

First Unitarian Church of Providence

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

March 8, 2023

ATTENDING:

Prudential Committee

Joan Richards, President

Odile Mattiauda, Past-President

Hillary Salmons, President-elect

John Dooley, Treasurer

Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk

Dana Borrelli-Murray, Personnel Liaison

Peter Laarman, Strategic Planning

Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison

Lisa Voutes, Social Justice Liaison *absent*

Alison Green, Spiritual Development Liaison

Andy Wilby, Stewardship Liaison *absent*

Ex-officio – Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay

Church Staff Attending

Mandy Neff, Interim Director of Religious Education

Guests

Rick Richards, Commitment Drive

6:45 PM – Gathering / Chalice Lighting / Covenant Reading

Opening Words – Joan – minute of silence

Call to Order – 6:50 PM

Consent Agenda:

- **AV Task Force proposal** - To spend \$5,970.48 on necessary equipment (microphones, sound mixing board, amplifiers and other smaller components) to allow for presentation of a variety of music genres. Funds will come from the Kelley Smith Memorial Fund for Community Music.
- **Approval of February, 2023 Minutes**

Consent agenda approved unanimously.

Financial Report (John) - See written report. In summary, we have more money coming in than going out. Things are looking well for this time in the church year.

Highlights from Staff & Committee Reports (submitted and read in advance)

Minister (Liz) – Prompt to PruComm to be sure to read full written report each month. Roger finished retraining for Chalice and Soul Circle facilitators. Thanks Fellowship Dinner Team for a marvelous event.

DRE (Mandy) – Curriculum planning is underway. Meeting with planning teams. Teacher feedback lunch is planned. March 26 workshop (noon-2PM) will be a lookback at First U History of Spiritual Pathways programs. What have we learned about important core stories.

Administrator (Nancy) – See written report

Mosaic (Claire and Louise) – See written report

GA recruitment process (Hillary) – Those already registered to attend GA are as follows: Kai Roberts-Speaker, Theo Henson, Jenn Nardone, Cynthia Roberts, John Simmonds, John Dooley, Kate Niles, Claire Rosenbaum, Hillary Salmons. Kate, Claire, Hillary and John Simmonds all plan to attend remotely. Svetlana Goretaya might be also be interested. If there are others who would like to attend and be designated delegates, Claire is willing to attend without delegate status. PruComm recommends that First U pay \$300 for the two youth who have registered and \$300 toward the registration of the one adult who has requested financial assistance . (\$900 to support GA attendance recommended at last meeting)

April 29 Strategic Plan retreat (Peter Laarman) – Energy will be key for the success of this day. Everyone will need to participate for buy-in. We will need lavish invitation, with lots of repetition and reinforcement for the date. The outcome will be a four year strategic plan. Erica Baron, UU consultant, has been advising and will facilitate the day using an “appreciative inquiry process.” This process involves discussion and active listening to each other, rather than debate. We will need assistance of PruComm members to be enthusiastic with other congregants regarding process of the day. PruComm members are also asked to be “scouting” throughout the day for people who are enthusiastic about various components and might be willing to help with the implementation plan. The morning will include a session for children and families called “We Build a Church” and ideas from this group will be shared and brought into the rest of the day’s deliberation. The others will be guided through visioning where they want to see the church four years from now. The day will build through listening and sharing to a process for selection of actions under each of the four Pathways –

- Enhancing Community,
- Transforming ourselves,
- Doing the Work of Justice, and
- Building our Capacity.

Lunch can be an opportunity for informal discussion and sharing. A “Deep Dive” in afternoon will be two 45 minute sessions. Participants will choose one of the pathways. Hearing and listening to partners, first in dyads, then groups of four, then eight. Helps build broader understanding of each others’ priorities – reporting on what someone else thinks is important. For each Pathway, there will be a list of possible action items. These have been purposely kept somewhat broad. Specifics will bubble up in the two, four, eight process. Groups can add items, but not rewrite items. Everyone will have a chance to rank the various actions. People will be

able to attend remotely if they need to and participate in a “zoom room” for most of the activities.

PruComm approves the overall concept and outline for the day. With a few suggestions

- Although the days design allows for families with children to participate in the morning leave before or after lunch if they have other engagements, would there be a way to make it possible for them to attend in the afternoon only (to accommodate morning sports activities). Be sure that half day options for families are part of the messaging.
- There was a concern that the deep thinking is scheduled for afternoon when people tend to flag. Would there be a way to get people engaged early on. Could process leave out the “eight” step as possibly being too unwieldy and time consuming.

The process will present what PruComm has heard from congregation so far, then offer opportunity for what you as congregation have to say, add, distill into a roadmap for the next four years. Will need an implementation team to flesh out detail of implementation plan – with representation from PruComm – by June.

Organ report (Claire Rosenbaum) - See report from Task Force

Joan formed an OrganTask Force consisting of Claire Rosenbaum, Nancy Nicholson, Jill Malin, and Beth Armstrong tasked with identifying a consultant to review existing proposals, survey our organ, hear from minister and other leaders, give their recommendations for various options we have for refurbishing or replacing the organ and conduct a congregational Q&A. Task force identified four possible candidates. One was unable to do the work. The other three shared their backgrounds and estimates. **Motion – To hire Jonathan Ambrosino as organ consultant not to exceed \$4000 (Odile / Peter)** - Some questioned the purpose for this consultant. We need to have focal point person with expertise in organs respond to issues being raised, help us consider all of the options for the future of our organ, help us consider which option may meet our needs, and advise on how to best pursue that option. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Nancy Nicholson (organist and piano and organ teacher) has offered to conduct an organ “petting zoo” on March 19 after services. She will demonstrate the workings of the organ and give those attending (especially children) a chance to try playing the organ. This will be advertised in First U Times this week.

Finance and Development Committee (Hillary)

Committee met and those proposed as members are all in agreement as proposed in last meeting. Nominated assistant treasurer role in relationship as well as President-elect.

Motion: To formalize the creation of a new Committee called the Finance and Development Committee which will be chaired by the Assistant Treasurer and bring together the chairs of the Investment Management, Benevolent Society/Planned Giving, Commitment Drive, and Capital Campaign sub-committees, as well as the President Elect, Operations Manager, and Treasurer to oversee, coordinate and plan revenue generating activities - a

group that will meet monthly and report to and be guided by the Prudential Committee on all of its activities. (Hillary / Peter) Motion passed unanimously. We are not recommending a change in By-Laws at this point to see how this arrangement works at least for a year. Review financial statements, begin mapping out capital expenses, determine what we need to upgrade gift giving materials

Nominating Committee – Odile reported that the Nominating Committee has identified a slate of new PruComm members. Thanks to Neil Bartholomew and the nominating committee and willing candidates.

President-Elect - Karen Sivla-Sabatoni

Assistant Treasurer - Chris Capanella

Clerk- Kate Niles

Community Life Liaison – Kate Killilea

Summer Retreat planning (Hillary) - Hilary would like to take advantage of the energy from the Strategic Planning day on April 29 and hold a longer PruComm meeting on June 14, 6:00 – 9:30PM with outgoing and incoming PruComm members. Then hold a full day Saturday retreat on September 9 with new PruComm and staff. There could be some summer zoom meetings for prep and planning.

Other Business – Items for Next Month’s Agenda – Send any items to Joan.

Closing Words - Joan (The Lake Isle of Innisfree – William Butler Yeats)

8:55PM - Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk