

UUCV Board Notes – 8/18/22

Attending: Jim, Cassie, Xenia, Gudrun, Ray, Sandy, Rev. Dana, Rebeca

Opening words: Cassie – The New Colossus, Emma Lazarus

Check-in about recent staff upheaval – many feelings expressed, but especially difficulty with not really knowing what happened without betraying any identities. Suggestions included providing examples of what happened, having inclusive/open discussion—not exclusively all-male or all-female discussions.

Consent items – Cassie moved, Sandy seconded

- Minutes were approved
- Finance report – June 30, 2022 statement has not yet been approved by the finance committee

Treasurer’s report – new treasurer is working to understand fund balances, a \$150,000 negative difference in total assets from 2021 to 2022.

Fidelity transition plan: She has resigned. We don’t owe her anything, severance or vacation payout, with regard to our policies. Rev. Dana proposes, however, that we give her a financial gift in recognition of her performance in maintaining the program through COVID. The details of this have yet to be developed, so the topic was tabled until next meeting.

Dealing with the issues that triggered Fidelity’s departure. Generally, multiple incidents involving multiple men telling her how to do her job. There were also some boundary issues Fidelity didn’t know how to handle. Rev. Dana does not feel that the RE program is unsafe. Incidents on the walkway/bike path beyond the church, including a murder, also made her feel unsafe. She took leave in the spring to deal with all the issues, after writing down her concerns. Most of the members involved have been spoken to, usually Rev. Dana with Neal Ortenberg.

What happens next?

- R.E. program needs to carry on. A task force is forming to help with the transition, to be convened by Jim Merrill and Krista Mendelsohn.
 - Immediate continuation of the program
 - Interim position
 - Hiring process
- Policies need to be updated as recommended by Fidelity. We have better practices than policies – Fidelity has pulled together a list of actions needed.
- Ongoing learning experience, not a “workshop”
- Categorize/name the issues:
 - Personal-professional relationship boundaries
 - Members not treating employees as professionals
 - Internalized patriarchy
 - Need for more resources to support the R.E. program and the DRE
 - Need to update policies and practices
- Address safety concerns – Yukio & health/safety committee

- What lessons do we need to learn?
 - There's been a pattern set in the R.E. program, with regard to being under-resourced
- Name the appropriate boundaries between staff and members
- California law on fingerprinting and background checks was passed and Fidelity felt responsible for ensuring we comply
- Something for the children – what do they know? Fidelity discussed with Krista a Zoom meeting with the families. Sharing session – possibly in age-appropriate groups.
- Jimmy suggested a curriculum “Feminism for men”
- Continue to have occasional post-service conversations – reassure people about plans in place – including Zoom conversations

Minister's Report

- Planning to invite the Rev. Rod Richards (UUSLO) to preach – men need to hear from men
 - No shame, just honesty
- We need to be as transparent and honest as we can be and not be perceived as sweeping things under the rug.
- Dana's last month has been mostly dedicated to the issues around Fidelity's departure
- Committee on Ministry has done a lot of work in dealing with the situation
- Next congregational conversation will be on Zoom some time in the next week, because many still have not returned to in-person church services
- Rested, centered, grounded and happy after her month off

Closing Words: Listen to the Mustn'ts – Shel Silverstein

Meeting adjourned