

TVUUC Board Meeting

May 20, 2018

Board Members Present: Denise Coleman; Debbie Ellis; Ginna Mashburn; Lynne Mullins; Robby McMurry; John McNair; Bill Myers; Wendy Syer; Terry Uselton; Elnora Williams

Ex Officio: Chris Buice; Claudia Pressley

Visiting: John Bohstedt; Kathy Bohstedt

Nominating Committee

Ginna reported that the Nominating Committee now has a complete slate of candidates for the election to be held at the annual congregational meeting on June 10. The slate is as follows:

- President-elect: Denise Coleman
- Secretary to the Board/Clerk: Wendy Syer
- Treasurer: Robby McMurry
- Program Council Rising Chair: Jodie Hamilton
- Board Members-at-Large: Athanasios Bayiates (to serve the remainder of Denise Coleman's term); Ryan McBee; Erven Williams
- Nominating Committee Chair: Ted Jones
- Nominating Committee Members: Betty Bumgarner; Barbara Plaut
- Endowment Fund Committee Members: Bill Cherry; Grier Novinger; Ken Stephenson

A motion was passed to make an exemption to the by-laws, permitting Robby McMurry to run for another two-year term as Treasurer.

Women in Black Event

Gordon Gibson presented a proposal and request from the *Women in Black* movement. To commemorate its 15th anniversary, the local branch of the organization is planning a forum at the Beck Cultural Center in October 2018. (Tentative title of the event is "Intersecting Identities and Social Justice", but this may change.) They have requested that TVUUC become a co-sponsor of this event. Co-sponsorship would involve financial assistance and/or in-kind help. Gordon plans to nominate Women in Black for a TVUUC Share-the-Plate collection in order to raise funds for this event. **The Board approved a motion for TVUUC to be listed as a co-sponsor of this event, without guaranteeing a specific amount of financial contribution.**

Program Council Report

Toni Powell gave a report on activities of the Program Council over the past year. New programs include support for:

- Gun Sense Outreach (Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America)
- Common Ground Co-Housing Community (a statement of support, but no financial contribution)
- "Kids Love Bikes" event which collects and refurbishes bicycles for low income children (event to be held at TVUUC; bicycles and repairs provided by Boys and Girls Clubs)
- Community Business Directory (to prepared and sold by TVUUC Administration)

Other notable programs include: Community Garden; development of a TVUUC Environmental Policy; Refugee Task Force; FISH; sponsorship of a table at the MLK Day Luncheon; UU Home Hospitality Program; Sunday Forums; UU Parenting Circle; expanded OWL program; Adult RE classes; and a Skills & Interest Survey. The Hiking Club was dropped from the Program Council list as it is currently inactive.

Next year, the Program Council plans to review its mission within TVUUC. (Is it meant to lead and initiate programs or to follow and support programs of members and staff?). Another plan is to start posting reports to the TVUUC website. Toni mentioned that the new Realm database has assisted the Program Council in managing and recruiting for programs and committees. She also thanked Bill Myers for his work as Board liaison to the Program Council.

The Program Council will probably be seeking a new head of the Membership Cluster, as Jodie Hamilton is running for Rising Chair of the Program Council.

Religious Education Program

Catherine Loya reported on the Lifespan Religious Education programs, providing details about a redesigned Sunday RE program for children and youth that she is calling "Choose Your Own Adventure", to begin in the fall of 2018. Rather than joining classes based on age or grade, children will be able to choose from several types of activities each week, with most activities open to all ages. (The Nursery and the Pre-School class will still be based on age. There will also be one class activity restricted to Grades 6-12, but children of those ages may choose to attend another class.) Although the program will incorporate aspects of the standard UU RE curriculum, the focus of each week's classes will be tied to the theme and sermon in the regular Sunday service. The new program will allow for a restructuring of duties for RE teachers and other volunteers.

Catherine also reported that TVUUC added the OWL (Our Whole Lives) program for the 5th and 6th grades for the first time this year; next year they plan to add the OWL program for kindergarten and first grade. They are also considering an adult version of OWL for the future. The mixed-age RE classes may require some modification of the OWL classes; it is possible that OWL classes will be offered as one of the Sunday morning options.

Catherine stressed that Board members are always welcome and encouraged to visit RE classes.

Job Description for Senior Minister and the Committee on the Ministry

The Leadership Team has been working on a revised job description for the Senior Minister, which Ginna presented to the Board for approval. Some goals in the revision were to make a clear distinction between required job duties and optional ones which are pursued at the discretion of the Minister, and to provide more specific requirements for some duties. Another change was to emphasize the need for the Minister to be more involved in the Stewardship campaign and fundraising throughout the year.

