

Westside UU Start-Up Meeting September 6, 2014

Attendance:

Annie Foerster, Adult RE	Reed Bilz, Board Secretary
Tanner Trask, Transition Team	Linda Ice, Board, Worship, , Stewardship
Bill Terry, Finance, Website	Cherri Mayberry, Administrator
Cindy Fountain, Board President	Morris Meador, Adult RE
Paul McLellan, Social	Don Jackson, Board
Myrtle McMahan, Transition Team	Beverly Archibald, Chaplain Corp
Jeff Bullock, Board	Suzie Lotven, Transition Team
Sara Munoz, Transition Team	John Gilbert, Chaplain Corp
Anita Snyder, Library	Gail Kilman, LRPC, Circle Supporters
Ginger Courtney, Board	Janell Broyles, Neighborhood Awareness
Cameron Youg, DLRE	Sandy Lord, Chaplain Corp
Ray Pfeiffer, LRPC	John Barnes, Adult Forum
Alex Holt, Interim Minister	Dianne Nixon, Board V.P.
Tricia Bowes, Board	Ken Leising, Board

Session led by Rev. Susan Smith, UU Regional director.

Question: What did you hear last night?

1. Our first two ministers were Christian and not tolerant of non-theists; but Russell, a non-theist was tolerant of everyone.
2. Uncertainty, but deep love for congregation.
3. We are sometimes judgmental.
4. We come together after crises.
5. We have an ability to “overcome” with minimum resources and commitment of members.
6. We have good records of our history in spite of the fire.
7. There is confusion over differing views.
8. Westside is minister-centered.
9. Alex is our first minister who is not new to ministry.
10. We are focused on ourselves, issues, not ideals.
11. We are a vibrant church with lots of activities.
12. Lots of memories of ups and downs.
13. We focus on either/or, right/wrong; we want answers. Some take a fundamental stances.
14. There is confusion about “freedom of the pulpit” and “freedom of the congregation.”
15. Some who attend services are intolerant of ideas with which they don’t agree. They want to fire the minister, withhold their money, leave, etc. which is a form of coercion.

Rev. Smith recited the “Five Smooth Stones” of James Luther Adams. She noted that attendance is more important than membership. She discussed three forms of UU churches:

1. Laity led matriarch/patriarch church with 0 to 50 members/attendees. The leaders have the power to adopt members they choose. The Board works through committees and the minister is not powerful.
2. Clergy led Pastoral congregation with 50-150 members/attendees. The minister becomes more important, matriarchs/patriarchs less so. The church is working toward becoming multipurpose. The minister “hands off” visitors to members to welcome, venerate and assimilate.
3. Program led Program congregation with 150+ members/attendees. A campus rather than a single building, multi programs led by Staff and program directors and the Board. Committees do the work to keep the programs going.

We discussed how to integrate new members besides putting them on a committee. We must recognize that some members do not want to serve.

Who is responsible/in charge?

Clergy/Staff

Minister is Chief of Staff
Bldg. Use, Sexton-who?
LRED, Administrator
Music, Worship
Faith Development
Chaplains/Caring Team

Shared

Culture
Covenant
Behavior policies
Communication

Lay Leaders

Bldg. & Grounds
Social Justice
Membership
Finances/Fund Raising
Social Activities
Governance
Long Range Planning
Environment
Outreach
Aesthetics
Interest groups
Montessori school

Priorities

A comprehensive Safe Congregation, Right Relations, Disruptive People policy.
A Communications policy that includes email etiquette.
Creative worship services and alternative times for services.
Identify our congregation. (LRPC)
Clarify our mission/vision.
Understand current trends, different ways to connect, adapt to size, change.
Document Policies and Procedures.
Deal with shared space.
Cultivate generous giving.

What do we need to do to succeed in transition?

1. Share information.
2. Be open to change and process, new ideas.
3. Affirm jobs well done.
4. Don't poach committee members; don't overfunction.
5. Engage in active listening.
6. Avoid triangulation.
7. Understand why we disagree.
8. Know when to say "no."
9. Cultivate acceptance vs. tolerance.
10. Celebrate accomplishments.
11. Be kind, trusting, generous, cooperative, brave, wise and optimistic.
12. Remember, "The Seven last word of the church: We never did it that way before."