

# WSUU Board of Trustees

## November 18, 2015

Present: Viveca Monahan, Nikki Roberg, Joe Rettenmaier, Michael Matz, Jean Mendel, April Kristjanson, Tracy Burrows

Staff and guests: Shannon Day, Beatrice Hitchcock, Betsy Lowry, Jill Fleming

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 by Viveca.

Beatrice lit the chalice with a reading of "Bless the Imperfect" by Hope Johnson.

There was a "check-in" for everyone there.

- 1) Viveca moved approval of the minutes of the November 4, 2015 Trustees meeting. Tracy seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.
- 2) Michael gave the treasurer's report. (attached). The board also gave verbal approval for a transfer of funds to checking. Michael proposed a letter of instruction for donations of stocks by members of the congregation. The board approved the letter with some editing. The finance committee will work on a policy regarding directed donations. The board expressed thanks to RE for making some funds available for the AV tech.
- 3) Shannon summarized the administration report. (attached) She has ordered a television and bracket for \$510 for the fireside room to replace the one that was stolen.
- 4) Betsy gave the RE report. (attached) Sunday programs are very successful as are the OWL classes. Space is at a premium.
- 5) Jill Fleming reported on the activities of the stewardship committee.

Despite good training and good volunteers, last year's pledge results were disappointing. Had a goal of at least 10% over previous year but didn't reach their goal. Found that one on one solicitations work better than a pledge Sunday.

Stewardship asks that each trustee make a gift of significance for them; be willing to talk about money; be a steward for the church and participate in the act of giving every week.

A tentative schedule for 2016 includes an introduction to stewardship workshop on Jan. 16, a training for stewards on February 27 with the pledge drive beginning March 13. A major donor event is being planned for March 6.

Beatrice suggested a matching fund challenge. The committee agreed to try it for this year.

Participation in the Give Big program this past spring resulted in an \$8,000 boost. Will encourage members to participate again.

Shannon suggested we need to talk about what is at risk if we don't have the pledges come in. Perhaps could make this clear at the Jan. 24 meeting. Also need to talk about what is positive that we fund.

Jill commented that the committee plans to find the pledge theme in the vision/mission statement.
- 6) Beatrice gave the interim minister's report. (attached) There will be healing workshops in early December.

The board reviewed the aspirations for members statement. Tracy moved with a second by Michael that we approve it as edited. The motion passed unanimously.

7) Nikki reported that the marketing and publicity committee is still looking for members. Is planning a survey on communicating habits of the congregation.

8) Tracy reported that she is recruiting a 5-6 member team for the committee to develop the vision/mission statement.

9) Joe gave a building update. The repairs continue. Hopefully we pay \$2,500 deductible and insurance covers the rest. The electrical system in the building has been mapped. Parking lot repairs will start in June.

10) April reported on Leadership Assembly. Questions she brought back were...a) is there a process for debriefing from one board to another, b) what is the main focus or priority for the board and c) when are we going to do something about Black Lives Matter and d) is there an organizational chart available for the church.

11) There was discussion about board support for putting up a banner for support of Black Lives Matter and support of the movement. It would require a vote of the congregation to take this step. Tracy moved we call a congregational meeting for Dec. 13 to vote on a banner. Jean seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Interim Minister's Report  
November 18, 2015

**WSUU Successes, Challenges and Opportunities  
in Relation to Five Developmental Tasks of Interim Ministry**

**1) *Claiming and honoring its past, and engaging and honoring its griefs and conflicts***

A Sunday afternoon discussion on changes to Joys and Sorrows was held.

Two Healing workshops are scheduled: a Healing Focus Group on December 1, and a Healing Ritual on December 2.

History will be collected from different groups within the congregation, preliminary to a History Gathering Day on Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**2) *Recognizing its unique identity and its strengths, needs, and challenges***

Tracy Burrows is assembling a team to craft a Vision and Mission from existing documents and input from the congregation.

I will meet with current Covenant Group leaders to review history, current operating model, leadership, times offered, and publicity strategies. I plan to meet monthly with them.

I am still gathering pastoral caregivers, and hope to have at least six.

Nikki Roberg is leading the Marketing and Publicity Team and has met with others to assess congregational needs for improved communication.

Several comments at the Joys and Sorrows meeting suggested a need for greater communication about the changes that accompany growth.

Board members are now staffing a coffee hour table to answer questions and hear suggestions.

Food for the Soul: Provocative Conversations are planned through December, but need planning and leadership beyond that time. Fred Matthews is willing to work on planning.

***3) Clarifying the appropriate leadership roles of ministers, church staff, and lay leaders and navigating the shifts in leadership that may accompany times of transition.***

The Transition Team is formed and has met. Members are: Larkie Gildersleeve, Storey Squires, Matt Aspin, Steve Bennett, Lisa Maynard.

Mark Newton will be stepping down as Chair of the Worship Council at the end of December. A new Chair will need to be appointed.

A new chairperson is needed for the Care Team, and the Congregational Concerns Committee. Some new volunteers have come forward for the coffee hour ministry; more leadership may be needed to coordinate schedules.

***4) Making appropriate use of District, UUA, and other outside resources***

Board President Viveca Monahan, and I have each met with Janine Larsen, UUA Congregational Life staff person.

Viveca Monahan and I will meet with Rev. Grace Simons on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, preliminary to starting ministerial search committee work.

A racial justice workshop with Dr. Robin DiAngelo is being planned for January at East Shore UU, for five area churches, including Westside.

***5) Proudly coming into possession of a renewed vision and strong stewardship, prepared for new growth and new professional leadership, ready to embrace the future with anticipation and zest.***

The first three Pathways to Community (membership) classes have been held, with light attendance but general appreciation. I will be revising the Giving and Receiving class to better fit the needs of WSUU.

Matt Aspin (Membership Chair) has assembled a team of “Buddies” to help create connections for newcomers.

Financial Stewardship is the subject of December 6<sup>th</sup> sermon, and will receive ongoing mentions in other sermons.

The Stewardship Team has a plan and schedule for the stewardship campaign.

Aspirations for Members have been reviewed by Membership and are pending Board approval. Following its approval, I can work with Matt Aspin (and Marketing/Publicity?) to create a Pathway to Membership brochure.

*Interesting information from UUMA Professional Days: Studies have shown that while about 1/3 of US population identify as introverts, about 75% of UU's identify as introverts.*

*Note: I will be in Alaska for medical follow-up on December 7 – 12.*

## **WSUU RE Report to the Board November and December 2015**

### **Highlights**

- Overview – RE programs are going well with many children, youth, and volunteers actively engaged each week (for which I am grateful!). Our RE Council (led by Amy Hance-Brancati) is a positive and supportive group (more gratefulness). The most significant strategic challenge continues to be how to operate this size of program with the resources our congregation is able to support.
- Sunday Morning RE – We've been averaging 64 children and youth participating in programs on Sundays. This is up from an average in the lower 40's last year. The second Sunday of the month is either a multigenerational worship or a Chalice Chapel, (in part to give our teachers a break), and on those Sundays our attendance is lower, averaging at 38. Our teachers and families often choose that Sunday to be away from the church. This is interesting to note for our service planning and programming.
- Curriculum Updates – We have been implementing our justice curriculum in kindergarten through middle school classes, with a focus on racial and environmental justice issues. Vanessa Shaughnessy is working with me to develop new curriculum activities for January – March, drawing on excellent resources available through the *Teaching Tolerance* web site.

- Chalice Chapels (worship for children and youth) – our first CC of the year was very successful, introducing our focus on the Duwamish, and the liturgical elements of participating in an offering collection, and using an alter table and symbolic objects to reflect on our joys and sorrows. Crystal took the lead in putting the CC together with a team including Kim Frappier, Leilani Davenport, and me. Each CC will be followed by a social action opportunity for families, connected to the Duwamish River and community.
- Teacher Recruitment – All of our teaching and advising teams were full for the year by mid-November, with the exception of our middle school class. Currently, we have two teachers for that group, who teach every Sunday (Rebecca Duke and Kristin Grace).
- OWL –
  - Our 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade OWL class is going well on Sunday mornings. Crystal and I are teaching in the rotation since we were short one female teacher. We both enjoy this immensely, and also feel the strain of juggling responsibilities.
  - The K-1 and 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade OWL teaching teams have met to plan, and those sessions will begin in January on Sunday afternoons.
- Middle School Youth –
  - Things have improved with our middle school RE class for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders who aren't participating in OWL. We now have 8 youth on the roster, and the group has been exploring the Syrian refugee issue.
  - Our total group of middle schoolers has been offered two opportunities to engage in social events this fall – one for Halloween, and in early December, they had a roller skating event.
- High School Youth – Our Youth Group is finding some stride with our new advising team.
  - Advisors – Nathan and Michael Germaine-Mothershed, Suki Kaplan, Charlie Hope, Marcus Green, and myself. We are now on a schedule where Nathan and Michael meet with the Youth Group without me. Both advisors and youth are growing their comfort levels with leading and facilitating the group. We are currently focusing on mental health issues (youth choice) and Black Lives Matter on our discussion nights.
  - Fall Con – We had a small group attending Fall Con this year, which included three 9<sup>th</sup> graders. Charlie Hope and Shelley Webb (COA teacher) attended as first-time sponsors.
  - Eli Breidford, Crystal and I are all participating on a district level team that has been formed to address multicultural needs in our youth ministry work.
  - Coming of Age classes are going well with seven engaged 9<sup>th</sup> graders, and our dedicated teaching team (John Monahan, Steve Burrows, Shelley Webb, and Joe Nabbefeld). We're looking for a cabin for the spring retreat in early March.

