

Ministry Team Council Minutes

June 15, 2006

It is the mission of the Ministry Team Council of First UU Church of San Diego to facilitate the work of ministry teams. The council may serve in an advisory capacity to ministry teams, ministers, and staff.

In attendance:

Ex officio: John Davis, Convener, and Joan Cudhea and Jan Gallo, Secretaries

Inreach – Suzette Southfox

Caring – Julie Kain and Dan Heiserman

Worship and Program - Arvid Straube and Beverly Joy

Denominational Affairs - Arvid Straube and Ardath Schaibly

Generosity - Iris Masotti

Lifespan Religious Growth and Learning – Liz Jones and Caroline Clark

Social Justice - Julie Kain and Sue Haskin

Observer - Ruth Van Leeuwen

Absent: Ken Herman, Thelest Stewart, Steve Howard

John's Chalice Lighting was accompanied by a song relating to the power of "net-neutrality". Members shared brief check-in remarks.

Process Reports by John Davis

1. Board

The Board approved Outcome Statements. John had prepared a large poster board of these, and reminded the MTC that they will be used for the Strategic Plan. Each Ministry Team may use any or all of the statements.

2. GAG (Governance Action Group of Board)

GAG is trying to figure out its future role. At a minimum, it will train Board members and others, and will be communicating the new governance process. A leadership transition will occur, as current leader Nancy Fisk assumes Presidency.

3. CRC (Constitution Revision Committee)

CRC has chosen to release a preliminary draft of the Constitution which includes provisions regarding an Empowered Organization.

Ministry Team Activities

1. Caring

Julie reported on the communication avenues regarding the illness of Rev. Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley and that the Rev. Jim Grant has agreed to serve in her place through December. He will have the same portfolio as Julie, beginning a few days after she leaves, and before Arvid's return. Officially, he begins on September 1.

The Caregiving Advisory Committee, which serves as the CM Team, meets on the third Monday of each month at 1 p.m.

2. Social Justice

Julie reported that the SJ MT and the Social Justice Committee are still negotiating roles. There is resistance to the Empowered Organization from some, including a Board member. This continues to be a challenge.

Sue Haskin reported on the achievement of a Social Justice newsletter, the first published from the SJ MT. Jackie Statman introduces Sue as Lay Leader of SJ MT. E-mails have been flying about information perceived to be missing from the church website. Sue wrote an introductory statement to support the Green Sanctuary survey.

The Earth Spirit Team, headed by Marge Wurgel, and which will carry forward the Green Sanctuary initiative at First Church, may wish to be a part of all Ministry Teams as the initiative will affect all aspects of church life. John suggested that a representative attend MTC meetings. Julie said that she is not sure that that is needed by the Earth Spirit Team.

The next Social Justice Ministry Team will be a potluck, to be held

3. Inreach

Suzette said that Steve Howard was attending to a family matter. She was pleased to receive annual reports fromministry teams. She plans to republish the MT brochure in July. The Leadership Roster is now under her care and keeping. She is working hard for consistency between hard copy and electronic publications.

There are ten new members this month. She noted that two are African-American, and that no one would know just seeing the names. She would like to collect demographic data, and will ask at UUA General Assembly (GA) about this. Jan Gallo reminded us that the Search Committee packet includes demographic data by self-identity groups such as ethnic origin and sexual orientation.

At GA, she plans to attend UU University, a new one-day pre GA event for leaders. She plans to attend workshops with the following titles: Repelling Fewer Visitors, Closing the Revolving Door, the Yin and Yang of Conflict, and the spirituality of Decision Making.

Inreach MT does not have a date set for a next meeting. Its first meeting, a dinner meeting (!) was a success.

4. Generosity.

Iris called the Dining For Dollars booklet "smashing".

Still under consideration is the Sunday "collection plate" – a proposal that each Sunday's offering be used for a social justice purpose (instead of monthly).

"The Moon Jars" is the title of the curriculum about stewardship that Iris and Liz (Family Ministry group) are discussing. The jars are for saving, spending, and giving.

It is now official that First Church will receive a \$50,000 grant for Young Adult/Campus Ministry.

The Rummage Sale project still needs leadership. Iris has been working to break the tasks into smaller chores. She has recruited a few (including Susan Berez and Joy Gorian) in the helper category.

A UU consultant, Larry Wheeler, has been engaged with a view to changing the method of the pledge drive next year. He will be "on campus" August 17-19, attending the MTC meeting on Thursday, August 17. The fee will be paid (mostly) by the UUA. He will:

1) make an assessment; 2) make recommendations for the Strategic Plan; and 3) advise on welcoming new members.

Larry was in San Diego recently, as he is working with Summit congregation on its capital drive. Arvid pointed out that he will be asking what we need funds for, and why. Thus, he will be engaging us in the larger questions: a fund just for Bard Hall Renovation or a Campaign for the Future?

Iris has started her own list of questions, and asks all MTC members to be thinking about before August. We want everyone up to speed ahead of time, she said. John remarked on how this engagement is a wonderful example of how the Empowered Organization works.

(That is, the decision to engage Larry's services was made by Arvid in consultation with Iris, and it was made swiftly, in a timely fashion.)

The Generosity Team meets monthly on the second Thursday at 6 pm.

5. Life Span Religious Growth and Learning

Liz reported that a Search Committee for the YA/CM position has held its first meeting, and that the church has received one resume already.

The Family Ministry group is very loose, and only on-line to date.

There have been two conversations held by youth and adults together, naming themselves the "Imagination Team". They want to do surveys, and to find out what other UU and non-UU congregations program for youth.

