

USR Board of Trustees Meeting
September 2, 2020
Minutes

Attendance: Dawn Walter, Don Campolo, Kristin Bluemel, Rose Castillo-Leon, Sarah Lenzi, Chris Dunnigan, Robert Markowitz, Helen Matusow-Ayres

Reading
Starting : 6:05

Check In

I. Rob Willis re: Ramp Progress

- Summary

- ◆ All approvals are in place to construct the handicap ramp in front of Anderson. We are just waiting for the building permit. The contractor has filed for this and anticipates being able to pull the permit in mid-September. Paul Braunius Brothers is the contractor. Rob is not sure how long the construction will take. Probably 4-6 weeks in construction. We agreed to pay a little extra to have the stone facing match the building.

II. Announcements / Housekeeping

- Summary

- ◆ Sarah is working on upgrading the format for services.
- ◆ Olaf will introduce himself to the congregation on Sunday
- ◆ There is uneven progress in the Circles.
- ◆ Anne has Introduced an on-line version of the green sheet.
- ◆ Reshuffling the zoom rooms a bit.
- ◆ In conversation about adult RE. Scheduling is a challenge
- ◆ Keeping the weekly numbers of service attendance. Dawn took attendance in Realm

- Action Items

- ◆ Board Members should take a look at the on-line green sheets and give feedback. Sarah will ask Anne to put the green sheets under visitors welcome on the website.

III. Action Items from last meeting

- Summary- Will review next meeting- reminder to complete actions

IV. New thank you notes

- Summary- None for this time period

V. Jeanne re: Fall RE Plans

- Summary: Virtual RE not about curriculum. The focus will be on keeping our families in contact with each other and the RE community. One quarter of the parents and teachers are on the RE. committee. The Committee is meeting every week through September than once a month.

◆ Four components of the Program.

1. Worship

- a. Giving RE families a prominent place in the Sunday Service. Keep the services child and family friendly. Feature a family to do the chalice lighting. Brings an RE family in.
- b. Encourage families to have a sacred space. Strengthen family spiritual practice.
- c. Continue a Time for All Ages
- d. Anti-racism project- 3-4 minutes in several of the services. Focus on historical underground railroad stations throughout NJ- Map the stories. Through December. In January map out first peoples.

2. Sharing Circles

a. Instead of classes

- i. Curriculum designed for Zoom -Soul Matters
- ii. This summer USR collaborated with 5 other DRE's to test the Soul Matters curriculum One hundred and twenty children from across the country. Fifteen percent of the USR RE children started in the class and in the end only one stayed with it. There was a high level of burnout. Not sure how many kids will stick with it during the school year
- iii. This will be just one component of a larger program
- iv. It will be a collaboration involving a joint grade cluster with Paramus and All Souls in Manhattan. The classes will be grouped: K-1, 2-5, 6-8 and 9-12
- v. Soul Matters has an Anti-racism component
- vi. Classes will be held on Sundays for 35 minutes.

- vii. There will be a focus on relationships and community using games.

3. Family Ministry

- a. Things to do in family life to bring spiritual practice

4. Congregational Community

- a. Dungeon and Dragons groups
- b. Reading partner volunteers
- c. Social once a month grades 6-9 on Zoom
- d. Holiday and Holy Days

- ◆ Next month Jeannie will talk about the roll out and promotion
- ◆ Pre-school 0-4- POP- A program that supports parents of preschoolers to do religious activities at home. Hoping to enroll parents with young children

- Discussion

- ◆ Dawn asked if we will be doing what we did in the service in the spring getting people to read children's book for Time for All Ages. Jeannie said that we would.
- ◆ Share opportunities for USB to participate in community family programs
- ◆ Jeannie added that they will continue continuous contact with the RE families, using the RE committee
- ◆ Kris asked some specific questions about the Crossing Paths program and Soul Matters.
- ◆ Rose suggested that the first song in the service be child friendly
- ◆ Rose commented that the collaboration with other congregations could rebuild the link to the Cons
- ◆ Chris asked about background checks. Background check company was problematic and Realm does a background check. We can afford to do a check for everyone using Realm. This will allow us to see if the person being checked is on the sexual predator list. Extensive background checks give too much information, more than we need. Can be an invasion of privacy. Trying to maximize the funding to only get the information that is necessary to determine whether or not someone should teach. More affordable and respects privacy. We will add motor vehicle violation check when needed.
- ◆ Chris also asked about are our safety policies consistent across the other congregations that we will be sharing the teaching with.

Jeannie will review the new UUA safety standards for zoom and she will make sure that we are following UUA guidelines.

- Action

- ◆ Sarah will confirm that the SCRT approves the changes to the background checks.

VI. Treasurer's Report

- Summary

- ◆ The members of the Financial Circle are enthusiastic about the raffle. Chris sent in application for permit. He has not received authorization and no one in the state office is responding to his inquiries. Chris is not sure that this is going to work because there is a delay in getting the permit.
- ◆ There is \$78,000 in cash. Our reserves increased by \$20,000 and the endowment earned \$30,000. Our stocks are doing well
- ◆ It is time to do the paperwork for the PPP loans. Need to make repayments starting in two months
- ◆ The Board drastically reduced the projected rentals income and it looks like we are going to easily beat the projection. We are getting back the preschool. Budgeted \$20,000. In first two months we have already collected \$3,700. Chris reminded Ann that we need to charge cleaning fee.
- ◆ Converting building upgrade fund from a checking to a savings account to earn interest
- ◆ Sarah asked why we aren't reflecting the PPP money in the operating budget.

- Action

- ◆ Dawn asked how we are doing with pledges. Sarah will get a different view of the budget from Ann so that this information is easier to access.

VII. Retreat Review

- Summary

- ◆ Sarah reframed Start a Revolution to how we live our values in our lives, not necessarily starting a social revolution. We need to be kind to each other-congregational care and grounding

- Discussion

- ◆ We discussed the Start a Revolution goal and there is some discomfort with the images that it creates

VIII. Don discussed the idea of a roll-over pledge, you will have to opt out or increase your pledge- would like to discuss at the next meeting- Sarah is in favor- Chris asked to make sure that there is a round-up

IX. Adjourned 7:41