

RE Council Meeting Minutes

September 19, 2018

Attendees: Geri Knoebel (chair), Mia Noren, Callie Cone, Stirling Crow, Carol Cowan, Nicia Rae, Benita Terrell, Desiree Spielman, Wendy Small (guest)

Administrative Agenda

- Opening Words - Benita Terrell
- Minutes: Approved August 19, 2018 minutes.

Staff Reports

Geri Knoebel, Chair Report, September Report

- Thanks to Stirling, Desiree, and Callie for staffing the RE table at the two Connections Sundays. The table provided visibility for the RE programs particularly attracting kids by giving away children's books.
- At Sunday's service Christine Robinson returned to Church after her one-year absence after her retirement as our Senior Minister. She was enthusiastically greeted by the Congregation. Christine will be teaching in RE this year.
- Also, Jane Davis, our new Min Intern, was introduced to the Congregation. Jane will be with the First Unitarian part-time for next two years.
- The RE Council Resource Manual has been updated. Over the course of the last year, the portfolio descriptions have been revised based on experience with them. Those revisions have been incorporated into the Manual. These resources include contact information for Council members, meeting dates for the coming year (note that the Council will be discussing at a later meeting whether members would rather be meeting during the week), 2017 RE Annual reports, and the DRE job description. This can also be found on the website.
- While I reported last month that the RE website would be updated, it did not happen. It's on our list for this coming month.

Mia Noren, DRE Report, September 2018

1. Thank you to all of you that helped make a challenging Sunday manageable, (September 9th). There was a lot going on that day and it was great to rely on the RE Council for help.
2. All of our teams are full now except for one (2/3 at 11 AM - We need one more volunteer).
3. The Pre-K class continues to struggle with low attendance. I've been communicating to let parents know about Pre-K, the curriculum, and that we hope they will come to our programming- this is meant to reach Pre-K families whose children may currently be attending church in the Family Room, at the activity table in the Sanctuary, or just sitting with their parents. I started a week and a half ago with this strategy but haven't had results yet. I've begun planning to combine the Pre-K class with the K-1 class, in case there continues to be no result from this push.

4. Plans are underway to cancel the 9:30 4-5 class as well. Attendance at 11:00 in 4-5 is wonderful, and only 1 or 2 children show up for the 9:30 class. The push for this move is coming from the volunteers, and I agree with it. We cancel the 9:30 class in the Spring session anyway to accommodate 4-5 OWL. It also mirrors how the mid-high youth meet. In addition, I think I have to move them to a bigger room, perhaps room 1?
5. Moving volunteers around so that we have four teachers on each team allows us to go ahead with youth assistants. I'm working with Alymay to run a modified teacher training for those youth who are interested in this, on Sunday, September 16th.
6. There are currently three applications for the R.E. Aide position. The deadline was extended to September 9. Brie-Anne's last day as staff is September 30th.
7. I'm delaying my Teacher Potluck Theology discussion till October. I've been challenged to get confirmed child care for the event. In part because of this, I've asked Alana to design a want ad looking specifically for adult child care workers. We need two child care workers. We will aim for 10/12 (6 PM to 8 PM) to do the potluck.
8. Alymay and I are working on a Children's Chapel/Backpack Blessing for children and youth for Sunday, September 23. There will be no class, but we're planning a special ceremony and celebration for this. Children would have had a much-shortened class in any case because of the Capital Campaign celebrations planned for that day.
9. The Annual RE Pool Party happened 9/2. We will be moving this event to August in future. While there was sufficient attendance, it would be much better if it were not held on a holiday that many families and extended families go camping. Attendance in RE was low and there were insufficient volunteers (0) at 11:00 to even hold teacher holiday activities, so we may need to consider other kinds of plans for this holiday.
10. Three new couches, two bulletin boards, and sound absorption panels for the ceiling are expected to arrive this month- components of the L/AW refurbishment project.
11. So far, our after-services high school youth meetings are going very well. Some youth are going to services, some are helping in R.E., and some are just hanging out with their friends, not under direct adult supervision. This is good- we want them to have close friendships here and come to church to be together. After a review of the church child protection policy, Alymay and I are working on ways to remind parents that they are responsible for their children and youth while they are here but not in an R.E. program. We will be asking parents to remember to communicate with their youth about safety. Alymay and I are communicating with youth more frequently about what a safe church situation is, and where they are welcome to be.
12. Abby Clark is helping Mia create a blog. Many parents are not on Facebook. This blog would be another way to communicate with parents.

