approving minutes or reporting on ongoing involvements in order to focus on the following:

- i. Shaping the church of today and tomorrow – Josh has already put some thought into how this might happen and will take the lead in this part of the conversation.
- ii. Creation Care – Mark has ideas as to how this work can take shape and will take the lead.
- iii. And a third agenda item will be catching loose ends that we need to hear and respond to.

Claire opened in prayer:

2. Shaping the church of today and tomorrow:

a) Sharing our stories of how we have been church during the pandemic:

- Josh led us through his draft ideas of how a google form for reporting our experiences of church during pandemic might look.
- The first step will be for constituents to fill in an introductory form, sharing how their congregations are being neighbors in this time of pandemic.
- The submissions will need to be moderated to prevent abuse.
- It will be important that there be a clear invitation to anyone with interest to make submissions.

b) Planning for a Town Hall type meetings to dream together how the church will move beyond the pandemic:

- The idea is to have zoom meetings to bring together those who are interested to think and plan. Josh supplied a sketch (see attachment A) to start our thinking.
- Perhaps a series of mini-town hall meetings with different groups and then try to bring the learnings together.
- When? Now or in fall? How quickly could such a meeting be called together? Could be done fairly quickly, within a month or so.
- Who should be invited? Send suggestions to Josh or Claire.
- Zoom feels like the right medium at this point.
- We need to start out with opening ourselves to a new future. How has the topography changed society and how can the church be here to welcome the change?
- Practical changes we have made also point to new possibilities for the future.
- We decided to start by planning for one virtual town hall, while hoping for the idea to snowballing.
- Josh and Claire will plan a meeting for mid/late June (June 15 to 19?).

3. For the Love of Creation:

- This effort is about local involvement/Creation Care/Climate Justice.
- It is to focus on youth engagement through consultation with churches and other faith communities through:
 - o Recognizing what science is saying;
 - o Hearing experiences;
 - o Hearing emotions;
 - o What do we actually do?
- Present framework (see Mennoclimateconvo file attached to cover letter) is for a three-hour engagement. We went through the framework quickly and felt that the flow 'makes sense'.
- Mark is asking for:
 - o Comments and ideas.
 - o Suggestions how best to reach churches and church groups.
 - o Use MC Sask Update to identify and invite interested people.
 - o Ideal is small groups (~20) and a diverse group.
- Start with denominational leadership?
- Invite Committees from Congregations, Adult Sunday School groups or small groups (care groups).
- Timing might be late June (June 21-27?)
- Perhaps start with Ministries Commission group and some passionate others.
- If we want to meet physically, MRMC would be appropriate.
- It seems important to develop a model that works virtually so we will plan for Zoom.
- Claire and Mark will approach some people.
- Mark will do a Google poll to choose a date.

4. Acquiring Our Own Labyrinth:

- Nancy reported that a rip-stop nylon parachute can be purchased for:
 - o A clean white one 16 feet in diameter is \$102.
 - o A 24 foot 'color me' parachute is \$194.95
 - o An army surplus 30 foot parachute sells for about \$300 (don't know how the material compares).
- Nancy will check with Common Word to find what their labyrinth is made of.
- Nancy and Claire will talk further.

5. Next Meeting

- Next meeting **Tuesday July 28**, same time (**6:30 pm**), format to be determined.

Recorded by Eric Olfert
Drafted May 22/2020

ATTACHMENT A

From: Josh Wallace <churchengagement@mcsask.ca>

Subject: Townhall re: Dreaming Church Beyond Pandemic

Date: May 19, 2020 at 10:30:26 AM CST

To: "Ryan Siemens: Area Church Minister, MC Sask" <minister@mcsask.ca>, Claire Ewert Fisher <claraewertfisher@gmail.com>

Ryan and Claire,

Here's a sketch of an idea for a townhall-type conversation via Zoom about what what life beyond pandemic could look like for our congregations. I'm working a bit from two webinars I've been on in the last few weeks—one with New Leaf on scenario thinking and one with Forge Canada on dwelling in the Word/world about how the Spirit may be leading us forward.

I think 1.5 to 2 hours is probably that max we should ask folks for on Zoom, but I think any shorter than that would short circuit good conversation. I'd like to utilize breakout rooms and report backs. I'd like this to really be a dreaming space, with notes that MC Sask bodies can take away to rework into future initiatives.

Let me know what you think.

Also, I'd like to get the storysharing Google doc live and distributed. What would be next good steps for that?

josh

Here's a sketch:

- Dwelling in the Word
- Begin with 3 five minute (max) stories from congregational members (not so much pastors) about experiences of lockdown
- Open sharing about the GIFTS and WOUNDS of pandemic for our way of being church
- Presentation of three scenarios for congregations moving forward*
- Open sharing of dreams moving forward
- Silent reflection
- Sharing of what has been heard (themes, striking words)
- Prayer

*I'd love input on imagining richly three different scenarios