

**UUCM Board Meeting
Tuesday, February 21, 2017**

Attending were Reverend Justin Osterman, President Michael Mernin, Vice President Sue Raufer, Treasurer Dennis Kurtti, Secretary Sheila Eby, and Trustees Jim Abramson, Doug Andrews, Dottie Hiebing, Steve Mintz, Mary Moriarity, Steve Ramshur and Denise Rodgers.

Present from the Coming of Age program were students Ryanne Barrett, Ben Douglas, Emma Eulette and Luca Ponticello ,and mentors Jeff Gattens, Johanna Foster, Ed Martoglio and Kathleen Reilly.

We called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

A motion to accept January minutes was raised by Sue, seconded by Dennis, and adopted.

We prepared thank you notes for David Hanley and Deb Corbett for their work on drafting the job descriptions.

Consent Agenda

The deadline for appeals to the Montclair tax assessor is Jan 10. Mike will call the assessor tomorrow. Ed Martoglio is trying to get the tax lawyer pro bono.

Claudia Sanders asked if could we accommodate marchers to sleep in Fletcher Hall the evening of March 5. Claudia will stay with group, one of whom is a close friend. They will leave Sunday, March 6th.

The GA will take place in New Orleans in mid-June. A new UUA president will be elected there. Marcus will be the band director. Let's use our full allotment of seven people, and have maximum impact on the votes, even if they don't all actually go to New Orleans. We'll need written and verbal encouragement from the pulpit. Do we influence attendees' votes? There could be ballots about supporting the overturn of the Johnson amendment and/or about congregations becoming sanctuaries. There's a lot of material on line to educate ourselves.

Justin Osterman inquired as to whether the congregations had a history of discussions about this on a congregation level? Michael Mernin responded that those discussions have been at the board level.

Justin Osterman pointed out that we have two issues then, setting a policy around how we identify delegates, plus general education of the congregation about the issues.

Mike Mernin pointed out that people are already signed up to go; perhaps we could let them take the lead. Jim Abramson emphasized approaching this carefully, selecting people whose views are as representative as possible of the congregation.

Denise Rodgers pointed out that we can't select people because we don't have money to send them. Jim Abramson suggested we tell them how we'd like to them to vote, but they are free to vote their conscious.

Sue Raufer said we should ask people planning to go to tell us. We should set up a time prior to GA, ask them to come to a meeting between services, and make sure that any member of the congregation can talk to them.

Doug Andrews suggested this be included in the weekly announcements and board moment.

Justin Osterman said that on April 1st, three candidates for the UU's leadership position will be talking nearby; we should invite people to attend. We should also make an assessment of best practices in this matter and follow it in upcoming years.

Treasurer's Report

Dennis Kurtti told us that income for the year is ahead of projections. Pledges are ahead of expectations; new member pledges are ahead of last year, and Sunday collections and rentals are also up. Expenses are down but they will go up as we start cutting checks for the search committee.

We have a surplus of \$33K as opposed to a deficit last year of \$17K. We hit 90% of our budget for repairs on building. We need to finalize the fiscal priorities as we look at the budget for next year.

Denise Rodgers questioned the confidence these numbers might prompt. They do not recognize the expenses encumbered between now and the end of the fiscal year. Or our inability to practice fair compensation guidelines.

Justin Osterman pointed that the surplus would more accurately be called cash received. You know when you close the books in July whether you have a surplus.

Dennis Kurtti said the finance committee, overseen by the stewardship committee, does an excellent job managing all this. How much attention does the board need to give it? Does the report need to be this detailed?

Mike Mernin answered in the positive; it's better to err on the side of maximum knowledge.

Senior Minister's Report

Justin Osterman pointed out that we had 11 recorded visitors from the January meeting. He will be on vacation 2 - 18 March; he will not be checking emails or responding to phone calls. Michael Mernin, Sue Raufer and Judy Tomlinson know how to get in touch if something cataclysmic happens.

Justin Osterman asked where the statement of guiding principles came from? Sue Raufer said the board wrote it at a retreat in 2011, and that it has tweaked somewhat since. Given that it hasn't been discussed during his tenure, he suggested we spend some time with it.

He reminded us that congregational life starts winding down after Memorial Day; we have four more months together, and in that space of time, we need to have in hand the

organization chart, the personnel committee, etc, to give to the new minister. The org chart is the map of the congregation. We've made great progress framing it out, and we've had thoughtful discussions relevant to the process of greeting the new minister. He emphasized that we're going to have to lead the congregation through the process of understanding and embracing the idea of policy governance. We need to help people ease into it. That means reading books, having discussions, doing Webinars and bringing in knowledgeable speakers.

Denise Rodgers suggested we start on Kona a list of things we want to make sure we include in a strategic planning process. What are we committed to achieving?

Justin Osterman said that, as leaders, we must incorporate communications in our practices. The congregation will look to us for information and direction.

He discussed UU financial and membership data. They do not indicate a crisis, but don't portray an institution that's thriving, either. If you do well and thrive, you will create coattails that carry other congregations along.

Communications Committee Discussion

Steve Ramshur pointed out that the congregation has no communication committee. He believes we need one. It would establish a "tone of voice in the public square." Internal communications and a database would be included. Social media would be unified; the tone would be consistent and we would know who is responsible for what. Some work could be done by staff and/or there could be a part-time communications specialist who really manages it.

Dennis Kurtti asked if a paid person should be brought in to help with communications. Justin responded that with one person, one voice, we could rebrand the congregation. Denise said that's right for the long term, but we need coherent communications right now to help ease the anxiety of change.

Stewardship Committee

Chris Corbett discussed the structure of the proposed committee and the associated job descriptions. An overall committee would have overarching responsibility, reporting to the board. There would be an additional subcommittee for each of the four pillars.

Mike Mernin moved to form the stewardship committee as presented. Sue seconded, and the motion was adopted, with a unanimous vote to have Chris at the organization's head.

Personnel Committee

Doug Andrews presented job descriptions for the two positions we're filling as Judy Tomlinson leaves. They took pieces from existing documents and wove them together, and followed the salary guideline offered by UU expert David Pyle.

Questions arose about benefits, sick time and development expenses. Dennis Kurtti will get the numbers these benefits involve. UUCM offers no benefits for people working fewer than 20 hours, though for-profits in Montclair must provide them to people working a smaller number.

The question of sick time was discussed. A stated number of hours prevents people from spreading germs. Justin Osterman prefers calling it paid time off.

Task Force check in

Communications

- Sue Raufer wrote the Gazette topic on stewardship
- Steve Ramshur will handle the Board Moment and talk about delegates and stewardship.

Organizational Structure

- Steve Mintz and Sue Raufer hope to take this to the next level, adding the Stewardship Committee.
- They're looking for another person.

Judy Tomlinson's Farewell

To discuss plans for Judy Tomlinson's good bye, Michael Mernin suggested the group go into executive session, Sue Raufer seconded that motion, which was adopted.