

Saturday September 28, 2019 Standing Committee Retreat minutes

All present except Patrick Drane who joined us by conference call. Rev Heather and Marianne also in attendance. Guest presenters stopping in Ryan Levering, Kathy Richardson and Mary Saudade.

9:00 am Meeting Opening with logistical details from Betsy and James, co-chairs

Lighting of the Chalice with a poem by John O'Donahue, read by Rev Heather and Marianne

### **A Prayer for Leaders**

May you have the grace and wisdom  
To act kindly, learning  
To distinguish between what is  
Personal and what is not.  
May you be hospitable to criticism.

May you never put yourself at the center of things.  
May you act not from arrogance but out of service.  
May you work on yourself  
Building up and refining the ways of your mind.

May you learn to cultivate the art of presence  
In order to engage with those who meet you.  
When someone fails or disappoints you  
May the graciousness with which you engage  
Be their stairway to renewal and refinement.

May you treasure the gifts of the mind  
Through reading and creative thinking  
So that you continue to be a servant of the frontier  
Where the new will draw its enrichment from the old,  
And you never become a functionary.

May you know the wisdom of deep listening,  
The healing of wholesome words,  
The encouragement of the appreciative gaze,  
The decorum of held dignity,  
The springtime of the bleak question.

May you have a mind that loves frontiers  
So that you can evoke the bright fields  
That lie beyond the view of the regular eye.

May you have good friends  
To mirror your blind spots.

May leadership be for you  
A true adventure of growth.

### Team Building, led by Marianne.

Each SC member chose a section of the SC covenant and shared a personal story that relates. This helped us see how our covenant is a living guide. Heather's sermon on Sunday will address similar topics.

### Congregational Mission discussion led by Heather

What is the mission of this congregation? Heather was pleased to see that some folks were familiar with the mission statement. It was read off from a phone after a successful search.

Focus areas mentioned in the mission statement:

- spiritual growth
- social transformation
- environmental responsibility

Heather also illustrated our org chart:

- Mission is the ultimate, highest authority -
- Congregation and bylaws have high authority
- Standing committee are middle managers,
- Ministers are supervisors to staff
- Staff serve the mission driven congregation

Heather's questions to ponder:

- Are we mission aware and focused?
- Are we spending our resources in support of our mission?

~~Add a copy of the mission statement into the minutes.~~ Uploaded mission/vision statement to SC@

James leading a discussion of the Bylaws. 20 min

- SC members task: **read the sections that apply to YOUR liaison committee**
- When you meet with your committees, **remind them of the bylaws**
- Temporary modification clause allows us to try changes before going for a full congregational bylaw vote.
- Article 5, Section 3 Duties of Standing Committee
  - Read and discussed – do we understand them and our role?
  - Every 5 years bylaw requires a survey and the last one was at search time, **so we have to begin planning for this 5th year. Need leadership for this project.**
  - Operational evaluation team can pair up to help with the task.
  - Consult the policies for answers to your “what to do” or “how to do” questions
- **Add a copy of the policies to the minutes.**
- **Get PPT from James, ~~either pull out text or upload to SC@.~~**

**Kathy Richardson** advice about SC from her 30+ years of experience... in 5 minutes!

- Big changes in the work of SC, from screening every rental agreement, to this board working at a higher level. The culture has changed also. Families don't feel strong ties to church communities as generations past.
- Some things haven't changed: Membership and finance are still biggest concerns. Communication is still a big thing. As a member of the SC, feel involved, when stepping off, feel very disconnected. Enter some notes in Highlights each week to share info.

- Weekly discussions after church have been a great opportunity for folks to share feelings. Example: discussion about the church name. **Add a question to the survey about the name?**
- The SC is a powerful group – decides how resources are focused. BIG responsibility to care for the community.

Sue: When you learn something, keep it transparent, document the process, and share it.

Heather: paraphrased from an evangelical proselytizing: “For every leader there are 10 followers. Who are your disciples? How often are you meeting?”

