**First Unitarian Church of Providence**

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

February 10, 2021

**ATTENDING:**

**Prudential Committee**

Michael Cappelli, President

Cheryl Bartholomew, Past-President

Odile Mattiauda, President-elect

Roberta Groch, Treasurer

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison *(arrived late)*

Beth Armstrong, Strategic Planning

Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison

Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison

Elizabeth Allsworth, Spiritual Development Liaison

Stewardship Liaison – vacant

Assistant Treasurer - vacant

**Church Staff Attending**

Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education

Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

**Guests**

Max Pounder

Sine Pounder

Peter Laarman

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

**6:45 PM - Gathering**

Opening Words – (Greg Kniseley) Wendell Berry – “What we need is here,” excerpt from “The Wild Geese”

Chalice Lighting & Covenant Reading

Call to Order – 7:02 PM

**7:02 PM Reports:**

**January Minutes** - (Michael/ Cheryl) Approved Unanimously

**January Treasurer’s Report –** See report – We are at 58% of the church year. Expenses are at 50%. Pledges at 69%. Overall income at 64.4%. Pledge analysis: 34% have paid entire pledge. 10% paid more than pledge. 21% have paid 25% or less of their pledge. 14% have paid nothing toward pledge. We will send out pledge reminder letters before this year’s commitment drive.

**DISCUSSION:**

* **7:13PM - Where are we?** – (Michael) – Michael reported on accomplishments midway through the church year. We are zooming and doing church school virtually; We had GA representation: Bridging team established and dealing with pandemic-related issues; Social Justice – get out the vote project August - October; Filling vacant PruComm seats; Decision not to open physical space; Approved $18,000 for tech improvements – database and accounting systems, streaming to 200 subscribers; Approved formation of mosaic committee; Approved repairing clock and bell; Worked toward more strategy, less admnistration; Established our annual PruCommm goals; Formally extended Transylvania partnership for three more years; Committed to support shared collections; Reviewed and approved ministerial candidate Aaron Friesner; Accepted Bridging Team recommendation to remained closed to physical space through 6/2021; Ordination of Lisa Sampson; Bethel AME joint service; Virtual Holiday services – over 1000 views; providing space for COVID testing with support of National Guard; Amending by-laws for 501(c)3; Have moved electronics out of pulpit.

Challenges, milestones still to meet – Mission statement; Rebuilding HR Committee; Build financial team; Complete establishment of staff performance management system; Increase hours for part time staff.

All should look at goals and milestones in google drive for more discussion at next meeting.

* **7:25 PM - Special Meeting** – Sunday, February, 14 during zoom coffee hour. Amendment to by-laws to satisfy IRS requirements for 501(c)3. Need 25 members for a quorum for this meeting.
* **7:30 PM -Mission Statement Development** – (Beth)

Reconvened mission statement task force. Feedback from last Procomm meeting: Mission seemed too long and lack of inclusion of reference to spirituality. Added “abilities” to list of kinds of diversities to welcome and honor --- shortened reference to anti-racism. “Love beyond belief” is a copyrighted phrase so rephrased that to “grounded in compassion”. Did not want to significantly shorten statement otherwise. Needed to capture our uniqueness. Suggestions form PruComm tonight: Put tagline language “transforming love into action” up front. A few more language suggestions to see if there is a way to shorten and make more memorable and digestible for youth and those new to us. Need to keep the bullets that describe vision for how to achieve mission. Mission Statement team will take into consideration what has been shared tonight and bring back to PruComm at next meeting.

* **8:19 PM - Building and Grounds** – (Max Pounder)

Max has extensive architectural experience with renovations in historic church buildings like ours. There are a variety of needs, but we need a master plan that incorporates these needs into one. Max sent questionnaire to stakeholders – Liz, Fred, Cathy, Neil Bartholomew. Asked “what makes it difficult to achieve what you need to do?” “What do you hope to achieve to make physical changes, including interactions with people with disabilities, and consider lighting, sound, etc.” Highlights of considered changes - Wheelchair accessibility; height of front platform; choir facing congregation; emergency exit bars on doors, lighting and sound needs, etc. Will need to consult history committee.

Need to work on design process with in-house talent. PruComm will need to take proposal for renovations to congregation as a whole. Need to be sensitive to fears / concerns about changes. Communication with congregation will be important. Refer any concerns to Max.

**8:40 PM - Budget** – **Development, meeting schedule** – (Roberta)

First budget committee meeting was held on Feb. 1. Draft budget was put together. There were some requests from various groups via liaisons. $25,000 requests above base budget. Another budget committee meeting on Feb. 16 at 7PM. Nancy reported that there are a few additional requests that have come in. There will need to be choices and priorities set. Special PruComm budget meeting set for Wednesday, May 12. Main PruComm meeting for May will be May 26. Annual Meeting, June 6. Need to schedule congregational budget meeting. With zoom does not need to be on a Sunday.

* **Annual Drive / changes** – Tiffany Reed has resigned as Stewardsip Liaison. A team has been gathered to oversee the Commitment Drive.

**Reports**:

* **8:53 - Minister (Liz) – See written report –** Liz testified at RI legislature regarding treating LGBTQ marriages the same as other marriages. Suggested requiring premarital counselling. Require minimum age for marriage of eighteen. Bill has been introduced.
* **­­­8:56 PM - DRE (Cathy ) – See written report.**  Completed goals and updated job description
* **8:57PM - Church Administrator (Nancy) –** Working with IRS on 501(c)3. Working on budget with Roberta. Preparing materials for commitment drive. We are in the second week of COVID testing. Tested 53 this week. Volunteers are working out well. We are certified with UUA. Recertifying with RI Food Bank.
* **Liaison updates**
  + **9:06PM Social Justice (Greg)**  –– Food not Bombs group wanted to use kitchen. Their schedule has changed and we will not be able to do this. Neighborhood justice is active and doing a lot. Green Team requested $5000 for energy audit. Need more discernment on this.
  + **8:59 PM Spritual Development (Elizabeth) –** Met with Music Committee for a vibrant meeting. Discussed space issues that Max will work with. Any new space reconfigurations will need to consider space planning for baby grand piano which is not easily moved on carpet. Music Director job description was reviewed. Consensus of committee was that organ proficiency should be a competency listed in job description. Discussion on what does music diversity mean? Recommended that THE vehicle for achieving musical diversity should be the music committee. Plans for how to identify and grow willing, diverse musical talent within the congregation. The music committee has representation from various congregation constituencies beyond choir members.
  + **Stewardship** - no update
  + **9:04 PM Congregational Life** – **(Louise) –** Met with Sam Cole (former congregational life liaison). Would be good to have a Google Doc that covers the list of committees under each Liaison. Might be good to come up with digital version of potluck with inclusion and diversity goals.
  + **9:09 PM** **Human Resources** – **(Edie)–** Reached out to some folks to expand committee.
  + **Strategic Planning** – **(Beth) – See discussion of mission statement above.**

**9:10 PM** **Closing Words** – (Greg) “Enough” from “Where Many Rivers Meet” – by David Whyte

**9:42 PM Adjourn (**Michael / Edie **)**

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk