

Minutes

TUUC Program Council Meeting

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

Submitted by Patty Barry

- I. Welcome, chalice lighting, introductions with pronouns, and check-in – 12 min
Chalice Lighting (read in unison): *We promise to Trust, to welcome each other, to be courteous, patient and warm, to give and gain the benefit of the doubt.* [from the TUUC Relational Covenant]

Your name, your pronouns (e.g. she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, he/him/his), your role. Check-in question: Who or what has inspired you in the last week?

Present: Kai Aiyetoro, Andrew Hager, Patty Barry, Joyce Duncan, Jane D'Ambrogi, Michael Magrogan, Tracy Hall, Larry Magder, Joe Tumbler, Anita Cox, Monica Sweidel, Karyn Marsh, Lisa Lubomski, Robin Sinn, Samantha Saalfield, Lorraine Sorbello, Donn Teubner-Rhodes, Marti MacKenzie, Sue Royer

Not Present: Clare Petersberger, Lora Powell-Haney, Todd Robertson, Jeanette Anders

- II. Request volunteers for Process Observer, Note Taker, Time Keeper (three roles). **These were assigned**
- III. Spotlight on: Youth Religious Exploration (YRE) – Joyce Duncan, Larry Magder (10 minutes)

Share what's going on with Youth RE: successes, important dates, areas needing help, possibly synergies or linkages with other groups at TUUC.

Youth Religious Education continues to need volunteers. Pulling together enough teachers and extra helpers for all classes is always a challenge. YRE is looking to the Program Council for suggestions of people to approach for volunteering.

You do not need to commit to serve as a teacher; you can present a one-day activity or interest, lead one class, or just speak for part of a class. A past example was given: Todd Robertson came in last year to share about Roots and Wings (TUUC Pagan Group). Possible topics for these visits include: dance, music, a special skill, and for YRUU (youth group): meditation and social action topics.

The Program Council then took part in an activity in small groups, the YRE Update Quiz. Some facts presented in this quiz:

- **Different levels of Our Whole Lives (OWL) offered now at TUUC: 3. In 2010, there was only 1 level offered at TUUC.**

- **# of teen participants in 1st service trip to West Virginia in 2017: 3.**
Predicted participants this year: 9
- **Number of social justice issues covered with Harry and UU (a Harry Potter themed curriculum for grades 5 - 8): 7**
- **Number of adult volunteers needed this semester to cover all ages at the 11:15 service: 22**
- **How many TUUC groups would YRE like to partner with? As many as possible.**
- **Upcoming events in YRE are the February 24 Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (youth group) worship service and the service trip to West Virginia in June, to help fix low income housing and to learn about health and economic issues.**

- IV. All-congregation collaborative fun event – 5 min
Ice-cream social and volunteer recognition on Sunday, May 19 after the second service. How can we as a Program Council, or the committees that we represent, help this event to be successful? Invite pairs of committees to be responsible for a specific part of the event? (e.g. planning for the ice cream and supplies, set-up, ice cream scoopers, volunteer recognition, clean-up).

This event is intended for all in the congregation, both children and adults. The question as to how the Program Council might help this to be successful was presented, with the suggestion of having committees pair up to take ownership of a particular aspect of the event.

- V. Communication & Sharing Group Activity – in groups – 25 minutes (15 min in groups, 10 min reporting back to the council and summarizing actions)

We broke up into three groups. Within each group, the following topics were discussed:

- Identifying an existing or planned program that might appeal to people from more than one committee (focus on February – June).
- Suggesting ways to improve communication and awareness – is it a program that we want to promote to the public?
- Discuss the ice-cream social & volunteer recognition event

Ideas that came about as a result of the small groups:

An existing or planned program that might appeal to people from more than one committee (focus on February – June):

- **Teens helping older congregants with technology, perhaps as a fundraiser.**
- **Youth group in West Virginia working with social action committee. Mutual teaching could occur before and after the trip, and SA**

committee members could work with youth locally afterwards to extend the ideals of the trip.

- Fundraisers - joining forces with youth group for trip, Amazing Grace and the issues they're facing/social event. Waterways exhibit. Smithsonian. Emily. Discussion underway about having a musical event in conjunction. Involving other churches?
- Drama students from local colleges to come here or for us to go there (to raise money) or other theater group
- Coffee House
- Theater camp that uses TUUC in the summer - engage them this year?

Ways to improve communication and awareness – is it a program that we want to promote to the public?