Guest: **Ryan Levering**

- Communication with the outside world, led by Thomas, support from volunteers, Tyson, Dave, Ryan helping with IT.
- Website hosting service does maintenance, wordpress content admin, additional plug-ins from the UUA. Hired someone to reorg our front page. Living thing, work in progress – able to restructure. Ideally, committees would be responsible for own pages, but technology challenges abound, safer to have admin do it. Thomas will be doing some marketing, so he’ll need control to ensure the brand will be consistent across the website.
- Communication within committees and church leadership, has been done by email mostly. Committees would make email list and lists would get shared. Trying to move to G- suite services. Sets up winchesteruu.org google groups (list of emails within a group) Example: [sc@winchesteruu.org](mailto:sc@winchesteruu.org). Each year more of the committees are converting to this, enabling them to use google docs. All addresses are on the website with information about who it reaches. To use google docs, committee members must have google account/password.
- Cyber Security discussion. Google doc is more secure than emails back and forth. Team drives are permanent part of the host. Team drives are accessible by email groups, docs are available to group, documents can be dragged and dropped into the google drive.
- The place to store and work with docs most securely is <https://drive.google.com>
- Communication is evolving at a higher speed that some of our learning curves.
- **Mary will work on getting documents up into the SC@ shared docs file.**

“How to Think like a Board Member” and “Orienting New and Potential Board Members”  
Discussion led by Heather. **(attach handouts)** Moving from practical to philosophical.

Page 3 question: **How is this work spiritual?** Each committee meeting includes: Opening words, chalice lighting, centering reading, something to bring the group together in purpose.

Case study: **Find a way to be explicit about your leadership** in relationship to the individuals who come to our church. **BE a role model** for ethical behavior as a spiritual leader. Inappropriate behavior happens, we must be aware and take action. How we manage and take responsibility for imperfections and indiscretions is important to mitigate the harm resulting.

Side discussion about (undefined) “disruptive behavior” as an example of understanding flexibility in policy and responsibility to check in with each other and accessing resources available to help.

Break for Lunch at noon. 12:45 Back from Lunch

Judy and Sue: Budget and finance review

- Financial documents are on the website in the members section
- Pledges are largest from elders in church, not sustainable.
- Our budget is 73% staff expenses, reasonable compared to others, see UUA chart
- Judy reviewed who does what in the office, flow of incoming and outgoing money.
- Thomas is Jenny's supervisor, Jenny has taken on bookkeeping responsibilities.
- Breeze, QuickBooks, and bank accounts are accessible online to treasurers.
- Goal: Treasurers will come in at end of the month to tie out month end and generate reports and office staff will handle day to day bookkeeping tasks.

Money today:

Cash assets = 4 million, (not incl. building & content) income available to SC Treasurers 350K +/-

\* **Do we have an inventory of contents/valuable objects? Insured? Replacement value?**

*Ask Building Committee about this, table for discussion later.*

- Handout shows who has access to what money.
- Descriptions of funds are reported in different ways.
- Trustees have control of Unrestricted and restricted funds. Trustees use Mark Shephard's company to manage based on trustees guidelines.
- Unrestricted funds sends 5% of 3 year balance average on March 31<sup>st</sup>. (offsets fluxuations)
- Restricted funds allows different uses in different amounts, all separately specified.

Liabilities: \$277K to cover budgeted items

- Almost 3 months of expense money is in reserve.
- **Judy will ask Thomas to add the descriptions of funds to our website.**
- We are supposed to do an outside audit/financial review every 3 years. **Don Landing** was project manager for the last one, maybe we can **ask him to do this one.**

Patty report from Core Analysis Team with **Rev David Pyle**, free consultant from UUA, because we're testing out his curriculum/guide. In the past, we staffed for growth, but we have not grown, we have shrunk. Where should we be? Interviewed all staff here at church, learned about what they all do. Staff here were honest and are fully invested in this process. Getting back on track after staff changes. We were looking at 3 other congregations to compare staffing/budget. Interviewed their boards, staff, etc. What we've learned: There's nobody out there just like us! Overarching question: "Is what we have what we *should* have?" Next meeting in October to get back on track.

James presenting about church security, physical security, emergency preparedness:

- Chuck Kheun completed a survey about this and the process heightened his awareness of many gaps. **SC initiative for this year** is to gather information about what is best practice, consult resources (fire/police) propose changes, decide, implement, propose policy, begin culture shift, budget, implement, train staff and volunteers, write policy, update bylaws.
- Resources: UUA, Church mutual insurance website, DHS, local fire and safety officers.
- **Let's have a sustainable plan** that is well thought out rather than a knee jerk reaction to a crisis. Have a well-trained team of greeters who can help understand why people are

coming through the door (and help them get what they want/need). UUA has a trauma resource group who might come and help assess the building.

- **Fire drill this October** will help us get started on the initiative.
- Plan (for this year?) is to train people how to help others safely exit the building. Ushers, Greeters, PCAs, RE staff, etc. (Note from Mary Mc: I support training Worship Associates and choir members so we have help at the front of the sanctuary also.)
- To **present this information and develop increased awareness to the congregation**, we'll start slow and talk about fire safety, fire drill, communicate our goals clearly and often.
- Design and practice safety and security, then if appropriate, document resulting policy. Set policy after we are sure we can comply.

Mary Sadad, report from the Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM). Mission statement of the committee: "We aspire to promote health in the ministry of this church as it is practiced by clergy, staff and lay members. In particular we aspire to support the settled minister in her service to the congregation."

Meet monthly to discuss spiritual health of the church. We gather info in the spring from staff and survey congregation to support Ministerial evaluation. We report on the effectiveness of the ministry of the church. RE & Youth, Music, Pastoral Care, SAOC, special committees. Other congregations have other responsibilities, what should/could our COSM do? Maybe contribute to the questions related to spiritual health we can ask on the 5 year survey of the whole congregation. Side discussion about 5 year survey due this spring, noted and discussion postponed to another time.

COSM, needs another member. Two names were proposed. Some email discussion around who the people were, **unanimous support from SC for both**.

Sheila Puffer and Mike Hyde left at 2pm.

James and Betsy: Should we have a Capital Campaign?

- If we have a capital campaign, we should have projects on it that will have wide appeal and support, so we will have a broad spectrum of donors and maximize gifts.
- Everyone should feel included.
- Community should be able to see the results – not all behind the scenes improvements.
- Heather suggests we consider a consultant who can help us, ask/answer questions about a capitol campaign, make a plan.
- If we cannot raise pledge money to cover budget, then we need other revenue streams. If we make the church appealing and accessible, maybe rent Metcalf for events/receptions.
- Betsy shared her vision of Metcalf hall as a wedding reception venue, with the Winchester Cooperative Nursery School storage closet converted to accessible bathrooms.
- The economic times are right for a capital campaign.
- Time to upgrade our technology in sanctuary, hall, security, upgrade to digital controls.
- Note from Mary Mc Is there a need in our community for a church hall meeting space? (market research needed?) If we invest in improving the space to be presentable and

rentable, *should we/could we/how can we* include a marketing fund in our capital campaign?

Side note: John Russell ran the last capitol campaign. He asked members to contribute the equivalent of an annual pledge amount, paid over 3 years. Mary suggests we ask him for his sage advice.

Side note: We have a \$25K budget gap this year, so we expect to have to have event(s) to raise funds. James will let John know: John Kramer can't advertise that his music series is the big/only fundraiser this year, but we should encourage him to promote the "bring a friend or two" marketing pitch anyway.

Discussion continued around the group, general opinion of group is to have a capitol campaign. **Send top 5 favorite projects to James.** Next steps?

3 pm

Postponed discussion about Heather's leave until next SC meeting.

Reminder to attend church tomorrow ready for photo shoot, so please arrive by 9:45.

Adjourn SC Retreat.

*Post Script from the clerk, Mary Mc, regarding attachments. If note in red re including a document or attaching it, I will upload it myself onto the sc@ google shared files, or ask the document creator to try uploading it. Drag and drop works too once you get into the file. **Please add to the sc@ files if you authored any of the documents referenced at the retreat.***