Before voting on the new job description, the Board had an extended discussion about a proposal to form a new Committee on the Ministry (or reformulate a currently inactive committee.) The goal of such a committee would be to advise the Minister and serve as a liaison between the Minister and the congregation. The committee would consist of people chosen by both the Minister and the Board, who could provide advice and feedback to the Minister. It was felt that many of the goals of such a committee are already being met by other means. For example, the responsibility for ministerial evaluation has been given to the Board, and the new Right Relations team may be helpful in resolving conflicts. The one missing element may be getting feedback from the congregation. As this seems to be more of an evaluative function, the Board felt that a Committee on the Ministry may not be the best

way to collect and process feedback. Ginna noted that Jeff Kovac has been working on some new procedures and instruments to be used in the thorough ministerial evaluation conducted every three years.

The Board then voted to table the charter for a Committee on the Ministry indefinitely, unless and until someone feels it is necessary.

The Board also voted to approve the revised Job Description with the following changes:

- **Remove Section 3.4 and any other reference to a Committee on the Ministry**
- **Amend Section 9.1 to specify that the Minister's self-evaluation must be done in the last quarter of the church year.**
- **In Section 2.1, add a reference to the Personnel Manual addendum, where specific staff positions are listed**

The Board also asked Chris to develop some suggestions for improving and organizing feedback from the congregation related to ministerial activities. These suggestions should be ready before the next monthly Board meeting.

Common Ground

Susan Fuhr made a presentation about the Common Ground project. Common Ground will be a Senior Co-Housing Community located in Knoxville, including about 25 units for persons 55 years and older. The community will be run on UU principles, but membership will not be restricted to UU members. Susan now has a binding contract on a 22-acre piece of land in Northeast Knoxville, and has raised \$101,000 toward the purchase price of \$150,000, hoping to close on the property in July. She has been working with a planning group at TVUUC and has been marketing the community to UU members across the country. Due to paperwork complications, the project is still a for-profit enterprise, so cannot be financially supported by the church. However, Susan is requesting an official statement of support from the TVUUC Board that can be used in marketing the project to prospective residents/co-owners. (She wants to have at least ten households signed up by the end of 2018, in order to go forward with the project.) As we were unsure of the best wording to be used in such a statement, the vote was postponed until the next meeting. In the meantime, Debbie Ellis and Lynne Mullins will develop a statement which could express non-financial support without implying that Common Ground is owned by, or officially associated with, TVUUC.

Stewardship Campaign

The stewardship campaign has now raised \$404,630. Not only is this far less than the goal of \$620,000, it is even less than the amount raised in last year's campaign. This does not include contributions from about 50 households that currently use automatic bank deposits but have not completed pledge forms this year. Staff and the Stewardship Committee are still in the process of calling these people to confirm their desire to continue contributions. Board members stressed the need to call these people immediately, as well as those who are active but have never pledged.

Anticipating that the phone calls will not bring us close to the goal of \$620,000, the Board expressed its great concern about this apparent lack of funding for the 2018-19 year and our possible inability, once again, to increase staff salaries. All agreed that it is essential that a new, urgent, message be sent to the congregation, clearly stating the need for additional pledges. [Shortly after the meeting, an e-mail to this effect was sent to the congregation from Jeff Kovac and the Board.] The Board also scheduled an

emergency meeting on May 30 to discuss the budget situation (to seek a strategy for increasing pledges and to examine and revise the budget for next year based on available funds.)

In light of the continued lack of sufficient funds, Robby McMurry made a tentative suggestion that the church **use the current contingency fund to pay off the remaining amount in the mortgage and then apply for a line of credit to serve as the contingency fund required by church policy.** He will research this possibility and present a formal proposal in a future Board meeting. **[Note: On May 30, a motion was made, and approved by the Board to make this move.]**

Robby also reported that spending for the 2017-18 year is still within the budgeted amount.

There was, again, a discussion about the process for entering direct bank deposit into Realm, as several Board members have had trouble understanding this process or finding financial information in Realm, and it was felt that there is even more confusion or lack of knowledge among the congregation. It was again suggested that written step-by-step instructions for this process be made available to church members.

Other Motions

The Board also approved the following motions:

- 1. A motion was passed to present to the congregation a resolution conferring the title of Minister Emerita upon Jenny Arthur in recognition of her many years of service to TVUUC, both as Director of Administration and Minister of Pastoral Care, and of her service to the community.**
- 2. A motion was passed to approve a slight change in the charter of the Finance Committee to limit the scope of the committee to drafting financial policies. (Financial policies are approved by the Board and then implemented by the Finance Team or the staff.)**

Miscellaneous

During the discussion about feedback to the Minister, it was noted that the Board might do a better job of collecting, discussing and acting on all feedback from the congregation. It was decided that the Secretary would bring the "red book" to the Board meeting each month to read comments to the Board so that an appropriate response can be determined.

It was also decided that the handouts from the Board meetings should be posted on the TVUUC website, in addition to the minutes. Robby offered to do this each month.

A tentative date of August 11 was suggested for the Board Retreat. As it appears that some members will not be available that day, another date may be suggested. We hope to hold the retreat at a location away from the church.

Submitted by Wendy Syer, Secretary to the Board.