

Resource Committee Meeting May 6, 2014

Present: Rick Fiske, Jack Nelson, Neil Stannard, Lynn Peterson from the Committee
Susan Inui, Denise Lyons from the Board.
Warren Clarke from the UUA via Skype

For the Board

- Help lead the community in a process to write a vision and mission statement and ultimately, to develop a strategic plan. We need this direction for our 2015 pledge drive and other fund raising.
- Ensure a documented and approved plan for borrowing from our reserve fund and a plan for repayment.

We reviewed briefly our current needs and questions we would like to address with Wayne. The major issue was whether he thought we should invest in a major fund raising program in the next year or so which would involve having a trained fund-raiser spend a significant amount of time with us. This would cost approximately \$6,000.

We began by sharing with him our work over the last 3 years. This included our Giving pyramid, the size of our congregation, our annual budget, our fund-raising efforts in the past few years, our fiscal needs, the results of our pledge drives, etc.

He thought:

- We did not have a large enough capital need to justify a full-fledged campaign.
- Successful fund-raising at this time rests on having an appealing, genuine social focus/action. Donors are not likely to give to maintenance or ordinary costs.
- We needed to spend time developing a Vision and Mission and Strategic Plan that states who we are, what we are about and what we aim to accomplish. Fund raising then flows from that effort. This is best done with an experienced leader.
- For our capital needs (driveway, insulation, barn restoration, etc.) we should consider borrowing from our reserve fund. We should have a written statement explaining why this is done and how and over what period of time it will be paid back.
- He would be glad to meet with us again via Skype.
- Our median and average pledge amount are precisely those of the national average for a church like ours
- Grants are difficult to get especially for churches. But they can provide a way to attract other donors since receiving a grant gives a good impression to others as they think about their own philanthropy.

We agreed that developing a new vision/mission statement would be helpful. We will ask the Board to join us in this effort. Susan and Denise were both members of the Growth Committee and seemed willing to help in capturing the ideas captured in that effort. Deb Hawthorne had written a draft of a mission statement 2 or 3 years ago for the Board. There was also a mission statement in the Growth Committee report. It would be helpful to get a copy of that work.

The mission statement will be helpful as we create the plans for this year's pledge drive so we should get busy immediately.

Lynn pointed out that we had a 15% increase in pledge amount between 2010 and 2011 but have remained flat since then. 33% of our income comes from non-pledged sources – donations, silent auction, Western Wind, book sale, etc. – so maybe we should keep that in mind as we try to find ways to meet our needs.

We also discussed grants. The largest grant source for a UU church is the Veatch Program at Shelter Rock. Their grants focus on social programs which can be international; the Life and Hope program would fit this category but we would have to make changes to make this happen. We are eligible to apply for a Vermont Arts Council Grant for 2015.

We need to review the discussion of borrowing from the reserve fund at our January's Annual meeting to see exactly what was presented to the Congregation and whether there was a vote for approval. Depending on what that shows, we should prepare a written statement about the sum to be borrowed, the plan to pay it back and ask for the congregation to approve.

Respectfully,
Lynn Peterson