

TVUUC Board Retreat

August 12, 2017

Board Members Present: Matthew Blondell; Denise Coleman; Debbie Ellis; Jeff Kovac; Ginna Mashburn; Robby McMurry; John McNair; Lynne Mullins; Bill Myers; Wendy Syer; Terry Uselton
Ex Officio: Chris Buice; Claudia Pressley

Board Member on Duty:

Review of procedure. Jeff will send out a script and instructions. Members signed up for duty days; all Sundays are now covered through December 2017. There may be no Sunday morning service on December 24. (Still undecided)

Policy Governance:

Review of Purpose ; examples of completed/approved sections of the Policy Governance Manual. List of all sections (with most completed sections) is on the TVUUC website at:

<http://tvuuc.org/members/tvuuc-governance/governance-manual/>

Note that some completed/approved sections are not yet posted on the website. Claudia will review the website and add approved sections. There was a discussion about who is responsible for giving final approval of each section. Some sections are approved by the Program Council, some by the Board, and some by the Personnel Committee, but Board members were not clear about who approves each section. ***At the September Board meeting, first agenda item should be to review the list of Policy Governance sections and identify for each who must approve it.***

Committees should review their charters annually and submit revisions for approval, if necessary. However, many committees don't know there is a charter for the committee, or how to find it. Program Council should remind each committee chair to review the charter each year. The Board decided that it would be useful to have Bill Cherry or Linda Randolph come to a Board meeting to *briefly* review the Policy Governance process (both drafting and approval) and answer questions.

Jeff handed out a list of suggested agenda items for each Board meeting this year. Are there other committees or issues that should be included in this list? When a committee will be discussed at a Board meeting, Board members should review the charter for that committee before the meeting; the Board liaison person for that committee should remind the committee to review its own charter before the meeting. ***Board members should also review the charter for the Board before the September meeting.***

We noted that the church By-Laws and Board Charter state that there will be 1-2 youth members on the board, but this has not happened for a few years. As Board Members must also be church members, it seems youth members would need to have church membership. It was suggested that a member of the Young Adult group might serve instead of a Youth Group member. Jeff will discuss this issue with Catherine Loya.

Dates of Board Meetings:

Board meetings are held at 12:30 p.m. on the third Sunday of the month. However:

- There will be no meeting on August 20.
- October meeting will be held on October 22 to enable Board members to go to the Church Retreat if they want to.
- May and June meeting dates may also be changed (undecided now) to avoid conflicts with Congregational Meeting, and Mother's and Father's Days.

Committees and Board Liaison Assignments

Board liaison assignments for the year will be as follows:

- Pastoral Care Lynne Mullins
- Program Council Matthew Blondell
- Community Involvement
 /Public Ministry Matthew Blondell
- Endowment Fund Terry Uselton
- Auction Wendy Syer
- Rummage Sale Debbie Ellis
- Stewardship Robby McMurry
- Ministerial Evaluation Robby McMurry
- Administration/Personnel Bill Myers
- Buildings and Grounds Bill Myers
- Membership Ginna Mashburn
- Nominating Committee Ginna Mashburn
- Music John McNair
- Lifespan Religious Education Denise Coleman
- Strategic Planning Jeff Kovac
- Technology Task Force Jeff Kovac

There was a discussion about forming a "Right Relations" Committee or Task Force which could serve as mediator in case of disputes within the church. No decision was made on this.

An organizational chart was given out to clarify the reporting structures of committees.

Seraphim and Technology Updates

Claudia gave a report on recent and upcoming technology changes. *Seraphim* is a new software program for managing the membership database. Church staff is working on this database now and plans to upload it for full use some time this fall. Church members will be able to have access to the database, using a personal password, and will be able to update their own records. When the new program is implemented, there will be an education program for the congregation, including work stations and volunteer assistants on Sunday mornings to help people access and update their own accounts.

Other technology updates:

- New computer screens have been installed in several church rooms, including the Fellowship Hall and Lizzie Crozier French Room, which now has a larger screen. All screens have DVD players and the potential for wireless connection to keyboards. Each screen has a tote bag which includes the keyboard for that screen, normally kept in the TVUUC Office; any person or group that plans to use a screen must check out the bag from the office before the meeting. When someone checks out a bag for the first time, staff will provide a brief training on the use of the equipment; each bag will also include written instructions. When a group reserves a room, the room request form includes a question about technology needs.
- Some changes are being made to the WiFi system in the church. There is now one system for TVUUC staff, and another ("TVUUC Guest") for everyone else (members and others.) Eventually, there will be separate passwords for members and for renters.
- RE classrooms will get iPads for checking children in on Sunday morning, and for keeping other classroom records; these iPads will be available for use by other groups.
- Within the next month, the church plans to install a donation "kiosk" to enable the congregation to use credit/debit cards for the Sunday offering, if they choose to. The same device can be used for other payments, such as Potluck and Fellowships meals.
- Most of the above technology improvements have been funded by the Endowment Fund
- The decision about installing possible screens in the sanctuary has been postponed. The final decision will not be made by the Endowment Committee.

