**First Unitarian Church of Providence**

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

March 11, 2020

**ATTENDING:**

**Prudential Committee**

Cheryl Bartholomew, President

John Simmonds, Past-President

Michael Cappelli, President-Elect

Roberta Groch, Treasurer - *absent*

David Francis, Assistant Treasurer - *absent*

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Caroline Mailloux, Strategic Planning

Tiffany Reed, Stewardship Liaison – *absent (joined by phone mid-meeting)*

Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison - *absent*

Sam Cole, Community Life Liaison

Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison - *absent*

Dave Spremulli, Spiritual Development Liaison

**Church Staff Attending**

Elizabeth Lerner Maclay, Minister, ex officio

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education

Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

Roger Peltier, Assistant Minister for Pastoral Care

**6:45 Check-in**

**Opening Words (Dave S.)**  The Tao of Healing

**Call to Order - Chalice Lighting & Covenant Reading**

**Meditation**

**7:00 Consent Agenda: February Minutes – John /Dave S - all**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

* **Coronavirus - (ALL)**

Cheryl read some of the guidelines from Governor Raimondo’s press conference held this afternoon.

*Do not attend or organize events of 250 people or more for the next two weeks.*

*We are asking that people 60 or older not attend any events for the next two weeks.*

*Large gatherings where people are close together, where there’s no ability to screen out people who are sick are the most concerning, and we’re asking that you shut them down for a period of two weeks.*

*The CDC has asked that organizations which serve high-risk populations [including people 60 and over] should be cancelling events of 10 people or more.*

*We now have minimal to moderate community transmission.*

*RI Health Department Director Nicole Alexander-Scott: “As a state, we have a unique opportunity to have a positive impact by implementing these steps now, prior to the onset of widespread community transmission. There are other states that may not have the same unique opportunity that we have right now.”*

First U attendance on Sunday is averaging 300 and high 200s. We fall into category of Governor’s recommendation to close down for next two weeks. Other UU congregations are looking to us to see what we are doing. Message from areas where there is large community spread is that they waited too long to close down. Even smaller group gatherings could pose a threat to Seniors.

Motion: **Due to the evolving nature of COVID-19, First U campus and buildings will be closed starting 12th of March for a period of two weeks and the continued closure will be reassessed considering guidance from the RI Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control.**  (Cheryl, DaveS.) Motion carried unanimously.

Staff will be planning for options for virtual programming and support. Cathy and Pathways team has already planned for “virtual potluck” on Friday. Roger is working with lay ministry and Bill Koteff to get options for pastoral support posted on the website, including a “buddy” system for those who need / want this. Liz is planning for virtual “service” options via facebook, zoom, YouTube, etc.

Food pantry team has a plan for restructuring their process -- handing prepacked bags to public at the door. Modified food pantry will be the only exception to building closure because it is a life-saving effort.

Some everyday business needs to happen on site – receiving and responding to mail, banking, etc. Other than the absolute essentials, staff will work remotely.

Communication to community will be important. Letter to the church community will go out via email tomorrow and posted to the Coronavirus webpage. Nancy will notify renters. A notice will be posted on the church doors. Michael will organize a phone tree with PruComm – and possibly deacons, past presidents, and others – to ensure that all members have seen the email. We need to direct folks to website to get updates and learn of virtual support options.

Michael has set up YouTube account. To create small, short sermonettes, poems, family suggestions from RE, inspirational music from Fred, etc. with a community-building mode. Virtual Potluck care package will be coming from Spiritual Pathways.

Impact on pledge drive? Cards have been mailed to those who did not pick up last Sunday. Possibility of YouTube testimonials.

Zoom –RE committee has been using our Zoom account for alternative times to meet with great success. Michael will send out invites to zoom with a one page “how-to”. Free account will allow certain components. Corporate account will allow for simultaneous meetings with audio / video, etc.

YouTube – church has a YouTube channel. Cannot repost copyrighted material. Locked for comments and advertisements. Michael will follow-up with Liz and other staff on how to use this option.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

* **Church Administrator (Nancy) –** See written report.
* **DRE (Cathy) -** Relieved not to have to plan in-person AND online activities at the same time.
* **Minister (Liz) –** We need to downshift some of our planned activity, taking a backseat to negotiating this time, and shift toward caring for each other. We can’t do business as usual and address crisis at the same time. Staff have all worked on identifying their backup.
* **Treasurer Reports (Roberta) –** Written report submitted, but not discussed.
* **Roger –** Jenn and Roger both working on buddy list. If PruComm members can help in anyway, let Roger know.

**MINITRIES, PERSONNEL, STRATEGIC PLANNING**

* **Strategic Planning (Caroline) –** Strategic weaving session can go online? Or can be postponed a bit, perhaps,
* **Community Life (Sam) –** Mosaic Committee proposal discussion put off until April if possible.

**NEW BUSINESS**

* **Atrium Digital Screen Letter of Concern**

Bill and Derek recommended that large screen planned for the atrium, rather be put on a cart to be portable for various places throughout the campus. Screen for atrium currently on hold.

**8:50 REVIEW ACTION ITEMS**

**Next Meeting/Assignments**

* **Next Meeting: April 8 possibly on Zoom**
* **Opening/Closing Words: Sam**

**Closing Words (Dave S.)** Liz also closed with prayer

**Extinguish Chalice**

**9:05 ADJOURNMENT –** Motion to adjourn(Dave S. / John) carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk