

Westside UU Congregation Annual Committee Reports for the period June 2015 – May 2016

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WORSHIP COUNCIL

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by Mark Newton for the Period: June 7 2015 – May 31, 2016

Activities and Accomplishments

The Worship Council planned and offered 56 services during the fiscal year. Of those, 24 services were led by our “Called” or “Interim Minister” (43%); 15 services were member-led (27%), including multigenerational services and services led by our ministerial intern; and 17 services were offered by external speakers (30%).

The Worship Council included a series of services focusing on “change and transition.” These services were offered to assist with the adjustment required by the retirement of Rev. Peg Morgan, and the introduction and ministry of Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock, Interim Minister.

The range of attendance at Sunday services for the reporting period was 71 – 204. The average adult attendance was 128. In general, highest attendance occurred when Rev. Peg was in the pulpit. Multigenerational services include children. The three Sunday multigenerational services, excluding Christmas Eve, drew an average attendance of 141.

We remain in transition from a pastoral size congregation to a program size. As such we are experiencing the typical growing pains associated with that shift. We meet monthly and discuss challenges and opportunities, including suggestions and feedback from Congregants. We also meet quarterly for a full day. When suggestions or feedback are offered they are discussed in detail. A member of the Council responds to whomever offered the feedback or suggestion.

An important marker in our transition has been the retirement of Rev. Peg after 13 years and the employment of Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock as Interim Minister. This transition and challenge was compounded by the release of Rev. Hitchcock after eight months.

Overall, the Worship Council receives very high marks for the services it offers. Our Sunday experience is unique among Unitarian Universalist congregations in its use on internal and external resources, its diversity of music, involvement of children and youth, and the substance of pulpit sermons.

We are fortunate to plan services in a collaborative manner with the minister, the director of music, and the director of religious exploration for children and youth. That collaboration is not present in all congregations. It's been a blessing in ours.

Our biggest challenges of the year were:

- (1) Loss of one qualified Sunday Service Leader from the Council.
- (2) During Rev. Hitchcock's tenure open microphone Joys and Sorrows was eliminated and replaced by the minister or service leader including joys and sorrows in a meditation or pastoral prayer. As expected, strong resistance occurred. Following a period of discernment the majority of feedback received by the Worship

Council supported not returning to the open microphone method. A final recommendation to that effect was made by Rev. Beatrice and supported by the Worship Council.

(5) A current challenge is filling the pulpit following the release of Rev. Beatrice on May 1.

Goals for Next Year

(1) Continue to provide high quality worship services in unchartered waters. At the current time we are confident we will not have a replacement Interim Minister before August 15, if at all.

Gratitudes

We extend our gratitude to Rev. Peg Morgan, Minister Emerita. Her keen thinking, experience, attention to detail, and willingness to collaborate and experiment are hallmarks of the Council’s work and effectiveness, and a testament to a truly shared ministry. We are grateful for lessons learned from Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock during her tenure with Westside. And we are grateful for the contributions of Westside’s RE Student Intern, Crystal Zerfoss. Crystal was a competent and wise addition to the Worship Council , and an excellent presence and speaker in our pulpit.

Worship Council for 2015 – 2016:

- Mark Newton, Chair
- Peg Morgan, Minister (Until June 2015)
- Beatrice Hitchcock, Interim Minister (August 2015-May 2016)
- Crystal Zerfoss, RE Student Intern
- Kevin Lawson, Ministerial Intern (Until June 2015)
- Shelby Greiner (leave of absence)
- Jerry Halsey
- Lisa Reitzes
- Guy Whitmore
- Betsy Lowry
- Bert Gulhaugen
- Albert Lorenzana
- Charlotte House

MUSIC COUNCIL

**Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation
Submitted by Marion Kee, Chair
May 6, 2016**

Westside’s Music Ministry continues to offer vibrant, meaningful music for Sunday services and other events. About 60 volunteer musicians participated directly in providing music for Sunday services and Christmas Eve, most of them on a recurring basis. A number of additional volunteers from the congregation baked pies for pie sales, helped out with various needs for events, and provided help with music filing and other office needs.

Multigenerational participation in the Music Ministry continues. Sunday service special-music musicians have included the youth band Tri-Siren, there is a youth member of the marimba ensemble, and children's and youth ensembles were put together for the Winter Solstice and the Youth Sunday services with leadership from Betsy Lowry and from Bert.

The congregation's support of the Music Council's pie sales raised over \$1600 for the General Fund. NZIRA marimbas played for a private party at Westside in the fall, and an outside gig this spring, enabling Music Council to meet its total goal of \$2300 in fundraising for the General Fund for this fiscal year. The "Musical Evening" auction offering sold out again this year, and will take place on Saturday July 23. Many thanks to Joe Rettenmaier for hosting this event again! WSUU's vocal ensembles, plus the rhythm section, are offering a concert on May 22 with a freewill offering to support three local community environmental justice groups: Got Green, Women of Color Speak Out and Puget Sound Sage. Westside's Environmental Justice Group is co-sponsoring the concert and helping with publicity.

Music Council continues its core work of supporting the Music Director's efforts; facilitating communication and coordination among WSUU's musical ensembles and Music Director, and helping meet the needs of ensembles; and fundraising. In July, the Music Council re-visited its mission and vision statements in a one-day retreat, and included Worship Council members during the morning session. This helped both Councils better understand each other's work and has led to some improved coordination regarding Sunday services.

