

Splinters from the Board

Dec. 8, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Vicki Chessin, Ricky Courlander, Laura McBride, Gisela Moffit, Grace Rollins and Rev. Joe Cleveland

1. Chalice lighting with a reading by Rev. Joe: “Long Haul People” from Bless the Imperfect. The meeting was called to order @ 6:37PM.
2. Welcome and check-in by all.
3. Consent Agenda – Minutes of Nov. meeting – approved.
4. **Updates/ Announcements:**
 - a. Holiday Tea (Laura McBride) – people are signing up.
 - b. Flow chart (Laura McBride) – problem with getting pictures off her camera – needs connector.
 - c. Handbills/handouts of committees, interest groups with pics (Laura) – same problem.
 - d. Updates: Margaret Nash, Jean Daab, and Janet Simon are back home and recovering. Millie Putz’s son, Kevin Puts, received the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2012 for his opera “Silent Night” which will be shown nation wide on PBS on Friday, Dec. 13 at 9 p.m.
5. **Interim Minister’s Report** (Joe) – has been involved with a lot of pastoral care needs, injuries, hospitalizations, personal problems. He participated in 2 events on the CMU campus: a film and discussion on homosexuality and religion and he lead a prayer at the Day of Remembrance. He attended a meeting with the Isabella County Restoration House Project. We will partner with the First United Methodist Church from Jan 12-18 (the second week) to help staff a shelter in their church, which is larger than ours. Joe met with the RE committee. He is keeping in touch with UU colleagues on the western side of Michigan, and reading for and preparing services and sermons. He is working on Adult RE offerings for the spring. Ideas include:
 1. A UU History film series and discussion,
 2. Adult small group ministry with a curriculum to work through
 3. Small group ministry on campus to explore theology,
 4. Use an “Even song” for families to facilitate multigenerational worship.Joe continues to envision more people sharing their various talents in the worship services.
6. **Transition Team’s Report** (Joe) – attached. What does it mean to be a multi-generational congregation? This question is one that we will need to address in a congregational workshop. The team will be looking for a facilitator, possibly supplied by MidAmerica region.
7. **Worship Team report** (Vicki) – attached. The liturgical calendar is shaping up and the

budget requests for next year were submitted. The lay teams are working out well.

8. **Treasurer's report** (Ricky) – attached. Monthly report for November shows total deposit of \$11,240.00 but this includes one large pledge that came in all at once. We spent \$9,298.79 Joe suggested consideration of a policy to “split the plate” one Sunday a month when half the undesignated funds would be given to a local need, for example, the Restoration House project.
9. **RE committee report** (Scott) – attached with a correction to reflect other people who have been trained to lead OWL workshops include Guy Newland, Laura McBride, Nikki and Justin Henri, all of whom are trained to lead High School OWL, and Norma Bailey, Mary Alsager and Laura McBride, who are trained for Elementary School OWL.
10. **Social Action report** (Grace) – Mari Potter continues to spearhead sign-up for the Christmas Outreach Project. Guest at Your Table is underway with Norma Bailey taking the lead. On Dec.1 Vicki invited members to become aware of the issues related to raising the minimum wage and call their senators to encourage support. A handout was provided.
11. **Membership committee report** (Laura) – attached. We have five new members with more anticipated. Budget will be submitted to Ricky.
12. **Miscellaneous Reports**
 - a. Social Fun (Laura) – attached.
 - b. Building Manager (Janet) - attached. Doorr repaired the cracked PVC pipe and will install the new thermostat for the sanctuary soon. Our bat seems to have moved on. The shelves for the basement can now be finished since Tina has procured the missing parts. A plumber has unclogged the right side bathroom toilet.
 - c. Publicity –committee needed. Gisela circulated an example of a post card from the First United Methodist Church. It was sent through the US postal service to a targeted area in Mt. Pleasant and invited anyone to attend their upcoming events for Christmas. It is a useful tool for publicity.
 - d. Communication Task force (Grace) – It was suggested and approved to include the names and E-mail addresses of the committee chairpersons at the bottom of every E-News to improve communication. Gisela will contact Kirsten.
 - e. Caring Committee (Laura) – this was largely discussed earlier by Joe under pastoral care issues. Mary Alsager sent flowers to Janet Simon while she was in the hospital and a card to Guy Newland.
 - f. Joys and Concerns: Joe shared that at his previous church in Bedford someone in the congregation keeps track of the things people share during Joys and Concerns, and when appropriate, posts them in the newsletter or send cards or follows up if needed. Gisela will ask Liz Dealing if she would take on making

note of what was said at Joys and Concerns, send cards or email responses when appropriate, and share the information with the Caring Committee chair and/or eNews.

11. **Old business –**

- a. Employment Assessment tools, new contract design (Scott, Joe) – pending but close to done.
- b. Staff evaluations (Joe) – Joe will be starting them this week.
- c. Contact with MidAmerica Region UUA (Gisela) - cancelled the phone consult.
- d. Stewardship (Grace) – Grace is planning circle suppers at private homes and at the UU Center for families with children. Training is needed for the “ambassadors” who will lead the discussion at each venue. In January Grace will draft a letter to the congregation for the E-news about stewardship issues and the plan. Joe will do a letter for the February E-news or to be E-mailed to the congregation under separate cover discussing stewardship, generosity, and the pledge drive. Throughout February and March we will have testimonials each Sunday. There are different ways to present the financial need of the church including how much it costs to run the church per day OR how much each chair in the sanctuary “costs” per Sunday. We may offer a breakdown of the number of people who are giving in various categories or by percentage of the budget.
- e. New vision/mission statement (Joe, TT) – deferred

12. **New business –**

- a. Homeless shelter – The Isabella County Restoration House project: see above in Minister’s report. Thus far 21 people have signed up to help. Joyce Henricks has offered to be the coordinator for our church. She is already on the Board of the Project. Hank ran a homeless shelter for 12 years and has offered to do some training for the volunteers – particularly those spending nights.
- b. Updating Bylaws/ Handbook – no additional changes offered.
- c. Board tickler for Dec. – all budget requests are due by December 15. Finish preparing board budget by December 15. The Finance Committee meeting is to be convened by Ricky on January 10, 2014 to precede the Board meeting which is being moved to January 22 at 6 PM. The budget will be presented to the congregation at the February Fellowship Life meeting after worship on February 16, 2014. The budget will be presented and discussed in detail.

- d. The Stewardship Drive takes place thereafter and the Board revises the budget upon its completion. The final budget is then explained and voted upon by the members at the Annual Meeting set for Sunday, May 18, 2014 after worship.
- e. The topic for the Fellowship Life meeting on January 19 will include:
 - 1. Explanation of plans for upcoming Cottage Meetings,
 - 2. Plans for the Stewardship Drive
 - 3. Possibly information on a future workshop about becoming a multigenerational church.
- f. Prepare Board budget requests: Ricky to look into the pros and cons of credit or debit card or automatic payment of utilities and make a recommendation to the board next month. Generally plan to add 10% for utilities and costs.
- g. Prepare Salary packages for paid staff. Discussed.
- h. Safety webinar (deferred).
- i. Membership Webinar (deferred).
- j. Weapons in places of Worship (deferred).
- k. Joe shared information from the Office of Church Staff Finances at the UUA indicating there will be new recommendations for the UUA Retirement Plans that must be read and re-adopted by June 30, 2014. The Fair Share compensation guidelines for 2014 will be forthcoming. Ricky and Joe will review this information.

Adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Next Board meeting will be Wednesday, January 22, 2014 at 6:30 PM at the UU Center.
(This January there will be no Trinity Meeting.)

Submitted by Vicki Chessin, Secretary