

Standing Committee Meeting February 18, 2019

Committee Members present: Elaine Mittell (Chair), Kathy Coolidge (Vice-Chair), Lise Olney (Past Chair), Betsy Taylor (Treasurer), Nancy Fenstemacher (Clerk), Andy Kemper, Karen Mariscal, Jim Lillie

Committee Members absent: Karen Quigley

Also attending: Rev. Dr. Kelly Murphy Mason

Opening

Participatory chalice lighting accompanied by a reading by Rev. Kelly

Ratifying email vote taken since January meeting:

Voted to confirm email vote to approve minutes of the January 14, 2019 Standing Committee meeting

Important Dates:

- Stewardship Kick-off Luncheon, February 24, 2019; Parish Hall Dinner Celebration March 22, 2019
- Standing Committee Coffee & Conversation, March 3, 2019, Rice House, 9:30 AM
- Next Standing Committee Meeting, March 11, 2019, 6:30 PM
- Rummage Sale, Saturday, March 30, 2019
- Installation Service for Rev. Kelly, Sunday, April 7, 2019, 3:00 PM
- Auction, April 28, 2019 and May 5, 2019 during Fellowship Hour. (Lise Olney offered to help Elaine Mittell with this fund raiser.)
- Carnival, May 18, 2019
- Comedy Night (at the church), June 2, 2019
- General Assembly, June 19-23, 2019 in Spokane, Washington (We will have four official delegates. The notice for those interested in attending GA will be posted in an upcoming Thursday Update with a deadline date at the end of March. The official delegates will be approved at the April Standing Committee meeting.)

Minister's Report

- Touchstone Groups are in full-swing and moving along successfully.
- Communications with the minister: Listening sessions will continue every other month, the next one on March 17, 12:30 PM in Rice House and another one in May. Rev. Kelly will hold Coffee Chats at Quebrada Baking Co. on Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2019 and Monday, February 25, 2019 from 2-4 PM. Rev. Kelly reports that members of the congregation are meeting individually with her to discuss their Annual "Spirituals." Finally, the Minister's Transition Team will be reintroduced to the congregation.

- A ministerial internship candidate has been identified. A two-year internship is being explored with a possible start date of Summer 2019. Standing Committee accepted a recommendation from the Personnel Committee that Rev. Kelly should extend an offer to the candidate. Details will be confirmed by a contract which Betsy Taylor will draft and submit to Standing Committee for approval at a future meeting.
- Eight members of the congregation will attend a Pastoral Care Team Training Workshop with Rev. Kelly in Providence, RI, on Saturday, February 23, 2019. The plan is to form a lay pastoral care team at UU Wellesley Hills including some of those who attend the training.
- On March 12, 2019, Rev. Kelly will hold a meeting with the Social Justice Council to discuss how to make the social justice programming structure more flexible so that we can be more responsive to emergent issues.

A member of the Advocacy and Witness Group has raised concerns about whether we are investing our endowed funds in socially responsible/fossil fuel free ways. Betsy Taylor responded that she will conduct preliminary research; a working group (to include members of the SC, Advocacy and Witness, and Investment Committee) will eventually be formed to address this concern.

Treasurer's Report

See the Treasurer's Report for February 11, 2018 which is posted on the Church Website.

Updates on Ongoing Initiatives

Archives:

The Standing Committee unanimously approved the transfer of the Church Archives to the Harvard Divinity School. Elaine Mittell, Chair of the SC, will sign the Certificate of Gift agreement (which was vetted by congregation member and intellectual property legal expert, Vic Polk) to execute the transfer.

Website:

Jim Lillie reported that the transition to the new Wordpress Web platform is moving ahead. A team including Jim Lillie, Elaine Mittell, Jessica Srinivas, Lise Olney, Cyra Cody, and Rev. Kelly will meet with Kevin Childress, the website developer, on February 26, 2019.

Stewardship Update:

The Stewardship Drive will be launched on Sunday, February 24, 2019. At a Kick-Off Luncheon, Rev. Kelly will summarize what she has learned about our congregational challenges and our many strengths since her arrival in August 2018. She will share an assessment of our perceived staffing needs that can be addressed through a robust response of financial support by the congregation. The March Coffee & Conversation with the SC and Listening Session with Rev. Kelly will provide opportunities for congregational questions and feedback.

A Stewardship Drive Letter from Rev. Kelly and Standing Committee Chair Elaine Mittell highlights the need for focus on building capacity, thereby enabling us to modernize and grow.

The Stewardship packet is on the church's website and will allow contributors to make a base budget pledge and Catch the Match pledge online.

Safety Planning Update:

A date will be set by Cyra, in collaboration with Andy Kemper, sometime in the spring for a Wellesley Police Department video presentation. Hospitality Team members will be invited with adequate advance notice.

Capital Improvements Task Force Update:

The Task Force has developed a comprehensive list of all projects in the church that need to be addressed. They are still working on researching costs and establishing priorities. The group will meet again soon to establish recommendations to present to Standing Committee and the Capital Campaign group authorized to disburse the remaining \$30,000 from funds collected during the campaign.

150th Anniversary Planning:

Lise Olney reported that the brainstorming session held recently elicited a lengthy, comprehensive list of ways to celebrate UU Wellesley's 150th Anniversary in 2020-2021. She also mentioned that a Wellesley citizen is pursuing the recognition of the writer Sylvia Plath's residency in Wellesley. Sylvia Plath and her family were members of the UU Wellesley Hills Church and Rev. Kelly will write a letter in support of this recognition effort.

Reports from Liaisons

- **Welcoming and Outreach:** Lise Olney reported that a proposal from the consultant is still forthcoming. She is in the process of constituting a working group, to be appointed by the Standing Committee, to vet options presented by the consultant and solicit congregational input.
- **House and Grounds/Facilities Use:** Elaine reported that this task force will be meeting soon to consider 2019-2020 rental rates. Karen Mariscal has been taking an active role in negotiating rental contracts.
Elaine also reported on the meeting with the Board of the Wellesley-Weston Lifetime Learning group to explain the Church's decision not to renew their rental agreement for 2019-2020. This was a difficult meeting, and, thankfully, John Pattillo will help negotiate the conditions for WWLL's final Spring Semester, even though he has now stepped down from the Facilities Use team.
- **Fundraising:** Elaine noted that most of the fundraising events occur in the spring and said we should rethink this schedule for next year.

- **Database implementation:** Jim Lillie reported that half of the leadership team has been trained in the use of the Breeze database and the next step will be to introduce the congregation to the new database. Breeze is compatible with Mail Chimp, so we will have to make a change from the current Constant Contact communications platform; this will likely occur in April.
- **Nominating Committee:** Kathy Coolidge reported that the Nominating Committee is meeting this week to discuss how to fill positions that will be open after the current church year, ending 6/19.
- **Leadership Council:** Kathy reported that Leadership Council members will continue their Breeze training.
- **Personnel Committee Update:** Lise reported on the Personnel Committee's meeting held on February 17, 2019. After careful review with Rev. Kelly, the Personnel Committee determined that UU Wellesley Hills would benefit from a professional re-evaluation of our Religious Education program. Personnel will be searching for an interim or consulting Religious Education Director with this expertise. We are very grateful to Kim Towlun for her service this year and for her help in getting us through this transitional period.

Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Issues

Standing Committee Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the Standing Committee will be on **Monday, March 11, 2019 at 6:30 PM**. Subsequent meetings will take place on April 8, May 13, and June 10—all Monday evenings at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Fenstemacher (Clerk)