

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church
Board of Trustees
March 18, 2010
Minutes

Goals for the Board of Trustees
2009-2010

- Support the Ministerial Search Committee.
- Encourage participation of the broader congregation and make ourselves available and recognizable, especially at council meetings.
- Evaluate the council structure.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the church staff, board, and councils.

Donna Baker, Liz Benzinger, Dan Grogan, Bill King, Johan Madson, Rich Olin, Pam Philips, Ellen Pratt, Karen Shaffer, Jean Shepard, Doug Webbink, Guest: Nick Laiacona, Morris Hudgins, Bob Kiefer, Anne Clark, Ian Sole, Dave Dawson, Marlene Jones

I. Opening Meeting (10 minutes)

A. Devotion/opening words (Morris)

B. Search Committee Report (Nick)

- Both candidates have already committed to other churches
- Met Tuesday night and discussed next steps
- Recommend: download and fill out the application for an interim minister; also discussed consulting ministry (which is bringing a minister on for a specific task)
- At the next congregational meeting we will need to elect a new search committee (members from the current committee will be invited to serve if they choose to do so)
- This is a church with amazing potential which needs to choose a minister who can assist us in meeting our potential; the committee did not want to invite a candidate for candidating week who they did not feel was a good match for our church
- The candidates had expressed the issue of limited ministerial staff through the process, but did not indicate this as the reason for not accepting; it is a complex decision with many components involved in the decision-making

C. Next steps

- There are approximately 10 other churches who have not found ministers through this search process
- Sometimes the UUA recommends to a church to start a new committee when a search brings a candidate who is voted down; in our circumstance, it is recommended that we invite current members to decide if they are interested in being on the next settled minister search committee
- Recommendation 1: that the church move forward with an interim minister for one year – apply by April 15 for this year, rather than a consulting minister; look for an interim minister with a different style from the current interim minister
- The Search Committee can also choose to review candidates who have been added after our Committee had narrowed down to the candidate list (UUA recommendation); A concern was expressed that there is limited time to vet someone in the time needed prior to the interim period
- Much of the work has done towards the next settled minister search by the current settled minister Search Committee

- Recommendation 2: utilize lay leadership for a year and save ministerial staff budget items for a year towards having that money available for the future; concern was expressed that attendance would decrease without a minister; concern that if there is a crisis situation which would need ministerial leadership that we would not be prepared to manage such a situation
- Recommendation 3: utilize consulting ministerial arrangement in conjunction with lay leadership over the next year
- Recommendation 4: hire an assistant minister/ministerial support during the interim
- We need to show leadership by finding leadership to fill the vacant ministerial leadership role; we have limited, though strong, lay leadership; we need to provide a calm presence and support for those who are grieving the loss of what we hoped to have in a new settled minister
- Future candidates will notice the choices that have been made across this interim time
- Consulting ministry can be whatever we choose it to be, we can hire someone to be on a contract basis for a specific time period; an interim minister is supposed to assist with helping us move from one ministry to another – which it is believed that we have completed through the current interim process; a full-time consulting minister can support the needs of the church with assistance from lay leadership; a consulting minister could potentially remain in an associate or other ministerial role beyond the interim should that be desirable for the minister and community, whereas an interim cannot remain at the end of their interim time; this would allow us to go through the process of deciding exactly what we want for a full-time minister; additionally, interim ministers can be consulting minister, but the opposite is not the case
- It is preferable for a settled minister to be decision-makers regarding additional ministerial staff rather than the Board having already hired someone into that role prior to bringing on a settled minister
- Need to incorporate the budget into these conversations as well
- In a previous time the church was led by lay-leadership and for at least one member it felt like a club
- The Search Committee is split on whether to recommend an interim or consulting minister
- Recommendation to bring an interim in order to have continuity in the pulpit
- The interim process takes about 2 weeks: an interim meeting with approximately 100 interim ministers; from that the churches looking are listed; ministers show an interest in churches; the department head takes 5 of the interested; a committee from the church does interviews with those 5 and then makes a decision; offers are made and ministers make the decision; in order to have an interim minister, we would have to go through this process; interims can also be found later in the year if a church finds itself without a minister in mid-year
- The typical contract situation is usually a smaller church looking for someone part-time and/or may want to keep on longer than an interim; the process is to go to the district executive for recommendation and/or others who might suggest folks; we then reach out to these folks and offer a contractual relationship
- Recommendation 5: make a commitment to a full-time minister and explore both interim and consulting minister options
- During the interim we need to resolve: a long-term plan, funding, and what we expect from our ministry
- It was stated that TJMC is a strong church that did not overreach during the process

- We have turnover in membership, so we do not always realize that we have several plans, we just need to pull them together and move forward; we are on the cusp of moving forward
- If there are concerns from the Search Committee regarding the process those should be shared with the UUA
- The Search Committee is willing to move forward on reviewing possible consulting ministers, while potentially applying for an interim minister
- Moved to hire a full-time minister for one year (interim or consulting) and continue with the search for a settled minister – approved 9, opposed 1
- The Search Committee will meet on Tuesday to end the current settled minister search process; the committee will share the names of any members who are interested in being on the interim committee or settled minister search committee and the Committee will make any final recommendations they have to the Board regarding consulting or interim ministry for the coming year
- The Board will need to appoint an interim committee for the interim ministry (current committee members will be invited to serve) – this includes researching consulting and interim ministry; the first step is to have a retreat/meeting between the interim committee and the Board to develop the description of what we are looking for in the interim hire
- The Board will need to select a search committee for the settled minister search over the next year (current committee members will be invited to serve)
- Pam and Donna will submit the application for an interim minister
- Next Board meeting will be held Thursday, March 25 at 7:30 pm in the TJMC Social Hall; Exec will meet at 6:30 pm in the TJMC Social Hall
- The candidating committee will be informed of the status of the search after tonight

D. Message to Congregation

- Draft letter distributed from the committee regarding message was shared
- Message: there were two candidates who were a good match for the church community and that both of these candidates have chosen different geographical locations
- We have strong lay leadership in our church and the next step is to bring in the minister who is the best fit for our community
- Suggested that we should share with the congregation that the staffing concerns are important; suggested that we not put this information in the letter regarding the close of the church, but use multiple forms of communication through this process
- It is important that the Board make it clear that we are committed to a full-time minister this year
- Communicate to the congregation that the Search Committee has done a great job on our behalf, we will seek full-time ministry for the next year, and a search committee will be appointed for a settled minister search to be conducted during this interim year as well as a committee for the interim ministry
- The Board will need to give direction to the interim committee on the needs for ministry during the interim as we move forward in this process
- An email posting of the Search Committee letter and the Board's statement will be sent Friday, March 19, 2010 am.
- Nick and Pam will share this information from the pulpit on Sunday
- Phone calls will be made tomorrow to folks who do not have access to email

E. Message for Canvass

- Thanks to the Search Committee
- Commit to ministry

- Spend the year re-visioning our future
- Currently not at half of the budget through canvass as of last Sunday
- We need to communicate to the congregation that folks have chosen to increase their pledges
- A pledge is a pledge to the church, not to a specific minister
- Focus on looking to the future, starting now
- Continue with a positive tone
- Ian and Bob will draft something and will involve the Board in personal communications with the members

- II. Closing Activities (5 minutes)
- A. Closing words (Morris)
 - B. Adjournment

Upcoming dates:

March 25 – Executive Committee of the Board Meeting, 6:30 pm in Social Hall

March 25 - Board Meeting at 7:30 pm in the Social Hall

April 15 – Board Meeting, 7 pm in Social Hall

March 25 2010 Meeting

Plan for interim ministry search and interim ministry. Plan for search for settled minister.

April 2010 Meeting

Positions to be filled on the Board and on Board-appointed Committees, leadership retreat, canvass update, congregational meeting planning, budget approval, Disruptive Persons Policy and Conflict Resolution group

May 2010 Meeting

Review of committee chairs and Board-appointed committees list, budget review, congregational meeting, General Assembly planning, Board retreat planning, Personnel Committee report on staff evaluations, completion of review of policies manual

June 2010 Meeting

Welcome of new Board members, farewell to departing Board members, 2010-11 budget review, congregational meeting review, General Assembly planning

Fall 2010

Re-covenanting committee and process (Pam, Dave Dawson?) – possibly begin at “leadership retreat”