The Music Director, with the support of the Chorale, coordinated two special events during 2015-16: the Music Ministry Retreat on Whidbey Island in September, and the UU Music Festival in March with UU composer and conductor Jason Shelton. The Music Festival, with a workshop at Northlake UU in Kirkland, attracted choirs from about twenty UU congregations around Puget Sound. It included a Sunday afternoon worship service at the Kirkland Performance Center with two guest ministers and a combined 200-voice choir. The next Music Ministry Retreat is planned for October 2016 at Camp Butler on Vashon Island, and the next UU Music Festival is slated for the first weekend of March 2017.

In November, Music Council chair Marion Kee coordinated a panel discussion and hands-on musical instrument encounter as a Common Quest class entitled "The Music Zoo." In addition to the four-person panel, about eight others attended and an engaging, fun evening was had by all. The WSUU panelists spoke to their experiences of becoming UU musicians and singers and took questions from the attendees. Half a dozen instruments were presented for hands-on demos following the discussion, including a marimba, mandolin, ukulele, electric bass, string bass and djembe. This class may be offered again if members and friends of the congregation express interest.

The WSUU musical ensembles currently include the Chorale (full choir), Chalice Singers (vocal ensemble), Celebration Singers (vocal ensemble) and rhythm section (instrumental ensemble.) In addition, the Summer Choir forms and sings about two Sundays a month during June, July and August, broadening participation opportunities for singers who cannot make a commitment to the Chorale. There is an informal uke group that plays in services occasionally. WSUU also hosts a resident ensemble which includes members from the larger community: NZIRA (marimba band.)

This year's MC members and roles included: Marion Kee (chair), Martin Sherry, Linda Anderson (Music Leader), Liz Bucklew, Lisa Maynard (Music Leader), and Glenn Phillips. Ex-officio members were Bert Gulhaugen, music director/choir conductor and Rev. Beatrice Hitchcock, interim minister. MC member Glenn Phillips stepped down when he moved to Georgia in the fall, after hosting MC's Retreat in July. He is dearly missed and we thank him for his years of service to the Music Ministry as a pianist, Music Leader and MC member.

The Music Council is very grateful for the congregation's support of the Music Ministry. Westside offers the congregation a wide range of opportunities for musical participation in Sunday services and for gaining experience with music on both intermediate and advanced levels. In addition, WSUU's involvement with the UU Music Festival supports bringing UU singers together from all over our region. Westside is having a positive impact on UU music both within and beyond its walls, thanks to Bert's leadership and the efforts of many volunteers

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION COUNCIL

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by: Amy Hance-Brancati and Betsy Lowry

May 2016

Activities and accomplishments from June 2015 to May 2016

- Assisted with and provided food for two teacher trainings - fall and winter
- Assisted with teacher recruitment
- Assisted with Sunday RE program throughout summer of 2015 by teaching and greeting
- Planned and provided children's activities at Ingathering BBQ in September 2015
- Supported curriculum decisions and development of story baskets for Spirit Play and Pathways curriculum through the year
- Substituted for RE teachers and the DRE during the year as needed
- Assisted with multi-generational services throughout the year
- Provided RE greeter each Sunday in addition to Betsy/Crystal
- Planned and hosted four successful Sunday soup lunches during social hour to meet requirements of RE operating budget for 2015-16
- Offered as auction event and hosted successful and fun Bunco Night Cinco de Mayo party
- Helped facilitate Chalice Chapels (children's worship in the Social Hall every other month)

Goals for next year

- As Betsy will have moved on, support new DRE through year of transition in order to meet our RE needs for children and youth
- Support changes in RE programming to continue to offer Coming of Age (and OWL as well after this year off) every year to accommodate larger numbers of children and youth
- Continue to create more Social and Environmental justice activities for families
- Support existing multigenerational events and offer more as needed
- Facilitate two middle school youth social gatherings, fall and spring
- Support increased RE program fundraising goals
- Continue to seek new ways to inspire and "kindle" our teachers
- Actively participate in community discernment discussions and activities through this transition period of Westside's ministry

Committee/group needs, opportunities, wishes

- Our need: Nurture committed volunteer leadership in support of Westside's RE ministry.
- Our wish: To foster continued inclusiveness of Westside's RE program as an integrated part of the whole community.
- Opportunities: Increasing the size of the RE Council to better distribute and share the Council's responsibilities, and identifying more ways to serve families through full-week faith.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION PROGRAM (COMMON QUEST)

Adult Exploration Program (Common Quest) -- Annual Report to WSUU Board of Trustees

