

**Minutes of the Monthly Board Meeting via Zoom
December 6, 2020**

Present: Moderator Fern Culhane (FC); Assistant Moderator Bruce Pollack-Johnson (BPJ), Treasurer Nicole Bartle (NB); Secretary Jane Hain (JH); Trustees Peter Johnstone (PJ); Leslie Ferron-Smith (LFS), Anam Owili-Eger (AOE), Stephen Workman (SW); Minister McKinley Sims (MS).

Absent: None

Chalice & Gathering Words: 1:40.

- 1. Minutes from Previous Meeting(s):** Edited minutes from the November Board Meeting: SW moved to approve; Second: NB. Minutes were approved.
- 2. Current Health of the Restoration Community:** Members spoke of personal issues as well as concerns about specific congregants during this crisis. It was especially sad to know that we lost two of our church family to COVID since the last meeting.
- 3. Reports, Actions, and Approvals:**
 - 3.1. Minister's Report:
 - 3.1.1. Holiday Services: MS reported on plans for the holiday services. He said that he and Jane H. can't commit to doing a complete holiday service that would be meaningful. SW offered his help with the Blue Christmas service on the 23rd. The Christmas Eve service may be a Holiday Variety Hour featuring the children. Kwanzaa may be incorporated into another service, perhaps joining with another congregation. He wants to feature lone V. in some way – the chalice lighting perhaps. He will speak with Latifah Griffin from USG about Kwanzaa. Solstice (Yule) service: FC offered to host or partner with perhaps Sharon F. if she is interested. BPJ volunteered to contact her. FC suggested featuring a fireplace video in that zoom service. FC asked if there was a template article for these services. She agreed to write the article about that service for the newsletter.
 - 3.1.2. Worship Team: MS commended the team for their resilience dealing with new and difficult expectations and anxiety.
 - 3.1.3. Donation: MS informed the board of a very generous anonymous donation to the church of \$50,000 in recognition of all the work that has been done during the pandemic. This was an extreme vote of confidence! The donation may be used in any way deemed necessary.
 - 3.1.4. Barbara M. signed the Membership Book on November 20, 2020. It was recorded and will be shared at a future date. Other friends have expressed an interest as well.
 - 3.1.5. MLK Day of Service: Is this being organized by USG again this coming year? MS hasn't heard anything yet so he guesses it will be drastically different this year. It was suggested that we might feature a story-telling session with volunteers and the kids. BPJ will bring it up for discussion at the next Social Justice Council meeting. FC offered to write an article in the newsletter asking for suggestions from the congregation. PJ suggested writing congratulatory letters to Biden and Harris.

3.2. Treasurer's Report:

3.2.1. November's net revenue was \$32,392 due in part to that generous donation. Pledges are coming in at 75% of what we received last year at this time. While she is very concerned that we won't meet our pledge percentage this year, we are still in the black at the moment. Should this trend continue, we might need to use some of \$50,000 donation to balance the budget. There have been no unexpected expenditures.

3.2.2. NB agreed to speak with Len R. and Mike F. about the precedent of sending out end-of-year notices. People expect a statement for tax purposes in December.

3.2.3. Actions:

3.2.3.1. Unemployment Insurance: NB offered to fill out a PA Form 100 to reinstate the church's unemployment insurance. The tax result is relatively small.

Decision: The board agreed with this plan.

3.2.3.2. Audit: As per the Finance Committee, NB has contacted an external firm in Conshohocken that agrees to audit the 2019-2020 fiscal year for \$2,000. There is a statement available for the 2017-2018 year but there is no report for the 2018-2019 year. BPJ asked if we need a congregational vote to ignore the requirements listed in the by-laws. FC hopes we can share the 2019-2020 audit report in January and then meet with the congregation later to approve not honoring the by-laws for 2018-2019 or to consider voting on an amendment to this and perhaps other laws in the future.

Decision: PJ moved to have this firm do the audit. It was seconded by LFS and passed unanimously.

3.3. Approval of the Board Covenant: The board approved the Covenant edits. Thank you to SW and BPJ for their team effort! FC proposed that we accept the amended statement.

Decision: Moved: PJ; Seconded: LFS. Unanimously approved. JH will post the new document on the website.

3.4. Retreat Plans: NB is unable to attend on the dates of Jan. 15-16 so if the 8th Principle Team can attend, the dates will be moved to Jan. 8-9. There is a meeting on Dec. 9 to with the team to confirm agreement.

3.5. PIHN Holiday Family Adoption Status: SW reported that including himself and Mike F., there are 6 congregants participating this year.

3.6. Other Reports: Justice Council and Religious Exploration have reports posted on the board page of the website. There was no discussion.

