

**First Unitarian Church of Providence**  
Prudential Committee Meeting Notes  
January 13, 2021

**ATTENDING:**

**Prudential Committee**

Michael Cappelli, President  
Cheryl Bartholomew, Past-President  
Odile Mattiauda, President-elect  
Roberta Groch, Treasurer  
Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk  
Tiffany Reed, Stewardship Liaison (*absent*)  
Edie Warren, Personnel Liaison  
Beth Armstrong, Strategic Planning (*needed to leave unexpectedly*)  
Louise Sloan, Community Life Liaison  
Greg Kniseley, Social Justice Liaison (*absent*)  
Elizabeth Allsworth, Spiritual Development Liaison

**Church Staff Attending**

Liz Lerner Maclay, Minister  
Cathy Seggel, Director of Religious Education  
Nancy Forsstrom, Church Administrator

**Guests**

Ted Martin  
Stew Armstrong

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

**6:45 - Gathering**

Opening Words – (Roberta Groch) John O’Donoghue  
Chalice Lighting & Covenant Reading  
Call to Order – 7:12PM

**7:12PM Reports:**

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

**December Treasurer’s Report** – See report – 50% of church year. We are doing well with 42% of expenses and 61.5% of pledges. Other income sources are behind. Difficult to make predictions due to unknowns with pandemic.

**DISCUSSION:**

- **7:21PM - Mission Statement (Beth)** – Thanks to Beth and team for all the hard work. Roles and responsibilities of PruComm – charge Beth and form team; to steward the process. Team members included five members from various constituencies.

- Peter Laarman – new member, retired minister, experienced with this process.
- Sena Pouder – Women’s Alliance and older population – experience in education and business.
- Joe Fisler – Served in many leadership capacities in other UU congregations. Served on First U Commitment Drive.
- Elizabeth Allsworth – current PruComm member, wonderful writer, international academic experience, newer member and children in RE.
- Beth – long term member of First U, represented music and also past president and PrComm member.

Worked started in October. Team met weekly initially and then bi-weekly. Looked at mission statements from other congregations, our existing mission statement. Heard from members of congregation who sent thoughts. Looked at “Imagine the Future” materials and materials from leadership retreat. Shared own experiences. Each member wrote a statement on their own. These were shared with whole group without authorship. Worked through themes and combined them. Looked at two versions. Did some final tweaking. They have shared the shorter version with PruComm. Want to hear reactions to this.

**Mission:** The First Unitarian Church of Providence nurtures resilience and cultivates courage as we renew ourselves through fierce commitment to justice, peace, and healing. We draw insight from our complex historic roots as we pledge our whole lives to forging a future in which every person – and Earth itself – can flourish.

Seeking to transform love into action,

- We welcome and honor a rich diversity of religious backgrounds, races, cultures, ages, economic circumstances, sexual orientations, and gender identities
- We rejoice in the creations of artists, musicians, scientists and all thinkers
- We confront racism in ourselves and work to uproot institutional expressions of white supremacy and economic injustice
- We rise to meet the challenge of climate change so that all may survive on a healthy planet.

**Tagline:** Transforming Love Into Action

### **Some thoughts shared**

Shorter is more powerful – (many feel this)

Hits all the important issues. Needs to grab something easily digestible up front.

Emphasizes social justice – may reflect change in congregation. May need some mention of spiritual development and growth (Several).

Shorter mission statement with accompanying values statement – as in the bullets.

Need to mention “abilities” in list of diversities we honor.

Likes energy and action focus.

Need something shorter that is more digestible – language that is accessible to youth

*(Beth needed to leave due to an emergency – discussion suspended on this topic)*

- **8:03PM – First U 4 You – Onsite Testing Proposal** – Because of relationship with RI Department of Health, they reached out to Liz see if we would be site for COVID testing and perhaps also COVID vaccine in the future. Nancy feels this is doable in the Meeting House – large size, entrance / exit on both ends, separate space, little use during the week. Propose to do this on Wednesdays. Support from National Guard for crowd control – medics will administer actual test. We will need some First U volunteers for administrative tasks – forms, etc. They will need to be trained. PPE will be provided. Approximately 2-5 minutes for whole process per person. Doctors on bridging team and whole bridging team feel this could be done safely if all protocols are followed. There may be some criteria for volunteers and strict safety protocols to follow. **Motion: That the First U Meeting House become testing and vaccination site for COVID-19 (Edie / Odile)** - Carries unanimously. The bridging team will write an article and begin recruitment of people who meet criteria. Need four volunteers for each week and backup – maybe 10 total. National Guard still need to review space.

#### Reports:

- **Minister (Liz) – See written report**
- **8:35 PM - DRE (Cathy)**– Brown first years moving into dorms – 3 UU Brown students. Youth variety show at end of Feb. Working on Wholly Family service. Harvest the Power – and Widening the Circle of Support sessions want to continue as soul circles. The Common Read will be Breathe: A Letter to my sons by Imani Perry. Cathy has submitted sabbatical proposal – January 2022. She will send to Micahel and PruComm will review and vote by email for provisional approval.
- **8:30PM Church Administrator (Nancy)** – We need items for the auction
- **Liaison updates**
  - **Social Justice (Greg)** — no update
  - **Spiritual Development (Elizabeth)** – No update
  - **Stewardship (Tiffany)**- no update
  - **8:31 PM Congregational Life – (Louise)** – Need small group to put together wording to introduce monthly communications on racial justice. Louise will send email – Bev Kotef may be able to help.
  - **8:36 PM Human Resources – (Edie)**– Staff meeting – PruComm is still opaque to congregation. Needs to be addressed. Sent thank you notes to staff.
  - **Strategic Planning – (Beth)** – See above report on work on mission statement
- **8:39PM Executive Session – Motion to enter executive session (Michael / Cheryl)**

**9:40PM PM Closing Words – (Roberta) John O’Donoghue**

**9:42 PM Adjourn (Cheryl / Rberta)**

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Claire Rosenbaum, Clerk