- Have a speaker or speaker series that would appeal to the public, as a way to have them visit TUUC.
- Nextdoor (website for promotion of events, by neighborhood). Have to get folks to post, be responsible for posting to their particular neighborhood - neighborhood ambassadors?
- WTMD/WYPR underwriting - perhaps for Waterways exhibit, events like the Eleanor Roosevelt one woman show

The ice-cream social & volunteer recognition event

- Get ice cream donated? Charmery? Uncle Wiggly's?
- Volunteer recognition idea: different color ribbons to indicate different categories or committees of volunteer work
- Solicit a volunteer coordinator to facilitate event and other things
- Honor volunteers in groups/categories on several Sundays as well as the big event
- List volunteers' rather like a diploma. Receive a certificate for the year.
- Nominations from congregation: Uber-volunteers. Will some folks who spend a lot of time but quietly/behind the scene be overlooked? But maybe they won't care? Or perhaps that's where their skills are, and they might feel slighted. This is not going forward.
- Volunteer of the Year? Done in the past but not recently. It was reported that Rev. Clare felt it was not her role to select one person to be recognized as the volunteer of the year.
- Karyn: Past volunteer recognition event: meal by Chipotle. Other years, every in Sunday in May, cake, recognizing a committee each week.
- Perhaps put names of volunteers in order of service, and invite to stand up, in Sundays in May. Karyn suggested having board members join Rev. Clare in recognizing volunteers as they stand.

- **Joyce:** For years, the YRE committee would thank their volunteers in the YRE service upstairs, presenting them with gifts either made or purchased by DRE. This became harder to do when we shifted to two semesters (requiring more volunteers), and we also realized they are volunteers for the whole church. Keep in mind, May 19 is senior bridging day for 3 seniors. Usually there is a cake, but perhaps a cake is not needed with all the ice cream.
- **Kai:** People like to see their names up front, which wouldn't happen with just certificates.
- **December for holidays:** decorate with scrolls with names and what they've volunteered for. Hang them, and then give them to them at the end.
- **Mini-posters of each committee** so that all can see.

Sue called for a summary of our volunteer recognition discussion. Ideas expressed:

- **Let's not lift up just a few volunteers. Post by committee/group,** perhaps in order of service and/or visible signs in the lobby.
- **A thumbs up/thumbs down assessment regarding printing a certificate for each volunteer was taken and resulted in few thumbs up.**
- **Lisa suggested that it's more important for folks to see lists/make people aware with a public display of names. Robin agreed, mentioning the saving of trees by reduced paper.**
- **Michael suggested that it's important for those volunteers who are not present on a particular Sunday to still be recognized and thanked.**
- **Perhaps include blank spaces on posters: your name here**
- **Still left to figure out: Set-up, serving, clean-up of ice cream social. Larry suggested involving the kids in set-up and clean up. Sue suggested having Board members serve.**
- **Dairy free option needs to be included.**

- VI. A Dialog on Race and Ethnicity (ADORE) idea of a poster board in the lobby with cards that you can write on when you've taken an action in support of TUUC's mission – deepening our ethical and spiritual lives together as we work for racial, social and environmental justice – Marti MacKenzie – 10 min

Marti Mackenzie proposed having a poster board in the lobby with cards that you can write on when you've taken an action in support of TUUC's mission.

Marti described that ADORE has been holding monthly activities for at least 3 - 4 years. They are looking at what should be their next step. She explained that people often approach her asking: what can I do? or commenting: guess what I did?

This poster board would be a space for people to list what they've done: visiting other congregations, MMTH, Amazing Grace, Earl's Place, books read. The poster would serve both as inspiration and for patting each other on the back. The board would be refreshed every couple of months.

Reaction was positive. Suggestions included having a space on the poster for displaying upcoming activities and using existing bulletin board space rather than a stand-alone board.

Kai expressed a desire for more information in the Threshold about people's mission-focused activities. She would especially like to see information not just from people running events, but all congregants.

There was discussion of putting social justice activities on the TUUC Facebook public page or a link to a page on the website focused on social justice. Kai reminded us that if we'd like to put something on the website to email her.

- VII. Announcements and reminders (2- 3 min per person unless otherwise noted)
– let Sue Royer know prior to the start of the meeting if you have something to announce

- a. Budget inputs – Joe Tumbler – 10 minutes

Joe presented what he has been working on regarding TUUC's financial statements and budget, attempting to make them more streamlined and understandable. He has been through 10 years of data. There are multiple issues, including overly long and complex statements. He sent out an email for committees/groups budgetary needs, and still needs some groups to reply. Joe requested that if you haven't given Joe a budget, to reach out to him so that he can work with you to achieve. Joe asked for the Program Council's buy-in, as change can be a challenge. Support was expressed.

