

## Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church Meeting of the Board of Trustees

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was held via video 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

Guest: Laura Conkle, Search Committee

### **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). An agenda was distributed prior to the meeting. Kate calls for additions or changes to the Agenda. None are offered. Agenda stands as published.

### **II Administration**

1. Minutes of the March 16 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.
  - » Matt notes that all online giving, including giving during worship, is pledge income since the donor can be identified. Links to the STP partners are posted separately.
  - » Year-to-date, the deficit is under \$1000, which is lower than the budget projection.
  - » The recent natural gas bill for Unitarian House is in dispute. The reading was several times higher than usual, and we have not been using the building during this time of pandemic. The meter was changed, and this may be the source of the discrepancy in readings. Matt and Charlie Snowden will pursue.
  - » Question: The Endowment Fund checking account has a balance of \$14,418.54. These funds were approved to be moved to the Endowment account – have they been? will they be? Matt will follow up on the disposition of these funds, will report next meeting.
3. Minister's Report: Rev. Dave notes the following:
  - » Through May, Sunday Worship will be shared/presented by the group of small congregations in the Pittsburgh Cluster. Allegheny will be responsible for three Sundays in May.
  - » He has been active with inreach/pastoral activities as he nears the end of ministry with Allegheny.
  - » Membership Committee (Jill Brethauer, remaining member) reached out to request a UU101 class before his retirement.
  - » Rev. Dave is looking forward to sharing these final six weeks with the congregation.
4. Report of the Clerk: Zeilman notes that membership has not changed, stands at 68.

5. Denominational Affairs: Kate states that she will be forwarding links to information from the UUA and the region with updates on the COVID-19 situation. Laura notes that Summer Institute and General Assembly will be online only. The CE Region will be reaching out to congregations.

**Reports accepted by assent.**

### **III Business**

#### **1. Interim Minister Search**

The interim minister search team comprises Kate Tomlinson, Patrick Burke, and Laura Conkle. Kate notes that the team reevaluated the general charge that it received from the Board. A draft of the revised “Charge and Qualifications” document was distributed to the Board prior to the meeting. Patrick led a discussion of the document and process.

- » Working to have a candidate engaged by July 1, but not later than September 1, with a start date of August or September first.
- » The team added information about candidate selection that outlines a clear process for comparing candidates.
- » Designated a group of “Essential Responsibilities”: Interim ministry, Worship Ministry, and Pastoral Ministry. Music Ministry was reassigned under “Facilitated Responsibility.”
- » Commitments & Qualifications states that the position is one-half-time (6 units). What are the congregational expectations for half-time ministry? Expecting robust interim, worship, and pastoral ministry may be unreasonable, especially in this time of pandemic. Board/Team will need to propose a balance.
- » Matt asks about stating an option for additional contract time (above half-time) in the information presented to potential candidates. Laura cautions that candidate expectations will be for half-time, and that discussion of additional time should be held off until after candidate(s) have been identified, with the awareness that it may not even be a possibility.
- » The Board will contract with the candidate that the Team recommends.
- » Zeilman notes that the qualifications are silent on the requirement (or not) around formal ministerial training (e.g., MDiv), and that such training usually includes a pastoral component. Also, the qualifications are silent on the issue of Ministerial Fellowship. Anyone may be ordained by any congregation, but only those who are qualified by the Ministers Association may be fellowshipped as UU ministers. Are our intentions clear?
- » The Board will begin preparing the contract. Kate will lead. The compensation package will have to be finalized.

#### **2. Sunday Worship**

Noted that the current process of providing worship every week relies upon a relatively small group of volunteers – an arrangement put in place to fill an immediate need when meeting in person was not possible. That functioned well for the short term, but is not sustainable over the long term. Rev. Dave reported (above) that the Worship Ministry has agreed to our participation with the

other small congregations in the Cluster, providing content and expertise for Sunday worship on a rotating basis. Post-Worship fellowship will remain congregational. This shared arrangement is set up through the end of May. Rev. Dave has enquired about continuing through June. We may have to consider sharing content that comes from beyond the Cluster. Allegheny will also need to expand the pool of volunteers in order to continue with online worship.

### **3. Annual Meeting**

Kate notes that preparation for the Annual Meeting typically includes items such as budget preparation (have no stewardship numbers and no compensation package numbers) and Board transition, none of which is prepared for a meeting to be held on May 17. Zeilman reports that the Bylaws require a meeting in the last quarter of the fiscal year, i.e., before June 30.

Board consensus is to postpone the meeting to a date later in the fiscal year when, potentially, we can meet in person, and have the necessary documents prepared. Kate will suggest dates for the Board to consider.

Kate also notes that this may not be the best time for a Board transition (pandemic measures in place; ministerial transition; an “online” congregation; pastoral needs). May consider asking the out-going Board members to remain on for a few months.

Zeilman sent out a first draft of proposed Bylaws amendments for Board input. There are still issues to be worked out. Generally, Board agrees with the direction of the amendments.

### **4. Annual Stewardship Drive**

The drive, usually underway by this time, has been preempted by more immediate concerns. The Committee is under staffed. In order to inform the budget, a drive will have to take place prior to final budget preparation and the Annual Meeting.

Board consensus is to hold a simplified stewardship drive. The current coordinators will consult with the Treasurer (Kate agrees to talk with Matt).

Suggested that Allegheny leadership form a team to reach out to congregants using a simplified form of appreciative inquiry (gratitude and assessment of needs). Participants will need some guidance and training.

### **5. Celebration for Rev. Dave**

In the current situation, we will plan for an online celebration on Sunday, May 31, with the intention to hold an in-person celebration when it is safe to do so.

### **» IV Adjournment**

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

Kate Tomlinson adjourns the meeting.

Next meeting: May 18, 7:00pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Donald G. Zeilman, Clerk 2019–20