

First Parish UU Church—Bridgewater

Parish Committee Meeting – Upper Parish Hall

Thursday, January 2, 2020

Present: Laurie Lessner, Kat Gillespie, David Wilson, McKayla Hoffman, Rev. Paul

Sprecher, Quent Jarvis

Absent: Sean Cooper and Deb Posepovich

Start: 7:02 PM

End: 8:52 PM

1. Chalice lighting, opening words, covenant, check-in

- a. Rev. Paul proposed a new outward line to our covenant that he will introduce at services until a formal vote at annual meeting. It will include the words: “and to nurture the interdependent web of existence”
- b. Bob Messing and Karen Reed Messing proposed the following recommendation for the placement of the new line:
Love is the spirit of this church and service is its gift.
This is our great covenant: To dwell together in peace,
To speak the truth in love,
To nurture the interconnected web of all life, and
To help one another.
- c. Rev. Paul recommends putting the new line last.

2. Approve minutes of the Nov, 25th 2019 PC meeting

- a. Because of the lack of a quorum, the Committee decided to table this vote.
[Parish Committee Meeting Minutes November 25 2019 DRAFT](#)

3. Facilities

- a. Quent reported that Lee Cutchell Flooring Company out of Lakeville took a look at the Lower Parish Hall floor. He recommended against installing a standard floor because the existing floor is too puckered (it is particularly severe in the nursery). There also might be asbestos underneath the existing floor, so he advised against pulling it up. He suggested a floating floor, but Quent said that that means it will not be right against the wall. He said they would do an industrial floating floor, so Quent will go down to Lee’s shop and look at a rubber floor. This industrial floor would be a floating floor, but it is thick. He wants to find someone else in the congregation who is savvy to go with him to Lee’s shop. They will bring back some samples to the church.
- b. Quent added that a leveled floor might not seal the floor like gluing the flooring down would, so he will also look into that. He wants congregation members to weigh in on this so that it can happen. The floor will likely have a foam bottom with vinyl on top, and they would put in a threshold strip through the doors. The two landings going upstairs would likely not be done. Rev. Paul asked how high the float would be, and Quent said that Lee did not give those specifics. It will only cover the Lower Parish Hall and not the back hall that leads to the basement. The kitchen is included in it, and they would have to make a strategy for the two stair landings going up to the Upper Parish Hall. Quent said while it likely will not be

- cheap, there will be some strategizing about how to make it most cost effective. Lee, so far, is the only contractor, and Quent will entertain inviting other people.
- c. Quent reported that David found plug in units that convert two outlets into six outlets. However, there still needs to be more outlets installed/available in the lower parish hall for programming. The basement also needs more outlets (a new set of lights in the basement were all blown out when a power tool was plugged in in the basement). A few more outlets will likely be installed around the stage, and David has strategic ideas about that. There will also be more outlets in the pulpit--they will put a 6 outlet addition. Paul asked if there could be one put onto the back wall behind the pulpit or behind the stage. Paul wants to eliminate the use of power strips and cords. **Quent will look into making this set up safer.** Tom told Quent that they took a 15 amp outlet off of the kitchen and made it a 20, but there is not enough in the lower parish hall.
 - d. Quent expressed to the Parish Committee that there needs to be a better way to manage the potholes in the driveway. The reconstituted asphalt continually gets ripped up by plows. Sonia asked if paving is astronomical in price. David added that because we are a historic property, the town feels that the driveway is technically a road and there would be issues with paving it. Frank Yeatman discovered that we were not allowed to do that after receiving a grant from the historical commission. Laurie said there was a place in Mansfield where there is reconstituted asphalt in the road that appears to prevent potholes. Quent thought that it might be better with a roller and not tamping it down by hand. **Quent will check out the spot where Laurie mentioned and investigate. David will investigate the soccer field parking lot on Summer Street that has an effective means of managing potholes.**

