

Congregational Life Shared Ministry Team Open Meeting

September 2, 2021 6:00pm

In attendance: Melissa Egger, Coordinator of Congregational Life; Joe Lobl, Board Liaison; Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick and Robin Taylor, Lay Members; and Roxanne Schlasner, Hospitality Lay Member.

Call to Order: Robin ran the meeting and called it to order at 6:12 p.m.

Chalice Lighting: Kelly Rae reviewed our church mission statement and lit the chalice.

Update on Congregational Life: Melissa prepared a written report for the meeting (see attached). She stressed the resilience of our congregation, the strong desire to meet together in person, and the great work the staff and lay volunteers have done to keep the services going online. There has been robust attendance to the services online as well as to the coffee hours.

The Caring Committee has been extremely active and their work is greatly appreciated. Vikki Wolff reported that “Every two weeks, during this pandemic weird time, the Caring Coordinator has sent out approximately 30 cards (birthday, sympathy, anniversary of death, graduation, baby) and made approximately 8 calls to check on people or cheer up an isolated person. During this time, for everyone’s safety, we have not arranged meals or made visits other than to personal church friends. We have helped Melissa arrange a couple of meal trains lately.” Melissa reported that one coordinator sent out 40 cards in her two-week stint!

Small group ministry (Chalice Circles) had 7 groups and 70 participants this past year. Registration for this year is going on now.

Membership is at 371 as of 8/31, down somewhat from March of 2020 when it was listed at 398. We have had 12 new members join in the past year and about 1-2 inquiries are fielded by Melissa weekly. There is an online “Pathway to Membership” video series that is a good introduction to our faith and church life.

Budget for 2021-22 is currently \$2500.

Fellowship Report: Robin reviewed Summer 2021 activities including Willow Creek Reservoir hike, Down by the Riverside Concert, and Kinstone Circle fieldtrip with the Northfield and LaCrossee UUs. A Fellowship brainstorming meeting was held and the focus was on planning activities to help congregants stay connected to the church. There are a great number of Fellowship activities planned for the Fall. These include Bird Hike (9/11), Church picnic at Slatterly Park (9/12), “Always Patsy” RCT musical (9/17), UU Holiday Bazaar (10/2), Trunk or Treat (Beth Thompson will be planning this), Church Auction (11/6), Doodling workshop with Harriett Hodgson (11/13). Kelly Rae volunteered to set up a Beer tasting at Forager Brewpub in October. Robin has been working on the schedule for Armchair Travellers, with planned events monthly in 6 months of the fall and winter. Other ideas mentioned were a church talent show and a skywatching party.

Update from Regathering Committee: Joe discussed the latest information about COVID and the Delta variant. Church indoor services are currently on hold, with a hoped return to limited capacity in person, indoor services on October 3rd. There will be 2 planned outdoor services at 9 and 11 am at the Olmsted County History Center on September 19th and 26th. The site Covidactnow.org will be used by the committee to monitor the disease prevalence in the community and help guide decisions.

Hospitality Update: Roxanne reported that the SignUp genius has been updated, using it for coffee hour hosts for right now. She will update (with Erika's assistance) for the planned services at the History Center on 9/19 and 9/26 and then back to 'normal' sign up for the planned in-person services indoors starting October 3rd. There has been a low response to the sign-up so far. With all of the changes going on, we will continue to have open sign-ups for all weeks at this time and reassess as the year progresses. There are training powerpoints online for the hospitality positions; Roxanne hasn't received any feedback on these to date.

Old Business: Joe reported that the Church Board agreed to pursue creating an all-church covenant as one of its goals for the upcoming year.

Next meetings: Kelly Rae and Roxanne will plan to meet together with Melissa to review the Hospitality teams at 11 am on September 27th at Dunn Brothers North. The next Congregational Life Shared Ministry Team meeting is tentatively planned for October 25th at 11 am at Dunn Brothers North. The next public meeting of the committee will be determined at that time.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Facilitator: Robin Taylor

Notetaker: Joe Lobl