Mia's Pulpit Editorial from 9/8:

You just saw some of the children that participate in our Religious Education programming. Did you know that our Programming begins with our nursery and Pre-school rooms? The title “Religious Education”, may imply that the primary activity is educational and classroom instruction-based, and that the task is to learn about religion. You may have assumed that your children are too young for that. This is only partially true; while we do learn about religion; our primary task in R.E. is doing religion. We Unitarian Universalists are here to form community, practice being human together, grow our spirits, sing, worship, and practice Unitarian Universalism.

Our youngest children can participate in all of this! The Preschool class is designed for children aged three and four years old. Early childhood is filled with curiosity and wonder, and our preschool programming, Chalice Children, holds up the wonder and awe that transcends everyday understanding. With their own dedicated teachers, young children explore life issues that we all share. They engage in spiritual seeking, develop their openness to sharing, and experience the benefits of a supportive community. Time that a young child spends in Religious Education can set a pattern for the rest of their lives and bring many lasting benefits.

If you have a 3 or 4-year-old in your life, please visit the R.E. Building! There’s currently room for many more children in the class! The entrance to the building is in the southwest corner of the courtyard. Pre-K classes meet at both services- 9:30 and 11:00- in RE Room 4.

Alymay Atherton, Youth Programs Coordinator, September 2018

- La Amokoj is back in full swing!
- Currently planning October travel to Salt Lake City for the MDD Youth Con.
- Working on some creative facilities projects: Working to decorate the new gender-neutral bathroom; Working on our courtyard.
- Our youth are excited to take stewardship over their spaces.
- In Mid-High, we worked hard over the last month to craft a covenant and have been exploring the monthly themes and the Seven Principles.
- Both groups continue to volunteer monthly at Roadrunner Food Bank.

Chair Reports

Carol Cowan, Unity/Diversity Thematic Curriculum Report

September Theme

Carol Cowan, Desiree Spielman, Kathy McKnight, Alana Rodriguez, and Mia Noren met on August 23 at 5:30pm. Benita Terrell (RE future chair) joined us to gain a better understanding of how Thematic Ministry works.

We discussed the manner of presentation for the poem, Like Me, presented as the reading for Chapel on August 26. Alana, Desiree, & Kathy at 9:30; Benita, Carol, & Kathy at 11:00.

Touchstone Materials are posted in Google Docs. The team post lessons in Google Docs. All team members will use the link to access the materials. Jane emails Touchstones Journal to Curriculum Team members. Lessons for a given week should be posted to Google Doc by Wed of that week.

We are meeting this Wednesday (19th) at 5:30 PM. October's theme is "formation."

Group Discussion on Vocation topic

- Working and Dedication
- Vocation: what do you want to be
- Legacy (UU prophetic voices): Harvesting Hope (César Chávez)
- Calling (The Noisy Paintbox, The Water Princess); Happy Hundredth Part 3; Salt in His Shoes (need 23 jersey)
- Our Heart's Work (6.2)
- Learning from Mistakes (The power of yet--it's not that you can't do it, but that you can't do it yet.); Oh the Places You'll Go; The Most Magnificent Idea
- "Love will guide us" (Cecilia Paine -- astronomer) -- neat fish tank activity w/flashlight
- The Story of Arjuna (windows and mirrors)

September 2018- Themes: Calling, Dedication, Work, Legacy, Learning from Mistakes

K-1 Lead: Desiree 2-3 Lead: Carol 4-5 Lead: Kathy

9/2 Teacher Holiday

9/9 Sanctuary Start

- **K-1** Oh the places you will go or When I Grow Up- Work, Calling (pencil tops/career hats)
- **2-3** Aesop's Fable: Aesop's Fable: Worker Bee, the Drone, and the Wasp- Calling (Bee Hive pictures) This story is related to our sixth source: the harmony of nature and the sacred circle of life.
- **4-5** Water Princess- the value of work, the poetry of work

9/16 Regular Session

- **K-1** What Bees Do at Home: Calling
- **2-3** Water Princess: Dedication, Calling, Work ethic, Legacy (African Round Houses) The story is related to our seventh principle: We believe in caring for our planet Earth and every living thing that shares it with us. It is also related to our fifth & sixth sources: the use of reason and the discoveries of science, the harmony of nature and the sacred circle of life.
- **4-5**

9/23 Family Sing-Children's Chapel-Blessing of the Backpacks-NO CLASS-Capital Campaign Party

9/30 Regular Session

- **K-1** The Dot- Learning from Mistakes
- **2-3** The Noisy Paintbox Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVBK-Zcj8U4>
- or The Noisy Paintbox book- Calling, Dedication, Legacy (salt watercolor project)
The story is related to Principle #4: We believe each person is free to search for what is true and right in life. Also, related to Source #1: the sense of wonder we all share.
- **4-5** Chasing a Dream: Salt in His Shoes by Michael Jordan

Nicia Rae, UU Kids Camp Liaison

The camp fundraising team met on Sunday and picked half a dozen events that have been successful in the past to stick with over the next year. We also began planning events for the rest of the calendar year. Hopefully there will be a night at O'Neill's in October (planned by Alana) and an auction/holiday gift market event after church in December (planned by Alison and I). Linda Skye will also be joining the team.