4. Name Change Process:

4.1. Two other possible name segments were offered for consideration at the Dec. 13 Town Hall: "Faith Community" and "Spiritual Community". People on the Name Change Committee prefer the latter. BPJ offered to contact a couple of our members about their feelings on these suggestions. He also suggested that there be a vote on the tagline at least.

4.2. FC thought that the design of a paper ballot should be settled before the end of the year if we are going to proceed with a final decision by the end of January. She intends that we approve the actual proposed name at the board meeting in January. The board must set up criteria to determine the strength of various options. It was agreed that ballots should be accompanied by stamped, return envelopes.

- 4.3. The Name Change Committee must not be made to feel that we are delaying any vote in order to retain the old name, but following this discussion, there was serious concern among the board members that the final vote should be postponed until we can all meet in person. When this crisis eases, the vote will be a top priority! This option should also be discussed with the congregation on the 13th.

Decision: Try to settle on some form of the name on the 13th and vote on accepting the tagline before the end of the church year. Convey the decision to postpone the final name vote until we can meet in person. In MS's words, we need to be responsible, resilient, and resourceful.

5. Going Forward and Parking Lot:

5.1. Memorial Services:

5.1.1. The memorial service for Bob T. will be via zoom on Saturday, December 12 at 2pm

5.1.2. A private family scattering of ashes for Dot F. will be held on December 15.

5.1.3. No specific plans have yet been published for a memorial service for Bob P. but possibly January.

5.1.4. Also, no specific plans have yet been published for a memorial service for Dave S.

- 5.2. Nominating Committee: FC asked if any of the board members retiring next spring would consider renewing their terms. If all goes according to plan, FC will substitute as moderator next fall if/when BPJ is on sabbatical but the Nominating Committee will need to find a new assistant moderator who will agree to become moderator when BPJ's term as moderator is over.

Decision: There are two trustees and the secretary whose terms end in 2021. They should try to let the board know at the January meeting if they will re-up.

- 5.3. Executive Level Biweekly Meeting: MS, FC and BPJ meet approximately every other week. MS felt that it might benefit transparency if there were a non-board member attending as well. It was suggested that a Committee on Ministry (COM) person join this group, or maybe COM members attend on a rotating basis. MS will contact them to learn their feelings with this plan.
- 5.4. Policies and Procedures: FC would like to see them all in one place. NB brought it to the attention of the board that new top-level policies have not yet filtered down to our congregation's policies. She has volunteered to address these inconsistencies over the summer. All policies and procedures need to be reviewed for accuracy.

TASKS: Some of these are carried over from earlier meetings. Tasks were not addressed during the December meeting.

FC Write articles for the weekly newsletter about the Yule service and ideas from the congregation for the MLK Day of Service.

BPJ Discuss possible MLK plans with the Justice Council.

BPJ Contact several congregants before the 13th about their feelings concerning "Faith" or "Spiritual" Community for the name change.

BPJ Contact Sharon F. about organizing a Yule/Solstice service, either alone or with FC.

BPJ & FC . Ask 8th Principle Team about change of date for the January board retreat and inform the board.

NB Contact Len R. and Mike F. about end-of-year pledge statement and plan to send out.

- NB** Fill out necessary forms to reinstate unemployment insurance.
- NB** Contact firm and agree to pay \$2,000 for 2019-2020 audit.
- NB** Look at policies and procedure over the summer.
- JH**..... Post revised Board Covenant on the website (private and public board pages).
- JH** Update Barbara M's status to Active in ICON.
- MS** Contact COM members about meeting with FC and BPJ on a rotating bi-weekly basis.
- All** Those board members whose terms expire should contact FC about continuing for another term.

Carried Over or not Addressed:

- BPJ:** Status of David Perry and maybe contact SW about caricatures for the tee shirt.
- FC:** Run the Board postponement decision of the name change plans past Linda H. and the committee prior to sending out an email to the whole congregation.
- FC:** Compile list of GA videos.
- MS:** Contact the top people on the "phone tree" grid. Contact Annabel G. to add Chelsea Cimino to the list (we only have an email for her, however. ccimino@arcadia.edu). Let MS and BPJ know if there are any problems. (no longer necessary at the moment?)
- MS:** Compose a test message for the "phone tree" and run it by FC. (no longer necessary at the moment?)
- NB:**..... Contact Tim S. about possible email/snail-mail end-of-year reminders.
- LFS:** Look into job descriptions.
- PJ:** Check into the "Aid for Friends" group.
- ALL:** Need to set up a policy of what level of expenditure needs to be approved by the Board.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:45.

Next Regular Meeting: January 3, tentatively at 1:30 pm

*Respectfully Submitted,
Jane L Hain, Secretary*