

March Meeting Minutes:

Unity Church Unitarian: Meeting of the Board of Trustees March 9, 2019

The meeting took place at Unity Church-Unitarian, 733 Portland Ave, St. Paul, MN.

Board of Trustees (BOT) members present: Jennifer Tong (chair), Jill van Koolwijk (secretary), John Steiner-Manning, Nila Gouldin, Ruth Kirkland, Clover Earl, Jackie Smith, Justin Cummins, Nancy Evert

Executive Team (ET) members present: Rob Eller-Isaacs, Janne Eller-Isaacs, Barbara Hubbard

Guests: Laura Park, Kathryn Jay

Jennifer Tong called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

An opening reading was offered by Nila Gouldin.

A journaling prompt was offered by Kathryn Jay:
- Which one of the new Ends speaks particularly to your heart?

Board Discussion around the Interpretation of the new Ends:

- Review and discussion of the ET's Interpretation of the Ends
- Role of the ET and Trustees under Policy Governance
- Thoughts on monitoring
- Reflections on the dialogue

Laura Park offered a discussion how the interpretations of the Ends are intertwined with our governing policies. We focused on three specific Ends: Building a Multicultural Home, Advancing Justice, Wholeness and Equity and Creating Brave Space for Racial Healing, and how we know as a church that we are making progress towards them.

To begin with, we sang the song "I need you to survive". The discussion advanced with the following ideas: Board and ET need to support each other in this process to advance the Ends. Humility is a concept we want to uphold in particular, and we have to continually face the dualities of power and humility, failure and re-engagement.

How can we focus on creating and nurturing authentic relationships? Theologically, the core values of our church are rooted in reflection and commitment to continuously change/restructure/improve our common experience. The experience of the holy is separate from the culture we live in, but the holy is experienced most often in community with others.

These questions were also brought up: What is the ET's vision? What are the outcomes the ET is working towards? What are the broad strategies the ET will employ to work towards these

outcomes? How does policy governance allow us to reach a common understanding? How do we build the Beloved Community?

The hope was expressed that Team Dynamics will help us articulate this vision, these strategies. The first step is to understand who we are as the Unity Church community.

The Trustees asked the ET for more clarity on the vision and strategies that are planned to move us toward these Ends. After some discussion about what that might mean, there was agreement that it would be an update or addition to the Interpretation that would include something like 3 broad statements on how the ET is approaching each End. Laura Park mentioned that she may have some templates that could be helpful. The ET will need to have further discussions internally to determine a timeframe for producing this, and will provide the Trustees with a timeline at the next Board meeting, currently scheduled for April 13.

There was also discussion about how the new Ends monitoring reports (I B – Program Outcomes) would be most effectively timed. Previously this had been scheduled to be reported three times a year, following the structure of the Ends as Within, Among and Beyond. The current Ends are not configured this way. The ET will provide a recommendation to the Trustees about how the monitoring reports would best be timed and what would be included.

Break

Monitoring Reports – ET report

Policy II.E. Financial Condition:

Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II E. The Financial Condition here refers specifically to the December preliminary financials. The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: For 2018 there was a relatively small net overspending of \$45K. This is primarily due to slightly lower than budget pledge income and some greater expenses related to utilities and repairs & maintenance.

For 2019 there is a gap in recurring and new pledges. The gap is a bit bigger than what the ET is comfortable with, though not significantly different from what has been seen at this point in the year. This year the ET is reviewing and addressing it earlier than usual. They are also reviewing some of their membership procedures. The ET has promised an update at the April Board meeting.

Barbara pointed out that the bylaws require a membership inquiry, a formal process to clean up the membership list. It will require a follow-up letter with some different wording than has been used in the more informal follow up process.

In addition to what was budgeted the Church is aware of five new gifts in 2019.)

Policy II H. Communication and Counsel to the Board:

Justin Cummins moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II H (Communication and Counsel to the Board). The motion passed unanimously.

Policy II B. Staff Changes:

Nancy Evert moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy I B (Staff Changes). The motion passed unanimously.

(Discussion: Rob suggested looking at configuring an ET that sunsets at the end of the interim minister's year. Determining the structure of the Executive is a Board task, and will be determined with whoever is selected as the new called minister.)

Policy II.I. Facilities Planning:

Clover Earl moved to accept the Executive Team report as in compliance with policy II I (Facilities Planning). The motions passed unanimously.

Ruth Kirkland moved to accept the February 2019 Meeting Minutes with corrections by Jill van Koolwijk. The motions passed unanimously.

Prophetic Leadership – Subcommittee Reports

No reports were given.

Meeting evaluation

Jackie Smith offered a meeting evaluation framework with 4 quadrants: Thinking/Feeling/Acting/Believing. Where are we today at this point of the meeting? We discussed it in partner conversations.

Nila Gouldin offered a closing reading.

Jennifer Tong adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jill van Koolwijk, secretary.