

Board of Trustees for Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church Board Minutes December 15, 2016

In attendance: Greg Blackman, Jay Poliziani, Mary Jo Sontag, Liz Dell

(quorum reached)

- Absent: Rev Dave, John Luff, Kate Tomlinson, Sonia Reed
- Check in: Mary Jo had a great vacation, Greg is looking forward to seeing his kids over the holidays and Liz is looking forward to babies first Christmas.
- Assent Agenda Approved

Ministers Report:

Minister's Report,

November/December 2016

Congregation in the community:

Continued planning for public Winter Solstice event with neighbor organization, City of Asylum.

Organized the neighborhood Carol.

Publicized and encouraged participation in various community efforts and events throughout Pittsburgh and the Northside.

Outreach to new Guests.

Worship services:

As noted last month, we'll have Christmas Day worship, but not Christmas Eve. Nor will there be a Watch Night (New Year's Eve) gathering. This decision was made by the Exec based on best use of volunteer resources.

Please note that the first Sunday of the year is on New Years Day. If you're in town, plan to attend. Bring a drum if you have (or can borrow) one.

Health of the congregation:

We continue to have a high proportion of Guests to Members attending worship. Having Guests is a good sign. But it makes it difficult on Members who attend and try to effectively reach out to Guests while maintaining relationships with other Members. (One Sunday there was a Guest from another local UU church who complained bitterly that I was the only one who approached her and that Members were just talking to themselves. Thinking back, I realized that the thin number of Members were actually all attending to other Guests.) So this challenge needs to be addressed if the church really wants to grow. For that to happen, the Leadership needs to show up consistently and in turn encourage other Members to do so. Once that happens, we can develop other mechanisms to encourage Member engagement.

How Trustees can help:

The biggest help you can provide is to develop your spiritual practice and bring it to the next level of depth.

With snow months here, it's always a great help when you come to church (and even offer to drive others either near you or close to your route to church).

Make sure you have at least one "action item" coming out of each Board Meeting and follow through on that action.

Connect with people who are new and those who have returned. And even reach out to those Members or Guests you haven't seen and miss.

Revive the Leadership Council.

Get that Board of Trustees picture in the Emerson Room.

Follow through on providing the annual Conflict Management workshop. Congregational conflict is an important part of any growing organism, including congregation.

In short, most all of this comes down to an encouragement to "show up fully!" and in turn encourage others to do so.

- Business
Religious Education update: the RE team will set up an interview with a candidate who worked at south hills uu church. Greg will check with Rev Dave to confirm that a verbal exit discussion

occurred with the most recent RE staff who resigned. The Board agreed that before we look further at authorizing additional hours for RE staff that we be sure that having enough time is the real issue and not behavior concerns related to individual children in the program (that appeared to be a concern in the letter of resignation from the last candidate). If that is the real issue then it would not be resolved with more work hours.

- Mid year meeting 1/29: Include a shout out and gift to volunteers keeping RE afloat. Be sure to include a thank you roation –opportunity for folks to acknowledge each other. Be sure to allow time for questions. Include a Justice League and Stewardship update. Lunch provided by the BOT to be determined at next meeting.
- Rev Dave will update us at the next meeting regarding plans for a mini sabbatical –possibly this will be included in the mid year meeting.
- Jay will talk to the membership committee about possible stratagies to encourage current members to greet new guests after service. Possabilities include a welcome sign in book for all at church, special name tags encouraging visitors to approach people with the name tags(ask me), name tags with I am a visitor on them to encourage folks to reach out, a team of members who offer to make greeting new people their “gig”
- Next meeting January 24, 2017 at 7 pm at U House.
- Meetings for 2017: 2/28 3/28 2/25 5/23 6/27 7/25 8/22 9/26 3/24 11/28 12/26
- Liz motioned to adjourn, MaryJo seconded and all agreed