**First Unitarian Church of Providence**

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

August 4, 2020

Special session to consider recommendations of Bridging Team toward reopening after COVID pandemic.

**ATTENDING:**

**Prudential Committee**

Michael Cappelli, President

Cheryl Bartholomew, Past-President

Odile Mattiauda, President-elect

Roberta Groch, Treasurer *(absent)*

David Francis, Assistant Treasurer

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Tiffany Reed, Stewardship Liaison *(absent)*

Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison

Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison

Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison

**Church Staff Attending**

Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education

Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

**Guests – Bridging Team**

Jim Cowan MD MPH, Bev Koteff, Bill Koteff, Steven McCloy MD, Ted Martin, Martha Rice Sanders, Cynthia Rosengard, Norma Rossi Mead, Jack Rusley MD, and Bill Twaddell.

**Meeting is being held remotely due to COVID-19 Emergency**

**6:30PM - Welcome and Introductions**

* **Overview of Bridging Team work to date and outline of remaining work**

The team was formed in late June – The medical team put together a thorough document outlining medical considerations based on current knowledge of the COVID19 virus and how it spreads, effective mitigation strategies, etc. This document was foundational to the Bridging committee’s considerations.

The committee met multiple times in July and determined:

* Mission and vision for moving forward
* The how / when / where of how to reopen the church
* Communications plan for sharing their conclusions with the congregation

The committee is still working on how to resume small groups, rentals, etc. They will have these recommendations for the PruComm by late August.

Members have been working 3 – 5 days a week. A lot of work has gone into the deliberations of these recommendations. Michael thanked the hard work of all members of the bridging team:

David Anthony MD MPH, Cheryl Bartholomew, Michael Cappelli, Jim Cowan MD MPH, Nancy Forsstrom, Bev Koteff, Bill Koteff, Steven McCloy MD, Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay, Odile Mattiauda, Ted Martin, Jonathan Niles, Martha Rice Sanders, Cynthia Rosengard, Norma Rossi Mead, Jack Rusley MD, Cathy Seggel, and Bill Twaddell.

* **Review / Discussion of recommendations**

Bev Koteff reviewed the main points of the recommendations document. The primary recommendation is to continue worship, religious education, small group ministry virtually for the first semester of the church year – through 12/31/2020. There are also recommendations for continuing pastoral care, membership, and office activities as currently. Several initiatives are also recommended with consideration of coming out of the COVID crisis stronger. These initiatives include: Live-streaming worship services, new church management and accounting systems; upgrade of office information infrastructure; purchase of masks with logo FirstU4U; purchase extra zoom accounts; conduct zoom trainings; provide internet connectivity for members who need it.

Developing capacity to livestream Sunday worship will allow for those who cannot attend physically to participate in live Sunday morning service as we begin to reopen and also allow for those who are housebound to attend and participate well beyond the pandemic. Along with the announcement of these recommendations, will go a request for feedback from members via an online survey or participation in one of two online conversations (one or more of the above). Questions for the survey and conversations will include: how members have participated in RE, worship, small groups; what more they would want from those experiences; how have they been cared for, and how might that be improved; what ways could the congregation better engage in healing the world and dismantling oppression.

* **Motion (s) and Vote (s)**

Motion: That that the Meeting House and buildings remain closed for worship services as well as religious education for youth and families for the first semester of the Church year ending December 31, 2020. Additionally, the prudential committee will support the initiatives recommended by the bridging team that are intended to strengthen both our faith and community both internally and beyond. (Michael / Edie). Motion passed with seven approving and one abstention.

* **Next Steps Discussion**

Tomorrow a letter will go out to the membership announcing this decision. Along with it an announcement of the First U 4 U – feedback opportunity and two zoom conversations. Members will also be given access to the report from the Medical subcommittee of the Bridging Team. Friday, the First U Times edition will repeat First U 4 U opportunities and this announcement. Cynthia R. will help with zoom meetings. Staff will join the Thursday meeting; some may choose to attend the Saturday meeting as well.

Bridging Team will continue re: small group meetings, rentals, etc. They will provide PruComm with those recommendations by end of August.

**7:35PM - ADJOURNMENT –**

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk