

Core Leadership Meeting, April 16, 2018

In attendance: Jen Hoerber, Joe Lee, Christian Hampson, Dorothy Beeman, Pam Johnson, Steve Rummel, Laura Baumgartner, Patty Ferguson, Robbin Price

Review of the Retreat: Laura briefly described our recent retreat, mentioning the three areas of focus that we agreed upon: nurturing a culture of inclusion, encouraging fellowship and discipleship, and putting faith into action. Laura apologized if anyone felt their voices weren't accurately heard later in the retreat, when strong feelings were expressed. Someone commented that our lively discussions feel like a family. Melinda thanked Laura for her leadership, and Joe expressed the opinion that the interactions we had at the retreat were valuable.

Laura shared some ground rules for meetings. We agreed that we generally abide by the rules that were listed, but we also agreed that they would be good to hold on to for future reference.

Hiring a new Nursery Care Provider: Judy Wallace will no longer be providing childcare in the nursery on Sunday mornings after May 27. Jen has tried to find people to work as a hiring committee to fill the position, but has had no luck. She has an updated job description and will be working with Dorothy to get it out. Dorothy wants to make sure the preschool staff and preschool parents see it, since someone there might be qualified and interested in filling the position. The position will also be advertised on Craigslist, in the church newsletter, and at Bellevue College.

Jen asked how Core Leadership wants to fill the position until we have a new person in place. Should we use one of our youth with an adult volunteer, or two youth? After some discussion, we agreed that two of our youth could adequately provide the service. There was some discussion of babysitting services that provide qualified college students to fill sitting needs, but we agreed that familiar people from the church community would be better than strangers. Jen reported that she has several youth who have experience working in the nursery and two subs, all of whom can do the job.

After some discussion, there was a motion.

Motion: It was moved that we rely on a system of using two paid, experienced youth to provide Sunday morning care in the nursery until a permanent nursery attendant is found to replace Judy. The motion passed unanimously.

We also discussed how to thank Judy for her service. It was pointed out that Judy doesn't like a big fuss, and would probably be uncomfortable standing up in front of the congregation. After some discussion, there was another motion.

Motion: It was moved that we use staff support line item monies to pay for flowers for the altar on May 20 in Judy Wallace's honor, as well as to purchase a \$25.00 gift

card for her. It was further moved that we announce her departure in church that day and encourage people to drop by the nursery to thank her for her service. The motion passed unanimously.

Green Team and Initiative 1631: The Green Team supports gathering signatures to get Initiative 1631 on the ballot in November. This initiative calls for putting a price on carbon that would be collected on carbon-based energy imports, such as coal. Its desired goal is to decrease carbon emissions and fight climate change. The money raised would be used in ways that benefit the poorest among us. I cannot adequately summarize the initiative here; interested readers are encouraged to contact members of the Green Team for further information.

The Green Team could have the petitions available in Friendship Hall, or they could gather signatures in front of the QFC. They requested a recommendation from Core Leadership about what actions to take. It was pointed out that some folks are uncomfortable with having something as political as signature gathering inside the church on Sunday mornings, and that people might feel too exposed if they did or didn't sign a petition that was there for all to see.

It was asked whether the team would be acting as individuals or as a group from Aldersgate. Someone also pointed out that wearing shirts indicating that they were a church group would distinguish them from paid signature gatherers.

The signatures must be in by June 30.

After some discussion, Core Leadership recommended that an evening presentation by a speaker on the topic of the initiative, with petitions available for signing by anyone who was interested, would be a great course of action. It was also recommended that this event be advertised to the surrounding community as well as to the congregation. We didn't see a problem with gathering signatures in places outside of church, but we did not recommend having petitions in the church on Sunday mornings. Laura will take back these thoughts to the Green Team for further action.

It was also recommended that an announcement be placed in the Thursday email newsletter. It would invite people to the speaker event, and also list members of the Green Team, so that congregants could approach them with questions, or if they want to sign the petition or help gather signatures.

Common Table set for June 18: June 4 was proposed as the date for the next Common Table, but there was some concern that the UMW circles will be doing year-end activities on the 4th, so it might not be the best date. After some consideration, we agreed that June 18 would be a better date. An agenda for the event is in the works.

NAMI: A representative from the National Alliance on Mental Illness will be presenting in church on Sunday April 29. This will give the congregation a chance to hear about the work they do and the local need for support for those with mental illness. There was discussion about whether we will focus on building a relationship with NAMI in the future and what that might look like. We will be considering this at our next meeting, after we've all had a chance to hear the speaker.

This led to a discussion of how we balance caring for those outside the church with caring for those who are already here in the church. If we want people to stay in our church, we need to make sure we are talking to each other, caring for each other and spiritually feeding each other. It was pointed out that we can all feed each other spiritually; that isn't a job solely reserved for pastors.

We also look forward to finding out what Brad discovers during his sabbatical about nurturing and sustaining the church. We hope that Brad will be able to present his findings at the Common Table in June.

Finance Report: Melinda started by giving us some perspective: in the past five years our budget has increased from roughly \$508,000 to \$526, 000—not a very large increase, given everything we've accomplished.

The stewardship campaign has begun. Tom Breske and the Magoons have spoken, and the Browders will speak this Sunday, followed by Melinda and Jen on April 29. We'll be gathering pledge cards on May 6. After that we'll wait for the numbers and hope to have a balanced budget. Melinda was optimistic that, judging by past results, we should come out well.

We discussed an SPR issue regarding pay equity and agreed to make sure we are fulfilling our commitments. This will need to be factored into the next budget cycle.

We discussed attendance, which has slightly decreased over the last five years, but has basically remained flat.

Announcements: Laura brought several upcoming events to our attention, and encouraged all of us to commit to attending as many as our schedules would allow. They are listed below, as they appeared in Laura's email:

- a. Please sign up for a team for Earth Day Mission Sunday on 4/22, 9am-1pm, and plan to bring a dish to share (made of local ingredients) to the potluck on Mission Celebration Sunday on 4/29, 10am-1pm.
- b. Habitat for Humanity Interfaith Build Steering Committee and tour of facilities for use by homeless residents at Riverton Park UMC 4/22 2-4pm

c. Fostering Interfaith Relationships on the Eastside (FIRE) dialogue "Living with Others in a World of Diverse Beliefs" 4/22 5-8pm at East Shore Unitarian Church in Bellevue

d. Love Thy Neighbor Conference at First UMC, Seattle 4/26 10am-4pm

e. Seattle District Table Talks with the bishop at Edmonds UMC 4/28 1-4pm about The Commission on a Way Forward and how to facilitate hard discussions in local congregations

Please note that the Love Thy Neighbor Conference and the Table Talks with the Bishop at Edmonds UMC both require an RSVP.

At this point, Laura ended the meeting in prayer.

These minutes respectfully submitted by Robbin Price, who was battling a headache on Monday, so any errors (probably) and omissions (undoubtedly) are mine, and corrections will be most appreciated.

Next Meeting: Monday, May 21, 7:00 p.m.

Next Common Table: Monday, June 18

Summary of Motions from this Meeting:

It was moved that we rely on a system of using two paid, experienced youth to provide Sunday morning care in the nursery until a permanent nursery attendant is found to replace Judy. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved that we use staff support line item monies to pay for flowers for the altar on May 20 in Judy Wallace's honor, as well as to purchase a \$25.00 gift card for her. It was further moved that we announce her departure in church that day and encourage people to drop by the nursery to thank her for her service. The motion passed unanimously.