This meeting was attended by Mia, Alana, Alison, Chuckie, Benita, Desiree and me. Our next meeting is scheduled for January. Camp pictures are now available online.

OWL - Callie Cone

Mia and I met 9/11 and started identifying potential teaching teams for OWL classes in the spring of 2019. We are likely to have enough students for the K-1, 4-5, and mid-high classes. Mia has received several inquiries from nonmembers about the K-1 class, so if we have a large number of participants and enough teachers, we would consider doing 2 sessions of K-1.

I am beginning to reach out to teachers to find out who is interested and available for the classes. Mia is going to share a list of upcoming OWL facilitator training classes in Colorado with some potential teachers who are interested in getting trained.

Desiree Spielman, Community Events

- The pool party went well. We had about 25 people turn out. We plan on having this a little earlier next year instead of the weekend of Labor Day.
- We had a lot of turnout for the most recent movie (it coincided with another event). The pool party is on September 2nd, from 5 to 7 PM at Sandia Pool.
- Movie Nights (fundraising) in the RE Foyer. Desiree will create Facebook events for these:
 - September 28th (Brave)
 - October 19th (Coco)
 - November 30th (Charlie Brown movies)
 - No Movie in December!
- We are also trying to bring together parents of teens (10/7). Maybe since there is more involvement with the teens we can get more involvement from parents. The hope is that parents can hang out while the kids are doing their activity.

Benita Terrell, Social Justice

Geri, Mia, and Benita spoke the other day. Maybe they can arrange an event every quarter. It's tough because some parents might not be willing to discuss certain topics (like guns) and attend and march at a rally. We may need a little more structure. Benita might be looking for a team to bounce ideas off of others. It's tough because you can't plan certain things. It's more of a responsive topic - something happens and a rally happens. Mia recommended reaching out to Roadrunner Food Bank. Also, the food pantry here is always running out of pet food - there's a need for separating out and packaging dog food and cat food. Again, Social Justice is really aimed around children up to 5th grade.

Discussion

RE Council Chair succession and recruiting Council members

- Benita has agreed to be the next chair and will be joining Mia and Geri to define meeting agendas.
- The recruiting portfolio is still vacant. We still need help filling that position.

Program Evaluation Portfolio: moving this to next month when Eric is back.

RE Council Resource Manual updated

- The RE Council Resource Manual has been updated. Over the course of the last year, the portfolio descriptions have been revised based on experience with them. Those revisions have been incorporated into the Manual. These resources include contact information for Council members, meeting dates for the coming year (note that the Council will be discussing at a later meeting whether members would rather be meeting during the week), 2017 RE Annual reports, and the DRE job description

RE Council volunteer appreciation – Sent around a card for Chuckie McHenry to thank her for all of her work.

Staff Appreciation card for BrieAnne: Sent around a card for BrieAnne to thank her for all of her work.

RE Council Retreat: Our retreat is coming up on September 29th (Saturday) in the evening. Thank you to Geri and Linda for offering to host!

Future Dates

September 2018

- Sunday, September 23rd – Stewardship and Capital Campaign kickoff
- Sunday, September 23rd – Blessings of the Backpacks (tentative date) - no classes
- Friday, September 28th - R.E. Family Movie night (Brave)
- Saturday, September 29 – REC Gathering (bring your families) at Geri house, 4P

October 2018

- Sunday, October 7, Parents of Teens, 12:30 to 1:30
- Friday, October 12, Teacher Potluck Theology Session (6 PM to 8 PM)
- Saturday, October 13, Youth Roadrunner work day 11-2
- Sunday, October 14, Teacher Holiday with Critter Club activity
- Friday, October 19 - R.E. Family Movie night (Coco)
- Friday, October 19-21, Youth Fall Con, Salt Lake City, UT
- Sunday, October 21 – REC meeting
- Friday, October 26- Halloween Party
- Sunday, October 28 – Start in Sanctuary for costume parade

November 2018

- Saturday, November 10th- Youth Roadrunner work day 11-2
- Sunday, November 18th- REC Meeting
- Sunday, November 25th- Teach holiday, Children's chapel with Jane

December 2018

- Sunday, December 2nd - Silent Auction for Camp
- Saturday, December 8th- Youth Roadrunner work day 11-2
- Sunday, December 16th- REC meeting
- Sunday, December 23rd- Teacher Holiday, Children's chapel
- Monday, December 24th- Christmas Eve Pageant service
- Sunday, December 30th- No RE- Full Intergenerational service