

**Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of the  
Congregational Church of West Medford, United Church of Christ  
DBA Sanctuary United Church of Christ  
February 7, 2016**

The meeting took place as part of the worship service.

Officially called to order at 10:07am by Moderator Paul Roberts.

27 voting members in attendance.

Hymn #495 was sung. Sanctuary's mission statement, the Gathering to Praise God and Genesis 1: 1-3a, 2: 2b-3 as printed in the bulletin were read.

Reverend Wendy Miller-Olapade offered reflection on Co-Creating Sanctuary.

Terri Bracy, Elizabeth Bennett, Joanna Begin, and Branwen Cook were accepted as new members.

Hymn #492 was sung and Paul read the Call to the Congregational Meeting.

Agenda item #1: Receive/Vote 2015 Financial Reports

- The reports are accurate but incomplete
- The stock market is down and those fluctuations were reflected in the year end totals

A motion to accept the reports as presented was made and passed unanimously.

Agency item #2: Ministry Plan and UCC Grant

- The organization has not accomplished everything it planned to do because of the tremendous amount of time, work and energy that has gone into institutional development
- Everyone should feel good about the progress that has been made
- Moving forward, we will build on what has been accomplished with an intentionality around:
  - Hiring a community minister
  - Developing Circles of Care
  - Leadership Development
  - Stewardship
  - Arts and Inspiration programming
  - Worship life
- A church-wide assessment is being planned and the ministry plan describes recommendations for an annual visioning meeting
- Karen McCune-Barca raised the concern that there is no mention of children's ministry in the plan and discussion ensued with Carol Luongo noting that there is a line in the budget for Faith Formation/Christian Education. Rev. Wendy referenced page 59 of the Annual Report and there was discussion about the role of and plans for Caring Circles and it was

noted that if youth programming is important to individual members, then there would be opportunities for those individuals to engage in leadership and program development around those themes.

- There was discussion about the UCC Matching Grant and the Pastor's Report reflects the proposal that was submitted which describes where we have been and where we are going.
- It was noted that the Boston Globe would be featuring Sanctuary in the Easter Sunday issue.

#### Agenda item #3: Propose/Vote Lakota YouthStay Ministry

- Joy Roberts read a statement about the ministry
- Bruce Roberts set forth the motion to accept the proposal, the motion was seconded, there were 2 abstentions, no nays and all others voted yes.

#### Agenda item #4: Lead Pastor's Contract

- Paul noted the need for extending the Pastor's contract and a brief discussion ensued. Trip Williams made the motion, the motion was seconded, there were 2 nays, 1 abstention and all others voted yes.

#### Agenda item #5: Receive/Vote 2016 Budget

- The budget is detailed in the 2015 Financial Reports/2016 Budgets document
- The page titled "III. Having Sanctuary: Finances" was referenced and the salmon pages detailing the Executive Summary were reviewed.
- There was discussion about changes to the income and expenses with the 2016 proposal
- Last year's actual income will be used to calculate tithe
- The organization has pending 2015 donation obligations which will be distributed in 2016
- Joy questioned the Advertising/Marketing line item, as much less was spent than was budgeted and suggested that we could be doing a lot more to get the word out about Sanctuary's programming and mission work. Discussion ensued and challenges around staff capacity and how to expand outreach were explored with Terri offering to learn and help with social media activities.
- There was a brief review of the big ticket items in the budget and discussion ensued which included
  - A question about the language regarding letter writing and soliciting donations from friends and family
  - Crowd funding
  - Sustainability
- Kathy Williams expressed concern about our acceptance of a grant from the Arts Council as it may restrict our ability to practice and preach our faith as we are called to do. There was lengthy discussion and debate on this issue. A member of the Arts Council was in attendance and stated that based on the experience of the individual members of the Council when they attended Sanctuary's programming in the past, they gave the grant because they were satisfied that the programming was designed to offer a safe space where individuals from all faith traditions could explore and discuss faith as it relates to

the arts. Kathy thanked everyone for allowing her concerns to be expressed and ended with support of accepting the grant.

- A motion to accept the budget was made by Bruce, the motion was seconded, there was one nay, 3 abstentions and all else voted yes.

#### Agenda item #6: Elect Leadership

- It was noted that Carvina Williams and Bruce would serve one year on the Leadership Circle, and Branwen will be added.
- The Nominating Committee will include Kathy, Ose Manheim and Joanna.
- The Pastoral Relations Committee will include Julie Roberts, Anita Nackel and Carol.
- Amanda Coughlin is currently the only member of the Stewardship Committee
- Deb Soule motioned that the roster be accepted as is, the motion was seconded, there were 3 abstentions and all else voted yes.
- Karen noted that even though she has resigned from the Leadership Circle she wants to stay connected to the community.

#### Agenda item #7: Other Business

- Jeffrey Smith questioned his ability to be involved in multiple faith communities and Rev. Wendy assured him that Sanctuary puts no limitations on this.
- Sanctuary's new Sexton Ray Santiago was in attendance and welcomed by the congregation to the community.

Business concluded at 12:10pm, with Paul commenting that he has spoken to many who are aware of Sanctuary, but do not participate regularly and that he is seeing Sanctuary making an impact in the community and changing lives – “Thank you all for your investment and efforts!”