Leader Training for the Children's RE program will be held before a potential leader commits to teach. Called "Classroom Management", it will occur on July 8.

Nancy Fisk had forwarded to Liz a letter from a UU member couple wanting to know whether a scholarship for the Pre-school could be available to UU member parents. This issue has come up in prior years, and there is no easy solution, particularly as a four-year commitment is difficult to fund.

The Pre-School is continuing to look at making application for grant funding of scholarships.

It was asked whether there is still a Church Pre-School Liaison Committee.

Joan commented that she thinks the couple is of African-American descent, and new, and that she hopes that they don't end up feeling lost in a bureaucratic inquiry.

Action Item: Liz will get back to them personally.

This inquiry could be a matter (pre-school scholarships) for the funding consultant conversations, the Generosity Team, and the Strategic Planning process.

Liz expects three meetings a year of this MT, the first to be held next fall.

6 Worship and Program

Arvid had nothing new to report.

The Team will meet again in the fall.

7. Denominational Affairs

First Church will have a full contingent of delegates (14), but no alternates at General Assembly. Kevin Mann is one Young Adult delegate. No First Church youth are planning to attend. The Board did not approve delegates this year, a departure from previous years and a result of the Empowered Organization. No list was published, however, and this omission was a "slip between the cracks".

Strategic Plan (SP)

John said that MTC needs a person who is not a member of MTC to coordinate the SP process. Arvid is doubtful.

Action Item: John and Arvid will discuss this further.

Arvid said that he "does not want a million good ideas...not a wish list". Each element suggested, if it is new, needs to include budget, staff resources needed, and a statement of how effectiveness will be judged. Each element should demonstrate potential for UUism in San Diego.

Joan (speaking not as Secretary) but from the Journey Toward Wholeness perspective requested that the Strategic Planning process begin with grounding in the anti-racism, anti-oppression, multicultural lens (AR/AO/MC), as envisioned by the Board's second and third Outcome Statements, but also important in all the other Statements. She said that JTW would pay for an outside trainer/facilitator. She has even communicated with Mitra Rahnema, one of the JUUST Change consultants assigned to our church this past year, and learned that Mitra could be available. Joan has identified several Saturdays open for scheduling in the fall, and expressed concern to select a date as soon as possible as our church spaces fill up rapidly, in her experience.

Liz spoke in support, describing the experience of the launch of the Religious Education Credentialing Committee. UUA provided two excellent facilitators, who guided the strategic planning, always within the framework of AR/AO/MC, in a multi-day time frame.

Caroline asked what such a training would be about. Joan spoke of three aspects: the concepts and terminology, so that we are all on the same page; a more deeply personal exploration of why this "work" is spiritual, and finally, embedding this consciousness in developing a strategic plan. She expressed a hope that such a retreat or workshop would be open to all members of all Ministry Teams – actually not just "open to", but very strongly encouraged.

Consensus developed for a fall Retreat to launch the Strategic Plan process.

Action Item: Joan will find out if either of the two facilitators that guided Liz's national committee could be available. Joan and John will work out details to be brought to the July MTC meeting.

Parking Lot and Property Use Policies

In Thelest's absence, this item was not addressed.

Communications

Arvid spoke of the need for a comprehensive communications policy. He has finally had time to convene a group, to be called the Communications Advisory Group. They have been researching other congregations. The newsletter is minimally edited. Anne Kruger will be inviting comments, and a forum will be held on August 13. A draft is already in preparation. The guidelines will apply to press releases, the website, and all communications. Thus, it will be easy to use any source in preparing another communication of a different type.

Website

John noted how it the website has changed, is beautiful, and is designed for a new person. However, it has removed information that internal folks have relied on. Suzette said that there is a lot of internal – but perhaps in different places. There may be confusion about “where things are.” An example: YAO moved from Groups to a new category called Fellowship.

There is now a clear process for making changes. Suzette handed out a much-praised one-pager:

First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego Web Update & Change Procedure, Draft, June 15, 2006.

For Corrections (spelling, grammar, accuracy) go direct to the website, while Edits can go direct to the website, but should also go to the staff person responsible.

For matters relating to Newcomers, Fellowship and Get Involved, go to Suzette.

For matters related to Worship, go to Arvid; for Education, go to Liz, for “Us” (everything internal) go to John Holl.

John requested notification of any changes. MT Brochure must match website.

It was stated that minutes of MTC have not been posted since February.

Action Item: John will send MTC minutes to John Holl.

Action Item: John will share with Communications Advisory Group about wiki.

The budget process is finished, and in future will be off the agenda.

Amazing to all, the meeting adjourned at 8 pm.

Below is a reminder repeat from the April minutes:

ACTION ITEM: All ministry teams to submit articles. [Joan notes: Ned Wight said we should have a schedule.] Tell your groups to use Ministry Team affiliation, either in article or at end. Thelest to notify Window editors.

ACTION ITEM: Communications should continuously make clear that individuals with ideas need not wait for an announcement of an open Ministry Team Meeting, but should go directly to either the Professional Staff or Lay Leader of one or more Ministry Teams.

These are also repeats:
Email management.

ACTION ITEM: Contact John for help with tools.

ACTION ITEM: Let all who may be interested, and you, yourselves, may get on John's Empowered Organization group list. "Anyone can get on it."

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Cudhea

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Additional note from secretary: Where possible I have included in these minutes when each Ministry Team meets next. I will repeat this information in all minutes, as I believe this needs to be public information, easy to find.