**Meeting Minutes**

**Board of Trustees**

**First Unitarian Church, South Bend**

**February 14, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**

*Present*: Dan Holm, Chuck Leone, David Mayfield, Florence Klecka, Jeremiah Cox, and Gail deSomer (in person); Bill Stevens, Rev. Chip Roush and Lynn Liston via Zoom.

*Guests*: Dr. Barbara Williams. Via Zoom: Dr. Louise Williams, Rin Adams, Karen Dickson.

**Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 7:03. Rev. Chip led the Chalice Lighting, then check-in and recitation of the Covenant followed. Bill did not have access to the agenda, so Chuck ran the meeting.

**Approval of minutes**

Gail moved to accept the January 10 meeting minutes, seconded by Chuck. Carried.

**Changes to Agenda**

New Business would include a request for funds from the Invisible Church fund for the Stewardship Campaign and formation of a new committee. Other Business would be to determine someone to take minutes in March.

**Reports**

Reports from Minister, Treasurer and Committees received in packet. Additional information given in meeting:

*Minister:* Rev.Chip explained that Ian Bunker asked that people speak to him directly about any opinions on his performance, instead of commenting audibly while he plays. Dan asked how long a unit is; Rev. Chip said it can be up to four hours.

*Committee Reports*: Chuck reminded people that he is the liaison for the Endowment Committee, not the Chair, although there is no nominal chair at this time. Lynn asked if the Endowment Committee would consider not funding any projects this year, to build up the balance. Chuck did not find this likely.

**Old Business**

*Hiring of New Office Administrator:* Rev. Chip reported that the preferred candidate for the office position could possibly accept the position in April, but not sooner. Since Pat has already resigned, pending training of a new person, the Board discussed possible alternatives. Dr. Louise offered to ask several younger members who are between jobs to fill in until a permanent replacement can be found, as they would be more likely to figure out how to streamline the Order of Service and Chirp duties quickly and efficiently, and help with the work flow. She also offered to help with this streamlining.

Chuck reminded the Board that Rev. Chip is the Chief Executive Officer of the church, and is in charge of hiring a new person.

*Dissemination of Ministerial Performance Review:* Jeremiah sent the Board an updated copy of the performance review results for input. As the review was originally meant to be confidential, but construed by many to be public, Jeremiah moved to publish the results, for a limited time, in the members only section of the website and in a Chirp, with only pie charts showing distribution of responses. It would not include Section 7, the Board’s letter to Rev. Chip, or individual comments. Lynn seconded. Motion was carried with two abstentions. Gail suggested that future surveys be clear from the start as to publication of results. All agreed.

*Venmo/Cash App*: Jeremiah is gathering information on how people can easily make small payments to the church with their credit cards, in the most economical way. David will talk to 1st Source Bank for more input, and the Finance Committee will follow up on this.

**New Business**

*January Congregational Meeting Followup*:

1. Barbara Williams is authorized by the Board to set up meetings to discuss pros, cons and procedures of changing the name of the church.
2. Discussion on the best way to conduct the reconciliation process included:

* Whether small groups, one-on-one, or larger forums were effective
* Talking about the meaning of the Church Covenant would be helpful. Dr. Louise offered to get more clarity from Gen XMZ members about the form of such a meeting.
* Several meetings between now and the May Annual Meeting are needed.
* Another meeting topic should be the structure of the church’s ministry.
* Conflict resolution meetings should come after the more positive covenant discussions.
* The planned discussions on the book *Part-Time is Plenty* should include other sources as well. Dr. Barbara Williams assured the Board that this will be the case.
* Chuck asked Rev. Chip to begin the process by determining possible dates for discussions, and leaders should be found to help facilitate the meetings.
* People need to feel comfortable and informed before the Annual Meeting in May.
* An outside facilitator should be found; Rev. Chip suggested asking Sharon Kniss (a former member and consultant) for advice. Ann Hoewing was also suggested as a resource.

*Church Alcoholic Beverage Policy*: Dr. Louise asked that a written policy, with clear instructions, be added to the current Building Use Policy, to cover the selling of alcoholic beverages, so that anyone putting on an event can refer to it and follow it. Chuck volunteered to write a draft of such a policy.

*Administration Committee*: The discussion then segued into the need to resurrect an Administration Committee (see attached). This would help ensure that policies, the perpetual calendar, and procedures be regularly reviewed, updated, and disseminated to help the church run more smoothly. Florence offered to find potential members for such a committee, and report back by next month. She offered to be part of this committee once her Board term ends after June.

*Insurance Deductible for Building*: David reported that the deductible for the building insurance was raised without clear warning to $25,000. This lowers the premiums by about $2,000 per year, but it may not be worth it if a major catastrophe occurs, such as another flood. The Board charged the Finance Committee with following up, and Kathy Vetter is looking into alternatives.

*Board Member Duties*: Gail asked that packets with the duties of new Board Members be distributed every June, and that this be put on the perpetual calendar.

*Gen XMZ Letter to the Board*: Dr. Louise asked that the Board prepare a statement, for publication via the Chirp and added to the next Annual Meeting announcement, about the importance of respectful behavior during meetings. Several hurtful comments were clearly heard during the last Congregational Meeting, as well as during other gatherings, while others had the floor. Gail offered to draft a statement, and promised that it would be available for review and then dissemination within the month. As a side note, Rin reminded everyone of the importance of using the mic, so that Zoom participants can hear. Florence promised to put an extra slot for both the Sound and Zoom people for the Sunday of the next congregational meeting in the volunteer rotation, so that there are enough people to help with microphone use.

*Invisible Church Fund*: Jeremiah moved that $75 be spent from the Invisible Church Fund to purchase T-shirts for the Stewardship Campaign. Gail seconded. Carried.

*Minutes Taken at Next Meeting*: As Florence will be unavailable for the March Board meeting, Chuck heroically agreed to take minutes in her place.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

Next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting: Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 7:00 p.m., in the Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted by:

Florence Klečka, Secretary, Board of Trustees

**Attachments**:

Gen XMZ Letter

Administration Committee Description, 2009