

FUSN Board of Trustees
Tuesday April 12, 2016
Children's Chapel, 7:30 PM

<p>Staff: Erin Splaine, Minister Rowan Van Ness, Director of Lifespan Religious Education</p> <p>Board: Lesley Sneddon, Co-chair Bobbie Sproat, Co-chair Brian Burba Gregg DiBiaso Eric Haas Julianna Lakomski, Youth Becca Lozinsky, Youth Cathy Morocco</p> <p>Clerk: Kit Ryan</p>	<p>Visitors: Members of the Black Lives Matter group, including, Dick Bail Bill Duset, Barney Freiberg-Dale, Wendy Haskell, Beau Stubblefield-Tave</p>
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Invocation / Chalice Lighting/Reading of the Board Covenant:
Began at 7:34 PM

Check-In

Staff Updates

Rowan van Ness, DLRE

Youth Activities

- The Board offered congratulations on the Youth Service. Sixteen youth were involved in the service. The Coffee House may have created momentum for this participation. Although the service was challenging for youth to organize, it received very positive feedback.
- Two big upcoming events: Passover Seder will be offered on April 23, lead by Deborah Bennett. Youth Mental Health First Aid will be offered for parents and anyone who works with youth on April 24 and May 1. Nanci Ginty Butler will co-facilitate.
- Youth Ministry applications are available for next year's Youth Teacher Program. Monthly "Bagel Brunches" will continue to support and connect our Youth Teachers.

Children's RE

4th & 5th grades completed the eight-week OWL course (Our Whole Lives). Parents were very pleased with the program. The first OWL oversight team meeting will be held

this week, focused on how pictures facilitated the course and how to evaluate the program.

Adults

- Adult Faith Formation Task Force meeting was held with Erin as chair. The initial step is a yearlong exploration of what members want, and will include 1) Data collection, 2) Data analysis, and 3) Reports to the Board. The meeting explored criteria for team membership and the question of how faith formation differs from faith development. The task force is exploring a distinction between intellectually based and experientially based faith.
- The adult RE program has changed since Bob Zeeb launched it. The focus has changed, with a greater focus on congregational needs. The current program, while rich and varied, entails a great deal of work for its volunteer leaders in developing catalogues and calendars.

Erin Splaine, Minister

- A workshop is planned for September titled "IN-FUSN: Aligning Our Being With Our Doing." Erin and staff have been holding conversations around that topic and discussing how to move the conversation forward.
- Planning for the June 5 joint service with Myrtle Baptist Church continues. The date has been announced to both congregations. The plan has taken a new turn in that it will be held at City Hall and will constitute a wider event than originally envisioned. The theme is "Living with Love, a City-wide Celebration of Love and Peace." It has the potential to become an annual event including other churches. A half-hour service will be a part of the event. Food trucks may be arranged. The event has financial implications for FUSN.
- Ash Engel will meet with the Operations Council on April 13 to present a proposal for a new database. A grant is being developed to offset costs. Ash is also working with the website.
- Erin attended every Annual Budget Drive get-together and found them very engaging.
- As part of the Safe Congregation Initiative, FUSN will start to conduct CORI checks (Criminal Offender Record Information) this month for all volunteer teachers. Only Erin and Rowan will have access to the reports.

Committee Reports

Black Lives Matter (BLM). Update by Wendy Haskell, Dick Bail, Bill Dusett, Barney Freiberg-Dale and Beau Stubblefield-Tave. The group will present this same update to the Operations Council on April 13.

The Board noted that FUSN's Multicultural Ministry (MMI) and Black Lives Matter (BLM) initiatives share some common themes and that connections between the two initiatives will continue to develop.

Presenters referred to Josie Greene's Summary of a Black Lives Matter Panel Discussion that included representatives from the Concord, Arlington and Brookline congregations, all of which have posted a public BLM banner. The summary was

presented to the congregation on the FUSN Business email list. FUSN's BLM group is incorporating ideas from other congregations.

The presenters showed the Board the BLM button and yard sign, and the mock-up of the banner that will be taken to the congregation at a series of coffee hours. The BLM group will gather feedback on the proposed yard sign/banner from the congregation at coffee hour on several upcoming Sundays. FUSN folks can write questions and comments on a bulletin board or privately. BLM group members will respond in writing and post all questions and responses on the FUSN list and website. These summaries will include "unincorporated comments," a term used informally to refer to responses that argued against putting up a banner, but would not stop the majority's positive responses. They are heard and respected and receive a response. The group feels that conversations about concerns and fears need to be visible, and members of the congregation need space to be heard, including expressing disagreements.

