

FUUSN Board of Trustees

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Children’s Chapel, 7:30 PM

Staff Erin Splaine, Minister Rowan VanNess, DLRE	Visitors Ted Hess-Mahan, Operations Barbara Bates Lesley Sneddon
Board Cathy Morocco, Chair Eric Haas, Vice Chair Amalia Basch, Youth Brian Burba, absent Josie Greene Chris Krebs Leah Lakomski, Youth Brooke Foucault Welles Clerk: Kit Ryan	

Highlights

Erin discussed her goals, hopes and concerns..

**The Board reviewed a report from the Pilot Phase of the Governance
Institutional Memory Committee**

**In the remaining meetings the Board will review their accomplishments for the
year and identify a continuing member willing to serve as Chair in FY19.**

Invocation/Chalice Lighting/Covenant 7:32PM.

Staff Updates

Erin Splaine

The Annual Budget Drive [ABD] round of Pledge Parties has been completed, and Erin attended all of them. She plans a sermon based on that experience and on her visits with FUUSN youth entitled, “Everything I needed to know about life I learned from our youth group and pledge parties.”

The search committee for a Director of Lifespan Religious Education [DLRE]—to fill the vacancy left by Rowan’s departure in the summer—is being populated. Susan Bartlett will chair. Kim Shanks will work closely with her and serve as a conduit for feedback

from staff. Other members of the search group are Lisa Carbone (representing Youth Leadership), Andrew Morse, Christine Lookner, and Bruce Burba as youth representative. Erin has one more person to invite, but if that person is unavailable, the group will proceed with the current members. Josie expressed the hope that, given our attention to multicultural welcoming, that the final member was an individual with family diversity.

Erin continued that Greg Sullivan has an application site up on the Web, and electronic applications are expected to start coming in. Kim Shanks has reviewed the job description with Rowan. We plan to accept resumes for 30 days, then begin phone interviews, to follow with in person interviews. Depending on the geographic location of applicants, we may need to fund travel for interviews out of the immediate region.

Brooke made a motion to affirm the Search Committee as described, with one possible additional member; Eric seconded; it passed unanimously.

Rowan Van Ness

The Youth Group overnight retreat took place over the preceding weekend. Dani and the youth planned the event together, did a great job. Eleven youth participated, with a lot of adults in support covering in shifts.

For several upcoming Sundays, 6th grade and older students will be busy with Service and therefore not in RE. Rowan and the RE staff are planning multi-year activities for the combined K-5 classes.

The Adult Faith Development team has scheduled "Reflect and Connect" time, one Sunday a month from 9-10am; the first will be on April 22. Plan to give time and space for congregants to be together in relative quiet, without anything asked of them; the tone is described as "fellowship." Josie asked how this event was being advertised. Eric suggested a notice in the preceding Order of Service (meaning a deadline for drafting the notice of about 36 hours); Cathy suggested the Business list and Facebook.

Conversation with the Minister: "Everything you've ever wanted to know about what Erin is thinking but were afraid to ask!"

Erin reviewed some of the "next big things" that are currently occupying her time and attention.

1] She has long wanted to have an ongoing group of advisors for long-term strategic planning. To illustrate the need, she discussed current and likely future staffing changes.

RE staff. She plans to have the new DRLE in place by August 1st, or Aug. 15th at the latest. Starting the next year would be hard without this position filled. Beth Walton plans to leave after one more year; Dani will finish their probationary year, unknown if they will continue in the position.

Administrative. Fran Clancy is vigorous, but will retire eventually! The building and grounds are currently managed well by Laurel Farnsworth, on a voluntary basis. At some point, she will tire of doing it. Who and how will these functions carry on; will we seek to replace these exact roles or will the job descriptions change? Will we need a professional building manager?

2] Membership coordinator Sam Foster has done a good job integrating the databases and making Realm more usable. His work has been very helpful to the ABD. Erin expects that his big project next year will be finding ways to deepen connections within the congregation and between the congregation and staff. She expects that he will conduct interviews with congregants around these matters.

