



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## BOARD OF COMMUNITY LIFE

### Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 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***

Emi shared a poem titled 'The Raincoat', by Ada Limon

### ***RACIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE DISCUSSION (continued) Guests - Catherine Shreves and Pat Hoven***

- Pat and Catherine stressed that we're continuing to learn and understand the impacts of racism, white privilege, and social injustice, and how these things influence decisions made within our church. This is an ongoing process, which gives us opportunities for personal and community growth.
- Pat shared the March 13 meditation from Plymouth's 2019 Lenten Meditations booklet. This meditation encourages stepping outside our comfort zones and advocating for what we know is right when we witness racial/social injustice.
- Catherine shared 'White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack' by Peggy McIntosh
  - This piece addressed institutional racism, listing numerous examples where various systems favor white-skinned people.
  - Members of the group read individual items from the list, and the group shared thoughts relevant to each item.
- How does racial justice impact our board's work?
  - Planning of events is shifting from including only members/attendees of the church, to welcoming members of our diverse surrounding community.
- Racial Justice Covenant Draft
  - Emi previously emailed the covenant draft to the board
  - As a church, we're working towards a final draft of the covenant

#### **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.

- Still deciding how we ultimately endorse and uphold the covenant we adapt
      - We discussed possibly incorporating verbiage relevant to community-building events (BCL work) in to the covenant. More discussion to follow.
  - The expectation is that each board review the covenant, and report their opinions/suggestions back to leadership.
- The Racial Justice Taskforce will continue working with boards, and attending board meetings, to help move things forward.

## ***UPCOMING EVENT PLANNING (All)***

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- **Spring Fling** (May 18, 6 – 9 pm)
  - An article will be published in the April Flame
    - Call for volunteers will be included
    - **Will a call for pot luck dishes also be included?**
  - FYI – floors will be re-finished in Guild Hall and the Sanctuary in June.
    - All furniture in Guild Hall and the Parlor will be removed 5/15 in preparation (including benches and large wooden chairs).
    - Small chairs and folding tables will be available for the Spring Fling.
  - In what ways can we encourage the surrounding community to feel welcome, and encourage their attendance?
    - Possibly reach out to community leaders / neighborhood association groups
- **New Member Initiatives**
  - New Member ‘Host’ Role
    - Discussion re expanding the role of the new member host to acting as a new member sponsor (a more long-term relationship). More to come.
  - New Member Survey
    - Survey new member classes from the past 5 years or so for input re how future new member classes, receptions, brunches, etc. could be improved
      - Possible survey topics
        - What could we do to improve new member orientation (classes, reception, expectations)
        - Do you feel meaningfully connected?
          - Do you know where to find connections in Plymouth to your areas of interest?
        - Are you still attending Plymouth regularly?
          - If not, why?
  - Next new member class is in October
  - What can we do to continue to improve the new member experience?
    - Develop a new member committee
    - Conduct a de-brief after each new member class to garner input re what did and didn’t work
    - Re-structure the role of new member host to encourage a more sustained relationship
- **Block Party (TENTATIVE DATE: JULY 20)**
  - General discussion re planning of the event
    - Theme
      - Carnival atmosphere? (game booths, karaoke / dj, dunk tank, face-painting, food trucks)
      - Invite neighborhood restaurants to participate?

- We have a variety of restaurants from different cultures within our neighborhood
- Would help to encourage diversity in attendance
- Marketing
  - Focus is on encouraging the surrounding community to attend, and making them feel welcome
  - How do we effectively reach out to all members of the community?
    - Steven’s Square Association may be able to help
      - Matthew will do some research
    - Fliers in local businesses?
- Budget
  - \$1,000
  - Should we ask other boards to co-sponsor, in order to increase our budgeting, and to assist with planning responsibilities?
- Facilities
  - Would the church be open to the public (for purposes such as restroom use, etc.)
    - Do we need to facilitate Porta Pottys?
  - Potential ordinance issues
    - Beth is doing some checking
- Much more to discussion and planning to come!

### ***BOARD JOB DESCRIPTION AND ANNUAL REPORTS (Emi)***

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- If you oversee a committee under the purview of the Board of Community Life, you are expected to submit an annual report and job description for that committee at the end of the church year.
- Emi will be sending additional details via email soon.

### ***LEADERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATES***

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- February meeting
  - Focus on decisions re the embroideries, and racial justice
    - Follow-up and highlights from our leadership day in February
    - Deep dive re the Leadership Council’s final decision re the embroidery
      - Leaders broke in to groups and talked thru four potential scenarios, then shared their thoughts with the entire council
    - Lenten Conversations offered
      - Facilitates structured conversations for members of varying opinions, in order to bring everyone to the table to promote respectful sharing of opinions and feelings
      - Unfortunately, enrollment in these conversations has been low.
        - It may be that minds are made up at this point, and people are done talking about this decision.
      - The Lenten conversation start date has been delayed to March 30, and members are still encouraged to sign up.
    - Annette Atkins facilitated a conversation with local Indigenous Community leaders on March 17, for the last of the ‘Embroideries in Context’ discussions
    - The Leadership Council is ultimately responsible for making a final decision, with the Deacons’ blessing....however, **no decision has been made yet!**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Brad Wieman (substitute)*