Erin will schedule a meeting with the Newton Police Chief to share and discuss FUSN's planning.

Presenters emphasized some upcoming Racial Justice events at FUSN that provide context for the BLM work (this is not the full calendar):

- Tuesday May 3 7-8:30 - "Now is Not the Time to Be Silent: White People's Role in Dismantling Racism - A Conversation with Shay Stewart-Boulet" (MMI),
- Sunday, May 22, 2-4 - Workshop with Beau Stubblefield-Tave, "Racism: What It Is and How to End It: at FUSN, in Newton, and Beyond."

Strategic

Conflict Resolution Documents: Cathy

Cathy met with Barbara Bates to assemble Conflict Transformation files from that committees' several years of work. We need to bring FUSN history and knowledge forward as we move to new (and recurring) challenges and change leadership. One of the key documents from that work is the Report of the Harvard Negotiation and Mediation Clinical Program completed in 2011. Cathy has forwarded the Executive Summary of the report to the Board and will make it available to the Developing Leadership Team. At present FUSN has no designated archive for documents from our various initiatives. Materials reside on individual computers and in various drawers. Cathy urged the Board to enlist expert members in setting up an archive for FUSN documents.

Welcoming Congregation (WC) Next Steps: Bobbie, Lesley.

The Board is awaiting the final edited report of the Welcoming Congregation Assessment Team, which presented its results to the congregation on February 7, 2016. The report will go to Annette Marquis, LGBTQ and Multicultural Programs Director for the UUA, who is in charge of Welcoming Congregation work. FUSN has completed the Welcoming Congregation assessment, which FUSN members adapted from a UUA assessment. The next steps, in this order are:

1. After reading the report, Annette will work with FUSN leaders to create a plan for continuing and completing FUSN's Welcoming Congregation renewal.
2. FUSN will engage in congregation-wide discussion and activity consistent with that plan.

Several FUSN members have expressed interest in working on the next steps of the Welcoming Congregation renewal. Eric Haas agreed to gather the individuals and serve as the Board liaison for this work.

Ministerial Sabbatical: Erin

Erin may address her sabbatical in an upcoming sermon, depending on time and timing. She has three sermons left before her sabbatical, which begins in September. She and the Board will provide an informational brochure to the congregation before September, detailing how things will work at FUSN during her sabbatical. In the meantime, sabbatical plans will be communicated as they are finalized.

Upcoming September Meeting on FUSN's Core Work: Erin and Rowan

On Saturday September 17th, just before Erin leaves for sabbatical, a gathering will discuss what is core to our FUSN work, in response to the density of activities at FUSN. The workshop, entitled "IN-FUSN: Aligning Our Being With Our Doing," will address a need to distinguish what we love and need to keep from what we may love but need to let go of in order to maintain our focus and health as a Society. Kim Sweeney, a New England Regional UUA staff member focussing on Faith Formation and Safe Congregations, will serve as facilitator. The current plan has the morning portion of the workshop open to all FUSN members, with the goal of collecting ideas and information, followed by lunch for all. In the afternoon, FUSN leaders will work with Kim on using the information gathered to set directions for action.

Adult Faith Formation: Rowan

Rowan and Ash are continuing to working on Adult Faith Formation.

Board of Trustees Leadership: All

Because none of the continuing Board members is able to take on role of Chair next year, Erin and the Board have asked Cathy if she would take on a second term and serve as Board Chair in the coming year. She is completing her three-year term in May this year and has agreed to take on another term. The Board will forward Cathy's name to FUSN's Nominating Committee.

Erin identified the challenge of continuity for the Board and other FUSN leadership positions. One task is to develop job descriptions that clarify leaders' roles, experience and requirements. Another is to establish a plan of succession that allows for a two-year Chair and supports Board leadership development.

Discussion of Board Accomplishments and Goals: Deferred to May

Procedural

Members affirmed an email vote to approve the November and December 2015 minutes.

Close

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 PM

Respectfully Submitted by Kit Ryan, Clerk