- LREDA Professional Meeting – I attended the Liberal Religious Educators Association conference in October in New Jersey, which I was also part of planning. It was a successful event, focused on full-week faith development and theme-based ministry. In addition to offering a wealth of ideas, it was a great opportunity to visit with and learn from colleagues all over the country who now feel like friends. I found it to be an enormously uplifting week!
- Partner Church Activities – Phil and I hosted Emese and Csaba Finta, our partner church minister and her husband, for eight days in our home. It was a rich and heart-warming experience, and they have said many times that they loved the visit. Aside from our mutual exchange and learning, it was challenging to inspire others outside of the Partner Church Committee to engage and to feel motivated to make that connection a priority. We have some ideas for RE exchanges between us in the future, but the most meaningful ideas for engagement are in-person trips and visits.
- RE Staff Hours and Right-Sizing – Crystal and I continue to struggle with the number of hours it realistically takes for us to run this program – and to run it without enormous compromise (i.e., I am still offering a full youth program without a lead advisor, and with a tentative advising team).
  - The REC was planning to put a survey out to the congregation to provide input on right-sizing the RE program, but we will likely add some items to the communications survey going out in the new year, since that and the mission/vision team are already on the calendar.
  - Crystal is an amazing gift to our community – her talents and skills, openness, and dedication have enriched our worship life, our RE ministry, and our community life. I am so grateful to work with her!

## Looking Ahead

- Winter Solstice Pageant and Multigenerational Service – After an unsuccessful search for a solstice pageant, Crystal decided to write one! It will be part of the service this coming Sunday, in an effort to offer a worshipful experience for all ages. Not surprisingly, it has become a much bigger undertaking than initially anticipated!
- Christmas Eve Multigen Family Service – We will follow our same format as in the past two years for this service, offering a spontaneous nativity story with only a few designated parts.
- Teacher Mid-Year Retreat – Our kindergarten through middle school teachers will meet from 9am-1pm on Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup> for our mid-year retreat, where we will introduce new curriculum activities from Teaching Tolerance, and discuss how we might address Black Lives Matter at the varied elementary ages.
- Building Space for Programming – Shannon is an angel to work with in a multitude of ways, including the problem solving needed to share our building for so many events and with different groups. We have enough RE activities on

Sundays now that the building is often bursting at the seams, and Shannon is encouraging other groups to consider meeting during the week.

- Safety Policy – I have not successfully allocated the time needed to update our safety policy for children and youth. I am working with the RE Council to determine how to proceed.

## Administrator Report November 2015

November has been a fairly smooth month in the office. The holding pattern we are in with the construction has made life a bit quieter. We are looking forward to the return of our north stairwell and are excited to have McBride Construction showing up to begin the process of repairs. I am so grateful to Rose Sheppard for handling all of the extremely complicated tasks involved in the insurance claim and the engagement of the contractors – God Bless Rose!

1. **Garbage/Recycling-** We will be adding a 3<sup>rd</sup> Recycling container. We are frequently out of space in the two we have prior to pick up. This will increase our monthly bill by \$42. There is a \$90 delivery fee. The \$600/mo increase in the preschool lease will help cover these expenses.
2. **Copier Contract-** At the end of last fiscal year I contacted Sharp Business Systems to renegotiate our copier contract. We have a 5 year lease for our machine. They agreed to reduce the number of copies in the contract and decrease our monthly bill by about \$100 (from \$400/mo to \$300/mo). I filled out the necessary paperwork and was told by our local account managers that all was well. The change was never reflected on our bill. The billing is handled by the leasing agent – a different outfit. I have had innumerable phone and email exchanges with our local reps who constantly assure me that all will be taken care of and not to pay the full bill. I have been receiving many calls from the leasing agent that we are delinquent. Last month I had a very long conversation with someone from the leasing side that explained that the local agents did not have the ability to adjust numbers in our contract – that they will tell me what I want to hear – they are salesmen... and that I should go ahead and pay the bill before more late charges accumulate. I paid the bill in full and have tried to reach out to the local SBS guys who are now neither answering my calls or emails. We will be switching to another outfit at the end of this contract in 2 years. Unfortunately, we budgeted based on the lower rate. Fortunately we have some extra in our copier budget line as Bert bill the UUA for copies he made here for GA and we made a little profit: )
3. **Television in Fireside** – I’m working on this. Shopping around. Will probably get a 50 inch smart TV in the end but haven’t made it happen yet.
4. **Communications/Marketing** – I had a great meeting with Nikki this week to begin our conversation about communications. This spurred me on to change our eNews template to a “responsive” format that behaves and appears better on phones and tablets. I’m also making a concerted effort to make our Facebook page more active. If

