



Plymouth

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

BOARD OF WORSHIP

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 13, 2018

Attendance:

Yes	No		Yes	No	
■		Karen Barstad (2020), <i>Chair</i>	■		Nancy Geertz-Larson (2020), <i>Secretary</i>
■		Jamie Bonczyk (2019)	■		Karl Jones (2019)
■		Andrea Bubula (2021)	■		Jasper Jonson (2019)
	x	Rossi Clem (2019)		x	Penelope Needham (2020)
■		Beth Faeth, <i>Staff Liaison</i>	■		Maureen Tanis (2021)

GUESTS:

Actions Taken:

Item 1. Minutes of the previous meeting electronically approved.

Item 2.

Item 3.

Focusing Ourselves

Opening thought – Nancy

Nancy shared two poems she wrote.

Recommitting to our Covenant

Board of Worship Racial Justice Covenant

Oh God, as people of faith, we as the Board of Worship covenant with you, with one another and to Plymouth Congregational Church to:

- Become better informed about people of other races and cultures, that we may overcome the fears and misconceptions that exist;
- Consider how issues of racial prejudice and privilege affect each person with whom we come in contact;
- Discover and acknowledge practices and structures that may be racist within Plymouth Congregational Church and our supporting faith community;
- Work to erase the sins of racism and injustice where they exist in Plymouth Congregational Church and within our faith community; and
- Prayerfully heed Your call to embrace people of all races.”

Karen shared two sermons she received from Mary Wellvang preached by H.A. Stimson.

Minutes Procedure

Minute-taker submits draft to group within 10 days of meeting; members have 7 days to submit revisions (no response is treated as approval).

If any revisions, minute-taker forwards revised draft to group within 3 days for electronic approval; members have 2 days to respond (no response is treated as approval).

Minute-taker submits approved minutes in Microsoft Word format to the Ministry Assistant for Programs (Doug Freeman, dougf@plymouth.org) upon approval.

Discussion Items

Update from Beth on clergy plans for worship themes for January – April, and incorporating racial justice into worship services

- Beth shared the board's theme idea with clergy. One concern raised was how racial justice would be incorporated into each service.
- Statement drafted to be included in each bulletin – an apology/acknowledgement for the church being built on native land. Racial Justice Committee is also framing discussion about the embroidery.
- Racial Justice Committee has made some suggested changes to the Purposes of the Church – subtle changes made and recommended to the Deacons. The Deacons adopted the changes unanimously.
- Other boards are working on their own version of a Racial Justice covenant. The boards have been asked to view it through the lens of their board's work.
- There will be a second leadership day in February.
- Jim Bear Jacobs is coming to preach at Plymouth in February. He has raised concerns about the embroidery when he has visited Plymouth in the past.
- Will we as a church unify ourselves around a Racial Justice Covenant?
- If the "apology/acknowledgement" is only in our bulletin, are we just talking to ourselves?
- A possible goal is a change of our hearts, not just making public statements without full buy-in. We have a lot more work to do before making public statements.
- Anything we put in writing needs to be backed by our action. Many people in this neighborhood who are homeless are native. Yes, we need to get the message out. And we need to make sure it is the truth of more than just a section of Plymouth.
- Conversations about the embroidery is continuing.
- Suggest making sure there is consistency in message, between message and practice, unity among all the different things the church is doing.
- Our goal is that our worship is more inviting and welcoming to people of color.
- There are people experiencing pain, so there is desire to make changes more quickly.
- There is no time limit on this work. The work is continuous.
- We can only be together if everyone is aware of how they are contributing to institutional racism. Working to acknowledge white privilege is personal work & takes time.
- The embroideries have given us a concrete thing to stimulate conversations and reflections.
- Are there things we can incorporate into worship that can help move us along this journey? Our approach to Racial Justice needs to be a spiritual one. A culture shift needs to come from our hearts. The Board of Worship could be instrumental in leading spirit work outside of Sunday morning worship....an opportunity to ask deeper questions.
- Might Lent be a good time to address the spiritual work of racial justice?
- Jan Rabbers has led the creation of the Lenten Meditation book in the past. Would it be possible to have that booklet include some prompting questions?
- Beth will still try to arrange a time in January to have a planning meeting. Epiphany lasts from Christmas until Lent. Are there other stories or readings to add to the service?

Ideas for using the extra \$1000 in our budget for church growth

- This \$1000 is for current fiscal year which ends June 30, 2019
- "Growth" can be growth in numbers, growth spiritually, growth fiscally, growth racially
- Idea to use the money to experience one of Jim Bear's sacred site tours. We could then share our reflections on the experience with the rest of the congregation. There are currently no tours scheduled.
- Suggest that we let it percolate.
- Is there something we could do out in the world, not just communicating to ourselves.
- Karl suggests we attend an African American Church in North Minneapolis – that would be free, but instructive.
- Many people don't come because they don't realize they are invited.

Communications to First & Second Service Committees regarding clergy decisions

What needs to be communicated before changes are made in these services?

When is Board approval appropriate?

- Suggestion: if clergy has a new idea, share the idea via email with the committee.
- Second Service committee had suggestion to “turn & greet your neighbor”. It hasn’t been incorporated into Second Service yet because of timing.

Upcoming worship services

- *The Longest Night* service on December 20 at 5:00 pm
 - Would be helpful to have someone from the Board to usher & hand out bulletins.
 - Karen will be there
- Christmas Eve – 4:45pm, 7:45 pm, 10:45 pm – needs for ushers and greeters (Karl will be out of town)
 - 4:45 – need more ushers & a head usher; Jasper will check with families of children who will be singing in service, Jasper will be a head usher
 - 7:45 – have a full team
 - 10:45 – need 3 more ushers & a head usher;
 - Also need more people for December 23
 - Karl will send email instructions
- Epiphany (ran out of time to discuss)

Other Business

Committee concerns

Plastic communion cups we have in stock are recyclable.

Next Meeting

Thursday, January 10, 2019, 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Fireside Room

Opening thought: Karl

Closing thought by: Jasper

Going Forth from this space

Closing thought: Maureen shared an ee cumings poem

*Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Geertz-Larson, secretary*