

UUCM Board Meeting Tuesday, December 27, 2016

Attending were Reverend Justin Osterman, President Michael Mernin, Vice President Sue Raufer, Treasurer Dennis Kurtti, Secretary Sheila Eby, Associate Minister Judy Tomlinson and Trustees Jim Abramson, Doug Andrews, Ellen Fenster-Kuehl, Dottie Hiebing, Steve Mintz, Mary Moriarity and Steve Ramshur.

Strategic Staffing

The board had a lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of hiring a couple to fill both the settled minister and RE leader's roles, or at least being open to such a possibility. The board had a few members open to this option, but most cited the many complexities and entanglements even the strongest partnership could involve. Steven Ramshur moved that the possibility of a partnership be tabled. Mary seconded the motion, which was carried with one abstention.

Of the two options presented, the majority coalesced around Option I, a transition to a single clergy leader during the two-year transitional period after calling our new Clergy Leader.

The board discussed the possibility of the new minister coordinating the Covenant Groups. The work is manageable, requiring about one day per month. Judy can manage it until she leaves; then the settled minister can oversee these groups. But CG participants must be prepared for the new minister to consider taking things in a different direction.

The Board ultimately voted to implement David Pyle's Transitional Staffing Option I, with variations as noted below:

- a. Instead of replacing the RE coordinator with a full-time Acting Director of Religious Education as Pyle recommends, we will continue the ½ time RE coordinator position, and also hire an Acting DRE on a ½ time basis;
- b. We will hire an Acting Membership and Congregational Life Director (AMCLD) on a ½ time basis, instead of Pyle's recommended ¾ time;
- c. The responsibility for managing the Covenant Groups Program will remain with the current Associate Minister until her departure, and will shift to the new Clergy Leader after hiring, as opposed to shifting those responsibilities now to the Interim Senior Minister (as Pyle recommends);
- d. As recommended, lay leaders will support the Harvest the Power program for 6 months after hiring of Acting Membership and Congregational Life Director, at which point the responsibility will shift to the AMCLD;
- e. As recommended, the Senior Youth Coordinator position will remain vacant during the transitional period, with the Acting DRE providing coordination and support for the Senior Youth program during that time;
- f. As recommended, increase the budgetary lines for worship support will be increased during the transitional period, given that there will not be a second minister on staff to provide worship services.

Judy agreed that the Director of Religious Education could function as a half-time role. Fiscally, this brought us to a "back of envelope" calculation a little shy of the numbers David Pyle projected. The board agreed that it's better to start small and increase hours as needed, rather than the converse.

A quick run of the numbers indicated that the numbers involved fit within our budget. However, the cost of benefits could be an issue. Justin observed that with the new minister, we will need a full staffing analysis.

Communications

Steve Ramschur demonstrated how Kona has been modified to include the task forces, and also to include a communications strategy for the rest of the year, through July. The sign-up is on Kona.

The board discussed the need to “tell our story” to the congregation during this time of dramatic change. That story was articulated as follows:

- There is no turnkey replacement for Judy, but we have spent considerable time ensuring all critical pieces remain strong at her departure.
- To gain the strongest overview, we brought in a consultant (at no cost) from the UU.
- After speaking to him at length, and weighing our alternatives, we’ve decided to on a transitional staffing plan that will allow our Senior Minister to adjust before we hire a new Associate Minister.
 - We’ll hire a half-time Director of Religious Education on a two-year contract.
 - We will retain our current RE Coordinator, which will also be a half-time role.
 - The settled minister will assume responsibility for covenant groups.
- We have been assured that well-qualified people exist to take on the new roles we envision.
- This plan is within our budget, and we have full expectations for its success.

Next step is drawing up a job description.

Montclair Tax Office

Justin is meeting with Ed Martoglio to discuss the tax issue mentioned at the December board meeting. Steve Ramshur volunteered to work with Justin on this issue.

Sue Rauffer motioned to adjourn. Sheila seconded the motion, which was adopted.