you haven't yet, please like our page. I'm also asking church leaders to send me links to articles that they feel would be appropriate to post around social justice issues, UU news, events etc. Currently we have 367 likes, 280 post reach. I've also added a button to the website that links to the weekly eNews.

5. **Membership Numbers** - Gained one member over the last month: Helen Stanford
6. **Rentals**- We have moved the ongoing Sunday evening AA Group rental from the south preschool classroom on the lower level to the Fireside Room. This will greatly simplify our preparations of the preschool spaces for Monday mornings. The Fireside Room is almost never in use on Sunday evenings. The group is very happy with the change. Puppy class rental ends soon. We had a violin rehearsal and recital and a birthday event here last week. In December Theresa McCormick and Carolyn Matthews will rent the social hall for their craft fair.
7. **Bookkeeping** – Currently no issues. Books are in good order. I believe we said that we would revisit me acting as our bookkeeper this month. I think it's going well. I enjoy the work and it helps me to deeply understand our finances : ) I get great support from our finance committee and Church Windows whenever I have questions or concerns.
8. **Security** – The re-key of the exterior doors went well. Only one or two snafus with folks that didn't read their email or I didn't know were leading groups. Huge thank you to John Monahan for coordination and working with the locksmith the day of the work. We now have numbered keys and a log to track who has them. Froula Inc. is now our provider for security monitoring. The first month has gone well. New sensors and panel are working great.

In Community,

Shannon

## December 2015 Westside UU Music Director's Report

### Adult Music

- Chorale.** As the Chorale becomes more accomplished, fewer people have ventured to join, so our numbers remain constant. This is not a bad thing. My main frustration is that we have many good male singers in our congregation but so few willing to participate. The Music Council may be able to help in this area by encouraging men to join, because the message could be more effective coming from others besides me.
- Chalice Singers.** The Chalice Singers continues to function as an ad hoc ensemble, a model that seems to be working quite well. Lisa Maynard has taken

- a leadership role, so we've begun to work more collaboratively on membership and repertoire.
- **Celebration Singers.** Current CS singers remain committed although finding rehearsal time continues to be a problem.
  - **Men's Ensemble.** Due to lack of response (and by assumption, interest) the Men's Ensemble is no more. Eileen Duffy approached me recently, without my prompting, to get the names of all of our male singers with the goal of promoting a male ensemble. If the message comes from another member maybe that'll do the trick; otherwise, it goes on the back burner.
  - **Rhythm Section.** Working with our rhythm section continues to be a pleasure for me. Martin has stepped back a bit from playing and I am deeply grateful for his willingness to play whenever he can. Marion has been playing more often, which I really appreciate. It won't be long before we will need to have a discussion about hiring a bass player occasionally.
    - In September it became clear to me that we have a shortage of pianists for worship services, due to a variety of reasons, and Lisa Maynard ended up as the only one available. Fortunately, Janet Sweet's health improved to the point that she is now able and very willing to play more often, which has been a huge blessing, and Lisa and Janet seem able to cover it so far. At some point the "fourth Sunday" pianist should become a paid position.
  - **Gift of Music soloists.** In November, I took the Gift of Music out of the first section of the liturgy and moved it to the offering. The Worship Council didn't request I do so; it was a unilateral decision on my part for the following reasons:
    - The Gift of Music is a holdover from what had been the prelude, and with the changes to the "Gathering" portion of the liturgy it became sort of the orphan child of the Gathering and didn't really fit. It seemed to me that, as a gift, it would be more appropriate during the offering, since the offering has been moved to a position before the sermon. This move has been reviewed by the Worship Council.
    - While I could listen to John play every Sunday, it felt like the "musical offering" had become too routine. So bringing other accomplished musicians into that spot creates variety and a suitable opportunity for them to share their music. John will play at least once per month, or in the event no one else is willing.
    - Fewer volunteer musicians seem willing to actively participate, which is not surprising as our congregation grows. I have developed a list of those who seem most interested and responsive, which includes two new singers: Kristina Darnell and Meg Stanton.
  - **Prelude.** I've added a piano prelude before the ringing of the bowl, starting at around 10:27 or so played by the day's pianist. This has been reviewed by the Worship Council.

