

Plymouth Church UCC - Church Council Minutes

Meeting Saturday 10/12/19 (in-person: Plymouth Church)

Present: Sue Maul (Vice-Moderator); Debbie Baden (Council Secretary); Matt Durland; Elizabeth Gordon; Kyna Shilling; Christine Hanson; Joan Griswold; Mike Pierson; Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown; Rev. Steve Davis

Excused/Absent: Bing Tso (Moderator); Cindy Anderson (Treasurer); Ruth Williamson;

Meeting called to order at 09:43 AM by Sue Maul (Vice-Moderator)

Check-in: Everyone asked to give one rose (good thing) and one thorn (bad thing) from the past month.

Opened with prayer

Review of the agenda: Sue Maul (Vice-Moderator).

The agenda is not going to be set by minutes or hours to allow more fluidity and the ability to adjust our timeline.

Sue reviewed meeting norms (leadership skills for equitable & inclusive organization) from Fleur Larsen (HR Consultant). Copies in email sent to Council.

Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown – Ministry report (emailed) – Overview:

Rev Dr. Kelle Brown as of Thursday 10/10/19 is in covenant with the Pacific NW Conference UCC, Dual-Standing approved by COM (Committee on Ministry).

- Pastoral Relations Committee? COM asked about Pastoral support at Plymouth.

We need to schedule installations for our four ministers. A decision needs to be made between the ministers whether they want to have one joint-installation or have individual installations. The decision will be communicated to the Council.

Suggestion made from an idea, from Mr. Lehto, a congregant, to install solar panels on the roof of Plymouth Church. The benefit of Plymouth not having an electric bill to pay may be to use the money saved in other ways. Suggestions of furthering our mission within Seattle and funding a new non-profit may be something to think about once we get off the electric grid.

- Sue Maul suggested that Mr. Lehto be invited to participate in the upcoming Congregational Conversation.
- Other congregants, who have interest in alternative energy sources, will be invited to participate in this Vision. (Possible people: Dan Durland, Bruce Shilling).

Conversation on who would do an exit interview for any employee leaving Plymouth.

- Recent departure of Facilities Coordinator (Brandon) raises question of how we follow-up.
- Joan Griswold volunteered to reach-out to Brandon.

Report -Rev. Steve Davis –

Rev Steve is just getting back after extended illness absence. We welcome him back and look forward to future report next month.

Proposals - Elizabeth Gordon (& Ruth Williamson)

Creating an Anti-Racism Task Force – recommendation to form one for purpose of ongoing discussion of topics covered in the ‘Undoing Institutional Racism’ workshops. This may create other events that can educate and provide opportunity for discernment. Ideas may include book group studying White Fragility (by Robin DiAngelo).

- Christine Hanson will be our person from the Council.

Recommend considering a possible shift in role of Chairperson in Committee to be more of a facilitator. Council liaisons to Committees might be more of the people in charge. It potentially would take administrative tasks off of Committee chairs and free them to help lead and motivate Committees.

To update how to engage the Congregation: new ways to include people and delegating tasks to those who are willing.

Finding how to engage people giving them permission to lead and not waiting for someone else to lead for it.

Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown (paraphrased): We need to find how to move forward in grace and to not foster ownership in place of discipleship.

Per Sue Maul, due to time restraints, we are tabling for now discussion: DRAFT of Human Resources Committee Proposal & Draft Pastoral Relations Committee proposal.

Safety & Security update – Due to time left in this meeting, the Council needs to read the email sent and be ready to discuss at next meeting.

Call Agreement for Rev. Kevin Bechtold:

Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown briefly gave an overview of the document. This revision includes an increase of hours to 32 hours per week, an increase of salary and how his vacation time is accrued.

- Rev. Bechtold is expanding his pastoral care to include some of the prior Parish Visitor responsibilities (including visiting people unable to attend services at Plymouth due to health or mobility issues).
- The position of Parish Visitor (from which Mr. Tad Anderson recently retired) is not going to be filled. The position has proven to be more pastoral and in need of a ministerial presence.
- Motion:

- In consideration of the fact that Plymouth Church UCC does not provide its ministers with a parsonage we approve the following housing allowance update for Rev. Kevin Bechtold October 1, 2019:
- Total salary compensation of \$43,200 of which \$33,928.34 is designated as housing allowance.

M/S/P

Finance committee – Kyna Shilling

New Finance Committee formed (combined Stewardship, Budget & Finance): Kyna is willing to take the topic of staff reimbursement to the Committee. Primary concerns are equity and fairness is needed in all staff compensation.

Meriwether & Associates 09/29/19 presentation

Our next couple of Congregational Conversations will include discussion of the report. Jennifer Castle has volunteered to facilitate and develop our approach to gathering and discerning this opportunity.

- For example: there have been a couple congregants who have expressed concern around discernment and the need not to rush into anything because of the recommendation made.
- January 2020 is not a date for any hard decision. The discernment group deadline to be formed is January 2020.
- The Council is working together with the congregation on this process. We want to welcome everyone to be involved in the discernment of the future process.
- We need to be gentle with each other and mindful of need for discernment.
- The reality is that we are expecting an elevator replacement for the building. The elevator is on its' last months of usage and needs to be replaced.

Budget meeting at 6:30 PM on Wednesday 10/16/19 (Zoom)

Next Council meeting: November 9, 2019 at Sue Maul's home (due to Plymouth Church being used for conference), gather at 9:15 AM with start time of 9:30 AM.

Closing prayer given by Rev Dr. Kelle Brown.

Meeting adjourned by Sue Maul (Vice-Moderator) at 12::30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Baden, Plymouth Church Council Secretary (2019)