Submitted by: Dr. Theresa McCormick, Coordinator of Common Quest

Activities and accomplishments from June 2015 – May 2016

- FALL 2015--Produced a brochure with a variety of offerings
- Ten new offerings: In-Depth Discussion Following Marcus Green's Sermon; UU Voices for Justice of Washington with Jolinda Stephens; Future of our Faith; Food For the Soul Sundays; Black Lives Matter Discussion Group; Pathways to Community; Know Your Church Musicians: The Music Zoo; Meaningful Movie about Climate Change and Racial Injustice; The Science, the Politics and the Immorality of Climate Change; 2016: Year of the Heart.
- * Returning Favorites: "The EXEL Group," "Beginner's T'ai Chi,"
- Listing of On going Programs (e.g., Circle Suppers, Family Circle Suppers, Covenant Groups, Newcomer Congregational Orientations)
- SPRING 2016--Produced another brochure of new classes
- Eight new offerings: Conscious Dying & After-Death Care: A 3-Part Series About Living Intentionally at the End of Life; Bidder 70 (a film); This Changes Everything by Naomi Klein, Book Discussion; Common Ground: Seeking the Heart of Islam; Intergenerational Art Class; Fidel's Farce, Fraud, and Failure—Recollections of a Guilty Bystander; Embodied Spirituality: Focusing and the Mind-Body-Spirit Connection; Journey to Israel and Jordan.
- Returning Favorites: Spiritual Study Group
- Listing of On going Programs (e.g., Newcomer Congregational Orientation, Covenant Groups, Westside Women's and Men's Groups, Circle Suppers)

Goals for next year

- * Produce a fall and winter-spring Common Quest brochure, each with new classes, as well as a listing of returning favorites and on going programs
- Produce an adult exploration program that supports the WSUU focus on racial justice and environmental justice and that reflect our UU principles, as well as the interests of our membership

- Include offerings that are led, facilitated, organized, or taught by WSUU members as well as by outside guest presenters

Issue: The decision last year to list a “Suggested Donation \$0 - \$10 per class” in each brochure is working well, versus the previous listing: “Suggested Donation \$5 per class,” which was problematic for some members

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by Paula vanHaagen, Chair

May 2016

The Finance Committee provided monthly reviews of the draft Treasurer's Report. The Committee looked at income and expenses for the previous month and the year to date. Shannon Day, Congregational Administrator, provided valuable information each month relative to income, expenses, and potential concerns. The Finance Committee supported the Treasurer in synthesizing the information into the important points and potential actions for the final monthly report to present to the Board.

The Finance Committee developed a draft Gift Policy, shared it with the Congregation and received a few comments. The Committee hopes to present the proposed Gift Policy to the Board for action its May meeting.

Alan Mendel and Michael Matz contacted UUA to look into extending our mortgage, due in one year, to avoid renegotiating the loan. A balloon payment is due in May 2017, when we'll be focused on calling a minister. Michael sent a letter requesting a continuation of our current payments for three years past our current term. The interest rate available from from UUA is the same as what we pay now.

The Finance Committee provided support and technical assistance to our Congregational Administrator.

Members of the Finance Committee this year are: Michael Matz, Joanne Cook, Alan Mendel, Shannon Day (ex officio) and Paula vanHaagen (Chair).

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

No report submitted.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT to WSUU Board of Trustees

Submitted by: Matt Aspin, Chair

DATE: May 2016

Activities and accomplishments from June 2015 to May 2016

Reviewed, updated, and operationalized all phases of visitor onboarding process

- Worked with Shannon to coordinate alert process when visitor completes Yellow card.
- Streamlined and enhanced Newcomer Orientation materials. Moved from content heavy data dump to more targeted messaging, with support to connect to resources for additional information for those that want to go deeper.
- Created and staffed a new “Matchmaker” team, tasked with proactively connecting with visitors that complete Yellow Information cards. Goal of this interaction is to ensure visitors continue feel welcomed, are finding what they came looking for, and are connected with members or resources that will help them develop stronger connections to our community.
- Launched and worked to streamline a series of “Pathways to Membership” sessions concept that was introduced by our Interim Minister. These sessions are intended to:
 - Allow individuals to begin developing a deeper connection into our community
 - Gain a better understanding of the history of our faith tradition and where we are today
 - Set mutual expectations of rights, responsibilities, and potential benefits of making the decision to become a member of our congregation.
- Identified and began to hand off responsibilities to a successor as I begin to prepare my departure to my Ministerial Internship congregation in the Fall.
- Encouraged members to offer more Common Quest offerings, and encouraged newcomers to join Covenant groups or attend class offerings to help with community connection.
- Helped to develop a new “Young Adults” group. Group met several times and began to develop some new connections.
- Supported efforts towards the creation of more connecting opportunities for long term members.

Goals for next year

- Maintain and continue to enhance new onboarding programs.
 - Evaluate Pathways curriculum and determine approach going forward.
 - Benefits-sets high level of membership expectations up front, which makes all future asks much easier. Always easier to walk back from an initial high commitment than it is to continually have to ask folks to step up.
 - Challenges-Our demographic includes A LOT of families. A series of classes is not always easy for parents to commit to and creates an unfortunate barrier to entry
 - Better leverage social media channels to improve connections beyond Sunday mornings.
- One consistent theme that emerged as I asked folks about their membership experience was a desire for opportunities to deepen their spiritual development in between Sunday services. I have become aware of great, low cost program called “Soul Matters” which may be of worth exploring.
- Continue to listen to existing members and ensure their needs are being met.

