

UUCM Board Meeting Tuesday, January 17, 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, Dottie Hiebing, Steve Mintz, Mary Moriarty, Steve Ramshur and Denise Rodgers.

Present from the Coming of Age program were students Eleanor Kanengiser, Justin Cerutti, Kyla Rombough and Molly Sailer. Mark Felix, Marianne Krupa (SP?) and Sarah Scalet also joined us.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

We prepared a thank you note for Andrew Bruggeman, who repaired kitchen cabinet doors.

Consent Agenda

There was a motion to accept December minutes, but Justin Osterman moved they be detached from the consent agenda. Mary Moriarty seconded the motion, and the two provided changes to the document. Sue Raufer moved to accept the edited minutes, and Steve Ramshur seconded the motion, which was adopted.

President's Report

- We agreed to ask Deborah Corbett and Steven Handley to work with Doug Andrews in creating job descriptions for the two RE posts we are filling. A clean draft will be presented at the February board meeting, allowing us to share the work with the UUA's Andrea Lerner, who can in turn share the document with prospects.
- We agreed to establish a personnel committee by March 1. Mary Moriarty moved to appoint a personnel committee by March 1 and Jim Abramson seconded the motion. It was adopted.
- Doug Andrews observed that we are establishing a stewardship committee at the same time.
- There was an animated discussion about the larger organizational picture, and the work Ellen Fenster-Kuehl and Dottie Hiebing have been doing to uncover the congregation's existing work-streams and informal reporting relationships. Steve Ramshur opened a conversation in Kona and invited people to offer their thoughts on this matter as we begin to put the pieces together.
- The Alliance Room will be open to congregants Sunday, Jan 22, to talk about transition. Steve Ramshur and Jim Abramson will lead the conversation.
- It was reported that Ed Martoglio recommended a specific individual to guide our response to the proposed tax on a portion of our rental income.
- Ellen Fenster-Kuehl is stepping down from the board, one year before her term was scheduled to end. Should we leave the position vacant until the May meeting, or fill it right now? Mary Moriarty suggested we table the discussion and take it up next meeting.

Treasurer's Report

- Income is in line with budget projections.
- On the bright side, expenses are running low.
- But they get higher the second half of the year, and we have yet to meet the cost of bringing on the new minister. Moreover, we face the possible tax liability.
- Justin Osterman observed that we have a staff vacancy. The meter is going to start running again soon, and that will have an impact on our numbers.

Senior Minister's Report

- The Board's continued work on some key issues is of the greatest importance as Judy Tomlinson and I near the ends of our ministries here. Areas of particular focus include improved

communications with the congregation, development of an organizational chart and clarification of governance.

- Having adopted an interim staffing plan to ensure the seamless continuation of RE and other congregational programs, we are now embarking on next steps: determining who will finalize job descriptions for the two positions we've outlined, establishing compensation and start dates for each of these roles and assigning responsibility for the hiring processes.
- Planning for the Annual Fund Drive is underway. The January 19 conversation on stewardship will be framed to introduce a new culture of year round financial stewardship,
- The Finance Committee's assessment of budget challenges for 2017/2018 poses some real challenges. The tax assessment by Montclair, expenses tied to the settlement of our new minister and the withdrawal of significant funds from reserves are all worrisome. Dennis Kurtti added that our maintenance budget is almost topped out. On the other hand, we'll save money if we choose a minister who's nearby.
- The Pastoral Care Committee continues to develop. Their work will be absolutely critical next year as we transition to a single minister. It's important to talk to the congregation about changes in pastoral care now, so members won't be disappointed and the new minister won't be overwhelmed. We must continue to talk to the congregation about what's involved. If we keep communicating, people will understand. We must repeat it, over and over. People need repetition over time to absorb information.
- We will start a discussion on Kona about the upcoming changes in pastoral care and how to best prepare the congregation for those changes.

Associate Minister's Report

- April 2 is CoA graduation, at which the board generally hosts coffee hour.
- The covenant group focusing on the parenting of teens is losing its leader.
- Nelia Sellars agreed to chair the Membership Committee. Dottie Hiebing moved to endorse Nelia as chair; Mary Moriarty seconded the motion, which was adopted.
- Dennis Kurtti asked if we had data on how long people have been members; the information would help with stewardship. The need for a database was discussed – a complicated issue, because other groups would be involved, as well. Costs, too. A discussion of Church Windows produced mixed reviews, and an agreement to keep exploring.

Ministerial Transition Team Update, Sarah Scalet

- We're gathering feedback from about 70 former members -- why they joined and why they left. We have an online survey and want to give them a chance to speak in depth.
- Dennis Kurtti suggested inviting them back for a single service.

Task Force Check Ins

Communication:

- We covered scheduling for the February Board Moment and Gazette, pointed out the need for coffee hour coverage in February, and discussed the need for both the Board Moment and the Gazette in March.
- The topic for February will be stewardship.

Governance:

- We looked at the planned transition to policy governance with a timeline going out until August 1, when the new minister starts.
- We have a narrow to-do list, which provides a solid framework focusing on reporting relationships.
- We have a tentative plan to meet again with the organizational chart committee and discuss our common issues.

Organization Chart:

- Ellen Fenster-Kuehl resigned.

Stewardship:

- This Thursday's meeting will drive direction and momentum. Someone on the board will go and report back on Kona.

Random Observations:

- Services are being videotaped, and that makes some people uncomfortable. Suppose a visitor finds him/herself on tape? But Justin Osterman thinks every service should be videotaped – "that's the future." We can protect people's privacy by filming only in front or from the choir loft.
- Justin mentioned that this is an unusually anxious time; we need to be extra patient and kind with each other.
- Sue Raufer said she'd be out of the country in February and March.

Process Observation

- The meeting was constructive and respectful; we did good work, Jim Abramson observed.
- Dottie Hiebing moved that we adjourn. Sue Raufer seconded the motion, which carried.