

EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

March 20, 2016

1. Opening (S. Wanke)

2. Detailed financial report

Ingrid Maier presented the detailed financial report, including explaining Erika Schroeder's bequeathment. She also suggested that since the Student Fund is currently well funded, future donations could instead be designated towards bunk beds for camp.

3. Annual reports and discussion arising from reports

J. Mueller presented the following statistics for EFC from the past year:

- there are 110 individuals on the membership list
- total attendance on Sunday mornings averages ~ 110 people (up to 15 in German service, ~ 85 in English service, ~ 10 in Sunday school)
- there were 2 funerals (one for an EFC member, and one for a former member)
- there was one child baptism, no weddings, and no confirmands.

4. Introduction of new board members

The new board members are Paul Fries, Rudi Winkelmann, and Simon Winkelmann, and the members stepping down from the board are M. Hauf, R. Lehmann, B. Wanke, and S. Wanke. At their next meeting the elders will decide upon positions and duties, and a list will then be posted in the foyer (to enable the congregation to pray for them).

5. Update from denomination affiliation committee

The members of this committee are Margaret Drachenberg, J. Mueller, D. Starke, and S. Wanke. As decided at the last business meeting, the committee has been working on identifying suitable denominations to bring forward to the congregation. The committee used the EFC survey results as their guide, with the following two aspects being of particular importance: (a) the denomination must allow child baptism, adult baptism, and child dedication; (b) EFC wants to remain in charge of its own affairs (ex. choose own pastor) rather than join a hierarchical governance structure.

Three denominations were also suggested on the survey by the congregation. These were considered by the committee, but found to be unsuitable for the following reasons: Christian Missionary Alliance (only allows believer's baptism and also exerts governing control over congregations); Lutheran Church of Canada (only allows infant baptism); and Lutheran Brethren (only allows infant baptism).

The committee then examined ~20 other denominations, and found 3 that met the requirements specified in the EFC survey:

- 1) Congregational Christian Churches of Canada – they give individual churches a lot of autonomy and independence, but have minimal organizational structure (ex. no seminary).
- 2) Church of the Nazarene – they are part of the Wesleyan holiness movement, and have a strong law / doctrine focus.
- 3) Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada (ECCC) – this denomination was the only suitable candidate found in the search. As per the handout provided to the congregation, ECCC is a small denomination

with 28 churches in Canada (they have several hundred in the US). It was founded in 1885 by Swedish Lutherans in the US, who were influenced by the Pietistical movement (which is similar to EFC's development). They allow both infant and believer's baptism, as well as child dedication. ECCC allows congregations considerable autonomy, rather than dictating to them (ex. individual congregations can decide to allow only child or adult baptism). One difference is that they allow women to be pastors. However, as per the president of ECCC, not all congregations practice this and it is not forced on them. When people become a member of an ECCC church, they are asked to confess and follow Jesus as Lord, and to accept the Scriptures as God's word. Further information about ECCC (including their constitution) can be accessed on the websites indicated in the handout.

6. Discussion and vote on further investigating affiliation with Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada

The committee was thanked for their good work. Regarding EFC's financial obligations (ex. synod fees), this depends on how a church came about. As per their president, if ECCC purchased and founded a church then repayment is expected. If a church joins ECCC without financial assistance, then synod fees are not well defined. EFC previously paid synod fees to Liberty Corner in the amount of 2.5% of donations. The survey results indicated that EFC supports synod fees of <5% (in addition to mission donations). ECCC does hope that congregations will support their missions in Asia, Central America, and Africa, although EFC will still have the choice of which mission to support. ECCC has one full time employee (the president) and some part-time employees.

On the EFC survey there was also a question about legal obligations, if the denomination we join is in debt or has lawsuits filed against it. As per legal advice, EFC is in no danger of being involved in existing or future legal action unless the denomination owns our property. Since ECCC has no central ownership, they will not have a claim to EFC property.

ECCC holds an annual general meeting in Breton, AB. EFC has been invited to attend this meeting in May (with likely 2 representatives - a pastor and another chosen by the board). The ECCC director also expressed interest in visiting EFC at that time. He did recommend that we do not rush into affiliation, so that both parties are comfortable with the decision (especially financially).

This denomination is growing fast in the USA, and includes some Spanish congregations. There are currently no ECCC churches in Edmonton; there was one in Bonnie Doon / then Beverly area but it has disappeared. ECCC does have churches in Northern Alberta, one in Breton and another in Malmo. They also have a camp at Pigeon Lake for use by their Canadian churches.

Today's vote is only about continuing the process of investigating ECCC (ex. determining requirements to join, etc). It is not a decision on actually joining ECCC; that vote may occur in October after more detailed information has been collected and made available.

Results of vote (85 ballots were distributed): 81 yes votes (96.4%), 3 no votes (3.6%), and 1 ballot not returned.

7. Reporting of mission donations

Donations at EFC have historically been confidential, and reporting of mission donations was considered to be an arms length process. Individual donors, how much they gave, and for which mission designation were reported to Liberty Corner or the synod once or twice a year.

We now no longer have a synod, and Liberty Corner Mission (LCM) Canada is a new organization. They are requesting that we forward mission donations and donor names on a monthly basis. Reporting of donor names is requested because the mission/missionaries want to write thank you

letters. (Hopefully they will not focus on fundraising and question donors if their gifts decrease). Since members of EFC are now on the board of LCM, it was felt that some donors might not want their information reported for confidentiality reasons.

The EFC board thus proposed to send the money and list of donors monthly, without linking dollar amounts to names. However due to the frequency of reporting (monthly), compared to number of donors (relatively few), this process could still make it possible to link names to amounts given. (The donations for mission children are somewhat of an exception, as each child has multiple sponsors). Should we thus only forward the information once or twice a year?

One solution is for donors to let Ingrid Maier know if they want to remain anonymous or not (could indicate this on the offering envelope), and she will honour those requests.

8. Update from property committee (B. Budinski)

The boiler's pressure relief valve was leaking, and it was replaced by Miracle Mechanical Ltd. However, the low water cut off was found to have been incorrectly originally installed and needs to be changed. The expansion tank on the boiler also needs to be replaced. This extensive repair is labour intensive (need to drain the boiler and repipe / refit it), and could cost a few thousand dollars. Our boiler has a ~30 to 35 year life span and was installed in late 70's/early 80's. If the boiler leaks and causes water damage, it could severely impact functions at EFC. A new boiler will also eventually increase efficiency.

Furthermore, the basement furnace duct (which runs under the floor) has accumulated dirt and moisture, and has thus rusted. It could cost ~\$5000 to determine if mold is present in this duct. Currently we are not achieving three air exchanges per hour in the basement (which is specified in the latest building code). The proposal of the property committee is thus to replace the boiler, expansion tank, and bring the piping up to code for ~\$31000. A second quote is also pending.

9. Discussion and vote on proposed property expenditures

Although this repair is a necessity, congregational approval is required because the cost is over \$5000. It may be good to the work now, while EFC has the money. The good work of Bernie Budinski and the property committee is much appreciated.

Results of vote (85 ballots were distributed): 80 yes votes (95.2%), 4 no votes (4.8%), and 1 ballot not returned.

10. Additional comments / questions from congregation

One of the cabins at camp Evansburg (Schmidt's cabin) had been fixed up by Jason McQueen (ex. put in new windows – unfortunately they may now be smashed again; unbreakable windows by Lexan cost ~\$200 for a small window). He is no longer using the cabin, and it could thus perhaps be put to other uses (ex. for small children to sleep in instead of the main building). This will be put on the agenda for discussion at the next elders meeting.

11. Closing

The following was decided at the meeting with the German congregation on March 13, 2016:

1. The German services will continue at their current frequency for the next year;
2. The issue of German services will be revisited in one year;
3. The German services will start at 9:15 am beginning with the April 3, 2016 service.

There were 13 people, besides J. Mueller and S. Wanke, at the meeting.