

Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church Meeting of the Board of Trustees

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was held at Unitarian House with the following Trustees in attendance: Kate Tomlinson, President; Sarah-Wade Smith, Vice President; Donald Zeilman, Clerk; Donna Badger Kopnitsky; Matt Merriman-Preston; and Patrick Burke.

Ex officio: Rev. David McFarland, Minister

Excused: John Luff, Treasurer

I Gathering

Kate Tomlinson called the meeting to order at 7:02PM, and shared words for the chalice lighting. A quorum was present at the call to order (six of six Trustees). Kate distributes an agenda, and calls for additions or changes. Zeilman requested a follow-up to discussions around the endowment checking account be added.

II Administration

1. Minutes of the June 17, 2019 meeting were distributed electronically. Kate calls for additions or changes to the Minutes. Kate notes that “Long-Range Planning” should be corrected to “Strategic Planning” in Section III, Item 2. No other corrections are offered.
2. Financial Report: The financial report was submitted electronically. Endowment update will be taken up under business. Matt will discuss the parameters of the bookkeeping role with John Luff.
3. Minister’s Report: None submitted.
4. Report of the Clerk: Zeilman reports that current membership stands at 65.
5. Denominational Affairs: The Pittsburgh Cluster Assembly will be held on November 16.

Reports accepted by assent.

III Business

1. Board Retreat Recap & Next Steps: Kate notes that the Board retreat focused on engagement through ministries, committees and volunteering. Though the congregation is largely satisfied with what is being done, we should be willing to try new approaches and ways of doing things. This should be the church that shows up, and is able to apply its passions.

Critical Leadership: Board identifies five broad areas that are critical to the congregation:

- » Worship
- » Board Leadership
- » Finance
- » Religious Education
- » Communications

Additionally, Membership, Stewardship, Social Justice and Committee on Ministry play important roles, if perhaps at a secondary level.

Board discussed whether stewardship is critical or secondary, determining that the process of engaging members' time, talent, and treasure may be critical, but may not require a standing committee. Board will lead a review of present and past practices, along with recommended practices, in order to further the discussion.

The Board signaled a willingness to go in a bold direction and "let go" of non-critical committees and ministries that are not functioning. The congregation/community will "tell us" what is vital. Rev. Dave recommends engaging the congregation, and encourages initiating regular opportunities for discussion.

The idea of the total Sunday Experience was raised at the retreat. Board discusses engaging the congregation within the context of Sunday morning:

- » Use extended fellowship on a monthly basis for discussions, to introduce new ideas, and to garner feedback.
- » The extended fellowship might occur before or after Worship, once or twice per month.
- » The time allotted should be no more than an hour, and contain a mix of open time and structured time, maybe 45 minutes of social time and 15 minutes for church life.
- » Create a combined worship experience that includes formal worship and this proposed period of fellowship/discernment now under discussion.
- » At each occasion, focus on one goal, move organically to other goals and topics. Experiment and learn as we go. Decide what a successful process looks like.

Next Steps:

- » Kate suggests that the Board partner with the Membership Committee to create something different for Ingathering Sunday, possibly modifying the traditional lunch or breakfast.
- » Kate will communicate with Jill Brethauer/Membership concerning that possibility.
- » Rev. Dave encourages discussion around making this "Welcome Table Sunday" sustainable and meaningful.

2. Fund raising: Kate reminds the Board that there is a \$2000 commitment in the Budget for fund raising this fiscal year. Possible vehicles include event income, product sales, and fee for services. Board would like to engage with the congregation to explore ideas and identify those folks who might be interested in developing ideas. Kate has been exploring the idea of custom Tee shirt sales. Zeilman notes that the holidays are upcoming and are traditional times for fund raising.

Board recommends that fund raising be the general topic of discussion at the October "Welcome Table" gathering.

3. Endowment: John Luff reported that there is \$14+K in a non-interest bearing Endowment checking account (bulk from 2016). He recommended that the Endowment Committee move most of those funds to an investment account. Kate followed up with Eric Meisberger of the Endowment Committee on the issue. Eric stated that the Committee has reached out to the person who advises us on the investments, but has not heard back. Kate will continue to monitor their progress.

Zeilman notes that there appears to be a (Board) policy to place money from bequests, such as the Clyde Fund and Swedlow Estate, in the Endowment account, but there is no indication in the record (Minutes). For the record, church needs the policy, date, and authorization. Matt will ask John if he can supply the details.

IV Adjournment

Sarah-Wade Smith moves to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carries.**

Kate Tomlinson adjourns the meeting and the chalice is extinguished.

Next meeting: September 23, 7:00pm at Unitarian House.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald G. Zeilman, Clerk 2019–20