Committee/group need, opportunities, wishes

- Outgoing, well connected members to join the team, either helping to facilitate Newcomer Orientations or reaching out to visitors to help facilitate connections.
- A social media guru to help us leverage current connecting technologies for those that have come to rely on these channels to help build their communities.
- Everyone-keep your eyes open for new folks, and don't be afraid to introduce yourself at coffee hour! I think we do a pretty good job of this, but it is a vital function so it bears reminder whenever possible.
- Additional ideas and leadership around any and all community building events. These are key to the ongoing health of our community

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Nominees for Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee 2016-17

President: Jill Jackson

Vice President: Tracy Burrows

Treasurer: Allan Lang

Secretary: Sue Mariconda

At Large:

Jean Mendel, 1st of 2 year term

Judi Finney, 1 year term

Michael Franzen, 1 year term

Nominating Committee:

Alice Britt, Chair

Peggy Abby

Mike Cox

Endowment Committee:

Marion Kee

2 positions unfilled

PLANNED GIVING TASK FORCE

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by Peggy Abby, Chair

Our committee does not require any budgeted funds. We hope to do a sermon on the subject next Fall and have some ideas for expanding awareness of the opportunity that I had talked to Rev Beatrice about, that we planed to do together, but will have to approach differently now.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

The Endowment Committee met once past year. It determined that the endowment rules changes it would like to recommend to a future Board could be made without requiring any change to the By-laws. The proposed changes are actually to a memo that a much-earlier Board adopted, which outlines how the endowment is supposed to be managed. (The memo is overly complicated and looks like it must have been copied from a congregation with a large endowment.) We think that a future Board could adopt the recommended changes to the memo by a simple vote. The recommendations are aimed at simplifying the endowment guidelines and making the chain of responsibility for decision-making more clear.

Also, the Endowment Committee agrees with the Planned Giving Committee that these two committees could be combined. The memo regarding the endowment could be administered by Planned Giving or by a combined committee. However, there is no rush to make changes, because there is no money in the endowment. We think any re-structuring can wait until after the next minister is called, especially since combining those committees officially might require a change in the By-Laws.

In the meantime, if a bequest should appear for the endowment, the Endowment Committee recommends that the congregation place the money with the UUA's Common Endowment Fund, which is professionally administered, has low fees and is invested in accordance with the UU Principles. For details on the fund, see <http://uucef.org/about/>

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by Regina Brennan

April 2016

Activities and accomplishments from June 2013 – May 2014

We fulfilled the 2-year **Food First** commitment as of January, 2016. At that time, we changed our name to **Community Service Projects**, and have been working on the following:

Mary's Place Rotating Night Shelter

We have participated with Peace Lutheran Church to host families for a week twice in the past year. Our duties have been to provide dinner and evening activities, overnight hosting, light breakfast, and weekend van driver(s) for up to five homeless families (maximum 15 people).

- Dates of service: **10-6-15 to 10-13-15**, and **4-26-16 to 5-3-2016**
- Service hours: approximately **900 volunteer hours**. More than **50 WSUU** congregants have participated in this project

White Center Food Bank

- Thursday morning senior Coffee Hour at the food bank. On the first and second Thursday mornings of the month, four volunteers provide coffee and cookies to the seniors starting at 10:00 AM.
- On Fridays, the Baby Pantry is open to provide mothers a chance to pick up diapers, formula, baby food, and other baby needs. Arline Borella volunteers her service on the first Friday of each month.

Lettuce Pray

Westside is an approved Lettuce Pray pickup site. In collaboration with the Landscaping Committee, we harvest produce from our church garden weekly and congregants bring fresh produce and food items to service on Sunday morning. Lettuce pray drivers

The donated food goes to both The West Seattle and White Center food banks.

Committee/group needs, opportunities, wishes

We plan to continue these activities in the year to come. We will consider other Community Services projects as they are brought to our attention. The more volunteers we get, the more we can do.

GREETER COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT to WSUU Board of Trustees

Submitted by: Laura H. White, Chair Greeters Committee

5/6/16

Activities and accomplishments from June 2015 to May 2016

* 11 committee members rotated responsibilities as welcoming ambassadors to Westside each Sunday by greeting members and new visitors, providing information on our activities and website to visitors, referring new families to our RE program, handing out orders of service and ushering during the offering. An average of 4 Greeters were scheduled each Sunday.

* Greeters also assisted with special events such as the Christmas Eve Family and Candlelight Service.

*Collaborated with the RE program side by side to welcome new visitors and families to Westside.

Goals for next year:

- * Recruit 3-5 new committee members due to natural attrition and to not overburden present committee members.
- * Collaborate with Membership, Board and staff to provide promotional handout materials about Westside UU membership and programs for new visitors and families.
- * Recommend continued partnership at front area with RE program.

Committee/group needs, opportunities, wishes:

- **Permanently fix any water leaks in the windows or roofing to eliminate ongoing damage to RE materials, tables, rug and ceiling and complete final repair of the ceiling crossbeam.
- * Maintain or highlight congregation-wide recruitment in our weekly update for new Greeter committee members as needed.
- * Continue to refresh the narthax area with improved tables for New Visitors and RE combined (has worked very well but tables are old). Our art banners (Alice) and improved signage (Laura) have been well received.
- *Consider relocating to an alternate location the large cabinet temporarily located in the narthex to improve traffic flow in a tight space.

