

First Unitarian Church of Providence

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

January 19, 2022

ATTENDING:

Prudential Committee

Odile Mattiauda, President

Michael Cappelli, Past-President

Joan Richards, President-elect

John Dooley, Treasurer

Rick Richards, Assistant Treasurer *Absent*

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison

Beth Armstrong, Strategic Planning

Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison

Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison *Absent*

Alison Green, Spiritual Development Liaison

Kate Niles, Stewardship Liaison

Ex-officio - Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister

Carson Cole, Youth Representative *Absent*

Church Staff Attending

Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education

Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

Roger Peltier, Assistant Minister for Pastoral Care

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

6:45 PM - Gathering

Opening Words – John – MLK I Have a Dream Speech Excerpt

Covenant Reading -

Call to Order – 6:53PM

Announcements – Services have gone online due to the Omicron COVID variant surge in Rhode Island. Judy Ortmann reported that Sanctuary furniture was donated to Dorcas Place. Inside Black Lives Matter and Pride flags are almost ready. No one has come forward for task force to investigate the possibility of outdoor flagpole. Do your best to recruit interested folks and let Greg know. Many thanks to Beth Armstrong for stepping in with musical direction and coordination Christmas week when Jeff was out sick.

December Minutes – (Odile / Joan) approved unanimously.

Reports (Highlights only) –

Administrator – Nancy worked hard on implementing Christmas plans. Some outside groups have moved to virtual meetings. Walter, Jenn and Nancy are working on UUA Certification.

Assistant Minister (See written report) – Lay ministry team has completed a day-long training/retreat for skills deepening to step up during sabbatical time. The congregation will “commission” them in upcoming service. Have combined soul circles and chalice circles meetings into one “Small Group Ministry” facilitators meeting. Planning facilitator training for when we can meet in-person. Has begun sabbatical planning with Neil and Worship committee, including for multi-generational services. Nancy and Roger will confer later in spring to strategize for sabbatical coverage.

DRE – Cathy – (See written report) - Continue to work to prepare for in-person RE for younger children when Omicron passes. Met with Jack Rusley to review protocols. Jack is recommending air purifiers for all the classrooms. Older grades pivoted to virtual during Omicron surge. Parent survey went out. All were willing to have children vaccinated. Several parents are willing to come in to volunteer.

Minister (Liz)– (See written report) – Worship team decided to add reading the covenant to the Order of Service to be read at each week’s service. Interim Music Director review happened today. Offered Jeff option to renew for a second year and he accepted. Staff had meeting with counselor / consultant on stress management and work-processing. Things remain difficult for staff, but appreciative of each other. Looking for time for staff to have some fun and space for joy. PruComm and congregation need to consider how to celebrate 300th anniversary beyond sermons only. Sabbatical Pamphlet was prepared and disseminated.

Sabbatical planning and policy (See document in google drive) – Motion: To accept Sabbatical Policy as proposed (Odile/Claire). Passed unanimously. Policy applies moving forward, not to Liz’s current sabbatical, although there is nothing in Liz’s plan that would not align. This sabbatical policy will be added to the HR policy as a new section in the Policy Handbook. Need to also make sure that we allocate money into a sabbatical line item on every annual budget. Alternatively, we could set up a sabbatical fund that is dedicated to this purpose. Finance committee will consider this during the spring budgeting process. **Motion: To amend all references to “Part time” in the sabbatical policy to “half time” (Edie / John). Motion passed unanimously.**

Financial Report - (John) – We are doing well financially. Expenses are down. Income is steady. Letter went to people who had not paid anything on their pledge. 40% of income came back from this effort. Need to ensure that we are attending to pastoral needs of those who have not connected.

Wheelchair Access - John went over wheelchair access plan with Max P. Will begin first phase of work soon. Concerns were raised that we should have designated space for more than one wheelchair and perhaps one or more options toward the back as well as in the front. Plans will also consider easier access for walkers and rollators around front area of the sanctuary.

Mosaic – (Claire - See written report)– The planned anti-racism trainings by Wayside Equity are fast approaching. The first, on February 5 – 2-5PM, will be virtual. We hope that the March and April sessions will be in-person or a hybrid version. At least 45 have registered to date. Congregational invitations and emails have been scheduled for this month. The Steering team will also be doing targeted outreach including reminder phone calls to all registrants. All PruComm members are encouraged to attend these trainings to support this important effort toward anti-racism in our congregation. Kate and Janet will be meeting with the Senior High Youth Group on January 23. The larger Mosaic Advisory Group will meet again on January 26. Peter Laarman has actively joined the Steering Team and will be facilitating “talk back” sessions between the trainings this spring.

Stewardship and Commitment Drive update - (Kate - See notes in the Drive) – Kate and others attended a clarifying meeting with Mark Ewert, who is consulting with Stewardship on this year’s commitment drive. There have been challenges in recruitment. Joan, Rick and Nancy will recruit two Commitment Drive (CD) leaders. One for one year, the other for two and rotating terms moving forward, so this effort is always led by at least one experienced CD leader. We hope to have an active Commitment Drive Team by February 1. We need to build budget and set priorities to help inform the CD. Budget committee is beginning work on this. Consider possibly moving dates later for next year – current timeline is outlined in policy manual. Kate will confer with Mark Ewert on his advice as our consultant for this year’s CD calendar. Possibly revise charge of nominating committee to help with populating committees like the CD. More discussion at Sunday’s retreat.

Mission Statement (Beth) – We need to convey to congregation that we are setting the draft mission statement aside for the time being. Beth did work on a draft today and shared verbally with PruComm. Beth will share a revised draft for comment and disseminate as decided.

DRE search – (Alison) – Search Team is working on job description. Sally Caruso will now be representing the Spiritual Pathways Team. Draft of the posting has begun. The Team has developed a timeline with the posting going out in early February. Consider moving supervision of Youth Music Director to Music Director. Change job descriptions accordingly.

Personnel (including DOO position) – Shifting Administrator position to Director of Operations in accordance with David Pyle’s recommendation. Edie shared current administrator roles and roles of Director of Operations. Could make this happen in two years with \$11,00 per year or three years with \$8,000 per year to get to target salary. Three new functions would be supervise tech staff in addition to supervising building, administrative, and front staff; work with church leaders to schedule major events within church calendar; Serve as liaison to Finance Committee. Additionally, “overseeing communications” now includes “coordinating church publications and overseeing website and social media presence.” Role of DOO in interfacing with PruComm - To be discussed further at retreat.

Retreat agenda items

- 300th anniversary celebration
- Role of PruComm with Staff

- Spring 2022 Goals – more practical
- Commitment Drive Schedule

NOTE UPCOMING MEETINGS

MID-YEAR Board Retreat: Sunday January 23, 2022, 5-7 pm on Zoom

MOSAIC Workshop: Saturday February 5, 2-5 pm

COVID 19 Team: Monday February 7, 7pm on Zoom

Next PRUCOMM Meeting: Wednesday February 9, 2022, at 6:45 pm on Zoom

Closing Words – John MLK – “I Have a Dream Speech” excerpt

Chalice Extinguishing

Adjourn – 9:02PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Claire Rosenbaum
Clerk