Monica gave a reminder that things groups share like coffee, copies, and postage don't belong in individual committee budgets. Those are outside the realm of committees/groups. Kai will still need to know if your group is planning on a special event that will require a great amount of these resources, so that it can be included in ordering and budgeting.

- b. **There will not be a House & Grounds Work Party on Feb 16**
- c. Neighborhood Dinners – February 23 and March 2 – Monica Sweidel
- d. Available Light/ADORE Film – Mar 1 – Andrew Hager
- e. Membership Information Session – March 10 after the second service – Karyn Marsh
- f. Special Music Service – March 24 – Tracy Hall or Donn Teubner-Rhodes

- g. Possible congregational Common Read – *Justice on Earth* - Lora Powell-Haney
 - h. UU Living Legacy Pilgrimage – Sue - <http://www.uulivinglegacy.org/>
 - i. Reminder to please wear your nametags on Sunday mornings and have your role on your nametag (send an email to assistant@towsonuuc.org)
 - j. Don't prop the lower level door open. It's recommended ask a volunteer to stand near the door to let people in. Unlock the main door after entering using your key fob.
 - k. Request for a committee to be highlighted in the next Program Council meeting – time on the plenary agenda (10 min) for that committee to share what they're working on – Sue
- VIII. Agree on date for next meeting: The next Program Council meeting will be on Wednesday, April 10, 2019. The (Zombie) Operations Team (O-Team) will meet on Wednesday, Mar 13 at 7:30 pm.**
- IX. Process Observation – 5 min – **see below**
- X. Close & put away tables and chairs

Process Observation Form

Date 2-13-19 Meeting place TUNE Observer Lorraine Sorbello

Task Focus	Process Focus					
	Excel -lent	Good	Fair	Excel -lent	Good	Fair
Meeting starts on time		✓		Members arrive on time		✓
Break periods are timed and adhered to		✓		Assembly is smooth, non-disruptive		✓
Agenda is followed		✓		Discussions stay focused on topic or issue at hand	✓	
Issues are clarified and diagnosed	NA			Group climate allows expression of feelings	✓	
Effective, orderly problem solving employed		✓		Facts, reason, persuasion, drama sorted out	NA	
Sufficient discussion before remedies proposed		✓		Broad participation; all are listened to; quiet ones drawn out	✓	
Expert information available	NA			One or a few do not dominate		✓
Decisions are not premature	NA			Interruptions, side-talking are minimal		✓
Consensus sought and tested for commitment	NA			Members trust each other; not guarded	✓	
Dissenting ideas considered to improve decisions	NA			Disagreements are objective, not personal	NA	
Decisions made clear and tasks assigned with time frames		✓		Members share responsibility for leadership, summarizing, interventions, etc.	✓	

Select 2-3 elements of the Relational Covenant that were well demonstrated during the meeting:

Were any elements of the Relational Covenant a challenge during the meeting?

Appendix

Goals for the Program Council for 2018 – 2019:

1. Foster synergy between individual committees; promote at least one program per quarter that is sponsored by or attended by people from more than one committee or group.
2. Improve communication, promotion, and awareness of programs.
3. Sponsor one additional all-congregation collaborative fun event (in addition to the auction).
4. Promote attendance and active participation in Program Council meetings.
5. Add Process Observation to Program Council and O-Team meetings.

How do we get the word out about programs?

- Ensure the event is on the TUUC calendar (form available on the side of the mailboxes in the lobby).
- The Threshold (weekly newsletter, delivered via email link, some copies mailed)
- Closed Facebook Group, including use of events
- Public Facebook Page, including use of events
- Twitter @TowsonUUC – determining who manages this account
- YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/user/TowsonUUC/> - determining who manages this account
- TUUC Website
- **Posts to Nextdoor (website for neighborhood news)**
- **Announcements (free) in Towson Times**
- **Press Releases to local media organizations**
- **Paid Ads**
- **Paid Underwriting to local public radio stations**
- Email to those who opted in to the TUUC Email Bulletin Board
- Emails to specific committees or interest groups
- Announcement at the beginning of the service
- Announcements on slides in the lobby on the TV and before the service in the meeting room
- Word of mouth – at coffee hour, with friends, etc.
- Postcards
- Poster boards in the lobby
- Communication both before and after a program. Communication afterward includes posting photos in our Facebook Group, updating the photos on our web site, word of mouth, etc. and may motivate someone to attend in the future.
- Feel free to write us a positive review on our public Facebook page or on Google