Meeting: Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees – September 2019
Date & Time: Thursday September 5, 2019, 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm
Location: First Universalist Church of Denver
Board members present: Tom Abood, Rick Granquist, Jeff Brothers, Eric Thompson, Jill Van de Water, Heather Curnett, Claire Reifert, Doug Griffes. Absent: Sheila Nitzel
Ministers & staff present: Rev Elaine Peresluha, Yvonne Wilken
Guests: Diane Butler, Pete Gutierrez, Dee Sweeney, Ed Durso, Ben Curnett, Jake Curnett, Pris Ledbury, Rhoda Whitney

Minutes of Meeting

1. Call to Order, Chalice Lighting, and Board Covenant

   Moderator, Tom Abood, called the meeting to order at 6:30. Rev. Elaine offered a reading from Robert Bly.

2. Approval of agenda

   Hearing no objections, the agenda was approved by acclamation.

3. Approval of minutes from August 1, 2019 BOT meeting

   Two minor editorial corrections to the draft minutes were suggested. The minutes were then approved by acclamation.

4. Check-In/Go-Around

5. Stewardship Report

   Ed Durso presented an update from the Stewardship Committee, highlighting the current status of pledges and collections for fiscal years 2018-19 and 2019-20. A copy of his handout is attached. The following are responses to several questions that were raised:

   - Members of the Stewardship Committee include: Ed, Bill Connors and Barry Mahoney
   - Pledging is discussed with new members when they join the church, but special follow-up may be required to ensure that they understand the annual process and ongoing need.
   - A special meeting is now scheduled for September 24th at 6:00pm to discuss additional fundraising needs and the potential for a special call to be conducted at this year’s auction. Participants in this meeting include: Stewardship (Bill Connors), Operations Council (Cris), Auction Committee (James Iacino), Finance Committee (Jeff Brothers), and Endowment Committee.

6. YRUU

   Representatives from the YRUU class have been invited to attend Board meetings to establish a closer link between youth and the leadership of the Church. Jake Curnett was the first representative to attend. He reported on plans that YRUU is currently making to attend a regional Fall Con in New Mexico the weekend of October 11th. He noted that there is currently no funding available to support this trip, or provide scholarship funding for those who would otherwise be
unable to attend. The value of activities such as the Con and current budget limitations were acknowledged by the Board, but it was noted that funding is a Church operational issue that should be addressed together through the FFRE organization.

Tom asked whether YRUU had discussed potential participation in the Global climate strike on September 20th. Nothing has been organized so far. If YRUU is interested, they should connect with Green First.

7. Appreciative Inquiry

Rev. Elaine and Dee Sweeney reported on the progress of Appreciative Inquiry. They indicated that the Leadership Team (otherwise known as the 3-legged stool of Elaine, Dee and Spud) met earlier in the day to review the results of the first pilot listening session held on last Friday, August 30th, and then plan for the next session to be conducted with a larger group on Tuesday the 10th. They expect that up to 30 listening sessions will be conducted during this fall, and that the timeline for the process as a whole may extend into 2021. There are two main focuses: establishing a clear mission/vision for the congregation and a culture for collaborative decision making.

Note that there is a liaison report for AI that Dee posted in Basecamp Docs & Files.

8. Governance

Pete Gutierrez and Diane Butler reported on the progress of the Governance Transition Team. The Team’s assessment of their own progress was summarized in the liaison report. A subsequent document ‘Preliminary Questions to Guide Thinking About Governance’ was to be sent to Board members following the meeting and then used to guide conversations with the Board and members the congregation in future meetings. The following items were noted in the discussion:

- The work of the Governance Team will be closely coordinated with the AI process, and should be linked to that timeline.
- Diane and Pete noted that the main emphasis for the Team over the summer had been on reading and research, including the Hotchkiss book and learning from the examples of other congregations, such as Foothills in Fort Collins.
- The Team has had two listening sessions with members of the congregation and is starting to plan a workshop for the near future.
- The Team felt it was too early to consider next steps or any changes or expansion to their charter.

9. Calendar/Reports & Reporting

Doug and Tom introduced an initial working draft of a new Board Annual Calendar for consideration of the Board. The calendar includes main topic categories of: vision/strategy, management, oversight, congregation and denomination, which will guide agenda setting and reporting over the next year. The Board should finalize the calendar for broader dissemination at the October meeting. The following items were noted in the discussion:

- The Board currently receives reports from the Senior Minister (Rev Elaine), the Assistant Minister (Rev Dylan) and the Executive Director (Cris). These will be filed in Board Minutes folders in Docs & Files on Basecamp each month. They will not be included in the final version of the minutes that are publicly distributed, but key information from these reports will be incorporated into other forms of communication such as the Member Reports, Happenings, and the Moderator Reports.
- Tom and Doug will add more detail to the draft annual calendar and have it available for discussion and additional ideas before the October Board meeting.
- Going forward, much of the communication for programs and operations should be provided by the councils. The FFRE newsletter is an example. Communications may be
by multiple channels that might include binders at the welcome desk and through the all-congregation Basecamp.

The following additional Board assignments were made for activities noted in the calendar:

- **Board Self-Evaluation Committee** – Sheila, Jill & Claire. The Board of Trustees Governance Process Policies requires that monitoring and self-evaluation be performed at least quarterly.
- **Appreciative Inquiry Liaison** - Rick
- **Minister Evaluation Committee** – Heather, Rick & Tom

The Board discussed the role of liaisons and concluded that primary purpose is intended to be a communication link between assigned organizations and the Board. Liaisons should focus primarily on strategies and not on day-to-day operations.

**10. Votes from Email/Basecamp**

There was no business requiring votes by the Board on Basecamp or email during the past month.

**11. UUA Pacific Western Region Resources**

Rev Elaine and Tom noted that they would be speaking with Sarah Millspaugh of the UUA in the next week to discuss the relationship of First U with the UUA. They will report back next month.

**12. Conversations with the Board**

Rick conducted the first ‘Conversations with the Board’ on August 25th following the new format. The informal conversation was good, but the turnout was small with no other Board members present. Better advertisement will be required in the future, with a notice in the Sunday Bulletin and an announcement from the pulpit by the Leadership Host.

**13. Adjourn**

9:06
Attachment A

Stewardship Update to the Board

September 5, 2019

- In fiscal year 2018-2019, we received pledges from 364 members for $646,235. As of July 31, 2019 we had received $608,996, which was 6% short of the pledged amount.

- The Committee, with the assistance of Cris and Renee, began a process in July to follow up with members who did not complete their pledges for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. We have been able to collect an additional $9,320.

- The new pledge total for 2018–2019 is now approximately $618,316 with 4% uncollected. Over the past several years we have been averaging about 3% uncollected.

- Current pledges for fiscal year 2019–2020 are at $604,281. This is $2,281 over our original goal budget of $602,000.

- Total number of pledging units for 2019-2020 were 316, which is 48 less than the previous year. This drop in pledges obviously had an impact on the $41,954 reduction in pledges from the previous fiscal year.

- The Stewardship Committee, with help from Cris and Renee, is currently reviewing all of our pledges monthly, as part of an ongoing process to update members on their giving commitments. By doing this review, we have already identified seven or eight members who needed updated direct deposit information for the month of July. This should also help with members who fall behind in their pledge and find it difficult to make up the shortage.

- We have collected 26% of 2019-2020 pledges as of the end of August 2019.
Board Liaisons to Councils and Committees

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<tr>
<th>Council/Committee</th>
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<td>Care Council</td>
<td>Sheila</td>
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<td>Lifespan Learning Council</td>
<td>Doug</td>
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<td>Operations Council</td>
<td>Jill</td>
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<td>Social Justice Council</td>
<td>Tom</td>
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<td>Programs Council</td>
<td>Eric</td>
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<td>Finance Committee</td>
<td>Jeff</td>
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<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<td>Claire</td>
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<td>Committee on Ministry</td>
<td>Jeff</td>
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<td>Leadership Development Committee</td>
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<td>Healthy Congregations</td>
<td>Sheila</td>
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<td>Governance</td>
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<td>Personnel Committee (new)</td>
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<td>Appreciative Inquiry (new)</td>
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Revised – Sep 25, 2019