

**FIRST PARISH BROOKLINE
PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING
February 3, 2014**

Parish Committee Members Present: Steve Davis, Ann Gilmore, Stacey Raczek, Ryan Kim, Ann Dinsmoor, Ann Congleton and Jake Walters

Others Present: Rev. James Sherblom and Sean Neil-Barron

Minutes: The January, 2014 minutes were reviewed and approved.

Minister's report: Rev. Jim began his report by saying eight of our High School youth want to attend the U.U. General Assembly in Providence and have asked for permission to raise funds to cover their costs. Rev. Jim felt we should authorize the request and indicated that if the youth fall short of their financial goals, we should find a way to guaranty they can attend. It was moved and voted to allow the fund raising to take place and to supplement that amount as needed. Rev. Jim also stated that he hopes First Parish will send fifty (50) adults to the Sunday General Assembly session this year.

Rev. Jim then stated that Kristin McIntire has been hired as the new Membership Coordinator, starting in May. Rev. Jim added that there will be no intern minister in the upcoming year but anticipates again having an intern in the following church year.

Turning to the budget, Rev. Jim said beginning with our March meeting, our Treasurer Ryan will provide a proposed budget for the coming year for review and discussion. Rev. Jim suggested we change the March meeting given Ryan's inability to attend the first Monday this March.

Rev. Jim then addressed the trend of falling attendance, stating that fewer members have signed the book, and noted that once members actually sign up, the average length of membership is usually 10 years. In response to a question Rev. Jim said he did not think our physical plant was keeping membership from growing, but added that a capital campaign would make our sanctuary and R.E. space more attractive, which would likely help membership grow and to retain members as well. Rev. Jim added that lower attendance is a nationwide trend.

Rev. Jim concluded his report by recommending the PC ask the ministerial search team to meet with us to discuss their level of engagement with the congregation and what we can do to increase that engagement.

Treasurer's Report. Ryan stated that so far pledges for the upcoming year exceed commitments received for prior years. Ryan added that other sources of revenue such as Sunday morning collections, fund raising and building rental are all down.

New Business. A draft of next year's budget will be provided for the March meeting for the PC to review and discuss at length. The March meeting may need to be rescheduled as Ryan will not be available on the 1st Monday, it was agreed that everyone would check their respective calendars to find a new date that worked for members of the committee. The

discussion turned to Canvas Sunday and what role the PC should take – providing testimonials versus asking for pledges from the congregation. It was agreed that the testimonials from each of the Committee members has had a positive impact and the sense of the committee was that we ought to have some role at the March 24th Canvas Sunday service. The suggestion was made that the PC reach out to the canvas committee chair to work with us on appropriate language of our appeal to the congregation. Rev. Jim stated that the Canvas Committee is very organized and doing an excellent job.

There being no other business it was unanimously voted to Adjourn.

Respectfully submitted
Jake Walters, Clerk