BUILDING COMMITTEE

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by: Rose Sheppard

04/18/2016

Activities and accomplishments from June 2015 – May 2016

- Our electrical wiring has been 90% mapped thanks to electrician, Jaison Briar (a friend of Soph Davenport), Soph, Rose, and especially Charlie Wilson who is putting all the information together on a map.
- The massive water intrusion into the NW stairwell due to an anomalous storm in August of 2015 was repaired by McBride Construction and covered by insurance except for the \$2500 deductible. We spent an additional \$1450 to extend the new carpeting to the 3rd floor hallway and the rest of the stairs.
- Cliff has purchased a needle blocker that looks like a metal lady bug (and happens to be called a lady bug) to keep the NW roof scupper from filling up and causing the water to run down the NW stairwell wall. He has been monitoring it that corner.
- Ongoing maintenance items such as the furnace inspection by Soph Davenport is done every fall and freeing the roof of debris are being monitored by our volunteers and attended to as needed.
- Keeping up with burned out lights as well as other things that come up is a constant job done by Cliff Houlihan.
- The mechanical aspects of our building are in good shape due to the efforts of the committee volunteers, our observant members.

- The BC and Landscape Committee joined together to clean the parking lot and the hedge was trimmed in preparation for the Plant Sale at the end of April.
- Regarding the vestibule leak: Steve Depew was consulted about the leak in the vestibule wind and rain. He said the difference in pressure sucks the water in from around the window. He advised removing all caulking around the big window in the center and resealing it.
- At Steve's recommendation, Steadfast Construction was hired to do the work. We are now waiting for a wind storm to see if the repair was successful. If it passes the test, we will box in the metal beam.
- A Safety Committee, headed by Charlie Wilson, has been formed. This committee is not actually part of the Building Committee, but we will cooperate as needed.

Goals for next year

Re-glaze the big windows in the front of the building. **This is a priority that should be attended to before the bad weather.**

- Replace windows that have failed as funds allow.
- Fix sidewalk by front door as funds allow.
- Replace ugly exterior wall in front of building as funds allow.
- To install or expand current lighting in the parking lot. Cliff will oversee this before the fall.
- To repair the NW corner of the parking lot. John Monahan will oversee this.

Wishes:

- We hope that the budget will allow for an occasional handyman/janitor to take pressure off Cliff and our cleaning volunteers
- Be able to set aside 15-20K each year for future maintenance items per the capital needs assessment report.

TEAM LANDSCAPE

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by: Rose Sheppard

04/21/16

Activities and accomplishments from June 2015 – May 2016

- In conjunction with Seattle Tilth/Food Justice and Westside's Food First initiative, we installed 2 large planter boxes to grow vegetables.
- Some of us attended the 3 classes put on by Seattle Tilth.
- We grew about 150 pounds and donated the produce to the White Center Food Bank, Lettuce Pray, and our members in need. This was part of our Food Justice commitment.
- Sweet Pea asked if they could use our Zen Garden space for a play area. We said yes.
- In order to move the Zen Garden to our main south side garden, we had to take out the rhodies. We did this.

- The plants were moved and new ones purchased with funds remaining from our grant through Seattle Tilth. Our little Buddha statue looks totally content in his new location.
- The wall was painted a dark brown color which looks better behind the plants than the white paint. The paint will be extended along the wall by the office steps for a more mellow effect.
- The vegetables have been planted for our new season.
- The Landscape and Building Committees joined together to clean the parking lot and the hedge was trimmed in preparation for the Plant Sale at the end of April.

Goals/wishes

- To attract someone willing to head the food growing aspect of the garden.
- To build a simple bench for the new Zen Garden area. This will be done by June.
- To have the right amount of sunshine and rain but be grateful for whatever comes our way.

CIRCLE SUPPERS

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by Joan Whitley

April 12, 2016

Activities and accomplishments from June 2015 to May 2016

Circle Suppers were scheduled each month from October, 2015 to June 2016.

Circle Supper interest was lower than I understood it to be. There was only one or two dinners each month. Finding hosts was difficult, although a few people stepped up to host. I hosted 3 times; Theresa McCormick 2; Jim and Barb Horton 2; Candace Sullivan 1; Ursula Ham & Richard Clark 1; Carole Stewart 1; Scott & Faith Iverson 1.

Had I not hosted there would have been interested people who would not have had any opportunity to take part. I don't object to hosting and coordinating. I was surprised when I was the only host.

However, the biggest complaint I had from hosts was the lack of RSVP's from guests. I hosted three times and attended a circle supper hosted by another person. I enjoyed all four events and had good reports from guests attending.

There has never been enough interest to have a list of alternates for circle supper. When someone dropped out, there was not anyone to step up and take their place. This results in a really small group and places more pressure on the host.

At this point, I have a small group of guests for May, but no hosts.

Goals for next year

This has been a successful long-term activity that gathered together a small groups of people for socializing and becoming acquainted outside of academic classes or community work.

However, if the interest is not there, perhaps this group should take a break for the coming year.

There may be other ways for people to meet each other people and socialize and become acquainted in a supportive manner. I believe more informal coffee-meetings have been suggested.

This congregation has a very full plate. However, I was disappointed that more long-term members did not reach out to meet new members through this venue.

CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Annual report to WSUU Board of Trustees and congregation

Submitted by Arline Borella, Chair

The committee has seen a little activity this year some concerns brought to its chairperson related to congregational issues. Some were resolved with a simple discussion. Some were of a larger nature and were resolved through committees working with the issues.

There are times when the decisions of the majority and what is best for the larger picture must be accepted.

No facilitating meetings between members were held.

