

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; Donald Zeilman, Clerk; Matt Merriman-Preston, interim Treasurer; and Patrick Burke.

Ex officio: Rev. David McFarland, Minister

Excused: Badger Kopnitsky

Guest: Terri Hammond

I Gathering

Kate Tomlinson called the meeting to order at 7:02PM. Kate and Terri shared words for the chalice lighting. A quorum was present at the call to order (four of six Trustees). Kate previously distributed the agenda electronically; calls for additions or changes. None are offered.

II Administration

1. Minutes of the September 23, 2019 meeting were distributed electronically. Kate calls for additions or changes to the Minutes. None are offered. Minutes stand as submitted.

2. Financial Report: Matt Merriman-Preston, interim Treasurer. Financial report was distributed electronically. Matt asks for input on the reporting – is there additional information that the Board would like to include, or conversely, are there reports that should be eliminated.

Noted that the annualized deficit for this fiscal year may reach \$8000, \$4000 over the deficit budgeted.

- » Pledge income was about \$3,000 below last year and about \$2,000 below budget.
- » Revenue is running about \$11,000 below budget for the year.
- » Expenditures were about \$2,400 below budget for the month and about \$7,000 below budget for the year.

There will be a major downward adjustment in pledge income following recent changes in membership.

3. Minister's Report: Rev. Dave submitted his report electronically.

He is concerned about lower Sunday participation.

But encouraged by the Board's commitment to learning through the "Small Numbers, Infinite Possibilities" series. There is Board consensus that Allegheny should pursue the invitation to shadow the South Hills Church's guest follow-up program once the next two "Small Numbers" sessions are completed (in November and January).

Regarding the question of whether a Growth Group should be revived, consensus it that this should be readdressed once the small congregations sessions are completed, and after the follow-up with the South Hills offer. Member participation will also have an affect on its viability.

4. Report of the Clerk: Zeilman notes that membership now stands at 68.

5. Denominational Affairs: The next “Small Numbers, Infinite Possibilities” session is scheduled for November 13. Zeilman will organize.

The Pittsburgh Cluster Assembly will be held on November 16. Lisa Schroth and Betty Luff have indicated willingness to serve as Allegheny’s representatives.

Reports accepted by assent.

III Business

1. Treasurer Position: John Luff has formally resigned his position as Treasurer, and has provided transition to Matt Merriman-Preston. Matt has expressed his willingness to be appointed.

Motion by Zeilman to appoint Matt Merriman-Preston as Treasurer, serving out the remainder of the term. **Motion carries.**

2. Membership, stewardship, volunteering/member and visitor engagement: Board will continue with the small congregations program, eventually connecting with South Hills Church’s offer, and will consider forming a Growth team (see items in Minister’s report above). Kate and Badger continue to monitor.

3. Social Justice Lyceum Proposal: Contacting Mark Tomlinson concerning his interest in leading these next steps in the process. Sarah-Wade is pursuing.

4. Sabbatical Proposal: Board and Rev. Dave have established that the Letter of Agreement would not prohibit taking one month of sabbatical each year. Kate notes that the timing will be important, and raises the concern that a back-to-back combination with vacation and study leave may present a hardship for the congregation. Zeilman notes that the Worship schedule is also affected by sabbatical timing.

Rev. Dave will submit this year’s sabbatical proposal for the Board’s consideration.

5. Strategic Plan – Next Steps: Terri Hammond distributed a one-page “Strategic Plan Milestones” document. The Strategic Plan Draft had been previously distributed to the Board.

The Milestones document is inviting and accessible. Less clear is measuring or knowing when milestones have been reached or accomplished.

Welcoming & Inclusive of All

- » The re-covenanting process (policy) is not functioning. The congregation doesn’t even seem sure when and how it’s supposed to go into effect.
- » How is healthy behavior embedded in the congregation? What does it look and feel like when we’re out of covenant? Who or what holds us accountable, both individually and as a congregation?

- » Healthy behavior can be promoted through our “practice,” which happens in Worship, in the Welcome Table sharing, and when we work together as a congregation.
- » Healthy behavior can also be learned and discovered through various kinds of formal training. Training or learning also becomes part of our “practice.”
- » Who / what is our “market” for growing the congregation through the next 25 members?
- » Understanding ourselves and our identity as a welcoming, accessible church is a leverage point that has to be reached prior to growth.

Mission Focused Space

- » Defined as space in service to mission, not mission in service to space.
- » The Lyceum proposal will have an effect on how we use our spaces in service to the mission.

Spiritual Growth

- » Deepening our connection internally will be part of our exploration of covenant and models of healthy behaviors.
- » The congregation is best served by a full and vibrant ministry.

Next Steps: Board will continue to explore questions, to clarify and focus the plan. Ideally, the Board will adopt the plan by the end of 2019. There is no expectation that one individual will be able to execute every aspect of the plan.

6. Justice Partner: Rev. Dave suggests *Black Women for Positive Change* as our next two-month-long justice partner. Board concurs.

IV Adjournment

Patrick Burke moves to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carries.**

Kate Tomlinson adjourns the meeting and the chalice is extinguished.

Next meeting: November 25, 7:00pm at Unitarian House.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald G. Zeilman, Clerk 2019–20