

## Parish Board Meeting FRS – December 20, 2023

**Present:** Rev. Rebecca Bryan, **Tina Benik, Jim Supple, Kathy Desilets, Renée Wolf Foster, Annie Maurer, Laurie Evans-Daly, Tom Himmel, Vern Ellis, Bob Higgins, Lori Clark, Liss Larsen,** Barbara Garnis (4<sup>th</sup> Century Team), Julie Menin (for HRC). *Note: names in **bold** are voting members.*

**Absent:** Caitlin Creps, Minnie Flanagan

**Call to Order:** Jim Supple called the meeting to order at 6:10pm.

**Welcome/Reading:** The welcoming was a reading from *Poetry of Presence II* that focused on slowing down and saying the names of those you love to receive a gift of listening and remembering.

**Finance Update:** Renée Wolf Foster and Jim Supple

Profit and Loss Statements and Balance Sheets were distributed with the monthly financial report. Year-to-date income continues to run behind budget expectations. Some of the shortfall is due to delays in receipt of anticipated funds and should be resolved in the December reports. Contributions continue to be strong both FYTD and monthly. Expenses appear favorable to the budget at this point, but this is partly due to the timing of payroll. We are also entering the normally volatile winter season. In December, projections for the remainder of the year will be available. No remedial actions recommended at this time. In December, projections for the remainder of the year will be available for closer review.

The board is working on plans to fund needed repairs to the roof of the meetinghouse with options including a combination of new grant income (a grant application to the City Historic Commission is in process), use of the Bailey Fund, and a dedicated limited fundraising effort. More information will be available in December.

Renee noted that the new financial reporting format has been helpful to the finance committee and has streamlined meetings.

**Human Relations Committee (HRC):** Leslie Lawrence and Jim Supple

Materials describing the UUA recommended salary process and a spreadsheet showing how it was applied in creating salary recommendations were distributed for review. Leslie reported that the HRC has traditionally used the UUA process as a baseline in determining salary recommendations. The process reflects extensive work done by UUA to define expected salaries to provide fair compensation based on geographic location, size of the congregation, and job definitions. Last year, UUA significantly increased recommended salaries, our church moved to a higher size category, and the system for setting salary levels across the staff was changed with a particular interest in assuring fairness across all levels of the pay scale. The rate of inflation was also high. UUA also recommends that as a rule people are brought in at 90% of the midline for their job types and given acceptable performance brought to the mid-point within five years.

Given the financial situation last year, we were not able to agree to fully apply the UUA rubric. When we considered our position this year, we found that some employees were losing ground in keeping up with UUA recommendations. Jim walked the board through the spreadsheets showing the process and explained that if we continue to do as we did last year (i.e., provide COLA based raises to all), we will not be using the system suggested to provide equity. Since we committed years ago to meet the UUA standards to be considered a fair compensation church, the committee recommendation is to do the following:

- Bring salaries for those with tenure of 5 years or more 100% of midpoint of the UUA salary range for their job category.
- Bring all staff to 95% of the midpoint of the UUA salary range for their job category.
- Provide a small increase to those at or above midpoint.

This will bring us into alignment with the UUA fair compensation guidelines and could be the basis for a policy statement on the issue of salaries. Jim offered to go to the finance committee meeting to discuss the recommendations.

**Action: Salary Recommendation for Church Year 2024-25**

Motion: Renée Wolf Foster moved that the Board accept the recommendation of the Human Resource Subcommittee regarding staff salaries for next year. Lori Clark seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**Stewardship Update:** Vern Ellis

- The auction and Cookie Walk yielded just under \$25,000 (\$23,700 for the auction and \$1,200 for the Cookie Walk).
- The Annual Campaign is underway. The theme is Strengthening Sacred Connections in Our Interconnected World. The Campaign Committee is working to boost the number of stewards in the hope that by limiting the number of contacts assigned to each steward, we would maximize the opportunity for them to have direct contact with congregants.
- The FRS Grant Team is preparing an application to the City Historic Commission for funds for roof repairs and beginning work on a Sacred Places Grant.

**Minister's Update:** Rev. Rebecca presented a report in writing.

Rev. Rebecca also noted:

- As pastoral demands and pressure on staff for programming increase around the holidays, December is a very demanding month for staff. She asked if there was a possibility of shifting business activities away from December to allow a focus on services and ministry activities. One piece of this could be shifting the board meeting schedule so that we would have 10 meetings annually but to skip August and December. There was support for considering this possibility.
- The parent meeting that was held as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century Visioning process yielded important information. Parents who attended want to be involved but feel that many activities of the church are not welcoming for them. Childcare during meetings and

activities would help and if meetings were consolidated, childcare that is more economical could be made available. Also, there are six young adults who are interested in becoming more involved with church activities.

**Gift Acceptance Policy:** Tina Benik

Tina said that this policy was a redrafting of work previously done to increase its usefulness to the board and donors and to use as a marketing tool for those who might be willing and able to make significant legacy donations to the church. She then walked through the document with the board to assure understanding of the provisions and invite amendments or suggestions. Suggestions for change are welcome over the month and the policy will be returned to the board for a vote.

**Facilities Update:** Rev. Rebecca and Jim Supple

Because we need to be prepared to replace the meetinghouse roof as soon as is feasible, action is required to support the availability of funds needed for this purpose.

**Action: Identification of Funding for Roof Repair and other Needs**

**Motion:** Kathy Desilets moved that the Parish Board hereby lift the previous restrictions on the Bailey Fund necessary to access up to \$80,000 of the current assets to support the replacement of the meetinghouse roof. Use of the Bailey Fund for this purpose is entirely consistent with the intention of the initial bequest to the church and the precedent set by prior Parish Boards. Tina Benik seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

**Action: Formalization of the Grant Application and Administration Team**

**Motion:** Lori Clark moved that the Parish board formalize the Grant Application and Administration Team as a Board Working Team and ask that the team continue to seek all available and appropriate grants including those to support the replacement of the meetinghouse roof. Renée seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

A motion regarding the relationship of fundraising for the meetinghouse roof with the Capital Campaign was considered, but a vote on it was postponed allowing clarification and refinement of its language.

**Shared Ministry Team:** Tom Himmel

Tom informed the board that the Shared Ministry Team will send an email from the convenors or board/team liaisons to each of the work teams to check on their progress toward the goals they have established.

## **Consent Agenda**

### **Action: Acceptance of Notes from November meeting**

**Motion:** Jim Supple moved that the notes of the November meeting of the board be accepted with the technical corrections submitted by board members incorporated. Tom Himmel seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

**Closing:** Reverend Rebecca wished the Board members a holiday season.

### **Action: Adjournment**

**Motion:** Kathy Desilets moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded and passed without objection.

At 8:17pm, the Chalice was extinguished, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Desilets, Clerk