We will continue to address issues as they are brought to us either individually or if needed as a group. This group probably needs to be restructured when we have a new permanent minister as the members have all been on the committee for greater than five years.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE (MarCom)

Annual Report to WSUU Board of Trustees

Submitted by: Nikki Roberg, Committee Chair

Date: May 4, 2016

Activities and Major Accomplishments (June 2015-May 2016)

- Committee formed with new committee chair in October 2015
- Recruited two members this year (Mark MacKay and Christine Morrell)

- Met with Staff to understand current communication systems and needs
- Created and distributed a congregation-wide survey to garner information about current communication vehicles (mainly website and eNews) and ideas for improvements
- Supported Climate Justice group in community outreach for their April speaker, Zarna Joshi
- Coordinated design and production of Black Lives Matter banner
- Helped Church Administrator make minor design improvements to eNews
- Worked with Interim Minister and Board President to develop communication materials for interim ministry and ministerial search (have not been widely distributed)

Goals for Next Year

- Complete analysis of congregational feedback of website and eNews (by June)
- Move WSUU.org website over to WordPress for easier content, update content and structure as needed during process (large project) (Summer 2016)
- Increase collaboration between Communications Committee and other committees for improved community outreach for services, speakers, events, etc.
- Improve congregational outreach via email, as dictated by survey feedback
- Recruit another committee member with community outreach experience
- Create a communications calendar to assist staff and committees with lead times and scheduling of communications to the congregation and the larger community.
- Improve our Facebook presence, at least within the congregation, for an added way to communicate news and events throughout the week.

Committee Needs

- We will likely be in need of an additional WordPress developer to help with porting the website over to new templates. (Uncertain whether anyone has this skill set within the congregation.)
- Volunteers with some writing and content management skills to help input copy on the new site.
- A volunteer skilled in community outreach to help guide those efforts.

VISION MISSION TEAM

Annual Report to WSUU Board of Trustees

Submitted by Tracy Burrows, Team Lead

April 24, 2016

Team Members: Tracy Burrows, Scott Iverson, Marion Kee, Roseanne Lorenzana, Kyra Maynard, Ed Smith, Candace Sullivan

Requested Action: Congregational approval of the proposed Vision and Mission Statements, including the list of commitments that we make as part of the mission.

Committee Purpose:

The Mission Vision Team was initiated in November 2015 to work with the congregation to develop a proposed mission and vision that will:

- Assist the ministerial search committee to define the qualities that we want in our next minister;
- Help to establish priorities that are aligned with our vision and mission;
- Guide the Board in developing objectives for the coming year; and,
- Provide the foundation for the work of the stewardship and membership committees.

Definitions:

Vision: A carefully defined picture of the congregation's future. It should answer the question:

- What do we want the congregation to look like in five or ten years as a result of its ministry, programming, and outreach?

Mission: A concise statement of who we are and what we value. The mission statement should answer the following questions:

- What is our core identity and our purpose?
- What must we do to carry out that purpose?
- How do we do it?

Both the vision and mission statements should be short enough to remember and easily communicate, and strong enough to inspire.

Process:

The Mission Vision Team solicited input from the congregation in a variety of ways. Members and friends of Westside shared their views on congregational priorities through a Mission Vision Survey. The survey tallied 122 responses between December 15, 2015 and January 6, 2016.

The Team also facilitated two Vision Mission workshops in January that were attended by over 70 members and friends. The workshops explored the aspects of WSUU that we place the greatest value on, our wishes for change, and our vision for the future.

In addition, we distributed two successive drafts of the Vision Mission Statement through the newsletter and received additional comments via email and in person at the coffee hour after three Sunday Services in February.

The product of this work is the attached Vision and Mission Statements, including a list of commitments we make to carrying out our mission.

SUNDAY MORNING FLOWERS

Annual Report to WSUU Board of Trustees
Submitted by Peggy Abby, Team Lead
May 4, 2016

We have four flower ladies now and some will do a double shift when there are five Sundays. All is well with no budget requests.

SPIRITUAL STUDY GROUP

Annual Report to WSUU Board of Trustees
Submitted on April 26, 2016 by Cynthia Townsend, who along with Robert Pacht is group co-facilitator, (main communicator & chief cheerleader).

We have worked hard this year, and have kept our group from dying, after 6 years of Rev. Peg's leadership, and we have found a sweet, relaxed intimacy and a quirky sense of fun.

An example of that ridiculous silliness is that we have been joking about listing our goal here as: "All of us will have become Spiritual Giants by the end of May 2017."

In June of last year, when Rev. Peg retired, about 12 people came to our average meeting. This year we've had a core group of about 6 members. During that time we have discussed Eckart Toole's A New Earth-Awakening to Your True Life's Purpose, 2 chapters a month. Our feelings about that book have ranged from: "egotist-bunk" to "extremely insightful and useful thoughts about how to live a life based on mindfulness." And that is part of the beauty of our group. It is a disciplined way to make sure you read some spiritual good stuff and even if you hated it, you might still gain something, from hearing how other group members experienced it.

Next year we will discuss another spiritual book, and our goal is to use it to continue seeking, probing, and sharing new spiritual adventures, with curiosity & love for one other.

As a gifted small group leader, herself, Shannon has been a tremendous help to us this year.

We would all love to have new members share their spiritual journeys with us, so we are considering these ways that might facilitate that:

1. Telling other people about our group and inviting them to try us out.
2. Having a special table at fall coffee hours &
3. Choosing a meeting night, other than Monday, when the choir meets.

