

Channing Memorial Church Board Meeting Tuesday, September 9, 2008

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Saturday, September 20th - Aquidneck Island Energy Conference

Sunday, September 28th – Sanctuary Rededication

Tuesday, September 30th – Special Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 14th – Regular Board Meeting

PRESENT: Chris Yalanis, Halcyon Westall, Chris Laudon, Tom Beall, Bill Peresta, Kelly Bailey, Coles Mallory, David Pedrick, Russ Milham, Susan VanDerhoof Bill Hawkins and Sheri Lussier.

Chris started the meeting by announcing that the Prince Charitable Trust is giving us \$100,000. They were very impressed with all that we have done acting on their recommendations so quickly.

BOARD MINUTES: The August Board minutes were approved with a few corrections that will be reflected in the revised copy.

As decided at the Board Retreat the Clerk should report each month on non-member events at the church. These are not included in the Minister's monthly report. Since the end of August the following weddings have taken place; 8/31-Migel/Albert, 9/6-Shannon Pastuzak, 9/7-White/Birnie, 9/12-Hanley/Colson, 9/13-Carrozza/Telefsen, 9/19-Anthony/Quirk, 9/20 – Ruhnke/Calcagni and 9/20-Cordner/Lawson.

MINISTER'S REPORT

Please see report following the minutes.

CURRENT BUSINESS

RAINBOW FLAG - There was some confusion on where this discussion had ended at our last meeting. Russ said that Beth had ordered the flags, one for outside the church and one for inside the Sanctuary. It was clarified by a review of the minutes that the issue had not been decided. There was further discussion about how such a decision should be reached, and if the Board should even be involved in it. Tom suggested that we establish a process for determining changes to the interior and exterior of the church. A motion was made and seconded that the Social Justice Committee still needs to present a solution for the Board's approval and thus, should work with the Property Committee to

formulate a proposal which will then be presented to the Board for approval. The motion passed with Russ opposed. The proposal will be put on google.docs when it is ready.

FACILITY USE

As a point of information, Amy reported that members who have for profit businesses offering programs/workshops that are in-line with our vision and mission will be charged \$20 instead of the \$50 for use of the facility. Russ asked that they be responsible for clean-up. Coles said there might be an insurance issue and that should be investigated. Amy said that there will be a contract used. Amy took the action item to follow up to ensure that the insurance requirements are met.

Later in the meeting, Chris L. brought up another issue concerning the use of the facility—use of candles in the Sanctuary. Since we no longer have the asbestos floor to protect from fire this is a concern. Amy said that if we had a policy banning the use of all candles that it would deter people renting from us for weddings, since the unity candle in the ceremony is very popular. The other large use of candles is the Christmas Eve service. Chris L. stated that the fire alarm system is hyper-sensitive and that it is not just the alarm that goes off, but the Fire Department comes.

There was a two-part motion proposed that 1) we make immediate changes to the wedding contracts that there be no candles at the pews and that discretion be used for other use of candles; 2) the property committee will look at the issue and make recommendations to the Board at a future meeting. The motion passed. Amy will make sure Bill Peresta receives the revised wedding contract to post on our web site. It was also asked that the Property Committee research possible grants for new pews.

AMAZON WEB SITE

A motion was made by Sue and seconded by Russ that Channing Church enter into a contract with Amazon.com to receive a percentage of the sales made through our Channing web site. The motion was approved. There was one concern voiced by some people that the use of the Amazon site it not deter people from supporting local businesses, such as Island Books.

DRE REQUEST FOR FUNDS

Halcyon requested reimbursement (a total of \$90) for 3 members who attended an all day youth ministry training. Sue made a motion that we reimburse them, but during the discussion, Russ asked which account the funds should come from. There was concern voiced by several people that we adhere to the budget in place. There are no monies available in the current budget for reimbursement. Bill Peresta made a generous offer to write a personal check to cover the costs as a specific gift to the church.

Kelly made a motion that the Board accept Bill's generous offer to reimburse the 3 people who attended the Ministry of Youth Conference. The motion was approved.

PRE-CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

The PCCC submitted a request (following) that the Board authorize the committee to solicit bids from fundraising professionals for assistance in conducting the upcoming Capital Campaign. Chris L. made a motion that the Board authorize the PCCC to obtain bids from fundraising professionals to conduct a feasibility study was seconded. The motion was approved. During the discussion, however, it was agreed that the vote on the expenditure of up to \$18,000 will go before the congregation at a special meeting on Sunday, October 19th immediately following church. Prior to that meeting there will be a special meeting of the board to review the arguments on behalf of paying for a Feasibility study. Upon board approval, a notice will be put in the Catalyst and a special letter with explanation will be sent to the Congregation before the October 19th meeting.

To: Channing Memorial Church Governing Board
Fr: CMC Pre-Capital Campaign Planning Committee, John Burnham, chair
Re: Recommendation

Our committee was charged by the church officers last May to consider the possibility of a capital campaign to help fund urgently needed steeple repairs, as well as other work as would be outlined by the evolving Property Master Plan. To repair the steeple in 2009, we understand that a commitment must be made to a contractor before the end of the 2008 calendar year.

Currently the church has approximately \$160,000 in funds available for steeple and other capital property projects through the Arthur Barrows Steeple Fund as well as donations made toward the capital campaign in 2007 after the Year of Decision was completed. A similar amount of money resides in the church's endowment if the congregation chooses to spend it on these projects.

We believe a capital campaign could and should be launched at the end of this year. It's scope could be as narrow as \$1.1 million for the steeple and bells alone, or it could be in the range of \$2 million +, if other Master Plan elements are included. The scope will depend on the outcome of the Master Plan, the results of pending grant applications (up to approximately \$800,000), and the completion of a feasibility study to determine what level of fundraising from private sources we're likely to be able to achieve.

We estimate the expenses of a campaign to be no more than \$18,000 for a feasibility study, including interviews of approximately 50 leading potential donors within the congregation and community, to be completed in the next two months. To maximize our results, we believe it worthwhile to also spend up to another \$18,000 for a fundraising

consultant to keep us on track in what is a complex project. Some administrative help and other costs should be budgeted for, although volunteer labor should be sought for most tasks.

We recommend that the Governing Board vote to approve the hiring of a consultant for a capital campaign feasibility study for not more than \$18,000 and, if the Board subsequently decides to move forward with a campaign, to hire a consultant for no more than \$18,000 to assist with management of the campaign. The funds could be drawn from the Steeple Fund, since this campaign's core purpose is to fund next year's steeple reconstruction.

John Burnham

Minister's Report

Rev. Amy B. Freedman
Channing Memorial Church

This report covers the period of June 10- September 9, 2008

Administration

I returned to the church office on August 5 after a month of Vacation/Study Leave. Michele did an excellent job in my absence. We worked together on the 2008-9 church calendar which is now available to all church leaders. With the guidance of Bill Peresta, she is putting our calendar online to be updated and accessible. The church office resumed regular hours in September. Halcyon, Michele and I have resumed weekly staff meetings on Tuesday mornings. The new photo directories are now available from the Membership Committee following Sunday services.

Adult Enrichment

Groups are now forming for this semester of **Small Group Ministry**. This session will explore the great religious questions. The **Aquidneck Island Energy Conference** will be held on **Saturday, September 20** at Salve Regina University. I am delighted that we along with the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission are bringing together leaders and organizations around this timely issue. On **October 2 at 7:00pm**, Tom Beall, Eleanor Doumato, and I will offer a session discussing the recent violence in Knoxville, TN and its implications for us. On **Monday, October 20, 7:00pm Margaret Starbird** will return to offer a lecture and slide presentation on "*The Sacred Union at the Heart of Christianity*." I am pleased to announce that the **Venerable Khensur Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Wangdak**, a Tibetan Buddhist and contemporary of the Dalai Lama will offer a teaching at our church on **Thursday, October 30, 7:30pm**.

Clergy Corner

On August 30-31, my article entitled "Acts of violence won't close doors, hearts of congregation" appeared in the Newport Daily News. The article focused on the

shootings in the Tennessee Valley UU Church this summer and the outpouring of compassion that has resulted across our faith movement.

Rites of Passage

Saturday, August 16, 4:00pm, Vow Renewal~ Dick and Mary Lou Baker

Saturday, September 6, 11:00am, Blessing Ceremony~ Ryann Elizabeth Petrillo,
Channing Church

Sanctuary Restoration and Rededication

What a pleasure to return to our glowing sanctuary! Alan Matoza did a superb job restoring the floors and cleaning the entire space. Thanks to Pat Padillia and his team for their work as well as the coordination of the Property Committee. Bill Peresta and Cliff Christianson worked hard to put the Sound System back in place. The congregation also pitched in to move hymnals and furniture back in place. The Membership Committee is working on creating a more welcoming environment for newcomers. Dennis Greene and Ruth Jernigan are putting materials and volunteers in place for tours on Thursday and Sunday afternoons. I am also working with Don Mallinson to have a rotating display in our sanctuary highlighting our history.

The invitations are printed for the **Sanctuary Rededication Ceremony on Sunday, September 28, 4:00pm**. This will be a public celebration of our history, restorations and vision. The program will feature the Rev. Dr. John Beuhrens, former UUA President, Richard Grosvenor, local artist and mentor, and Dr. James Yarnall, Associate Professor of Art, Salve Regina University. A Champagne Reception will follow. Your presence as church leaders and gracious hosts is encouraged. Please let me know if there is someone in the community who should be included on our guest list.

Touro Synagogue

I was honored to offer the Invocation at the 61st Annual George Washington Letter Reading Celebration on Sunday, August 17, 2008.

Worship

Summer services in the Parish Hall went very well. Special thanks to Linda Beall for her coordination. The lay led services based on the popular radio series "This I believe" were meaningful and well-presented. Attendance ranged from 40-80 people. Thanks also to Tom and Linda Beall for hosting Summer Fellowship Hour providing lemonade and refreshments each Sunday.

Sunday, August 10, *On Expecting*

Sunday, August 17, *Why I am a Unitarian Universalist*

Sunday, August 24, *Anne Morrow Lindbergh's Gift from the Sea*

Sunday, September 7, *Ingathering Service*