

Minutes -- Tuesday, April 27, 2010
Live Oak Board of Trustees Meeting
David & Lisa Fry's apartment

Board Members Present: Lisa Fry, Peter Hand, Vicky Jensen, and Darlene Pagano
Absent: Ruby Reay (traveling for work)
Guests Present: David Fry

Called to order at 7:35 p.m. Peter opened the meeting with a reading and chalice lighting.

Approve/Modify Agenda: Modifications to the agenda included adding an item on priority of event planning and upcoming opportunities to promote Live Oak in Alameda. Board officer's job description approval was added to the consent agenda. Calendar review and Membership Expectation/Bylaws review were both tabled. The modified agenda was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda/Approval of Minutes: Unanimous approval.

Calendaring Discussion: Lisa suggested we plan a meeting with leaders of various committees and the board to set a calendar for the coming year. She will look for a possible date for that meeting.

March 28 Congregational Meeting Feedback Review: After reviewing the comments made under both "More of," "Less of," and "New Directions/Other," priorities appeared, as follows:

- More opportunities to be together
 - Social events (circle suppers, games night, picnics, hikes)
 - Covenant groups
 - Listening, learning (e.g. Dyads)
- Publicity & outreach to new members
- Involving and developing new leaders

We thought it would be useful to use a process similar to the one Carol Bodeau used at the R.E. Workshop during our June 13th Congregational meeting, to further refine priorities and to encourage folks to take the lead or work on specific events. We also discussed how to form committees and would like to ask the Children's RE Committee to talk about how they came together, as a model.

Home of Truth Accessibility and Safety Improvements: The ramp at the Home of Truth has been helpful, but does not work for people with electric wheelchairs. Further, the handrails on the steps to the cottage need to be secured and stabilized. We recognize that improving accessibility in the bathrooms in both the main building and the cottage is not likely to happen. But we would like to have a conversation with people from the Home of Truth about the ramp and handrail. Perhaps we can share costs of improvements. Lisa will approach Sharon Potts. Ruby has been investigating costs of portable ramps.

Darlene has offered to print a couple of copies of the Order of Services in large print and to order one large print hymnal. She also is aware of a UUA Disability Assistance Committee that has helped congregations get audio-assisted listening systems. We may not qualify for their help until we are an official congregation, but she will look into it.

David noted he is researching better microphones.

Financial Report: With the assistance of a consulting bookkeeper, David was able to get Quickbooks in order and print reports for the board. Our unreconciled bank balance today is: \$13,104. He also reported we now are using Vanco, a company that processes automatic check deposits, which our bank had been refusing to do for us. Vanco offers services to many churches and non-profits and has lower fees than the bank would have charged. This has helped a number of our pledgers.

It's time to begin the budget planning process for the next fiscal year (July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011). David and the finance committee will initiate an on-line process for input and create a first draft budget for the board's and congregation's consideration.

PCD Organizational Development Meeting Follow-ups: Our board has had several conference call meetings with district staff (Cilla Raughley and Jeanelyse Doran Adams). The purpose of these calls is to provide us with advice (coaching) on issues that are relevant to new congregations. We have talked about a number of topics: bylaws, membership expectations, membership processes, the importance of tracking visitor data, a survey other district congregations use to learn their strengths and weaknesses from recent visitors, bringing in guest ministers, and more. Lisa will follow up with Cilla to get a copy of the visitor survey and distribute it to the board for assessment.

Membership Follow-up Tasks and Assignments: We do not have a formal membership committee or a lead person for that role, though several people have volunteered to help with tasks. The board decided to take on membership tasks because we feel this is the next area we really need to focus on. We will call members and friends whom we haven't seen at church for a while, as a first step. We now have a form for visitors to complete which provides us with contact information and also lets us know: 1) how they learned about us and 2) what programming areas (RE, choir, e.g.) interest them. Vicky Jensen talked about a systematic approach to deepening our relationships with current members and friends (an inreach program). Other ideas include a photo directory, bio's of members and friends (in a directory or a few at a time in a newsletter).

Lisa will investigate membership education/integration programs, such as New UU, and report on them to the board. Vicky noted it might be better not to say from the pulpit, "If you see a stranger, please introduce ..." That statement could give the impression to visitors that we need to be reminded to engage with them. And all board members will look at the policies and membership information we got from the Redwood City Fellowship.

Alameda Events & Guerilla Marketing: Darlene identified several events coming up in Alameda where we should consider having a presence. We all agreed that having Live Oak t-shirts and brochures to handout would be useful for promoting and growing our fellowship. The board is enthusiastic about being present at the 4th of July parade and/or the park where the parade ends. Alameda Walks (3rd Sat. of the month, May-Dec) is another opportunity to meet and introduce ourselves, as well as the spring festival, sandcastle contest, and wine and art festival in August.

Jim Freschi and David Fry are looking into making a sign that would hang over the Home of Truth's sign just during the times that we are having our services.

Feedback / How is the Board and the Fellowship doing? We all are feeling energized and sometimes a bit overwhelmed. There is clearly excitement about having Susan Sonnemaker on board, leading our choir. We are looking forward to connecting with other UUs and learning a lot at District Assembly.

Peter read the closing words. We adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Action Items – for Board members and guests

- Lisa will look for a possible date for a calendaring meeting
- Lisa will communicate with HOT about accessibility issues and continuing our reservations through the end of this calendar year
- Darlene will look into large print hymnal and audio-assistance
- David Fry will research better microphone
- David and finance committee will begin budget process
- Lisa will get more info on the district visitor survey and using their surveymonkey account
- All: email discussion of people we've not seen and contacting them
- Lisa will report on curricula for integrating new members
- Lisa will ask worship leaders to change greeting (eliminate "If you see stranger, ...")
- David will talk with Jim Freschi about sign to hang at HOT
- Vicky will talk with Debra Temple about a music committee
- Vicky will get dates of upcoming choir rehearsals to Lisa or Ruby for the calendar
- Peter will draft words for calendar priority guidelines (what events come first, e.g.)
- Lisa will ask The Home of Truth to continue our reservation through December-2010

Action Items -- Remaining from previous lists

- Lisa will organize a Circle Supper
- Darlene will check on the possibility of visiting another church as a group
- Lisa will write up possible "expectations of membership" and run them past the congregation, inviting comment and additions.
- Peter will create an org chart.