Blessings to us all, and especially to our Board, who we hope won't forget to take their blood pressure medicine!

COVENANT GROUPS

Annual Report to WSUU Board of Trustees

Submitted by: Steve Becker

May, 2016

This report covers the 2015-2016 season of Westside's Covenant Group program.

Activities:

This year was one of rebuilding this ministerial program following the retirement of Reverend Peg Morgan last May. In the fall, we actively marketed group participation through a Sign-Up table in the Social Hall and planned for three groups. Sue Mariconda, and Dejon Shegrud volunteered as Facilitators with myself as a back-up if needed. Sue's group has met twice a month on the first and third Tuesdays. Dejon's group began meeting but attendance dropped and he discontinued after the first few weeks. Nevertheless, we added a new Covenant Group, led by Eileen Duffy, in April, with 17 people in attendance.

Goals:

- 1.0. To assemble a group of 4 trained Facilitators by August 31, 2016.
- 2.0. To actively market new participants throughout the fall.
- 3.0. To enroll at least 25 participants by October 31, 2016.
- 4.0. To develop two new covenant groups.

Needs, opportunities, wishes:

The Covenant Group program is a ministry; as such, it needs support from the minister in the form of advocacy from the pulpit, notifications to the congregation of its value, and communication of the message to all that this is a worthwhile activity with many benefits. Looking ahead, this program will need the support of the incoming Interim minister, or, at least, the Worship Committee.

I want to thank the Board, in particular Joe Rettenmaier, for his support of this program in recent years.

YOUTH/ADULT COMMITTEE (YAC)

ANNUAL REPORT to WSUU Board of Trustees

Submitted by: Betsy Lowry

May 2016

Activities and accomplishments from June 2015 to May 2016

- Added two new youth advisors to our team, and sent two advisors to youth ministry training.
- Sent three youth and one advisor to GA in Portland in June of 2015, where they participated in the Youth Caucus and other GA activities. One youth volunteered with the cyber café, and one served as a WSUU delegate. This June we will send Eli Breidford to GA, where he will be serving on the Youth Caucus staff.

- Implemented the high level of activity and traditions we have established for youth ministry at Westside, including weekly Youth Group sessions, two overnights, attending district Con retreats, fundraising, offering a youth-led service, and participating in UU opportunities nationally (GA, Goldmine Leadership School).
- Supported youth to be part of our district Youth Conference staff; Goldmine Leadership School staff; our newly formed district Multicultural Team for youth ministry; to attend Youth/Adult Chaplain Training; and to participate in the national UU Luminary Leaders program.
- We are sending two youth to Thrive Leadership School for youth of color in Colorado in July.
- Engaged in discussion around youth-selected topics of change, mental health issues, racism, and social justice.
- Developed and delivered a youth-led service around the theme of change, which seemed to be highly regarded and well received by our congregation. With scaffolding and support, the youth developed the liturgy and wrote all of their parts, with full ownership of this service.
- Offered a successful Coming of Age program with seven freshman youth that included two-hour sessions every other week, overnights, a retreat with a silent wilderness walk, and a closing dinner ceremony where youth shared their credos.
- Planned and offered a smooth integration of seven new youth into Westside's Youth Group.
- Supported youth in finding a natural place to lead and integrate authentically within the larger Westside community, including participation in worship services, music, childcare, teaching RE, supporting the RE summer program, the Worship Council, and the Youth Adult Committee.
- Operated as a self-sustaining unit financially within the congregation, with no operating budget allocated for youth ministry. Successfully implementing two fundraisers (greens sale and annual BBQ). We are grateful to dedicated advisors and community members who contribute funds to make each youth event happen.
- Held quarterly Youth Adult Committee meetings.
- Continued to engage youth in our Westside community activities, so that their presence and energy is felt by the entire congregation of all ages.

Goals for next year

- Grow the volunteer team and leadership that is supporting our thriving youth ministry at Westside.
- Identify a youth program leader who is willing to volunteer the time, passion and energy needed to run a vibrant youth ministry like Westside's.
- Work with the larger WSUU community to grow our capacity to financially support our youth programs in the operating budget, including payment for a lead youth advisor.
- Increase our social action activity, drawing on the rich awareness of social justice issues discussed this year.
- Explore the possibility of a heritage trip to our partner village in Romania for youth.
- Continue to educate the congregation about youth integration into committees, worship, and other community activities, where they can serve as authentic members.
- Actively participate in community discernment discussions and activities through our transition to a called minister.

Committee/group needs, opportunities, wishes

- Our need: To have a budget that supports Westside's youth ministry.
- Our wish: To identify passionate leadership to help us continue to grow in our understanding of how to structure a highly effective youth ministry program that incorporates spirituality, worship, social action, connectedness, authentic involvement in the broader community, and fun.

- Opportunities: Our youth and our Youth Adult Committee can play a strong role in our community and conversations as we move through our transition period.

INCOME STRATEGY TASK FORCE

Interim REPORT to WSUU Board of Trustees

Submitted by: Alice Britt

May 2016

Purpose and Duration: Last June, the Income Strategies Task Force was formed to identify and recommend income-generating strategies and coordinate fundraising events to achieve maximal financial efficiency and donor/volunteer support. It was decided that the Task Force would exist through June of 2016 at which time the purpose and direction of the Task Force would be reassessed by Task Force members and the Board of Trustees.

