

# RE Council Meeting Minutes

## June 12, 2018

**Attendance:** Geri Knoebel (chair), Benita Terrell, Callie Cone, Desiree Spielman, Nicia Rae, Mia Noren

**Opening Words** - Desiree

### Administrative Agenda

- Approved May 15, 2018 minutes
- RE Council Meeting Dates
  - July 15, 2018
  - August 19, 2018
  - September 16, 2018
  - October 21, 2018
  - November 18, 2018
  - December 16, 2018
  - January 20, 2019-no mtg
- Chair Report – Geri
- Staff Report – Mia, Alymay
- Portfolio Reports – Benita, Desiree, Eric, Nicia

### Discussion

- Summer RE / families/ volunteering -
- Evaluation of camp fundraising and program calendar  
The Council will discuss this after camp is held in July. Will consider holding fewer fundraising events and to do fundraising year round
- RE Council Chair succession and recruiting Council members
- RE Council retreat/ gathering  
Geri Knoebel volunteered her home in the South Valley for a fall gathering. We will discuss a fall date at our July meeting
- Holding meeting off-site – to discuss in July
- Transition to thematic ministry
- 2019 Council meetings and OWL scheduling  
The June RE Council meeting was held at the Canteen on a Tuesday evening because the regularly scheduled date fell on Father 's Day. There was a positive response to holding our meeting on a weekday. The Council will discuss our 2019 schedule in the fall considering holding non-Sunday meetings.
- RE Council volunteer appreciation – Will select a volunteer next month
- REC needed volunteers June 24<sup>th</sup> - Mia and Alana are going to be at the UUA General Assembly in Kansas City and Brienne is on vacation. RE needed Council help for coverage. Thanks to Callie who volunteered for the 9:30 am service and Benita for the 11:00 am.

### Future Dates

#### June 2018

Friday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 to 7:00 PM – La Amikoj Open House

June 19 – 24 – Mia @ UUA General Assembly (Kansas City, MO)

Friday, June 29- Family Movie Night

## **July 2018**

Friday, July 6, 5:00 to 7:00 PM – La Amikoj Open House  
Saturday, July 7 – All Camp Staff Orientation  
July 8- July 27- ROOTS camp in RE building  
Saturday, July 14, 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM- Youth Roadrunner work day  
Sunday, July 15 – 12:30 REC meeting  
Friday, July 20, 5:00 to 7:00 PM – La Amikoj Open House  
Sunday, July 22- Campers depart for camp

## **August 2018**

Sunday, August 5- Fall teacher/adviser training  
Saturday, August 11- Youth Roadrunner work day 11-2  
Sunday, August 12- Youth chalice lighting in Sanctuary, Teacher Litany  
Sunday, August 19- REC meeting  
Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup> – RE Connections Sunday

## **September 2018**

Sunday, September 2- RE Pool Party  
Saturday, September 8- Youth Roadrunner work day 11-2  
Sunday, September 9 – RE Connections Sunday  
Sunday, September 16- REC meeting

## **October 2018**

Sunday, October 21 – REC meeting  
Friday, October 26- Halloween Part

## **Geri Knoebel, Chair Report**

### **June 2018**

- 1) Linda and I are planning on an extended road trip next year. In the Fall, I plan to resign as the Chair of the RE Council. As you know, I have been Chair of the RE Council for about 2-1/2 years. We have not talked about succession planning and would like us to begin this conversation. Being on the Council has been a highlight of my service at First U.
- 2) Mia, as the DRE, has taken on the responsibility for honoring RE Teachers through an event that she put together and also did the inviting. Mia and I talked about the RE Council taking the lead, showing appreciation for the invaluable contributions that RE teachers make to our RE families and the First U community.
  - a. Ove BBQ and honoring teachers to June combined with Field Day. Hold on a Saturday. Avoid Pride Parade date; include thank you from kids for teachers. Mia willing to MC
  - b. Have Camp Auction in November
- 3) For the last couple of years, the Council has had a social gathering at a Council member's house. Linda and I would like to host this year's gathering. Let's discuss the date for holding this event in July.

## **Mia Noren, DRE Report, June 2018**

1. Planning for our experiment with thematic ministry continues. The challenge now is getting volunteers. I'm hoping to discuss the outcome of a conversation I had with Angela about this with the Council.
  - Mia provided summer attendance statistics for the 2015 – 2017. Last Sunday, only 9 children at first service and 9 at the 11:00 am. Few volunteers. Mia is adjusting curriculum / activities and reducing the number of volunteers needed through the summer. This will also give RE staff time to do future planning. RE teacher training for the fall semester is being held August 5<sup>th</sup>.
2. I took our HS OWL facilitator team out to dinner on June 5<sup>th</sup>. The team was Alymay Atherton, Geoff Skelton, and the Rev. Gail Joralemon, our UCC facilitator.
3. I am going to G.A. later this month, along with Alymay and Alana Rodriguez who are going with the UU Young Adults group.
4. I have plans to ask our camp fundraising team to meet after camp and review the events for the past year, and discard the less effective efforts. I would like us to plan the next year out, leaving room for fundraising by youth and young adults. I don't want to waste the energies of these very dedicated people.
5. I am also going to have the RE staff team meet after camp to review our own calendar of events. This year has been a wonderful success, but it has also felt too full at times, and staff have been overburdened with activities. We will be looking at our calendar and taking into consideration outside events that affect us, including Run For The Zoo, Memorial Day Weekend, Pride Day, and more.
6. Susan and I are discussing running Family Sing in summer outside in the courtyard and making it multigenerational.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

- Baca Trees has cleaned up the La Amikoj courtyard, areas around the playground, and removed limbs from the dying sycamore on the playground.
- The new bathroom is functional, and youth will have a hand in decorating it. The new outside sink is also functional.
- The east exterior wall and trim on La Amikoj was repainted, and the trim on the south side of the Arnold/Wesson/La Amikoj building was repainted. The small trim area on the southeast exit of the RE Building was also painted.
- The Council is concerned about the preliminary plans that have been drawn for the Social Hall. There are plans for an exit to the Wildlife Habitat from the Social Hall. The Council is concerned that children are at risk with Carlisle being so close.

### **Desiree Spielman, Community Connections**

- Movie nights have been very successful. Jurassic Park was shown, and 17 persons attended. WALL-E was shown June 29<sup>th</sup>. There will be no movie in July.
- Desiree reported that an initial meeting of Parents of Teens Group was held but no one came. She will try again.

### **Eric Keiter, Program Evaluation**

My main report is that I have started the ball rolling, somewhat, on program evaluation. I sent an initial email to the various RE volunteers, which most of you probably saw. (Letter below)

Hello RE volunteers,

First, let me introduce myself. My name is Eric Keiter, and I am a new member of the RE council. You may know me as the father of 6-year-old Thorfin. As part of this volunteer role, I am working with Mia on Program Evaluation for Religious Education at First Unitarian.

As some of you know, First Unitarian is switching to a "Thematic Ministry". This is going to be phased in gradually, starting with Thematic RE this summer, beginning on June 10. The first RE theme will be "Beloved Community". This will begin a 3-month experiment. The use of Thematic Ministry at First Unitarian will start officially in September.

If you are curious about what is involved in Thematic Ministry, a good resource for learning more is the [uua.org](http://uua.org) website (see <https://www.uua.org/theme>). The main idea is to have a different theme each month and orient various church activities around this theme. How this impacts RE will involve changing the class so that (unlike now) it isn't centered around specific grade level, and instead is centered around activities that are designed around the theme of the month.

As this is a new program, we will be very interested to understand how well the new curriculum is working, what adjustments might be useful, and of what aspects are well-received by children and parents. First U RE teachers such as yourselves will be one of the best sources of information for this. As part of this, we'd like to solicit stories from RE teachers about their experiences with the new curriculum. Mia is planning to start a blog at the First Unitarian website, and the stories will be published there. (This blog is not going to be publically accessible) The stories would be a paragraph long or so. Here are some example stories, to give you the idea of what we're looking for:

"Alice likes morning sing. She is in the nursery. She used to not like going to church but now she likes it a lot."

"I noticed a boy in OWL who was unhappy. But then later he was much happier. His Mom told Mia that he had been bullied (age 9) and the 4th-5th grade OWL class gave him the language to talk about it, so they were able to find out what was happening and switch schools."

"Several kids have thanked me for teaching. They didn't know until recently that we are volunteers. Previously they thought we were paid."

Thanks, and I appreciate your help!

Eric