

First Unitarian Church of Providence
Prudential Committee Meeting Notes
February 12, 2020

ATTENDING:

Prudential Committee

Cheryl Bartholomew, President
John Simmonds, Past-President
Michael Cappelli, President-Elect
Roberta Groch, Treasurer
David Francis, Assistant Treasurer
Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk
Caroline Mailloux, Strategic Planning
Tiffany Reed, Stewardship Liaison
Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison
Sam Cole, Community Life Liaison
Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison
Dave Spremulli, Spiritual Development Liaison

Church Staff Attending

Elizabeth Lerner Maclay, Minister, ex officio
Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education
Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

6:45 Check-in

Opening Words (Caroline) –“ Call to Adventure” by John Mark Green
Call to Order - Chalice Lighting & Covenant Reading
Meditation

7:00 Consent Agenda:

- **January Minutes** – Consent agenda approved unanimously (Dave / Edie)

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- **Draft Budget Discussion FY2021 (Roberta & David)**

Our new process is to develop and review a proposed budget before the commitment drive. The budget committee asked each group to submit their budgets by January. The budget committee met last month and discussed the budget that David, Nancy and Walter put together. This is an aspirational budget based on all items on the various wish lists. The committee will meet again in March, April and possibly May to refine. PruComm reviewed the list of major new or increased budget items. A few items came in late – some related to buildings and grounds and also an energy audit requested by the Green Team. Some of the buildings and grounds items may be capital costs and/or repairs rather than items for the operating budget. Budget is based on the assumption that 94%

of pledges will come in. This is more than the assumption for last year, but still conservative based on the actual pledge amounts for the last few years. This budget represents an increase of \$65,000 over last year. Process is that the budget committee will set priorities after which the PruComm endorses or makes adjustments. Tiffany will reach out to Rick Richards to assist with the narrative for commitment drive based on this budget. **Motion: Members of the PruComm agree with the total increase in the FY21 draft budget presented at the 2/12 meeting and collectively agree to support in our pledges the increase reflected therein. (John /Edie).** Approved unanimously.

- **Debrief David Pyle Pot Luck Presentation**

The presentation on February 7 was well-received. Turnout was very good – standing room only. Rev. Pyle clearly outlined that we are approaching large church size, but still at pastoral church staffing and infrastructure. It seemed that people listened and heard message. Many people read the report and /or summary and were also impressed by David’s presentation. The report and summary are on the website and links in the newsletters. It is important to communicate out to congregation the progress we have made already on many of Rev. Pyle’s recommendations.

- **Sabbatical policy task force update (Michael and Greg)**

Policy and process draft was shared. Some questioned the “purpose of sabbatical” section. Self-renewal should be primary. The task force will be meeting again 2/24. PruComm members should get any further comments to Michael and Greg. The draft policy has drawn on UUA recommendations and other congregations’ policies. It outlines some expectations about what happens when person is away, process for welcoming them back, etc.

- **Lisa Garcia-Sampson Ordination**

Lisa’s ordination is set for Saturday, May 16, 3PM. She is contacting people to be on her ordination committee. We have already raised \$1650. If interested in making donation, see Cheryl or Nancy. We will try to raise around \$2000. These funds will cover food, flowers, travel costs, etc. First \$1000 was from the church where Lisa interned. We could use this donation as a motivator to match. Announcement asking for donations will appear in upcoming newsletter.

- **Congregational Giving Assessment**

PruComm involvement Friday, February 21, 7PM (no dinner) and Sunday, February 23 after services with a lunch. Sign-ups for ministries are filling up on Saturday.

- **Outdoor 300th Anniversary Banner**

The 300th Anniversary committee has requested to put banner outside of the church to honor 300th anniversary. There is a concern about attaching a banner to the window

frames. Additionally, it could possibly impact wedding photographs and potential rentals. We are rather recommending a lawn sign. **Motion: We will place 300th anniversary banner on the lawn to go up in the next month and remain for the remainder of the year. (Dave S / John).** Passed unanimously.

