

Minutes of the USR Board of Trustees Meeting
November 10, 2021, 7 pm (Zoom)

Present: Dawn, Sarah, Jack, Kris, Chris, Craig

Excused: Don, Helen

1. New Dais

A new base with old steps is the arrangement a self-selected committee has settled on. Seems like this has been decided without usual flow of information about decision making (the who, how and what) to Board. Some of us expressed desire that Board get updates and congregation be involved. Jack was going to message the congregation. Doug Goodell was or could be involved [?].

2. Capital Improvement Fund

The Building or Capital Improvement Fund has remaining approximately \$100,000 in funds and \$60,000 in pledges. Kris Bluemel will meet with Rob Willis after confirming available funds with Chris Dunnigan in order to share priorities and determine next steps. Dawn has a template of projects with status towards completion and possible priority ratings (e.g., high, moderate, low) all organized on an excel sheet which Kris will share with Rob. Jack reminded us to review the publicity or campaign promotion material that had been circulated to the congregation as a way of measuring announced promise of improvements and actual completion of projects.

3. Thank You Notes

KB to send thank you to Stephanie Gannon and son Davis for extraordinary job on Soles4Soles drive. Circle facilitators are possible recipients of thank yous.

4. Circle Restart

Blue Circle or Asset Management: met on Nov. 3, 2021, with Anita DiGiulio facilitating.

Yellow Circle of Spiritual Development: met on Oct. 28, 2021, with Laura Krag facilitating.

Orange Circle or Congregational Connections: has not met as Jessica Downey had to resign from facilitator position.

Red Circle or Welcoming and Participation: met on Oct. 12, 2021 with Jeff Sommerville facilitating. Jack attended and reported that the work was divided with potential members handed off. New member brunch – not an effective division of responses.

Green Circle or Wider World: has been meeting and active under Marilyn Maney's facilitation.

Purple Circle or Governance and Well Being: met with George Witte facilitating. Board of Trustees and SCRT have not been all together. [my notes say, "We don't need to meet. Can't join as ad hoc person." What does this mean?]

Sarah made a by-law confession. Board of Trustees should not be dealing with appointments to facilitator positions. This is work of Nominating Committee and George with Circle on Shared Ministry.

Craig pointed out that not all Circles have groups. It seems we need a group leader for subgroup to appear within any given Circle. Anita and Marilyn are good at structuring their Circles and could be consulted by other facilitators. Action item: Board of Trustees needs to assess and assign Realm solution to problem of group appearance within Realm construct of Circles.

5. Treasurer's Report and Pledge Drive Plan

Chris reported that rentals are up providing \$10,000 annual additional. \$74,000 in our operating account means no liquidity issue. \$8,000 is owed yet to congregational members. We're at the 5 year point until we pay off our mortgage.

Finance Circle Meeting: Planning February or March 2022 fund raising drive. We need something to replace the raffle which replaced the auction.

Jack (Saint Jack) volunteer to work on the Pledge Drive with Rev. Sarah and Ira Mendelsberg and Bob Shoemaker [check]. Proposed a December 1 or thereabouts meeting to brainstorm on how to approach the Pledge Drive. Try to find opportunities with new social connections.

6. Growth Discussion:

Sarah has provided readings plus there is video from August retreat. What might our next steps be? Keep the conversation moving. Suggested that we bring Thom Belot back to speak to Board. Start with idea of hospitality: to ourselves, to all people who walk through USR's doors. Jack said he's excited about the outer world, not so much worried about ourselves. Everyone wants the church to grow (per Thom, to grow by 10% you need to grow by 20%). This means everyone has to change. "Everyone wants to grow, no one wants to change."

7. DRE Report

Planning joint programming with CUC for late November or early December. There was some questioning about whether this was planned far enough in advance.

8. Minister's Report:

Discussion on SCRT and possibility of indoor coffee hour. For November 17, 2021, if we're in "yellow" code, Dawn suggested we eat indoors at minimal risk. Item 2: Nursery should go from 8:45-11:45 so parents can talk.

Leadership Leaves/Ministerial Sabbatical Program: Caroline Lavanhar is departing. Need new leadership for this Program. [? My notes say "Thumbs Up" meaning??]

Service between Christmas and New Year's: Traditionally this is a singing service. It should be scheduled for fully online as there's not much point otherwise if singing is the prime purpose.

9. Anti-Racism Discussion

Two articles that pointed out the overlap of race, religion, and class. We discussed adoption of common terms. For example, distinguishing between white supremacy and white nationalism and between white supremacy and white privilege. Tried to come to agreement on following:

- Being a beneficiary of white privilege does not imply one is manipulating white privilege to advantage oneself.
- Being white does not mean one desires to benefit from white privilege.
- Benefiting from white privilege does not limit individual commitments to multicultural learning and anti-racist activism.

Kris will suggest reading for December.

10. Executive Session

None.

Meeting adjourned 9:00 pm or so
KB Secretary Pro Tem