3] The Multicultural Ministry Initiative required some ministerial support to build a good foundation, but has become largely self-sustaining. Erin is trying to avoid micromanagement and let the group direct itself.

4] Erin has similar hopes for the Adult Faith Development effort. After a strong effort by the AFD Task Force, some members of the team continued to work with Rowan during Erin's sabbatical; the next priority is to enhance communication within the congregation. The team's planned "Reflect and Connect" events are a start.

She noted with some chagrin that Sunday morning's service has felt like the last item to which she give attention; she wants to plan with other staff for more coherent worship. In the same vein, Erin wants to establish a group or committee for Worship Arts, (although she would prefer another name for it). The goal will be to broaden how we worship together beyond Sunday morning service; to find other ways to connect spiritually during the year. The recent Passover Seder is a great example; observances of other sacred days, such as Rosh Hashanah and Tenebrae. Another idea is expanding the quiet evening reflection Vespers-style gatherings beyond the monthly Evening Song services. She hopes to stage a Worship Arts day-long session, October 20, tentative cost \$1000, to look at how "we do things", after which we will form a working group to carry it forward.

5] Erin continues to ponder how to increase FUUSN's visibility and presence in the city of Newton. Her position is a little ambiguous: she the leader of an active congregation

with the potential to deliver a positive message and exert positive efforts in the community, yet she herself is not a resident of Newton.

Generative

Governance Institutional Memory. Handout: Governance Institutional Memory Committee status report 4/7/18

Background (Cathy). For over a year, we have wanted to develop an archive of documents and reports generated by and for the Board. Many issues that the BoT considers have come up before; we wish to avoid repeating work that has been done before and to learn from our predecessors. Last fall the Board approved a charter for the Governance Institutional Memory [GIM] committee, which consists at present of Barbara Bates and Lesley Sneddon.

Barbara and Lesley have been conducting the pilot phase. They report that they have established a Dropbox account to file material. It now contains BoT meeting agendas and minutes from this church year, notes on FUUSN governance and its policies, and documents from the Financial Summit. Barbara gave a brief demonstration of the Dropbox and its current contents, and promised to send account access to BoT members. Barbara will be the Dropbox owner for the four-year pilot phase.

Lesley noted that as both a past BoT member and, before that, a Clerk for the Board she has brought a different perspective to the project. The two of them are developing questions to bring to the BoT for guidance, such as whether handouts and attachments from Board meetings should be included with the meeting agendas and minutes.

Brooke, who is perhaps the Board member most experienced with using Dropbox had several queries regarding the account. Her suggestion was that it is not tied to an individual person's email. She discussed a possible creation of a FUUSN email identity to be the owner, whether we are likely to exceed the Dropbox capacity and will incur fees for the account, and the feasibility of making offline copies.

Barbara and Lesley view the archive as a work in progress, and will be working on policies for the incoming Board to approve.

Board Updates

Welcoming Congregation Implementation Team. Chris

The April 8, 2018 a workshop on "pre-emptive radical inclusion" by CB (the best name of the religious educator who facilitated) was well-received. We had a smaller group than expected, but some new people attended, and group was very engaged. Cathy noted that the sermon and story for all ages delivered by CB during morning service

segued neatly into the workshop. And Brooke noted that, even though they weren't able to attend the workshop, young children and their parents carried on a lively playground conversation about CB's service.

Listening to Facebook. Brooke

Congregants may not be aware of the various FUUSN Facebook [FB]groups. Several suggestions were made of ways to let people know, including the new member packet, FUUSN's public website, and news and business email lists.

Brooke noted Eric Moore had posted a notice on the FUUSN Family FB page for an upcoming benefit event his daughter Naomi was participating in. The post got one "like," and no comments. Brooke wondered how this lack of activity was perceived, both by Naomi's family and by others. She queried whether the Board or Ops should be active on Facebook. Josie agreed that we want to convey our culture as affirming and responsive, and may need to translate that to a more active role on FB.

