

Unitarian Society of New Haven
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
December 9, 2021, Via Zoom
Approved 1/13/22

Board Members Present:

President - Emily McCave
Susan Trotta-Smith
Clerk - Aimee Cotton Bogush
Treasurer - Larry Copes (left at 6:54 p.m.)
Bernice Marie-Daly

Others Present:

Rev. Lindasusan, David Stagg, Bobbi Pace, and Jean Rosenthal from Management Team, David Jones

Board Members Absent:

Rich Stockton, Tina Santoni, Becky Reeve

1. Gather & Chalice Lighting

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. and the chalice was lit. The covenant was read and check in took place.

2. Future Planning

Meaningful Engagement, Leadership Development (MELD) Group Presentation – Bobbie Pace, Becky Friedkin, Cindy Chelcun (postponed until January)

Ad-Hoc Committee on Financial Roles and Responsibilities – Larry Copes

Larry reported that the committee is closing in on a detailed picture of current roles and responsibilities and having a draft of a final report - hope will be available to the board by the January meeting. Reverend Lindasusan noted this will be a great tool for current and future treasurers and from a systems perspective for the roles to be clarified as the congregation grows, there is more clarity about how the pieces fit together. It is worthwhile to take the time to get it right.

Nominating Committee Update – Sue

Sue reported the committee was laser focused on finding a VP and are not planning on meeting again until after the holidays. Emily asked Sue to encourage Nominating to work with MELD as well as to prioritize creating a charge and give a report to the Board in February or March.

Congregational Meeting Final Details – Emily -

The meeting is December 12 at 11:45 am. Aimee, Emily, and Becky Friedkin will work after the meeting to work out the logistics of the hybrid meeting. Bernice will help in the congregation

about counting people. Sue will help to monitor the chat and read out the questions. David Stagg will make copies of the budget and the agendas. Discussion about the agenda took place as well as the plan for the 8th Principle vote. Bernice will have a flip chart ready to record member concerns that cannot be addressed during the meeting.

A question about in absentia votes was raised and discussion took place. It was decided there is not enough time to conduct obtaining in absentia votes in a thoughtful and fair manner. The Board agrees that at this time we cannot accept votes in absentia.

Retreat Discussion – Emily (tabled until January)

3. Reports

Minister’s Report – Rev. Lindasusan (attached)

Rev. Lindasusan noted that regarding BELOVED and Stewardship testimonials, if someone wants to speak extemporaneously they are asked to submit bullet points/highlights of what they are going to say in advance. This helps the Worship Team weave themes into the service and helps the speaker think through what they are going to say within the allotted three minutes. It is hoped that this approach meets the needs of speakers and worship planners without creating barriers to participation. A lot of pastoral care is taking place and a search committee is being formed to find a new music director. Rev. Lindasusan gave the benediction at the swearing in of Hamden officials.

Monitoring Policy 1.10 – David S.

David S. briefly reviewed the report and addressed a question about the trees needing removal. Emily suggested that the recent change in requiring vaccination be included in the report. David will send a revised version.

4. Closing

The minutes from the November 8, 2021 board meeting were approved unanimously.

Process Observations – Bernice

We had to move around more agenda items than other meetings and it was done with lightness, humor, and flexibility.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aimee Cotton Bogush, Clerk



Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees

December 9, 2021

What do you notice?

- The installation service on November 14 was fabulous! So much joy all around. I've noticed (and been told) that the service helped people feel more settled in about having me as their minister. This includes leaders I've worked with often, not just congregants who haven't been as present during my tenure. In other words, it sounds like the ritual did exactly what it was supposed to do.
- The December 5 service on the 8th Principle seemed to cover all of the concerns we'd hoped to address in advance of the December 12 vote. Kudos to the 8th Principle Working Group for their contributions, with special thanks to Sandra Salazar Hernandez for sharing her powerful reflections.
- Based on feedback following the December 5 service, the Worship Committee and I are rethinking how to handle the submission of texts ahead of time for LOVED and Stewardship testimonials. We need to balance multiple goals (weaving the person's comments into other parts of worship, keeping to agreed upon time limits, accommodating different skill levels and delivery styles, etc.), but I'm confident that we'll find a workable solution.
- Between injuries, surgeries, deaths, and follow-up on previous issues, I've been doing quite a bit of pastoral care in recent weeks. This has primarily taken the form of phone calls, though much has also happened during informal in-person moments that weren't possible while the building was closed.
- The pastoral care database (which consolidates people's offers of peer-to-peer care) has started to be used for recruiting people for specific tasks. This is still on a limited basis right now. I'd reached out to those who had signed up as volunteer coordinator before Thanksgiving, but need to regroup a bit — a couple of them didn't realize what they were signing up for when they checked the box. I also plan to convene those who volunteered for the Pastoral Care Visitors Group, which will likely happen after the holidays.

Do you have questions?

- How are you opening to joy this month?

What do you need?

- Jackie Trimble Shapiro and I have started the process of putting together a Search Committee for a new Director of Music. We have an amazing opportunity before us, even as I'm incredibly sad that Jeff Douma and Erika Schroth are stepping down. I wanted to note that this is a significant — and unforeseen —

project being added to my goals for the year, which means some other items will need to drop off the priorities I shared a few months ago.

- Starting in mid-December, more of my attention and energy will be needed for parenting. If you need something from me urgently, please let me know so that it can go to the top of my to-do list.
- I'm proud to share that I was recently recruited and accepted into a 2-year leadership development program called PINNE (Pastoral Innovation Network of New England). "Younger clergy who are three to ten years into their ministry career and who are engaged in innovative congregation-based ministries will build and sustain relationships with peers and mentors where they can explore challenges of ministry in New England, share creative ideas, and receive support from each other." (<https://pastoralinnovationnetwork.org/>)