

The First Church of Christ “Old North” in Marblehead, Inc.

Minutes of the Leadership Board – October 21, 2021

Old North Church Vision Statement

Old North Church is an inclusive Christian Community called to bring to life God’s Love and grace by sharing the gospel for this time and place; extending the hospitality Christ showed; embodying God’s love and compassion to those in need; and growing together in our understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit at work in our midst.

Leadership Board

The Leadership Board shall set polity and facilitate the execution of congregational priorities for the church. It shepherds the ongoing visioning process and makes decisions and takes action within the stated vision and approved budget that are outside the scope of a single ministry. It listens with faith and facilitates communications and coordination within and between ministries, the entire congregation and the wider community. It conducts ongoing strategic planning for the church. It may task ad hoc teams with specific action in support of its responsibilities. Sub Committees: PPR, Nominating.

The meeting was called to order via ZOOM by Betsey H. at 7pm. Attending were: Dennis C., Lindsay P., Betsey H., Meg A., Blair L., James H., Rhod S., Sally S. (Prudential). Lindsay led us in an opening prayer. The September minutes were accepted as submitted.

Blair L. gave a positive financial statement which reflected, in part, the PPP that has been officially forgiven by the federal program and now taken fully into church accounts. This is our last year we will have this PPP cushion. Income and expenses are where they have been budgeted for at this time of this year.

A discussion ensued relative to outreach donations to local programs we support as well as the wider UCC. What we donate to the wider UCC is determined by our number of pledging units and currently we may have overpaid. It was suggested that this be a topic taken up at the November meeting once we have spoken to Paul Hare from Outreach for specifics on what our local obligations are through the end of 2021 and then how we can fully support the wider UCC on whose many support systems we depend.

Sally S. from Prudential gave a quick update on the state of our physical property before moving on to the topic of Stewardship. Prudential feels strongly that we are looking at a shortage of funds if we don’t improve our stewardship for this coming year and that this should be prioritized before the capital campaign. With that in mind she asked that all church boards to return their pledge cards by early November for a show of strength to the congregation. Perhaps we might do a phonathon where donors could be given Joe Froggers or shortbread, two of our church’s specialties! “Have a s’more and give s’more”. The annual Stewardship letter and envelopes will be going out shortly. The time is now to get creative in our giving to the church we all love so dearly. A thank you was given to Stow W. and Dave B. who have turned their attention from the flower room to the stone room behind the parish hall stage and found a crushed pipe. If they can fix it between \$10K and \$15K will be saved. Sally S. promised each a dozen Joe Froggers!!

Betsey H. reported on the meeting with Jill W. of the UCC at the end of Jill’s church wide consultation on the potential for a conducting a capital campaign. It’s a go with a score of 71% on feedback as anything over 60% is good. Members who Jill spoke with put high value on the music program at Old North as well as the ministers who serve our congregation. Also the church building is perceived as “an icon of the community” and should be maintained. While there are always negatives to be aired it was way more positive on the whole. Much more needs to be communicated to the congregation but most likely the campaign will commence after the new year.

As we start to gather in the sanctuary in person Dennis noted that he and Lindsay look forward to seeing more people out in the pews. Look around and personally contact people who you see are missing from familiar pews. We all must be vaccinated and for now all are wearing masks. The lighthouse services are over and we are moving back into the sanctuary for 8 o'clock and 10 o'clock services. The 10 o'clock will be followed by coffee outside the parish hall doors until such time as we can safely gather in the parish hall. Please wear your name tags to coffee. A discussion has been taking place as to whether we should just have one service each Sunday and whether that one service could be at 9 o'clock but for now that has been tabled.

Most likely we are going forward with some form of livestreaming our service for those who cannot attend in person. Church personnel are gathering information currently with livestreaming contractors Powersound New England who are the most reliable company servicing our area. Lindsay observed that the way the world is going some sort of internet viewing of services is here to stay. There are many discussions to be had and details to work. The earliest this could be accomplished is maybe March 2022.

Lindsay and her wife, Ashley, have been accepted to be foster parents and are in the "end stages" of the process. They hope to become foster parents in November.

Dennis led us in a closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm. The next meeting is **Thursday, November 11, 2021** by ZOOM at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rhod S. and Janet D., Clerk