

Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church Meeting of the Board of Trustees

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

Ex officio: Rev. David McFarland

I Gathering

Kate Tomlinson called the meeting to order at 7:02PM. Sarah-Wade shared opening words. A quorum was present at the call to order (six of six Trustees). An agenda was not distributed, with the understanding that the meeting would primarily address church functioning during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

II Administration

- 1.** Minutes of the February 17 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. The financial report was distributed electronically.
 - » Question raised as to how we were handling mail without a regular presence at the church. Board understands that Betty Schwarz has been checking periodically, and leaving items in the mail slots.
 - » Matt notes that the MWSS is behind on their U-House rent payment, but that we are expecting a check for a year's worth of rent (\$2,400).
 - » The Jan/Feb Share-the-Plate donation to PIIN was \$616.46.
 - » On-line donations during the weekly worship broadcast are low. Organizers are considering adjustments that would make donating easier. Board is anticipating a large decrease in the Sunday "plate" donation during the months of on-line worship.
 - » YTD, the Budget balance is \$1500 lower than anticipated.
 - » It was noted that Lisa Schroth is organizing a fundraising effort through church participation in the MWSS annual neighborhood yard sale in June.
- 3.** Minister's Report: Rev. Dave notes that the move away from meeting in person for all worship and business will result in many changes for the congregation.
- 4.** Report of the Clerk: Zeilman notes that membership has not changed, stands at 68.
- 5.** Denominational Affairs: The last "Small Numbers, Infinite Possibilities" session was not well attended. Kate will make sure that the video and notes from the sessions are made available.
- 6.** Ministerial Search Committee: Kate reports that the Committee met, and that Sue Johnson has indicated that she won't be continuing. Laura Conkle agreed to join the Committee. The group reviewed and discussed the charge from the Board, and planned their next meeting.

Reports accepted by assent.

III Business

1. COVID-19 Response

A. Worship

- » Allegheny will continue to hold worship services on-line for the foreseeable future, including April 12, Easter Sunday.
- » Board notes that on-line worship will have a negative effect on revenue, especially revenue from non-pledge Sunday giving. Board would like to make the process of giving easier during on-line worship. Ideas include: creating more “space” for giving in the order of worship, making the links for on-line giving more prominent in the weekly *Advocate*, and exploring other venues for on-line giving.
- » Question raised as to the use of Facebook for nonprofit giving; Kate replies that she has previously investigated this option. Our nonprofit status is included under the larger UUA status, which disqualifies us under the Facebook guidelines.
- » Discussed mail deliveries to the church. As noted above, Betty S has been checking periodically. Kate also agrees to stop by the church periodically to sort and check the incoming mail. Matt would be most comfortable with Kate providing that service. Matt is also stopping in to pick up the Treasurer’s mail (checks, insurance, invoices, notices, etc.) and will contact Charlie Snowden to discuss how deposits are made.

B. Justice Partners

- » Time for recognition of the church’s justice partners during Sunday worship is still included.
- » The direct link to the current share-the-plate partner, *Hello Neighbor*, is being shared in worship. Donations or portions of donations given through the Allegheny link will only be shared with the STP partner if there is a notation to do so. Board may want to extend the giving period for the current partner beyond the typical two months, when the lock down is over. Patrick will contact *Hello Neighbor*, and confer with them.
- » Donations to the NCM Food Pantry through the church will only be monetary, with the appropriate link shared during worship. Folks will still be able to make food donations to the pantry on their own.

C. Pastoral & Communications

- » Various venues are being explored and considered for opportunities to connect beyond Sunday worship/fellowship. These include: mid-week Zoom fellowship/gathering, a “Welcome Table” Zoom gathering with the Board, a “time with Rev Dave” Zoom gathering, and possibly some one-on-one communication. Board is interested in reducing the sense of isolation that some congregants may be experiencing.

- » Matt notes that there are some in-church regulars whose names are not coming up in the on-line worship. To help with technology-related issues, Zoom instructions have been posted on the Allegheny UU Facebook page, and some have reached out individually to folks who may be experiencing technical problems. Kate and Sarah-Wade will follow up with comparing the two lists: Sunday regulars and Zoom participants.
- » Kate notes that the church has been using the Tomlinson Pro-Zoom account, but will be setting up a church pro account subscription to facilitate Sunday worship and other communications. The cost will be \$15 per month. Board concurs.

D. Facilities

- » The facilities will remain closed for the foreseeable future (includes both church and outside uses). Weekly cleaning will continue. Charlie Snowden will continue to monitor the facilities. Zeilman and Charlie will arrange for a thorough cleaning and sanitizing prior to the return of regular facilities' use. NA has been asked to discontinue meeting until further notice.

2. Ministerial Search

- » Question raised concerning ongoing communication with the congregation about the search process. Is there someone (perhaps from the Search Committee) who can provide a regular update on the process for the congregation? Perhaps a "Search Moment" during worship/fellowship?
- » Kate had the conversation with Rev. Tines that was part of the charge to the Search Committee. Rev. Tines would very much like to have an ongoing relationship with Allegheny. He will follow Allegheny's lead as far as what that relationship might be. Kate expressed Allegheny's wish to continue a relationship as well.
- » Kate also spoke with Rev. Sunshine Wolfe, Congregational Field Staff for the Central East Region. Rev. Wolfe supports Allegheny's proposal to engage half-time ministry, and indicated that Allegheny may still be able to post the opening on the UUA website.

» IV Adjournment

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

Kate Tomlinson adjourns the meeting.

Next meeting: April 20, 7:00pm at Unitarian House.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald G. Zeilman, Clerk 2019–20