

WELCOMING AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes, July 7, 2016

Present: Barbara Bartlett, Richard Schramm, Joanna Garbisch, Rick Fiske, Pru Schuler, Kathy Fiske, Polly Forcier

We opened with Barbara's reading of a Mary Oliver poem. Lit a candle, a moment of silence and check-ins.

Old business: All agreed that Geraldine has done a fine job in converting the "IN TOUCH" to brief and shorter announcements and providing links to expand the information.

The greater focus of our discussion was how we can be more welcoming and inclusive. How do we keep new members engaged? The entire church community should be involved with welcoming... how to do this?

Richard, when he is coordinator, will invite newcomers to stand, if they wish and tell where they are visiting from. Shall we greet and introduce ourselves to those beside us in church? **Action:** Barbara will follow up with Worship Committee for their input.

Pru mentioned the possibility of a rainbow ribbon on the church sign. Rick has seen a sign with the lengthy explanation "This UU Community welcomes and celebrates the presence and participation of everyone- no exceptions." Can it be shortened to "All are welcome-no exceptions"? Do we need a new visible sign? **Action:** Rick will email the co-chairs of the board and recommend that we have a sign.

Richard reported about another UU church in Bryn Mawr which has an expanded way of welcoming. He brought much printed material to share and we thought some of it might be worth considering as ideas to incorporate.

While on vacation, Rick and Kathy experienced a peaceful and soulful welcome from a gentle monk.

Rick noticed that our new welcoming and informational trifolds have not been in evidence at our Sunday services. They need to be put out. **Action:** Joanna will see to this.

Do we need a calendar for signing up outside welcomers? (We have changed the word "greeter" to "welcomer" to differentiate the outside people from the inside greeters.) Rick will initiate the first calendar. Barbara will welcome on the 17th and Polly will welcome on the 31st. Kathy will make a welcoming sign for the narthax.

Action: *Kathy* will speak to Rosie and *Joanna* will speak to Moira about becoming welcomers.

Pru reports that social hour offerings are sparse and people are complaining. We may need to make a request in the church service.

We need to complete an application to become a welcoming community. It was agreed to table this action until Joby is here next time to participate in the discussion.

Richard reported on his initial conversations with the new "Covenant Committee", ie. Don Ransom, Vee Delay, Richard Schramm, and Anne Marinello and Judy Williamson will be joining them. They have accomplished a great deal in thinking through a new format, but the details have yet to be worked out.

We closed on time with a Mary Oliver poem read by Barbara.

Next meeting August 4.

Respectfully submitted, Polly Forcier