



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

BOARD OF COMMUNITY LIFE

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 13 2019

Attendance:

Yes	No	
■		Emi Bennett Vo (2019), <i>Chair</i>
■		Beth Faeth, <i>Staff Liaison</i>
■		Jess Ahlemeier (2020)
■		Heidi McCallister (2021)

Yes	No	
■		Fran Neir (2021)
■		Remona Weaver (2021)
■		Matthew Wiandt (2020)
■		Brad Wieman (2019)

Actions Taken:

Item 1. Minutes of the previous meeting were electronically approved.

Reflection

Heidi shared some passages from L. R. Knost, a children’s rights activist. Thanks, Heidi!

RACIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE DISCUSSION / Guest - Catherine Shreves

- Catherine shared an essay titled **Ten Myths White People Believe About Racism** with the group, prior to our meeting, and asked for our feedback.
 - Thoughts regarding the ten myths that were called out in the essay.
 - What experience(s) first made you aware of systemic racism?
 - Thoughts regarding how education can help contribute to solving racism, or how it can unwittingly hinder solving it.
 - People tend to look for a spiritual community of ‘like’ individuals. How do we attract more people of other races/cultures?
 - While we want to foster an atmosphere that is welcoming to everyone, the Racial Justice Initiative’s current focus is not necessarily increasing the presence of people who are ‘not like’ us. Rather, they’re coordinating opportunities to help our congregation learn about the reality of systemic racism, white privilege etc., in order to help us become more aware and informed as we move toward a culture of welcoming everyone.
 - Catherine and Pat Hoven will be returning to our next meeting to continue this discussion.
 - Think about what was discussed in our February meeting, and come prepared to share additional thoughts, as well as to discuss the Racial Justice Covenant that Catherine previously shared with us. How do we see the work that the Racial Justice Initiative is engaged in impacting our own work on the Board of Community Life?

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.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL (All)

- The crafts portion of the Christmas Festival has been under the purview of the Board of Spiritual Formation, with the reception/food portion overseen by the Board of Community Life. However, there may be opportunities to expand the scope of the festival, and its structure.
 - Limiting the purview can result in a small group of volunteers doing the majority of the work.
 - The festival provides opportunities for growth – we would benefit from having multiple perspectives and ideas from various boards when planning it.
 - The current model may not be sustainable without more extensive sponsorship
- Conversations are continuing regarding how festival sponsorship could be restructured, in order to ensure sustainability, and to support growth.
 - Recommendations will be presented to the Leadership Council in the near future
 - How would we transition responsibilities from oversight limited primarily to two boards, to another form of governance?
 - One idea is to form a Christmas Festival Committee, consisting of members from various boards, who would be responsible for organizing various aspects of the festival.
 - Documentation supporting the organization and planning for each year’s festival, published to a central library, would greatly help the organization of future festivals.
 - Sustaining the crafts portion of the festival is an important element...it fosters an inter-generational aspect, and the kids love it.
- We will be discussing this topic again in upcoming meetings – please come prepared with your input and ideas.

EVENT UPDATES (Remona)

- **Member Reunion – March 3rd, 5 – 7 PM**
 - Announcements in Flame, and from the pulpit
 - Remona is asking last year’s members to volunteer to host new members
 - Philip will be a guest musician
- **Spring Fling - May 18, 6 – 9 PM**
 - Plans under way...DJ is confirmed and the deposit has been paid!
- **New Member Classes**
 - During our recent Leadership Day, expansion of the scope of Plymouth’s new member classes was mentioned as an opportunity to be more welcoming to the surrounding community
 - Bryce Hamilton will be working w/Remona re/new ideas
 - Additional ideas/thoughts from are board are welcome!
 - New member brunch is 2/24; asking for volunteers from BCL
- **Sharing the Ministries**
 - Updating documentation on the website for a variety of events
 - Add a feature called ‘Did You Know’? Advertising volunteer opportunities, services, etc.
- **Care Cabinet**
 - Soliciting respite volunteers who could help support church members who are caring full-time for a family member

LEADERSHIP DAY 2 – Focus on Plymouth’s Stance on Racial Justice

- Attendees shared highlights of the day
 - The author of *Acting Black* facilitated a conversation regarding what true racial justice might look like at Plymouth.
 - Members of various boards convened to discuss the challenges Plymouth may face in our journey to making people of other races and cultures feel truly welcome.
 - Sarah Lehman provided an update re the ongoing conversations regarding the embroideries
 - There is some sense that a decision has already been made....it’s important for members to understand that talks are continuing
 - Two more conversations relevant to the embroideries are upcoming
 - We need to find ways to bring the entire congregation in to the conversation
 - Notes from leadership day, including input re the embroideries, will be made available to all Plymouth members
 - Paula and Beth have met with the needlers to be sure their perspectives are heard

- The Purposes of the Church through a Racial Lens continues to be a topic through sermons and through forums
 - 'Options' re 'Consequences' is a recurrent theme

*Respectfully submitted,
Brad Wieman (substitute)*