**First Unitarian Church of Providence**

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

August 12, 2020

**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

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**

Bill Koteff

**This is a special August meeting of the PruComm due to need for planning related to COVID pandemic. Meeting was held remotely via zoom due to COVID-19 Emergency.**

**6:50 Check-in**

**Opening Words (Odile Mattiauda – words from Shel Silvertein “Falling Up”)**

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

**Task for the Month.....** Michael requested that all members check the google drive roster to be sure addresses are correct. Look for package in mail during the month and do not open until next meeting.

**Vacant PruComm Positions -** The nominating committee has been working to fill vacant positions on the Pru Comm. Elizabeth Allsworth has agreed to accept the position of Liaison for Spiritual Development. Elizabeth has served on several committees and is currently a soul circle facilitator. She would fill one year left on this term.

**Motion: To accept Elizabeth Allsworth as Spiritual Liaison** (Odile / Edie). Motion passed unanimously.

Beth Armstrong is willing to fill the role of Strategic Planning Liaison. Beth is a past president, served as interim Music Director. She is passionate about First U’s trajectory.

**Motion: To accept Beth Armstrong as Strategic Planning Liaison** (Edie / Greg). Motion passed unanimously.

**7:15 PM - Consent Agenda**: - June 10 and August 4 Minutes. **Motion: To accept the minutes with amended typos in June minutes.** (Edie / Odile). Motion passed unanimously.

**REPORTS**:

* **Treasurer (David) –** See report. We have 13.5% of income with only 8.3% of the year spent. This is good, but not as good as last year at this point. Will folks continue to pay pledges through the church year? We finished last year with $69,000 surplus, but we will not have a final number until all bills are paid out. Will not know for certain whether we get PPP loan forgiveness until well into fall.

**Motion: To allow programming staff to spend money on budgeted programming for the 2020-21 church year. (Tiffany / Cheryl)** Motion passed with one opposed.

**DISCUSSION:**

* **Bridging Team Recommendations –** 
  + **1st U 4 U**
    - Worship Virtually until 12/31/2020 - Adults, Youth and Families
    - **Foundations**
      * The essential worth and dignity of every human being
      * Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations
      * Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part
    - **Commitments**
      * Prioritizing the health and safety of all those we serve
      * Strengthening the dynamism of our congregation
      * Serving and supporting the needs and safety of our larger community
  + **Recommendation around re-opening for small groups –** These recommendations are coming from Bridging Team soon. There is urgency for twelve-step groups to have a space. As soon as Bridging Team has recommendations, will want review and sign-off from PruComm, likely via email mid-week next week.
  + **Reopening Guidance beyond December -** PruComm will request a report from Bridging Team by November PruComm meeting (November 11) with re-opening recommendations beyond January 1 so that PruComm can consider and decide on any necessary actions that may need to happen.
  + **Zoom Conversations, questionnaires update –** Liz annd Cynthia Rosengard are sifting through feedback from questionnaire and Zoom sessions that were conducted last week. Some people would like to see more anti-racist, anti-oppression work. Most people are feeling pretty well supported, but some want more support. Challenge – what can we do to help people feel not just connected, but inspired, refreshing spirits? Folks want worship webcast out of meeting house –in real time and also ability to watch later at times of peoples’ choosing.
  + **National Guard training –** National Guard will be providing training to certain representative congregations in various categories. Rev. Jenkins (Bethel AME) asked First U to represent the “large community with a large space” category. First U will receive a site review and recommendations from National Guard. Our team will then train other congregations in same category, (including churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.) on the national guard recommendations Our staff / lay team will meet with National Guard on Friday and they will come back with recommendations for how to open up when the congregation is ready.
  + **Recommendations by Pru Comm to Committees and Groups** *-* For consideration: How does PruComm provide leadership to committees in regard to “Serving and supporting the needs and safety of our larger community” – one of the First U4U foundations? PruCommm could reach out to all ministries – to ask , How could you expand what you are doing meet the need – what do you need to make that happen? How can we help? (Food and Sanctuary ministries, but other ministries as well). Ways for people to connect who need safe, but physical connection rather than virtual – walks, sunrise service, biking, etc. Members can think about this and Michael will prompt before next meeting.