Safe Congregations. Brooke

The group is meeting monthly, and has settled on the Wednesday after each Board meeting. Its most recent task has been proposing additions to the disruptive persons policy, to include guidelines for disruptive children, particularly in RE class.

Youth Update. Leah and Amalia

At the most recent Bagel Brunch the conversation was about redefining the role of the Youth Teacher. The participating youth help to decide who may be a Youth Teacher, how they are assigned to classrooms, and then help to orient and mentor them through a period of shadowing more experienced teachers

Upcoming meetings. Cathy

The final "regular" Board meeting for the church year will be May 8. Topics will include results of Budget Drive, a review of the year's Board work, the state of our sanctuary organ and the need for a Capital Campaign, and board succession.

As always in May, we will have two other meeting concerning the budget; a joint session with Ops May 15 to review the draft budget by line item--our role is primarily to assure the budget can support BoT goals—and a final meeting later in May to review and approve the final budget for the congregation's Annual Meeting.

Procedural

February minutes. Josie moved to accept minutes of the February 2018 meeting; Chris seconded; it passed unanimously. March minutes: Eric reminded the group to review and provide feedback. Thanks to Brooke who read them. She had no feedback since she had not attended the meeting.

Generative

Charge to General Assembly Delegates. Cathy

We have approved several representatives to the UUA General Assembly [GA] in June, in Kansas City. Cathy inquired if the Board wanted delegates to pay attention to any particular issues and bring back advice, information or expertise to FUUSN.

Josie suggested that delegates give a presentation to the congregation about the experience.

Eric asked that they look for stewardship prototypes we can use to develop our own successful stewardship. Other topics were Safe Congregations, how to maintain engagement of youth, and inclusion of congregants with special needs.

Charge to Incoming Board. Cathy

As outgoing Board chair, Cathy wanted to recommend that the new Board convened after our Annual Meeting pay attention to two specific matters in addition to those the Board will be outlining in May: early orientation to the timeline of FUUSN's financial affairs and revitalization of our leadership development effort.

Charge to present Board. Cathy

She has prepared an assignment, "Looking back/Looking ahead," for the upcoming May 8th meeting. Board members are to review the year's meeting agendas and minutes, then describe our accomplishments, decide which of our open initiatives and tasks should be continued by the next Board, and cite any surprises or concerns.

Nominating Committee

Handout: FUUSN Nominations Committee email from Julia Wolfe

Sharon Sisskind wants to be nominated to the Operations Council. Even though she has been coming to FUUSN for decades and has participated in many activities [including being a leader of the Annual Budget Drive, she has never formally become a member of the congregation. Membership is required for a post on Ops, and so she has applied for same. Chris moved to accept her application; Brooke seconded; it passed unanimously.

The Nominating Committee [NC] will submit the slate of nominations to the Board at least two weeks before the Annual Meeting.

Erin noted that the slate should be communicated to her before it is set. Over the last few years, she has felt increasingly distanced from the NC selection process, and asked communication between her as minister and the NC be improved. As liaison to the NC, Josie was not aware of a problem. She will meet with Erin for discussion of process in greater depth.

Board Succession. Cathy

Cathy, who has been Board Chair for two years, feels that it is very important for a person willing to perform that function to be identified from among continuing members. Our Bylaws specify that the newly-constituted Board of Trustees must meet within one week after being elected at the Annual Meeting, and select a chairperson. Cathy thinks that a person just put in this new group will find it hard to understand the responsibilities of the role.

Brooke declined to be nominated for the Board Chair role, due to the time constraints in her life. Neither Chris nor Josie were prepared to make the commitment at this time, but agreed that the question should be raised again at the next meeting.

Executive Session

Close

Meeting adjourned: 9:45PM (The executive session required additional time)