

Plymouth Church, United Church of Christ
1217 6th Ave
Seattle WA 98101
www.plymouthchurchseattle.org

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL Meeting Minutes
Meeting Date: February 11, 2017

ATTENDANCE:

Al Wallace
 Lori Kaid
 Dan Landes
 Bing Tso
 Doug James
 Margot Page

Kathleen Wilson
 Kyna Shilling
 Madeline Beery
 Paul Ford
 Jane Dunkel
 Katherine Guthrie

Staff:
Rev. Kelle Brown
Rev. Steve Davis
Janice Randall
 Guests:
Don Bell
Edie Lackland
Rev. Liz Oettinger
Tad Anderson

AGENDA ITEMS:

- 1) **Call to Order & Moderator Remarks** – Al Wallace
 - a) Called to order at 10:22am, started with prayer.
- 2) **Collaborative ministry report** – update from Rev. Liz Oettinger (with group discussion of ramifications afterwards). Additional discussion to follow in April.
 - a) Grateful for time and openness from many at Plymouth
 - b) Key points from her report
 - i) Big change since last August from trauma to balance ; mostly positive
 - ii) Need education about collaborative ministry and what it means, for this model to work and congregation to buy into non-hierarchical structure. Little material out there for non-spousal co-pastoring for us to draw from.
 - iii) Culture hasn't changed enough, to where if conflict happens again, we will still fall into same destructive patterns. Truly safe, brave space needed, or more implosions will happen. Major sustained effort needed to inculcate this into the culture of this church.
 - iv) Plymouth not great at personal faith formation—how do we live out love among each other?
 - c) Key discussion points
 - i) How do we overcome general congregational lack of trust, especially with our leaders?
 - ii) This is a not a “head” issue, but one of “heart.” Practice and modeling is important (e.g., gently calling out bad behavior as happened recently in choir)

- iii) Center for Progressive Renewal (CPR) points: doesn't work to have senior pastor as "chief spiritual officer" who takes care of details of running large church, too.
 - iv) E-mailed newsletters don't work now—details get buried in peoples' in-boxes. Better to send shorter, more frequent notes. Societally, communications patterns changing radically, so how do we adapt?
 - v) Ombudsperson—good to have channel, but important to have trustworthy non-council folks in that role.
- 3) **Visioning / SWOT Analysis** (Strengths-Weakness-Opportunity-Threat analysis). Organizational activity to inform strategic thinking. Brainstormed these round-robin with lots of discussion and fruitful, generative thinking; lists to be provided at next meeting.
 - 4) **Minutes** of January 24, 2017 Council meeting & January 29, 2017 Annual Meeting
 - a) 1/24 minutes – motion to approve seconded and passed (MSP), with small correction to mentally ill housing statistics
 - b) 1/29 minutes – to be approved at the next congregational meeting. Motion to approve minutes documenting election of officers as stated in 1/29 annual meeting minutes, for purposes of authorizing check signers (moderator, vice moderator, treasurer, and two ministers). Motion seconded and passed.
 - 5) **Minister's Report** - Rev. Kelle Brown
 - a) Has reached out to Dale Sewell to follow up on his presentation about prison ministry on 1/24/17.
 - b) Kelle and Steve spoke with Cameron Trimble from Center for Progressive Renewal, plan to follow up soon with implementation team to decide on next steps.
 - c) Met four possible deacons to serve the church.
 - d) St. Mark's covenant can be a model for Plymouth to begin developing our own covenant.
 - 6) **Finance Report** - Rev. Steve Davis
 - a) Slight adjustments to three line items in 2017 Budget, affects all priority area budgets, but important to note that total approved budget did not change. MSP that we accept this adjustment.
 - 7) **New Business** - Al Wallace
 - a) **Ombudsperson** – should it be a council person, versus a truly independent person? Logistically, a new person would be hard with the time commitment. Are we looking for a Council liaison (direct line to decision-makers) vs. a neutral ombudsperson in the truest sense? Regardless, we would need training to do this right. Hope we can approve this role at next meeting in April. Jane, as a new Council member, thought it would be good to have the congregation bless/affirm/commission the council.
 - b) **Bylaw Considerations** – best not to do this too fast, even though we have a committee in place. Committee plans to do some house-keeping and deal with ministry flexibility in revision. Would need to have a panel discussion (folks from UCong, Rev. Mike Denton, Rev. Liz Oettinger, etc.) to educate the church in the spring about the co-ministry.
 - 8) Adjourned at 12:01 pm.
 - 9) Minutes submitted by Bing Tso, Council Secretary. Subsequent to meeting, Council reviewed draft minutes and provided minor edits. Final minutes MSP via email on 2/22/17.