Membership: Membership of the Task Force membership consisted of Shannon Day, Alice Britt, Michael Matz and Steve Becker (replaced after a few months with Joanne Cook). Jean Mendel was assigned as Board liaison.

Responsibilities/Authorities were identified as follows:

- Identify existing fundraising events and strategies including, at minimum, the date of the events, event leadership, volunteer commitment, projected income, and disbursement of profit to the general fund or special program.
- Identify best fundraising practices by other UU congregations.
- Identify new income raising strategies for current and future fundraising initiatives. (Ideas to be solicited from the general membership of the congregation as well as the Leadership Assembly.)
- Create a calendar of fundraising events for the 2015-2016 church year that will include the date of the event, event leadership, volunteer commitment, projected income, and disbursement of profit to the general fund or special program. The Task Force will endeavor to schedule fundraising activities for the year for maximum financial impact, and donor/volunteer support.
- Create for approval by the Board of Trustees a prioritized list of criteria for vetting new fundraising proposals.
- Develop a process for vetting new fundraising proposals and conduct a trial of the process through June, 2016.
- Communicate the process for vetting new fundraising projects to the congregation through the WSUU e-News and Leadership Assembly.
- Coordinate with the Membership Committee to develop a Volunteer Resource Guide and a Marketing Guide to support those leading fundraising projects.

Accomplishments/Recommendations: Many of the above tasks have been accomplished. The ISTF continues to work on others. A final report with our recommendation for future direction will be submitted to the Board in July. The following highlights accomplishments to date:

- Annual Event Calendar: In September 2015, we created a calendar of proposed fundraising activities, date of event, leadership, volunteer commitment, project income and disbursement of profit to the general fund or special program. While the calendar proved to simply be a beginning point for event planning, it did serve as a general guideline and helped avoid overlapping events and putting stress on our volunteers.

Our calendaring experience this year served to underline the importance of pinning down significant church activities early in the fall. The calendar should include, not only fundraising events, but also significant retreats, major youth activities, annual meeting, concerts, etc. We recommend that the Board, staff and all committee leads be asked to submit major activities for the year in September if at all possible. (It should be noted that by the time our Labor of Love Auction events are added in late January, it can be a challenge to find available dates, especially on the weekends.)

- Vetting Process for New Income-generating strategies: In the fall of 2015, we created a process for submitting and vetting new fundraising proposals. The purpose of the “vetting” process is to ensure that new projects are coordinated with other WSUU activities so that neither our volunteers nor our membership at large are overly taxed with multiple fundraisers occurring close together. Ideally, we would like to see no more than one fundraiser per month including our annual “internal” auction (LOLA) and, perhaps, one “external” fundraiser such as the Garden Fair in which the wider community is invited.

Our new vetting process has been used several times this year (for Phil Harris’s OMG oil and vinegar holiday sale, Janet Sweet’s upcoming concert and the Garden Fair), and it has worked well. We still have some work to do to ensure that the congregation understands and uses the process.

It is important to note that any fundraising we do serves only to **supplement** our annual pledging; and it is our pledges from which WSUU should derive the lion’s share of its operating budget. There is a clear limit as to how much additional fundraising we can expect of our congregation.

- New income-generating strategies: In the Fall of 2015, we generated a long list of potential income generating activities. As a community, we are excellent at coming up with creative ideas, and we are able to find folks to help out with small tasks and sign up to help on the day of a planned event. However, it remains a challenge to find leadership to plan and oversee fundraising activities.

The Westside Plant & Garden Fair was initiated this year as a possible new strategy for generating income and increasing our involvement (and visibility) in the wider West Seattle community. This event was extremely successful. In order to offer this event again, however, additional leadership would have to be found to assist in the planning and organization of the event.

- Collaboration among WSUU committees: In our work to date, we have become increasingly aware of overlapping goals of several of our committees including Income Strategies, Finance, Stewardship, Membership and Publicity. Mutual collaboration and support would be beneficial to all. Here are some examples:
 - Income Strategies/Membership/Publicity/Finance – At WSUU, we have a number of events (classes, concerts, etc.) that would be of interest to the wider community and should be advertised beyond our friends and members (e.g., Olio, classes on environmental issues and the recent Islam series). Some events may generate a little income, but more importantly, they may serve to attract more like-minded people to our congregation. This is an area where Membership, Publicity and Income Strategies could work together. It would also be important in the budgeting process to maintain a line-item for publicity.
 - Income Strategies/Finance/Board – While several of our income-generating efforts (e.g., LOLA, soup lunches) are fairly consistent from year to year in the amount of money they generate, other income-generating activities (e.g., book sale, rummage sale) have not been consistent. During the budgeting process it is important to review each of these activities to determine if they are likely to remain reliable sources of income, rather than just assume that they will generate the same or greater income the following year.

ISTF Continuing Efforts: Between now and the end of June, the Income Strategies Task Force will . . .

- Continue to provide support for our smaller income-generating events.
- Begin the process of developing a Volunteer Resource Guide and a Marketing Guide to support those leading fundraising projects.
- Investigate what congregations of similar size are doing to generate income beyond pledge income.
- Recommend what form (if any) the Income Strategies Task Force should take in the future.