4. Parish Committee Administration

- a. Rev. Paul and Laurie discussed how church committees are organized and managed. He said it might be useful if members of the Parish Committee represent the church's committees. Stewardship, Facilities, and Membership are the only three without representation on Parish Committee currently.
- b. For membership, Laurie offered to be the connection. Sonia can be the RE and Social Justice connection. McKayla can represent Worship Committee, and Deb can do Facilities. David could be Events Committee. Kat is on the Finance Committee and represents that as Treasurer. Laurie recommended that Membership and Stewardship work more closely together. She also recommended that RE could link with Worship Committee more.
- c. Laurie thought that formalizing reporting on committees would be beneficial.
- d. Rev. Paul also recommended having a timekeeper for Parish Committee to ensure that we stay on track during meetings.
- e. Rev. Paul and Laurie also recommended a Google Calendar that everyone can access from Parish Committee. The paper calendar is not as effective, and someone has to physically be there to change it.
- f. Discussion ensued about how to make a new digital calendar accessible. Rev. Paul asked if we could synchronize the external/website calendar with the proposed

internal/operational Google Calendar. The external one would likely feed from our Breeze software.

- g. The Committee decided that the external calendar will not be changed, but for scheduling everything else that is internal, we can use a Google Calendar and give it a name (like First Parish Bridgewater Calendar). David recommended putting up a sign next to the paper calendar clearly indicating where the new calendar is.
Laurie will set up and distribute this new calendar.

5. Religious Education Update

- a. Sonia reported that the RE and Social Justice accepted donations for Horizons for Homeless children. It was a request for wishes for people to take via an Amazon wishlist. There were over 30 donations, and Sara delivered them. The mitten “tree” collected adult sized mittens and outer wear for the Matthew Mission at First Parish Taunton. That will continue until the end of the month, and then it will all be brought over to them.
- b. Sonia continued by reporting about “The Butterfly Effect” (butterflyeffectmigration.org), which was brought to RE from the Peace Committee. This was a project started by youth activists who created over 400 paper butterflies for children in detention centers. The Peace Committee wondered if RE could do a project like that, and they decided to work it into an RE gathering called “Building Community at First Parish” It’s not just for RE families and youth, but the whole community. The idea is that there will be a shared meal and a service project. January 19 will include the Butterfly Project, and Rev. Paul will include indigenous history adult RE on that evening while the youth are doing the butterfly activity. It presents an opportunity for all to engage in RE together. February 16 and March 15 at 6PM will be when future ones happen.
- c. Rev. Paul mentioned an idea about “church nights out,” which RE also explored. Sonia added that they want it to build community, so it isn’t just for families. McKayla asked if there was any chance that this could become a part of the Building Bridges community, and Sonia said yes. **McKayla will spread the word about this to the wider UU community through the Building Bridges channels.**

6. Minister’s Report

- a. Laurie began by adding that Deb Posepp did some research on the safe congregations program, and how to implement those. She will discuss those at the next meeting.
- b. Rev. Paul said there would be more emergency information shared, particularly about the location of exits and where to go in case of emergencies. There are particular concerns also around the anti-semitic attacks and a recent shooting at a church in Texas.
- c. Discussion ensued around how to not insight fear, but how to create a system that keeps everyone safe in case of an emergency situation. Laurie mentioned that Deb had suggested creating an inventory of people’s skills might be a good idea.
- d. Laurie mentioned that the person who is the president or the chair of the Trustees must know what is going on at the church, must know about the UUA Fund. David Tedesco wants the bylaws done before a new president is selected. Eileen was going to look at the trustees bylaws, but not update them.

7. Growth

- a. Discussion ensued about the variety of programs First Parish currently offers. Laurie mentioned that a Google Calendar would help plan around more spontaneous activities. Rev. Paul added that while there can be conflicts around planning programming and reserving spaces, it is heartening that there are so many fruitful activities happening.

8. Maintaining a strong social justice commitment.

- a. The Welcoming Congregation program is going well. Rev. Paul has the new banner to put up on the Summer Street sign. Sonia will lead the next Welcoming Congregation discussion this Sunday.
- b. Laurie said that the pole for the Little Free Library is now set up outside.

9. Worship

- a. Laurie said that Janet has wanted to make a First Parish banner for GA. She recommended that we put something in the weekly asking for volunteers.

10. Other

- a. David will be withdrawing from the Parish Committee as Vice President.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52PM.

Respectfully submitted,

McKayla Hoffman, Secretary