**First Unitarian Church of Providence**

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

October 14, 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 *(absent)*

Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison *(absent)*

Beth Armstrong, Strategic Planning

Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison

Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison

Elizabeth Allsworth, Spiritual Development Liaison

**Church Staff Attending**

Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister

Roger Peltier, Pastoral Care Minister

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education

Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

**Guests**

Tom Getz

Janet Downing Taylor

**Meeting was held remotely via zoom due to COVID-19 Emergency.**

**6:45 - Gathering**

**Opening words** (Claire Rosenbaum) from “To Bless the Space Between Us” John O’Donoghue

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

**7:00 PM**

**Minutes:** Motion to approve September Minutes passed unanimously (Michael / Cheryl).

**Reports**:

* **Church Administrator (Nancy) –** Building is getting busier. Some new groups are signing up for rental. Jaime is doing well. Nancy is spending a lot of time with tech team on new database and accounting software. Computers are old and won’t support Windows 10. Team is looking into all of this. Walter is maintaining two databases at the same time. Front desk volunteers are back.
* **DRE (Cathy) –** Weekly family chapel service is happening from auditorium via zoom. Kristi and Jenn helping with tech / music from home. Teachers conduct break out rooms by grade. Themes to do with First U4 you packages that went out to families. Coming of Age – 2019-20 recognition on November 1. Highschool – Teachers are using “On the Road” online curriculum with success. Campus UUs continue to meet. Cathy is working with Liz and others for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Launching adult offerings – Harvest the Power – Widening the Circle of Concern – Parenting during COVID. Some families share that they are intentionally not doing online activities. Need outside, off computer time on Sundays.
* **Minister (Liz) –** Worship is going well. Working out snags with tech. Viewership is higher than back in real space worship. More worship associates have been recruited. A variety of members invited to light chalice. Increased pastoral need – pastoral care network is thriving: There are196 in buddy pairings; Mindful grieving support group; Care Crew – rides meals; Rx deliveries; Roger and lay ministry respond to mentions in joys and sorrows; Online learning, Chalice and Soul circles, and support groups. First U 4 You kits will go out soon to families not in RE. Bethel AME / First U conversations continue. Plans are underway for shared First U / Bethel AME MLK service. Shared food ministry effort is reaching100 families weekly. Staff are working very hard – extra hours and extra work. Cathy, Roger, Nancy, Jenn have gone above and beyond. Being urged to take vacation time. Liz will be with ministerial study group next week. She will also take some Sundays off over next few months to balance for lost vacation this summer.
* **Treasurer Report –** 25% of year has passed. Expenses under less than 17%. 29% of pledges are in. Income at 24%. Picture looks good overall. Walter sent out quarterly statements to members which generated more pledge payments. Suggestion to post information on the website on how to make donation from stock holdings.
* **Liaison updates**
  + Stewardship - none
  + Personnel - none
  + Strategic Planning - none
  + Congregational Life – Louise just getting started.
  + Social Justice – Food ministry is going strong – monthly pantry, loaves and fishes, AME partnership; Art Collective – online exhibit on Sacred Spaces being planned.
  + Spiritual Development – Elizabeth just getting started also.
  + For all liaisons -- Church is providing a few more zoom accounts for the next three months. Liaisons should give thought to whether committees would need zoom account – either shared or if need sole account. Let Michael know.

**DISCUSSION:**

* **Open Meetings**
  + Plan to open Prudential Committee Zoom meetings to Congregation via registration. Zoom is our medium for now. Nancy will announce PruComm meetings and announce via a registration link. Planning underway to accommodate large number of attendees, in case more than a few members register to attend )
* **Bridging Team and Related Updates** 
  + Bridging Team Update - Team met. Continue policies for now.
  + Opportunity with masks - Odile and liaisons working on getting 600 donated masks out.
  + Zoom Services – Reviewed that Zoom licenses are being paid for by Church. Some are shared by small groups others for individuals and staff. Liaisons are asked to check with committee chairs on potential Zoom needs and report back. Extension of this policy will be revisited at end of calendar year.
* **Request for Sponsorship from Nicholas Aaron Friesner** 
  + Sponsorship allows for applicant status on path to ordination – See Nicholas’ letter in PruComm packet requesting sponsorship. He has been working as lay minister with Roger for the last year.
  + Rev. Roger provided background on Nicholas and his year of service. Nick is attracted to religion and way people think about religion – Doctorate in Religious Studies from Yale Divinity School. Feels called to become Navy chaplain. UUA requirements, chaplaincy requirements and Navy requirements all to be met. Roger feels he has all the qualities to be a success at this. Is a delight on the lay ministry team. He has a good instinct for pastoral care.
  + Congregational sponsorship involves recommendation and report from Liz or Roger. It is an honor for a congregation to sponsor a candidate. PruCom wants to meet with Nicholas to get to know him and ask what he might want or need from us. Also important to let congregation know about this. Michael will invite Nicholas to next meeting.
* **Transylvania Partnership**
  + Tom Getz and Janet Downing Taylor presented.
  + Update on partnership account – Started year with $4800 dollars, Ended year with $2800 dollars. Airline tickets were purchased for Partners to come last June. Trip was cancelled sue to COVID, but tickets can be extended until December 2021.
    - Revised expenditure policy – No way to pay for translators. Wanted to give stipend for person who does this. Motion: Approve amendment to the expenditure policy to allow payment for translators. (Michael / Cheryl) Approved unanimously.\*\*\* Policy may need to be revised to allow committee to make these decisions without coming to PruComm.
  + End of year gift proposals – Exchange of gifts when we visit them or they visit us. Suggestion for next gift is to have a communion plate made and inscribed. Proposing that Transylvania church could craft cover for pew pillows or cloth hangings for back pews.
* **Sunday plate, for partnership and others**
  + There is an application process for community collection plates. Transylvania partnership church was given permission for three years. Three years are up in January **Motion: Extend Transylvania Partnership plate for the next three years. (Michael / Odile) Motion passed unanimously.**
  + Since going virtual, we cannot discern whether online donations are “plate” donations. Technical challenges – working on this. Nancy: we need to be consistent in the language from announcement and same language on banco form on website. E.g., currently website calls this “Weekly offering”
  + There has also been a recent request for a plate for Armenian relief. Emergency situations are separate from community collection plate application policy. Decisions on these emergency situations can be made by the executive committee.
* **Goals for the year**
  + Follow-up from weekend retreat – PruComm agreed to meet on Sunday, October 25, 2-4PM to discuss minister and PruComm goals for the year. This is very important for alignment of minister and PruComm goals as outlined in Susan Beaumont *When Moses meets Aaron*. We agreed to follow these recommendations last Fall but have been derailed by COVID priorities. We are re-committing to this now.
* **Restructure Finance into Investment and Finance committees (Did not discuss) – David and Roberta will bring to next meeting**
  + High level goals
  + Will need to update policy manual
* **Additional items… None**

**Closing Words** (Claire Rosenbaum) “Continue” - Maya Angelou

Extinguish Chalice

**9:15 PM –** Motion to adjourn passed unanimously (Cheryl / Michael)

**Addendum –** Motion passed during extended PruComm retreat (via zoom) to discuss Minister / PruComm Goals on October 25.

**Motion: To display a banner in favor of Referendum #1 to remove the words “and Providence Plantations” from the official name of Rhode Island. (Cheryl / Beth)** Nine yes - One abstention.

Michael will work with Bridging team communications group and get an announcement regarding the banner posting for the Newsletter to Nancy F. before Tuesday (10/27) noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk