

Central Board Meeting Minutes 2/15/2022

via Zoom 6:30 – 8:40 PM

Proof Notice: February meeting time was posted in February Spire and announced in church.

Attendees: Dale Earl, Nancy Koch, Joyce Mosher, Rev. Lisa Stedman, Lauren Swiniuch, Jack Terrill and Andrea Trefry.

Opening Prayer by Rev Lisa

The meeting was Chaired by Dale Earl and notes were taken by Nancy Koch.

Approved Central Board minutes from 1/18/2022 regular meeting.

Lisa opened meeting in prayer

Minutes from Jan. were approved. Jack moved, Lauren seconded

Rev. Lisa - Status

- **Staff meeting today**
 - Pastoral Care: Wendy continues to reach out to individuals. Both Lisa and Wendy saw Mary Sue before she passed away.
 - Wendy and Lisa co-officiated at Karen Varga's service
 - They also visited during the calling hours for Joyce Mosher's mother Margery in Gloucester
 - Mary Sue Wonson's memorial service will be held July 16, 2022 at 2:00 pm.
- **Plans for Lent and Easter**
 - Ash Wednesday Service: March 2nd
 - Full service in Chapel at 7:00 pm
 - Open Chapel from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Individuals can come for silent prayer, meditation, and ashes
 - There will be no soup supper due to Covid
 - Maundy Thursday Service on April 14th
 - Hope to have soup supper for this service
 - Adult Spiritual Nurture opportunity: 3x gathering to explore and play with psalms on March 9th, 23rd, and April 6th in the evenings. May add soup supper on either the March 23rd or April 6th.
- **Super Saturday, March 19, 2022**
 - Lisa is asking us to look at the offerings that conference is offering on Super Saturday, Lisa will resend the link. Encouraging everyone to see if there is anything that piqued your interest. We don't need to plan on spending the entire day – the event is virtual.

- Dale is suggesting that we look to see if we could each explore offerings to see if we can cover as many workshops as possible. The link and information will also be sent out to the congregation.
- Registration Deadline is March 13. Lisa will register anyone willing to go.
- **Transition Planning**
 - Lisa will send out PowerPoint for presentation that provided guidance and information on transition. The message is that we have done nothing wrong as a church, and that we are not alone.
 - Lauren asked if we need to have a funeral or a remembrance service so that we can let go of the past and move on to the future. The congregation is elderly and is having a difficult time of letting go. No one is signing up to be on the transition team.
 - There were 5 UCC churches on Beverly, and we are the last one.
 - Dale read that if churches close it can be viewed as a rebirth. We need to have a forward chat so that individuals can be involved in a directed conversation. Provide a forum for people to express their feelings.
 - March 13th is targeted for the next time the congregation explores this topic.
- **Choir**
 - Choir is going to restart slowly. The choir is not ready to come back as a full entity yet. Going to look at live solos. Coming back with 3 congregational hymns that will be sung with masks on.
 - Bells are starting up this week.
- **Reopening**
 - Central Board is asking that the reopening team have a meeting to address these issues.
 - We will be able to take on several tasks at once, but giving assignments to individuals so that we can get things moving.
- **Technology:**
 - Consult with the new tech consultant will happen with Lisa, David, Charles and Claire at 3:00 on February 22nd. Will talk to him about what we have been using and doing and what we need. Live music is the major issue presently. This is very important to Nancy and Charles if we are recording live in the sanctuary.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Finance Team did not meet in February. There will be no Finance Team notes for this month's Spire due to the meeting postponement.
 - The credit card is working.
 - Lisa's contract needs to be renewed as it expires in April.
 - Roger Moulton will be come to next finance committee meeting to discuss the annual rebalancing of the church's investment portfolio.
 - Spire input is due Feb. 23rd.
- **Suggested Amendments for Discussion at Forward Chat on February 28, 2022**
- **Article III – CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**
 - Section 4 Termination:

- Action: move **(b) By Inactivity** to Sec. 3, creating parts a) and b); then remove reference to Sec. 4 b); adjust numbering so that **By Exclusion** becomes b).
- Reason: Inactive is not a termination, a better fit under description of rights, explaining when and why an active member is moved to the inactive list.
- Discussion: lack of process for informing member moved to inactive status

- **Article IV – BASIC ELEMENTS OF GOVERNANCE**
 - **Section 2 Bylaws**
 - Action: **Temporary suspension** of bylaws in an emergency is permitted with a quorum of active members in a duly called congregational meeting. The powers reserved to the congregation (Article VI, Section 4) will be excluded from a suspension. [adjust other language]
 - Reason: This provides flexibility in an emergency situation where the desire is not to change the Bylaws permanently. This change still gives the congregation the power to decide if the temporary change is appropriate and to set limits the length of the suspension.
 - Discussion: This would seem to be more efficient than amending Bylaws and then reverting to original language later.

- **Section 5 Summary of communication structures**
 - Action: in part (f) Connecting working teams with each other and with the staff, insert the phrase **“with supervisor’s approval”** before the word staff.
 - Reason: To better coordinate special requests that may interrupt a staff member’s work schedule.
 - Discussion: This refers to requests for time-consuming tasks and not the typical day-to-day questions and interactions.

- **Article VI – CONGREGATION**
 - **Section 4 Powers reserved to the congregation**
 - Action: Add word **“settled”** to the first bullet
 - Reason: Differentiating among the types of pastors allows the Central Board to hire or call an Interim Pastor, Bridge Pastor, or Pulpit Supply.
 - Discussion: Do we need to add something to Article VII – CENTRAL BOARD, Section 6 Responsibilities of the Central Board, (e) Decisions relating to staff and Article X – STAFF to clarify or remove conflicting language regarding how other types of pastors are called/hired?

- **Article VII – CENTRAL BOARD**
 - **Section 2 Eligibility**
 - Action: Add to end of paragraph: **Members of staff may not serve on the Central Board.**
 - Reason: Remove any conflict of interest. This is typical of board structure.
 - Discussion: ?

 - **Section 3 Election process**

- Action: Considering parts (a)-(c) for a way to simplify the process and still obtain satisfactory results. No specific recommendations at this time.
 - Reason: Need to ensure that those elected to serve are genuinely interested and prepared for the work and commitment required while maintaining good representation and transparency.
 - Discussion: There is a plan to update the Church Directory (last published in October 2019) for accuracy and to obtain more information that will inform the congregation when considering members for election to the Central Board, e.g., brief information on occupation, other interests, hobbies, etc. Would it be useful to ask members to indicate if they have an interest in being on the Central Board, and if so, to include that information on the ballot?
- **ARTICLE IX – OFFICERS AND DELEGATES**
 - **Section 1 Eligibility, election and terms of officers**
 - Action: Substitute for the last sentence, the language found in ARTICLE VII – CENTRAL BOARD, Section 4 (a) Terms.
 - Reason: This would allow for officers to serve up to eight years before stepping down for at least one year. This would allow greater involvement of members to fully understand the workings of the Church and assure those serving that the expectation is not an unending term of service.
 - Discussion: Change can be a good thing but does this change allow enough continuity with the possibility of a relatively brief 3-year commitment. Is there a better minimum or maximum length of time, e.g., 5-10 years?
 - Lisa gave the closing prayer at 8:40 pm.