* + **Initiatives**
  + **Technical (Bill K.) (See report)**
    - **Management and Accounting System –** Current software is obsolete. Need to replace. Hope to finalize selection of new system by end of August. Installation in next months with new system operational by Jan. Run two systems for a few months to ensure functionality.
    - **Office systems upgrade –** Plan to move to Microsoft set of platforms. Can get large discount with 501(c)3, once in place. May also get discount for hardware as well. Goal is to get common set of tools. Will need to replace desktops in order to run system.
    - **Stream Worship –** Pre-pandemic, we were using facebook live with smart phones. In order to livestream with better more consistent quality that will be able to reach more people, we will need hardware (cameras, microphones), sound board, control boards, wiring, installation, tripods, etc. We have contacted several vendors – and have three quotes. Some vendors will produce first several streams and train a team of people to operate the equipment moving forward. We need to do this quickly – finalize vendor in next few weeks if we are to meet the goal of livestreaming out through YoutTube by Mid September. Vendors need to see meeting house and see about installation. We will also need to stream from other locations on campus. Issues of wifi speed, etc. Estimated cost of equipment, installation and training - $15,000 - $18,000. With this capacity we will be able to reach people who cannot come to the meeting house – even after we return as a congregation.
  + Discussion - Historic architecture challenge. Have other historic churches been able to do this and preserve the historic nature of building? Question regarding lighting – considerations since lighting can be challenging in meeting house. Need to resolve compatibility with live sound system proposal. Recognition that this is a hefty price tag – but wider internet presence has potential for more donations. Long term accessibility for those who cannot make it to the meeting house.

**Motion: To spend up to $18,000 on live-streaming services**.(Greg / Cheryl) Motion passed with two abstentions.

* **Mosaic Proposal –** Due to late hour, several members needed to leave. This proposal needs discussion of full PruComm. Louise will revisit budget for this proposal and share. This issue will be addressed first at next meeting.
* **Signage Task Force Report (Greg) –**Task Force (Katherine Alquist, Nancy Forsstram, Greg Knisely, Merritt Meyer, MaxPounder) met to develop recommendations on how and where to relocate BLM banner in a more prominent position. See full report in materials **–**  Questions for PruComm to consider are below:
  + Should we take down the BLM banner and design/install a new sign on the windows in the Atrium? *Leave banner where it is while other options are explored.*
  + Should we keep the 300th Anniversary banner where it is currently located?

*Keep sign until the end of year – paint for better aesthetic.*

* + What purposes would PruCom want to achieve with new signage - temporary signage in the windows or permanent signage near the street? *Let people know who we are. Important messages and give personality to our presence.*
  + Is Pru Comm interested in funding a project to design, construct, and install a permanent sign near the street? *Need some idea of budget for new signage.*
  + Should Pru Comm identify a new committee be formed to oversee the new permanent signage project that includes First U members who are architects, graphic designers, and Communications Team members? *Michael and Greg will discuss formation of such a task force.*
* **For September Meeting**
  + Mosaic Proposal
  + Recommended repairs to Church clock and bell system
    - Immediate repairs in context of long-term repairs
    - All or some of recommended bell related repairs
  + Monthly plates
  + Policy updates
  + New members

**9:30PM - Closing Words (Odile Mattiauda)**

**Extinguish Chalice**

**9:35PM - ADJOURNMENT – Motion to adjourn (Greg / Odile)**

**August 22, 2020 - Motion proposed via email: To adopt the Bridging Committee's guidelines and open the First U Campus for groups meeting those guidelines. Those guidelines to incorporate "medical exceptions" for the wearing of masks.**

Motion passed via email on 8/24 - 10 – Yes; 0 – No; 0 – Abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk