

Altona Mennonite Church 2024 Annual General Meeting

Sunday, February 9, 2025 1:00 pm

Present: Loren Braul, Gina Enns, Marge Friesen, John Gerbrandt, Lil Gerbrandt, Marilyn Houser Hamm, Ray Hamm, Harv Heinrichs, Kathy Heinrichs, Loren Hiebert, Lori Hiebert, Andrea Hildebrand, Crystal Kehler, Dan Kehler, Dale Klassen, Sandra Klassen, Darlene Klassen, Ted Klassen, Bill Loewen, Elaine Loewen, Ken Loewen, Nathan Loewen, Karen Martens, Doreen Mierau, Ray Mierau, Marnë Mierau Friesen, Mick Friesen, Nancy Neufeld, Erika Enns Rodine, June Schwartz, John Thiessen, Julia Thiessen, Norma Thiessen, Edna Zacharias

Proxy: Kim Batchelor, Kerry Enns Margruite Krahn, Paul Krahn, Peggy Martens, Robert Martens, Kevin Neufeld, Nancy Ratzlaff, Marlene Rempel

1. Call to Order @ 1:00 pm

2. Opening – Erika Enns Rodine

Recapped the morning – AMC kids, Paul & Margruite Krahn and Erika led worship at Eastview Place and The Gardens. Led us in a prayer which recapped the year, listing our joys and concerns, and asked for guidance for the coming year and boldness in our vision. Amen.

3. Quorum – achieved – 34 present, 9 proxies

4. Agenda – Dale Klassen / Andrea Hildebrand - motion to adopt agenda. CARRIED

5. Appointments – Listening Committee – no volunteers before the meeting.

Edited to Add: Mick Friesen and Marilyn Houser Hamm will combine their notes as a listening committee and forward to Leadership Council

6. Minutes of AMC's AGM held on February 11, 2024.

a) Motion to Adopt John Gerbrandt / Loren Hiebert to adopt minutes. CARRIED

b) Business arising - none

7. Reports

7.1 Moderator – Loren Braul

- drew on theme of service and finding purpose at AMC - Service to others is a life well-lived
- Although we no longer have a "service" committee which officially serves other causes, activities in church still shows God's love to others. eg. Youth to Matheson Island, our association with Friendship Manor
- May we continue to find ways to be servants and to be served.

7.2 Pastor – Erika Enns Rodine

- Erika sees the work of service that we do, as a relational thing, the Eastview/ Gardens service, communion, etc.
- Initially concerned about being the "only" pastor in the church. With people dropping in, and her different activities in the community, she doesn't feel alone.
- Comment from Ray Hamm – good set up for AGM – Anabaptism, communion, sermon on the Mount

7.3 Worship – Elaine Loewen

- Kim Batchelor wrote the report highlighting the themes and events of the past year.
- meet every 5 or 6 weeks to plan in units.
- Comment from Andrea Hildebrand expressing gratitude for the careful planning
- Comment from Ray Hamm suggesting we experiment with switching up the format occasionally

- Comment from Edna Zacharias also expresses gratitude for the energy given to worship planning. The church calendar is really important time. She and some others really miss having our own Christmas Day service. Perhaps "Cut and Ordinary Time" Sunday instead? Erika responded with why we started sharing the Christmas Eve/Day services with Altona Bergthaler.
- Crystal Kehler commented – we have little connection during other times of the year with the Bergthaler, so it doesn't feel like home and family. We meet more with the United Church.
- Andrea added that our youth are really connected.
- Norma said for some of us, "if it doesn't happen AT AMC, we won't go".

7.4 Formation – Andrea Hildebrand

- Many themes overlap, as committees also work together.
- Thanks to all who have participated.
- AMC kids programming – any help welcomed for blocks of time. The committee is small and spread thin.
- If you feel inspired to lead / initiate an adult book study, let Andrea know.
- 30-35 people coming for this year's retreat. More info will be sent to those attending.

7.5 Trustees – Sandra Klassen

- lists of things accomplished during the past year.
- New chairs are super comfortable, old chairs are still in storage so if you need some
- Comment from Marilyn Houser Hamm expressing thanks to all the work Dale and Sandra have done over the year!
- Also thanks to Greg Costen for his work on the yard this summer.
- Trustee position is now available!
- June Schwartz reminded the speakers at the mics (ours are not directional) to keep them in front of their mouths. (*Microphones were mentioned at our last leadership meeting, research has begun.*)
- The technician can only do so much!
- Comment – if we want to be accessible, we need to remember this part of our service to others.
- Comment (Loren Hiebert) – we hear "pinging or feedback" in the front. Suggestion to turn down the bass a bit, treble up a bit.

7.6 Conference Reports

1. MC Manitoba – reminder that the delegate meeting is coming up, we are allowed 4 delegates.
2. MC Canada
3. Canadian Mennonite

7.7 Adopt Reports – John Gerbrandt /Elaine Loewen - Motion to adopt reports. CARRIED

8. Treasurer Report – Marnë Mierau Friesen

8.1 2024 Report

- Glad to be able to do this work for the church, Monday nights are her "treasurer meetings".
- Different budget lines were highlighted – please look at the numbers.
- Giving patterns were fairly straightforward, with a slight increase in numbers of donors.
- upcoming budget based on this information.
- bulk of organ repair bill was covered by a donor.
- total revenue was just over \$136,000, we had budgeted for \$140,000.
- total expenses – we were over budget in most areas of General and Admin. Expenses.

Motion: To approve 2024 Financial Report Marnë Mierau Friesen/Nancy Neufeld CARRIED

8.2 2025 Budget Proposal

- gave a 3% increase to the 2024 expenses to come up with the proposed 2025 budget.
- Conference guidelines re pastor salary was followed.

- we are doing things again, those things cost money, expenses are going up. The committees need money to operate.
- Leadership decided to wait until the end of the year to give money to our Conference & Affiliates. We want to give responsibly and respectfully. The goal is to give but giving trends are only covering increased costs. We want a balanced budget, not a deficit budget.
- We also have not put money into the sabbatical fund for a number of years. (Erika is okay with this for now.)

Question: Ray Hamm asked about the expenses involved with the things mentioned in the trustee report. A specific amount is not mentioned, will be paid as needed. (building improvement)

Comment – Norma Thiessen agrees that it doesn't feel right / isn't right to not give our organizations the money they need. What numbers will be used to encourage the end of year donations if we can't use "we are still this much below budget".

Other Comments:

- We have a policy that says we give the first three quarters of our donations, then pay the fourth if we can.
- Can we share our building with another denomination?
- our church conferences are laying off people, the employees need a paycheck all through the year.
- which conference/affiliates do we put back in? What ratios do we use to figure out the numbers?
- side discussion regarding how Gardens Chaplaincy program is organized and paid for.

Suggested Changes:

Chaplaincy program	\$3000.00
Mennonite Church MB	\$10,000.00
YFC	\$1000.00
Steps Towards Reconciliation	\$100.00
Camping Ministry	\$1000.00

8.3 Budget Vote

Motion to adopt budget discussion Marne/Marge

Motion to amend Ray/Norma CARRIED

Motion to accept budget as amended - CARRIED

9. Discussion on Proposed Constitutional Amendments

Loren Brault, Ang Enns and Kim Batchelor met to review some of the language used in our constitution.

They also looked at was the procedural and structural statements to reflect what is current practise.

General changes:

- Highlighting our legal structure as a religious society.
- Add written and numeric numbers as required.
- Replace "s/he" to they.

Gina Enns/Elaine Loewen – Ray Hamm/Marge Friesen moves to amend the language to be consistent re members of conferences/ Marge CARRIED

Committee Changes:

- Deacons – as many as we need to meet the needs of the congregation.
- Secretary (Council) keeps written records of meetings. This was previously with the trustees.
- Changing "commission" to committee. Committees can be formed as needed.
- Trustees to hold the property on behalf of the congregation

John Gerbrandt / Marilyn Houser Hamm amend re committee changes

Membership:

- Change from "resident member" to "active" and "inactive" membership – lots of discussion

Comment: AMC has a ministry of grace

- Annual renewal of membership required

- Remove category of "associate membership"

- Add "Declaration of Commitment" to the congregation as a path to membership in addition to baptism

How do we draw in people to be part of this community? How do we get the "inactive" ones to see the importance and benefit of being a part of this group? We want to bring people in.

Motion to Table this Membership section with the understanding that it will be revised according to our discussion today and presented at another time: Dan Kehler / Ken Loewen - CARRIED

10. Community Connections to AMC – presented for information

10.1 Mennonite Collegiate Institute – see corrected report

10.2 Gardens on Tenth

10.3 Mennonite Central Committee

10.4 Rhineland Food Bank

10.5 Eden Health Care – see website

10.6 Abundance Canada – see website

10.7 Youth For Christ (The Station) - see website

11. Altona Mennonite Church in the mirror – presented as information

11.1 2024 Year at a Glance

11.2 AMC Statistical Report

12. Nominations and Elections

12.1 Cumulative Position Listing to date

12.2 Nominations and Elections / Committee Members

Moved Harv / John to accept this slate

AMC Moderator -

Past Moderator – Loren Braul

Council Secretary – Lori Hiebert

Treasurer – Marnë Mierau Friesen, assistant Marge Friesen

Deacons – Susie Fisher, Karen Martens, John Thiessen, Norma Thiessen

Formation Committee – Andrea Hildebrand, Margruite Krahn, Julia Thiessen

Trustees – Dan Kehler (effective May 1, 2025), Dale & Sandra Klassen (until April 30)

Worship Committee – Kim Batchelor, Elaine Loewen, Peggy Martens, Mary Costen

Pastor – Erika Enns Rodine

Church Office Administrator – Lori Hiebert

Custodians – Dale & Sandra Klassen

13. Other Business - none

14. Closing

15. Adjournment at 4:20 pm

Minutes recorded by Lori Hiebert