- **Music Leaders.** Our music leaders, Lisa Maynard and Linda Anderson, continue to do an excellent job keeping the music going. I have come to depend on them more and more and am grateful for their skill and willingness to collaborate with me.

### **Multigenerational/Children/Youth Music** (mostly fantasy)

I have been working with Betsy to develop a vibrant Multigenerational, Children, and Youth music program, and due to budget constraints and lack of support from parents our plans remain mostly fantasy. Our solution so far has been to implement what we are able and put the rest on the back burner, so I've divided this into *Doable* and *Dream On*:

#### **Doable**

- **Voice Classes for Children.** We started this last spring and it was quite successful (5 to 8 weekly lessons after worship). Some children don't want to sing in a Children's Choir because they don't want to have to perform, so I teach them some voice technique and musical skills to begin to facilitate the gradual building of a children's music program. It was also a treasured opportunity for me to get to know some of the children. Upon review, we plan to change the model and offer voice classes in the fall, and a multigenerational song circle in the spring. My surgery and other issues prevented us from starting this fall's classes. These voice classes are a good opportunity for training children *and* parents, to help them understand the necessity of follow-through with regard to the commitment required to build a viable children's music program.
- **Ukulele Band.** As far as I know there still is a ukulele band and I plan to arrange for them to play a Gift of Music sometime after the first of the year.
- **Youth participation.** In an attempt to get youth more involved in worship, we are inviting more experienced youth musicians to play a gift of music. So far TriSiren has performed a couple of times and I've contacted Eli and Logan, but communications are difficult with teenagers. Some help from the Music Council in this area would be appreciated.

#### **Dream On**

- **Multigenerational Choir.** I've mentioned this to a few people who got very excited about it. As the Chorale gets more proficient, those who don't think they can keep up would like a "no-audition" option to make music. When I started working at Westside in 2010 I was charged with building a vibrant Music Ministry that includes offering music making opportunities to anyone who wants to participate regardless of their skill level. A multigenerational choir will be a step toward fulfilling that expectation. This won't happen until I have more work hours to devote to it or unless someone wants to take it on.
- **Children's Choir.** I believe that the first step toward forming a children's choir will be to form a Multigenerational Choir. A viable children's choir requires a

strong commitment from the parents and we don't have that yet, and frankly, it's really going to have to be the parents who make it happen. Also, this won't happen until I have more work hours to devote to it, or unless someone wants to take it on.

- **Song Circle.** Lisa did a great job with the song circle last year, but it never had traction. I think a larger congregation would provide the necessary critical mass to make it successful, so this goes on the back burner.

I think it is important to have clarity around the fact that I am doing two jobs: those of the music director and the choral conductor. In some congregations they are 2 separate positions and other smaller congregations manage without a music director.

To be clear

- A **music director** is an administrative position. He is in constant contact with the volunteer musicians with regard to repertoire and scheduling, he has a ministry with our congregation's musicians, he manages the professional music staff, participates in the Worship Council and the Music Council, writes a monthly Ministry Musings article, keeps music related records for the Music Ministry and the Worship Council, writes reports to the Music Council and the WSUU board, creates and manages both the Music Ministry and AV budgets, advocates for the volunteer musicians, manages the Audio/Visual staff, and collaborates with the minister or other speaker and the service leader for each worship service.
- The **choral conductor** rehearses the vocal and instrumental ensembles for worship services, organizes any needed rehearsals other than those regularly scheduled, sees to the concerns of the musicians he works with, plans worship music well in advance of each service, plans and leads an annual Music Ministry Retreat, leads hymn singing and serves as stage manager each Sunday, collaborates with the minister or other speaker and service leader each week, and organizes and leads the pre-service rehearsal with all musicians and the AV staff.

Obviously, in our situation the lines between a music director and choral conductor are blurred, but I can honestly say that I spend most of my time in my capacity as Westside's music director. As for my choral conductor position, I'm often bringing it together by the seat of my pants since my preparation time is very limited.

Respectfully,

Bertram Gulhaugen  
Music director and choral conductor