

Committee on Ministries
Northwoods Unitarian-Universalist Church
Minutes

September 22, 2013, 1-3 p.m.

Members Present: Mary Branson, John Hammond, Susan Blackmore, David Shontz

Members Absent: Olivia Carrender, Mary Chimarusti

Non-Voting Attendees: Rev. Ellen Cooper-Davis, Sarah Prickett

Guest: Bill Clontz

*Mary Branson called the meeting to order and offered a reading.

*UUA Consultant Bill Clontz gave a summary of his preliminary conclusions after meeting with lay leaders and members of the congregation. He will send his report in less than two weeks. Some of his observations:

The Big Picture:

1. Stewardship and pledging issues are holding us back (see below).
2. Outreach is tough here – might consider electronic outreach.
3. We could learn from others: there is a Florida-Maine cluster who are doing this.
4. There is a strong sense of community here.
5. You should be willing to change your mind, to be flexible – say, “We’ll try this approach and if it doesn’t work we’ll try something different.”
6. We have a little more room to grow – beyond the task force’s recommendations.

More Detailed Observations:

1. We need more conversation about stewardship and pledging, which is holding us back.
 - Our pledge distribution is a problem: 17 families contribute 50% of all pledges.
 - We need to move some non-pledgers to pledging & need to know how many they are.
2. As a result, the Long Range Plan’s call for part-time positions would require achieving 100% of the stewardship projections – of 7% growth for each of the next three years.
3. The endowment is too small: it should be twice the annual budget.
4. The pledge secrecy clause should be changed to allow a few more people than one to know pledging details.
5. The Service Auction is a major revenue source – and it shouldn’t be as important to the budget as it is.
6. