

Parish Board Minutes, 11/6/2017

Attendees: Michele David, Ben Davis, Dave Demerjian, David Cave, Alice Mark, Gene Thompson-Grove, Laura Hatfield, Rev Rebecca, James Shilabar (by phone)

Absent: Charles Sandmel

We began with a **chalice lighting** and two readings from “A Buddhist Grief Observed” by Pema Chodron

“Every act counts. Every thought and emotion counts too. This is all the path we have”

“When anyone asks me how I got involved with Buddhism, I always say it was because I was so angry with my husband. The truth is that he saved my life. Instinctively I knew that the annihilation of my old dependent, clinging self was the only way to go. Things are always in transition...Nothing ever sums itself up in the way we like to dream about. The off-center, in-between state is an ideal solution.”

Rev Rebecca reviewed the **minister’s report**.

We discussed that she was approached by Lincoln school about parking in the upper lot. **Ben** will investigate whether we can ask for rental that would cover maintenance and plowing since the lot is only maintained on Sundays. In addition, we will ensure that our policy would protect us from liability. Our aim is to both be good neighbors to the school and cover costs.

We discussed the lack of volunteers for Thanksgiving feast. The board advised Rev Rebecca to cancel the event for this year. We discussed diminished staff capacity as a deliberate budget decision and the role of volunteerism and stewardship among congregants. This shift still needs to be made by the congregation and canceling the feast is an opportunity to see where the congregation would like to put its energy in future.

Beyond Categorical Thinking is scheduled for 12/3.

Rev. Rebecca will give insight to Ben and finance committee about a capital campaign at a later meeting.

Steve Davis and Ellie Boynton joined us for a discussion of **search**.

We talked about how the minister and Board make decisions. At a Board level, our mode of decision-making seems to be “consensual style with majority vote” or “shared decision making”. Gene recommended the “Facilitator’s Guide to Participatory Decision Making” by Kaner as a future reference for the board.

We discussed the minister’s role in hiring and firing of staff and whether this should be a policy or a bylaw. As a pragmatic decision, the bylaws committee and board don’t have time to change bylaws at this time and there is not genuine consensus about language. We agreed that the minister’s new contract should support the UUA guideline 2.7.2 “The Parish Board and minister will jointly decide on hiring, discharging, and changing compensation of church staff.” We need to work together and with bylaws to make sure that this is consistent with bylaws and any other church policy.

Steve and Ellie wanted help with elements of the offer letter. Regarding compensation, we want to be in compliance with the UUA compensation policy, **which the Board unanimously supported**.

We discussed offering a set salary vs. a range. We discussed that a range gives us flexibility in hiring but a set salary puts the minister and Board/congregation in right relationship from the start. In addition, a range may not be equitable to people of all backgrounds. Any minister would be doing the same amount of work, regardless of their background. Steve asked us to have faith in the process that anyone we hire would have the qualifications and experience we want.

After coming to consensus, the Board voted to offer a set salary, rather than a range.

Steve and Ellie wanted our assistance in establishing the offer amount. We discussed the range dictated by the UUA and agreed that we should offer somewhere in the middle two quartiles. We discussed equity, the impact on our finances, the message that the number sends to candidates, our congregants, and existing staff.

After coming to consensus, the Board voted to offer a salary at the midpoint of the UUA fair compensation guidelines.

Reverend Rebecca proposed that there be no Committee on Ministry for the settled minister, as this can create conflict and lack of transparency between the minister and different members or committees.

After a brief discussion, the Board voted unanimously to end the Committee on Ministry.

We ended with plus/delta and our usual prayer.

Dave Demerjian will take notes on Dec 4 since Alice is away

Plus	Delta
Consensus decision making – we didn’t all agree on things tonight but we came to consensus – this was a good process and good that we stated it clearly	Meeting ran late
Whole board was engaged in coming to consensus	When we have outside guests, we need to know what they are asking for – we didn’t understand that tonight.
It was good that James called in	
Deadline by search made things hard but good	
We moved things along by narrowing to consensus	