

## Central Board Meeting Wednesday February 21, 2024

Present: Doug Marquart, Peggie Morris, Peg Round, Joyce Mosher (Moderator), Jack Terrill, and Rev. Adam Isbitsky. Excused: Dale Earl, Nancy Koch, Lauren Noonan

With Dale away, Doug served as Chair and Jack as Secretary.

**Opening Prayer:** Adam offered a prayer at 7:02 pm.

**Minutes of January 17, 2024, Central Board Meeting** were moved for approval by Jack, second by Peggie and unanimously approved.

### General Discussion/Major Topics/Updates & Next Steps

**Priorities and Other Updates from Rev. Adam** – (Note: The Board welcomed Rev. Adam to his first meeting with the Board and his first as a new member of Second Congregational Church.) He went over all that he had to do in the past month dealing with the hiring process. He discussed the Lenten theme of the “Wandering Heart of Peter” which will be the theme through Easter.

He expressed interest in being more active on the church’s Facebook page and will be introducing an online devotional. He has been meeting with other colleagues in the community in the UCC and other faiths. They are in discussions regarding the sunrise Easter service at Lynch Park. He has also been in touch with Lisa, Judy and Wendy. Wendy is looking to start up Spirited Women again.

He is emailing each church member and will be calling those without email access. He is finding some have left the church while others have a new email address. He is conducting hospital visits and pastoral care.

He is getting to know the staff and is holding staff meetings. At his previous church, he was the staff.

**Building Our Legacy Team Update** – Jack reported on recent progress. The Team provided updates to a zoning opinion prepared by our Real Estate Attorney, Meredith Fine. The Team assisted with efforts on a letter to the Attorney General’s Office (AGO) laying out the church’s intended plans for the building to be accompanied by the Letter of Interest from Lifebridge. Both are expected to be submitted this week. This is a preliminary inquiry to determine if the AGO will consider what the church has proposed, that our legacy would be to follow our long term mission rather than transfer the church to another house of worship.

**Forward Chats** – There was no Forward Chat in the last quarter of 2023, so the Board wants to make sure one is scheduled for this quarter. The staff had a discussion on the best date and offered Sunday, March 17, after church. A few topics were discussed, and the one chosen for the chat is a presentation by Rev. Adam called the “Death Café”. More will be presented on this topic as the date approaches.

The Board discussed the history of the Forward Chat, that it was developed to address topics of interest, allow full discussion with the goal of keeping everyone up to date and allowing a better understanding of the topic. This has been done for presentations on the budget before a vote, the transition we are in, etc.

**SNEUCC Super Saturday on March 9<sup>th</sup>:** Last year this event was a series of webinars that several members participated in. This year it is a live event being held in Southbridge, MA. A variety of timely topics will be discussed in groups. An email was sent to Jack (and likely others) saying that the registration deadline is fast approaching (2/26). The CB asked that Jack forward the email to them and Theresa to be included in the weekly email.

### **Other Updates/Status reports from CB Liaisons**

**Worship Team** – Rev. Adam forwarded a question about whether there was still a need to take attendance on Sundays. During the discussion it was noted that attendance has been being taken for many years even before COVID. It was recommended that as long as it wasn't a burden, that it should continue.

### **Property Team / Building Use – Jack reported that:**

1. The Lower Parish Hall water bubbler was removed.
2. Lift – needs to be replaced, no longer can it be repaired.
  - a. Installed by Garaventa 20 years ago.
  - b. The platform is warped from uneven loading of heavy items.
  - c. The church is no longer ADA Compliant, and individuals have problems attending church and other events.
  - d. Looking to get 3 bids. Expect to costs around \$50,000. One has been received and another is scheduled for the next day.
  - e. Since it is expected to cost more than \$10,000, the process will be a presentation to Finance Team for a recommendation, then the Central Board for a recommendation and a Congregational Meeting for approval
3. North Shore Christian School
  - a. They have located a place to move to and hope to be out by the end of summer. Note that this will have an unfavorable impact on the budget since they will be leaving four months early.
  - b. They have requested permission for:
    - i. putting a second dumpster in the parking lot. (2 months in the summer) [Approved by Jack]
    - ii. putting storage pods in the parking lot. (2 months in the summer) [Approved by Jack]
    - iii. using the balcony or parlor for box storage before school lets out, then moving them to the Lower Parish Hall. [Jack will tell them the parlor can be used.]
  - c. The school will repair any damage they caused.

**Mission/Social Action: nothing to report.**

**Technology Team:** David Brandt, Dale Earl and Rev. Adam interviewed a candidate for the part time position to coordinate the Sunday service/Zoom broadcast. The intern is a sophomore at the Essex Technical School and also interns at Bev-Cam. They are waiting to hear if he is interested. The position would be paid at \$25/hour so working Sundays would be \$50.

**Finance Team:** Doug reported on the February Finance Team meeting. Since we are one month into the new year there was nothing significant to report. Both revenues and expenses are tracking close to the annual budget. The Team is exploring making the investments safer from market fluctuations. The past focus had been on long-term investments which could weather the market's ups and downs. Now that the focus is just a few years, it makes sense to look at safer financial instruments. David Varga is going to contact Schwab to discuss what would be available for us.

Doug provided a closing prayer.

At 8:10 pm Jack made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Peg R, and there was unanimous approval.