Financial Report:

Robby McMurry reported on financial activity in July 2017, and made suggestions for some small changes in bookkeeping. Discussion highlights:

- The Contingency Fund and the Capital Reserve Funds were moved from a "Restricted Fund" designation to the "General Fund". This does not change any policies related to the use of these funds.
- Greg's Group account: Do they know they have money in an account? Wendy will find out.
- WUOT Underwriting: There is no one coordinating this effort now; Chris will find someone to take on this task, and they can decide whether to use the funds in this account or move to general funds. (Note: This money was designated for use by all area UU congregations.)
- Women in Crisis Fund: These funds will be combined with the Helping Fund, based on a recommendation from Jenny Arthur
- Hops and Hope: It is unclear at this time whether this should be a church program or independent program. (Non-church programs pay rental fees for use of church. Hops and Hope has been considered a church program.) This discussion and decision were postponed for a later meeting.
- The Memorial Garden Fund initially took a loan from the Endowment Fund. Has it been paid back in total? This could not be answered in this meeting. The Endowment Fund should be consulted, and the decision put in writing to avoid future confusion.
- "RE Youth Boston Trip" will be renamed to reflect the fact that the money may be used for Youth Group trips to other locations
- "Campus Ministry" funds can be used for the Young Adult Group

Stewardship (including Annual Pledges)

Stewardship Chairs for 2017-18 are Cindy Moffett and Barbara Taylor. Board members should think of other people who would be interested in helping them. They will come to the Board Meeting in September to discuss stewardship issues.

We recognize that annual Pledge Drives in recent years have not raised enough to meet all the financial goals of the church, including staff salary needs. The Board discussed ideas for increasing pledge amounts; this discussion will continue in future Board meetings.

Suggestions for trying to increase total donations include:

- Send personal thank you notes to all donors
- Provide the congregation with more detailed information about specific financial needs and the impact of insufficient funds
- Somehow involve RE programs (students and parents) in the pledge drive
- Find new ways to suggest appropriate giving amounts (beyond the "Fair Share" calculation, which can be confusing and a bit daunting)
- Include the Stewardship Chairs in the budget discussions
- Get better data on membership and their pledging history
- Include information about annual pledges in the New Member class. However, do not have Lauren (or whoever conducts the class) do this part of the presentation, as it can interfere with rapport built with new members. Mention of pledging expectations can be combined with a discussion of other ways members give back to the church (volunteering ,etc.)
- Continue pledge reminders throughout the year at various times, and not only during the pledge campaign.

Social Action Funding

There was a long discussion about the selection process and policies for the Share the Plate program, as well as other programs designed to raise money for non-church-based social action organizations and projects. What is the process for approving such events held in the name of the church?

A new Social Action Fundraising Task Force (or Committee?) will be formed to discuss these issues and create some policies to be approved by the Board. The committee will include Terry Uselton and others already involved in the Share the Plate selection process, as well as 2-3 other people to be chosen from members of the Social Action committee cluster of the Program Council. Jeff will approve the list of persons to be on this committee.

Other highlights from this discussion:

- The decision will result in a new section in the Policy Governance. Will this be a charter or a policy? (probably a policy)
- It was suggested that we should make a distinction between programs that have close ties to the church, and to which church has made a long-term commitment (such as Family Promise) and those organizations with no formal church ties. We do not want to risk having our commitments go unfunded for the year because the congregation gave more votes to other organizations
- How can we get congregational input into this selection process? Should they actually vote on the new policy? How and when should we get congregational feedback on continuing our long-term commitments? (such as Lonsdale School and Family Promise)
- Very few people vote in the Share the Plate selection. How can we increase participation in this process?

- Should we continue a strict 50/50 split of the weekly offering, or should we guarantee that a minimum amount will go to the outside organization, regardless of the total intake for that week?
- Should we support fewer organizations with Share the Plate, but collect over 3-4 weeks for some instead of two?
- We need to have some data on how much has been raised each week through Share the Plate.

Technology Task Force

The Technology Task Force will be reactivated/reformed to discuss possible improvements in church technology. Jeff will find new members and get things started, but will not be a member of the Task Force. A few topics for discussion:

- Does the church have adequate digital storage capacity?
- Are the workstations for the staff (and others?) adequate?
- Have problems with church WiFi been sufficiently addressed?
- What information is archived? How and Where? Can this be improved?
- What information is digitally available to the staff? To members? To the public? Can this be improved, including the church website?

Sales in the Church

There was a discussion about allowing both church and non-church groups or individuals to have fund-raising sales at church (such as Girl Scout Cookies or School Coupons). There is no clear policy right now. Chris and Claudia will draft a policy and bring back to the Board for discussion/approval.

The question was raised about whether this policy would cover solicitations on the church listserv. It was decided that the current covenant, signed by listserv members, already covers this issues.

Strategic Plan

It is time to create or update a long-range (20 year?) Strategic Plan for TVUUC. A task force was formed last year, but a plan is still in process. The Task Force members will find some additional people for this task force (seeking some younger members). The goal is to finish a Strategic Plan by the end of this church year. It will then need to be approved by the congregation. Does this Task Force need a charter to be included in the Policy Governance Manual?

Items for September Board Meeting

- Sections of Policy Governance Manual will be reviewed to identify who approves which section.
- Lauren Hulse will report on Membership matters.
- Cindy Moffat and Barbara Taylor will report on plans for Stewardship.
- The Board will review the Ministerial Evaluation completed last year.
- Board will review Board charter to see if it needs revision.
- There will be updates on plans for the auction and rummage sale.