

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
BOARD MINUTES
March 10, 2009

Present: Bob Thorson, Russ Milham, Kelly Bailey, Ruth Jernigan, Sherrie Lussier, Chris Yalanis, Sue VanDerhoof, Bill Hawkin, Chris Laudon.

Guests: Jake Smith and John Burnham

Staff: Halcyon Westall and Amy Freedman

Process Observer: Bob Thorson

MINUTES: The minutes for the February meeting were approved with no changes

NOMINATING COMMITTEE – Jake Smith

Jake gave an update on the nominating committee's progress. Chris Yalanis will remain as President, Sue VanDerhoof as Clerk and Russ Milham as Treasurer. Jim Freese will be Vice-President. We are waiting to hear from Kim Shute regarding Membership and we need one other person in addition to Bob Thorson as Trustees. Pat Fairchild has agreed to chair the Worship Committee, Sarah will remain with RE and Jake & Anna Smith will continue with Fellowship for one more year.

Chris Laudon suggested we look for another person for the Property Committee since David Pedrick will be gone a lot for his new job.

GRANT – Jake Smith

We are currently waiting for the grant package to arrive. Chris Y. asked Jake to send updating emails to the board regarding the Nominating Committee's progress and the also about the grants.

PROPERTY REPORT – Chris Laudon

Bid documents were sent to nine pre-approved contractors in February, and bids are to be received back by Friday March 13th. A walk-through of the project was held on February 24th and eight companies were represented by attendees.

We have applied for the HDC permit, and are on the agenda for the Tuesday March 17th meeting. Holly Grosvenor has been very helpful producing the copies of the drawings needed for the application and helping prepare it for Chris to submit on behalf of the church.

Chris met today with Amy and Mrs. Giroux, our next door neighbor, to explain the process to her so she can know what to expect and how we have tried to make the project as painless as possible for our neighbors as possible.

Chris suggested we hold a meeting and invite many neighbors for the same explanation. All the abutters as well as everyone around the park will be affected, and it would be better if we could explain the necessity for the work and generate some excitement about this once-in-many-lifetimes event.

There will need to be a work area created in the SE corner of the site for stone storage, and tools and materials storage and work area. It will be reached by an extension of the driveway from the existing tenant's driveway past the tree to the corner of the lot. We propose to move the fence to enclose the playground to be reconfigured at about 12' - 15' wide, and will need to move the shrubs and plants that are now in that area to other locations. We need volunteers to work on this or we will need to hire it done.

We are awaiting the proposal from the bell subcontractor. The process for the bells is that they would be removed before the steeple is dismantled in order to prevent damage to them, they would be restored at the foundry while the masons are working and then reinstalled in the tower once it is completely done.

The repair of the area between the Parish Hall and the Sanctuary is on front burner now that the winter is almost over.

Chris requested authorization to offer wedding couples the opportunity to come back next year (or at some later date) to have the bells rung for them. This is an attempt to make the inconvenience of the steeple construction a little easier on them. Without a formal vote, the board approved the plan.

Many thanks from the board were expressed to Chris for all of her hard work.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN – John Burnham

The Capital Campaign has been underway now for a week. We are ½ way to our goal. We are now over \$1 million. The annual goal of \$65,970 is 1/3 of the way there. Things are going well. We have done a little better with major gifts than expected. There are some concerns about the annual canvass. John, Don and Bill H. will do some analysis and circulate a report to the board. There are people on the list that haven't given recently. There may be 10 to 20 pledging units that have not given lately that we may not connect with. Bill added that this year's canvass is right on track. We have received about \$116,000 or 68.66% of our goal.

MINISTER'S REPORT – Amy Freedman

Administration

Our office computer was purchased in 2007 to replace an older computer that had significant problems. Although the current computer is new to us, it has come to my

attention that it is slow and cannot easily perform certain Administrative tasks. I bring this to the attention of the Board for two reasons. One, if you ask Michele to complete a task you feel should be easy and she is unable to complete it quickly, more often than not it is because of our computer not her skills. Two, the amount of time the current computer takes is a waste of our Administrator's time.

*ACTION ITEM: I highly recommend that the Board finds a church member who is savvy in computers or hire a consultant like "Geeks to Go" to advise us in upgrading the church computer.

Adult Enrichment

In October the Venerable Khensur Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Wangdak, a Tibetan Buddhist monk and contemporary of the Dalai Lama offered an Introduction to Buddhism at our church. I am exploring having him offer a monthly teaching.

Shake Your Soul is being offered on **Thursday mornings** in the Parish Hall by Rachel Balaban.

Cakes for the Queen of Heaven, a two-part workshop in feminist theology will be held on **Saturdays, March 21 and April 11, 2009, 9:30am-3:00pm** in the Parish Hall. The class is open to the public. \$40 includes the materials and lunch. Scholarships are available.

On **Thursday, April 9th** we will hold a *Passover Seder* in the Parish Hall.

Black History Assembly

Bethany Lopes, a Rogers High School Senior won the Dr. Marcus Wheatland Award and scholarship that we give in partnership with Community Baptist Church. Harry Rice won the George Downing Award. Eleven members of our church attended the Awards Assembly on February 13. I visited with Harry in his home to learn more about his Great Grandfather who served as Sexton of our church for 40 years starting on Mill Street and coming over to the new building on Pelham St.

Capital Campaign and Canvass

Go team! I am very pleased with the work of the Capital Campaign and Canvass Team. The brochures and mailing was informative and attractive. Rev. Tricia Hart's training of our Visiting Stewards was excellent. The kick-off event at St. Paul's with music by Christopher Carbone and the premiere of Peter Bowden's video was fun and upbeat. There seems to be a very positive buzz. We are rising to the challenge!

Caregiving

Word of our excellent shared ministry has traveled. Nickie Kates has been hired by Trinity Church to set-up a caregiving program at their church. We should be proud that our own church leader is being sought out for guidance in this way.

Coming of Age

On Sunday, March 1 I met with our Coming of Age kids and mentors. I spoke with them about the lifelong process of spiritual development. I had an opportunity to speak with

each youth privately. Each one spoke about how important and fun this program is for them. Tom Beall and Sheri Lussier are doing an excellent job.

CROP Walk

Due to lack of leadership, the Aquidneck Island CROP Walk against Hunger will not be held this year. The Social Justice Committee has decided to host a **Hunger Awareness Dinner on Friday, May 15** in the Parish Hall. This will be educational and an opportunity for community organizing for the future.

Denominational Affairs

On Sunday, February 8th I offered the Right Hand of Fellowship at the Installation Ceremony of the Rev. James Ishmael Ford to First Unitarian Church in Providence.

On **Tuesday, April 14** there will be a **UU President Candidates Forum** at the Westminster Unitarian Church. More information to come.

General Assembly is June 24-28, 2009 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Registration and Housing Reservations are now open. Scholarship and Volunteer applications are available. A wealth of great programming is being offered. 2009 is also a UUA election year when delegates will elect a new UUA President. This year's Assembly will vote to adopt a new Statement of Conscience, Peacemaking. We welcome Melissa Harris-Lacewell as the 2009 Ware Lecturer. If you would like to attend, contact Amy so you can be a delegate from our church. If not, we will vote by absentee ballot.

Green Soulful Sundown with Leroy White

On **Friday March 27, 7 pm** the Green Congregation Group is sponsoring Soulful Sundown featuring Leroy White. With music, rhythm, imagery, and poetic inspiration, we will move into the spirit and practice of living with and caring for our planet home. Suggested donation is \$5. A Soulful Supper of homemade soup will be served in the Parish Hall at 5:45 pm before the main event. You are welcome to bring a loaf of bread to share.

Rhode Island Legislative Ministry

Rhode Island UU's for Social Justice is now called RI Legislative Ministry. The Annual Meeting will be **Sunday, March 15, 2pm** at First Unitarian Church in Providence. Members will select 3-4 legislative issues to focus our collective efforts. The commitment for involvement is 1-2 hours/month for four months. This is a great way to participate in our democracy.

Rites of Passage

Tuesday, February 24, Funeral for Dr. Pietro Russo, Memorial Funeral Home

Worship

March 1, ***Ring Out, Wild Bells!*** Rev. Freedman, Lay Leader: Don Mallinson

March 8, ***God, Sex, and a Pitbull with Lipstick***, Rev. Freedman, Lay Leader: John Burnham

OTHER BUSINESS

Chris Y. informed the Board that there have been requests for people to use Channing's membership list to promote their business. It has been decided that we will not sell the membership list. The idea of holding a green raffle has come up again. Please let Chris know if you are approached with fundraising ideas/requests.

Russ is in the middle of renegotiating the loan on Channing House. The cost to do so is \$250. Russ pointed out that this past Sunday the window was left open in the Parish Hall and the back door was left unlocked. The last person out should check doors and locks and Pat should survey property after everyone has gone.

PROCESS OBSERVER – Bob Thorson

Good meeting. People were polite and brief.

*Minutes Submitted by
Susan VanDerhoof
Channing Church Clerk*