

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH

Board Minutes

February 4, 2010

PRESENT: Chris Laudon, Sally Hanchett, Sarah Mermin, Coles Mallory, Chris Yalanis, Russ Milham, Susan VanDerhoof

STAFF: Halycon Westall, Amy Freedman

PROCESS OBSERVER: Chris Laudon

MINUTES: The January minutes were approved.

PROPERTY – Chris L.

The steeple is done! They are in the process of setting up a group of people to play the bells. The financial accounting is being finalized.

The design of the plaque is still being worked on. There was an idea presented to have a competition for artists. We could have an exhibit of the entries and have outside entries. Chris L. presented a budget which was authorized by the finance committee of \$7,000. This is the final step of the steeple project. Chris Y. questioned whether the board has to even vote on this since it is part of the project. The board did vote and approve a motion to defer to the finance committee's decision the approval of the plaque budget. The budget for the entire steeple project is coming in about ¼ of a percent of what we anticipated.

MINISTER'S REPORT - Amy

Chris Y & Jim Freess met with the committee on ministry regarding the strategic plan. The committee identified 83 areas that we need to focus on. Chris will send the report out via email. Please see Amy's complete report following the minutes.

FINANCE – Russ

A problem was identified in the Finance Committee in the area of accounting. There are liability accounts that are skewing the balance statement. Russ has a request from Michele that we should purchase a wireless printer. They will look at it and talk about it next month at the Finance Committee for next month.

CANVASS – Chris Y.

Jim was not present so no update was given. Jim asked Chris to request a larger budget for the canvass for a total of \$950 which included \$350 for a canvass trainer. Last year the budget was \$400. Coles questioned spending that much on food and drinks. Last year it was a potluck and Chris Y donated wine. Chris suggested we stay within the \$400 original budget. A motion was made to increase the canvass budget to \$950. The motion was not approved. Budget is still \$400.

The finance Committee approved a canvass target is \$190,000, which is about 10% more than where we are now. With new members we should be able to get that amount.

GOVERNANCE - Sue

Sue presented a slightly modified organizational chart for a vote. The new chart did not show all of the committees. Russ drew attention to the strategic plan and the discussion during that as to what a board should look like. Coles felt the model did not provide more communication, but less. The current Trustees do not fulfill the intended role. He also suggested we change our agenda items. Coles suggested we wait until the new minister is found. Chris Y. agreed. Chris L. suggested we think outside the box and maybe each quarter the board can explore a different area of the church like one quarter focus on RE another we could focus on financial.

Sarah said that would be quite awhile before this governance issue is visited again with the search committee. She asked Amy what she thought about our current governance. Amy stated that she had really wanted the return of the program council and that the board has been too cumbersome. Chris suggested that since we are in transition and that in a few years it might become clear.

Russ made a motion for the board to vote on the model that was presented by the governance committee and send it to the congregation. Coles asked if we could see the supporting documentation which consisted of the proposed changes to the bylaws. Sue and Russ, after some discussion, decided to retract the motion. Coles then made a motion that the issue of governance be tabled until we have an interim minister. It was noted that it would not be the role of an interim minister to be involved in the board's governance issues. The vote was as follows 3 for 1 against and 3 abstentions, the motion did not pass.

SEARCH PROCESS – Chris Y.

The UUA has said that we have to have an interim minister. The function of that minister will help us find a permanent minister. Previously there was a 3 person committee to select an interim minister. Then a larger committee that is appointed by the congregation and the board will conduct the search for a settled minister. That committee does a lot of work. They will have to survey the congregation, develop a packet and review packets from ministers. The district executive will interview Chris Y. & Amy and another representative will meet with the board about the settlement process.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE – Chris Y.

Chris Y has spoken to Nancy Peresta and Joy Benson. The Board still needs to appoint one more person.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The Social Justice Committee has requested the Endowment Committee consider ethical and environmental issues to guide them in their investment decisions. They have

requested the board make recommendations. Chris Y. suggested that this not be a board issue but that the Social Action Committee should give the endowment committee more concrete guidelines. Don Mallinson will give them broad guidelines. They are not seeking to change the bylaws and procedures, but rather to offer guidelines. Don wants the board to support what the SJ committee is doing. It was agreed that this is an important issue.

PROCESSOR OBSERVER:

The meeting went over time due to the governance issue and there were two things added to the agenda.

*Submitted by
Susan VanDerhoof
Channing Church Clerk*

Minister's Report

Rev. Amy B. Freedman
Channing Memorial Church

This report covers the period of January 7- February 4, 2010

Administration

Michele Dubuc is an asset to the operations of our church. She has become very skilled at scheduling and managing increasingly complex church activities. The church office is currently open 20 hours a week. For the upcoming church year, Michele has expressed interest in increasing her hours to 25 hours per week, with an additional 4 hours per month to work on the Catalyst. Given the upcoming Ministerial transition, this would be a wise investment of church resources that I strongly recommend.

Adult Enrichment

On Saturday, January 16, Anna Smith offered a **Reiki Level I Class** in the Parish Hall. Anna is a Reiki Master/Teacher who provided instruction to ten participants on how Reiki's gentle touch can reduce stress, pain and anxiety and promote healing. A fee of \$65 included lunch, materials and a contribution to the church.

Reading Confucius~ Wednesdays, March 3, 17, & 31, 7:00-9:00pm

Channing member and preeminent scholar, Henry Rosemont, Jr. will offer a series of three lectures and discussions focusing on the *Analects*. The class fee of \$50 includes a copy of *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* translated by Roger T. Ames & Henry Rosemont, Jr. Scholarships are available. All proceeds benefit the church. Contact the church office to register.

Annual Program Fund

I received a letter from Laura Amabile, the Director of the Annual Program Fund of the UUA stating that our full requested contribution in the current fiscal year is \$10864. No pledge or contribution (Fair Share) has been made on behalf of Channing

Memorial Church. Not only is making a contribution to the Association the right thing to do, it is in your best interest for the upcoming Ministerial Search Process.

Black History Assembly

Friday, February 12th, 9:45am-11:00am

Since 1970, Channing Memorial Church has sponsored a Black History Assembly in the Rogers High School Auditorium affirming the contributions of people of color in our community. Our congregation began this initiative and for many years has done so in partnership with Community Baptist Church. The program includes music, speeches by local politicians, a performance by the student dance troupe, and awards to a student and adult who exemplify the spirit of integration, leadership, and service. *Please let me know if you plan to attend.*

Channing Library

Trevor Maloof and Kristine Thorson are currently cataloging our Lending Library through an online service called Library Thing.

Clergy Meetings

Wednesday, January 13, Noon, Aquidneck Island Clergy Association, Middletown
Wednesday, February 3, 2:30pm, RI UU Minister Cluster, East Greenwich

Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry has reviewed Channing's Strategic Plan and created a matrix to clarify which committees are responsible for which initiatives as well as possible action items. We met with Chris Yalanis and Jim Freess to discuss next steps. Members of the Committee will be meeting with church leaders to share insights and discuss how to highlight the plan in the upcoming Annual reports.

Membership

Good news! Last year, Channing Church had the highest net increase in membership of the Ballou Channing District. This year we certified with the UU Association 220 members. In addition, our statistics were updated as follows: RE Enrollment: 83; Pledging Units: 135; Pledging Income: \$157,000; Average Weekly Attendance: 130; Total Expenditures: \$250,116.

On Sunday, January 24, Marcia Mallory and I offered, UU101, an orientation to six people following the service in Channing House. The Membership Committee provided lunch.

A Member/Friend Information Form is now on the Channing website. Paper copies are also available on Sunday mornings or at the church office. Please take time to complete the information. Your input will help to update our church directory, create a useable database of interests and skills, and connect individuals with meaningful and creative endeavors in our church community.

Go to: www.channingchurch.org

Select: member/friend input (from menu on the left)

Complete: the information and select areas of interest to you (note that there are spaces for 2 people. If you are a couple, you have the option of completing it separately)

Submit: the completed form goes to the church office and to Barbara Nowicki who will work to make the information useable for all in our church community.

Please Respond if someone is interested in your area of church life!

Rites of Passage

Saturday, January 9, 11:00am, Memorial Service for Patricia Mary Kaczor, Channing Memorial Church

Tuesday, January 12, 2:30pm, Memorial Service for Edwin William Hand, Blenheim

Saturday, January 23, 2:00pm, Memorial Service for Marsha W. Francis, Channing Memorial Church

Small Group Ministry

Our program is focusing on “Food for Thought” for the entire church year exploring the many issues related to ethical eating and our relationship to food. During the Fall semester, we had fifty-two participants meeting in five groups as follows:

09 –Newport – Tues.

11 –Newport – Wed.

10 –Middletown – Thurs.

09 – Portsmouth – Tues.

13 – Jamestown – Thurs.

This semester we have fifty-three participants as follows:

14 – Newport – Tues.

11 – Newport – Wed.

08 – Middletown – Thurs.

07 – Portsmouth – Wed.

13 – Jamestown – Thurs.

Social Action

After a series of discussions following Sunday services, we submitted the following comments to the UUA about the **draft Statement of Conscience on**

Peacemaking:

“We approve this Statement of Conscience being placed on the Agenda of General Assembly 2010 because Peacemaking is a pressing issue that deserves our collective attention. However, we feel strongly that the draft is a bloated boring consensus document that cannot lead to positive change. Several statements affirm the use of violence in self-defense which has no place in our testimony about Peacemaking. There are numerous statements presented as factual that are open to multiple interpretations. We strongly recommend Lines 23-26 be excised from the document. We call for a statement that takes a stand that inspires action.”

On Sunday, January 31, Al Benson offered a presentation and discussion following the service about **Rhode Island Ethics**.

On Saturday, February 27, 9:30am-4:00pm, we are co-sponsoring with the Ballou Channing District, a Congregational Action and Social Justice Workshop with the Rev. Richard Gilbert, called *Unitarian Universalists Walking the Talk*. This workshop will explore the spiritual roots of our concern for social justice and the unique UU mission to translate concern into action. Participants will gain organizational tools for working with a congregation and planning for change. *Registration Fee: \$15.00 including Lunch. Register Online: <http://www.channingchurch.org/walkthetalk>*

Soulful Sundown

Leroy White was our featured artist for Soulful Sundown on Friday, January 29. The evening began with a soup supper in the Parish Hall with three different kinds of soup. Despite the frigid temperatures, about fifty people attended and there was dancing in the aisles!

Worship

Worship Team Meeting, January 13

[Sunday, January 3, *Meditations with Pema Chodron*, UU Church Kingston, MA in exchange for colleague preaching during my Maternity Leave]

Sunday, January 10, *The Larger Circle—public announcement of upcoming departure*

Sunday, January 17, *Learning to Be White*

Sunday, January 24, *Restitution of Art*