



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

DEACONS

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 4th, 2018

Attendance:

Yes	No		Yes	No	
■		Peg Birk (2020)	■		Gloria Wallace (2019)
■		Claire Colliander (2021), <i>Treasurer</i>	■		Greg Zoidis (2019)
■		Ed Curtiss (2019)	■		Paula Northwood, <i>Acting Senior Minister</i>
■		Katie Dillon (2021), <i>Clerk</i>	■		Beth Faeth, <i>Minister for Congregational Care</i>
■		David Homans (2020)	■		Seth Patterson, <i>Director of Spiritual Formation and Theater</i>
■		Claire Kolmodin (2020)	■		Dan Wolpert, <i>Interim Minister</i>
■		Brian Siska (2021), <i>Moderator</i>			

GUESTS: Allison Campbell Jensen

Actions Taken:

Item 1. Minutes of the previous meeting electronically approved.

Item 2: Motion to approve recommended changes to the Purposes brought forth by the Racial Justice Initiative. Moved by Peg, seconded by Greg, motion approved unanimously.

Agenda and Minutes

Meditation (David)

Dave shared a piece with the group that he had written a about 4 years ago.

Process Time- Prompting question “What have people been noticing at Plymouth?”

- Positive comments about Claire’s profile in the Flame and work of Deacons and Leadership Council, struck by how affirming it is especially compared to a year ago
- Great that we are having conversations within the church around things like the embroideries
- Comparing where we were 15 months ago to today there is a remarkable shift, filled with gratitude for the work that clergy and staff have done to facilitate that change
- People are loving the new energy in the church
- Conversations around radical hospitality have been interesting and deep

Reports

Ministers:

Paula has been hosting afternoon teas where she shares a bit and allows a lot of time for questions, these have been good for correcting some lingering misinformation and have been fun to do (they have been full). Saturday folks made about 150 phone calls about the stewardship campaign, there has been some concern expressed about where the church is going and we need to make sure to be communicating out into the wider congregation. Paula has been spending a lot of time on the embroidery process and we need to make sure we are communicating out the phases of this process and what those look like. Paula wants to hire a 10-hour a week outreach coordinator. The personnel

committee is doing great working getting things like manuals up to date. Overall staff moral seems high, this is a refreshing change from previous years.

Beth wrapped up a book study on forgiveness last week, it was very powerful and a meaningful theological topic. Beth invited several members who have specialties in mental health to come together to discuss how we might pursue some offerings around mental health here at Plymouth; some neighboring churches are doing some of this type of work also. Beth does quite a few home visits and especially does a number of visits in the time leading up to Christmas. Thematic worship has been well received; the Board of Worship and clergy are looking at using the Purposes of the Church through a racial justice lens as the theme to take us through to Easter. Beth works with the Mortality Project, they are working on a panel conversation on hospice. We had a post-election prayer gathering and Seth and Beth will be hosting a longest night service in December.

Dan sent a written report prior to the meeting.

Seth shared that the first few months of the new schedule has been embraced. 10 o'clock education hour has been well attended. Sunday Forum and Spiritual Exploration committee have finalized the programs for the upcoming 'semester', and will continue to listen to what people respond to. Dan and others will be leading class on theology of the Purposes of the Church, and would like to include the Deacons in leading those conversations. 100 Hands continues to go well and is expanding- this is an activity which is some people's only access point to Plymouth. The Theater is continuing to diversify the voices on our stage, especially in this coming season and have changed the way the theater is rented to include more theater companies.

Moderator (Brian):

In January Deacons are scheduled to meet with Beth and Seth individually to discuss their ministry at Plymouth (part of our monitoring schedule in governing policies), Brian would like other Deacons to participate in that (Brian asked for Deacons interested in participating to email him). Dan's year contract is up May 21st, some questions may come up around what Dan will be focused on between now and then; vision work is one of the big pieces. The vision team has met once and will be meeting again this week and going forward; included in the vision group conversation is thinking about how we move forward and create groundwork for the future Minister Search Committee. Racial Justice Initiative sent out proposed adjustments to Purposes Document; Deacons discussed that changing the Purposes is within the governing policies and is part of the Deacons responsibility and authority, and the changes feel appropriate given the passion and focus on racial justice we have seen growing among the members of the church. A motion was made by Peg to approve the recommended changes to the Purposes, this was seconded by Greg and unanimously approved.

The Deacons had a discussion about what the future ministry model for Plymouth will need in order to succeed, including how lay leaders will need to share in some of the work (this is a paradigm shift we will need to be embracing). This will also include defining what our mission and calling is to shape how we do the work and what the ministry model would need to look like.

Treasurer (Claire C.):

Claire asked that the Deacons talk about any grand assumptions or things we want to be considered in budget; questions to consider will be the Community Fund, proposed draw from co-mingled funds, and comfort around using restricted funds for their intended purposes (Claire will bring some of this to Deacons in more detail in January ahead of the budget work).

Other Matters

Racial Justice/Social Justice

Board of Worship created a covenant for their board related to Racial Justice and other boards will be working on that also. The embroidery discussions and large Racial Justice topic have elicited some good conversations between Brian, Deb Fowler, Sara Lehman and some ministers. The Leadership Council has taken ownership of much of the process regarding the embroideries- this includes the listening sessions, education phase and then a decision-making phase; Paula and Sara will create a timeline around the process. Racial justice also needs to infuse within the vision work.

One question that we as Deacons can think about- What kind of transformation are we being invited into?

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

Next Meeting Preview

Joint Meeting with Leadership Council January 8th, 2019

Congregational Dialogue

Next Meeting

January 8th, 2019

*Respectfully submitted,
Katie Dillon, Clerk*