- **Faithify account to bond out people from Wyatt Detention Center with 1st U as sponsor**

PruComm discussed the request to sponsor a Faithify account with a passthrough to AMOR. Faithify is a UU crowdsourcing platform. AMOR and sanctuary can sponsor the account with funds going directly to AMOR. No need for a passthrough.

Motion: We support both AMOR and the sanctuary steering committee of First U to launch a Faithify account to bond out people at the Wyatt Detention Center. (Michael / John) Passed unanimously. *

** On February 18, after being made aware that asylum seekers have recently been moved from Wyatt to other regional detention centers, the following amendment was proposed, seconded and approved by email: **We support both AMOR and the Sanctuary Steering Committee of the First Unitarian Church of Providence to launch a Faithify Account to bond out asylum seekers. (Cheryl/Caroline)***

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Church Administrator (Nancy)** – See written report. Question about internet security issue. Someone had downloaded copyrighted material through the church’s internet. Public internet was shut off since it was no longer password protected. Internet in the future will be password protected. Nancy is taking vacation 2/27 – 2/28 and 3/2-3/3. Anything that needs Nancy’s attention should get to her before or wait until her return.
- **DRE (Cathy)** - See written report. Cathy is fielding lots of request for GA participation.
- **Minister (Liz)** – See written report. Liz and Roger working on covenant. Liz was excited that staff came to David Pyle’s presentation. Liz spoke with David Pyle about mission and vision. He outlined a framework of four questions: (1) Identity - Who are we? Where have we been? Who do we want to be? (2) Culture – All the things you have to accept in order to feel comfortable in the community. What is our culture? (3) Vision – What church / community would we create if we could magically create it? (4) Mission. – What are we resourced, equipped and capable of doing now?
- **Treasurer Reports (Roberta)** – Expenses are where they should be. Pledges payments doing very well.

MINISTRIES, PERSONNEL, STRATEGIC PLANNING

- **Personnel (Edie)** – We need volunteer from PruComm for Liz’s performance review. Caroline has volunteered. Also need recommendation for congregant-at-large to serve.

- **Strategic Planning (Caroline)** – Recommendation to revise the timeline developed at retreat to do identity work (described by David Pyle) before jumping into vision and mission.
- **Community Life (Sam)** – 300th Anniversary work continues. Rick has held listening session.
- **Social Justice (Greg) – Bob Cox** – Statement of conscience, “Our democracy uncorrupted” to be voted on at GA. Suggested that Bob Cox offer a meeting on a Sunday after church for delegates to be informed about this.
- **Spiritual Development (David S.)** – Music committee held a productive meeting.
- **Stewardship (Tiffany)** –

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Candidates for Slave Trade & Abolition Movement research**
Anna Harvey, a senior history concentrator at Brown, will be conducting the research for our First U and abolition history. She will complete her work by May.
- **Coffee Hour (Roberta)**
Deacons are considering taking over the coffee hour work. We are all asked to help Janet with this effort in the meantime. Liz made an invitation from pulpit last week.
- **Landscaping, Chromebook, and Laptops – Special requests**
\$3500 to complete landscaping was requested; also special request from food pantry for Chromebook for registration and purchase of laptops for program staff. All of these requests will be paid out of surplus from last year’s budget.

Executive Session: Sanctuary Documentary Proposal – Motion to go into executive session (Sam / Dave S.)

Executive Session: Worship Service Changes/Decisions/Directions – put off until March

NEW BUSINESS –

9:15 REVIEW ACTION ITEMS

Next Meeting/Assignments

- **Next Meeting: March 11**
- **Opening/Closing Words: Dave Spremulli**

Closing Words (Caroline)

Extinguish Chalice

9:25 ADJOURNMENT – Motion to adjourn (Roberta / David) carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk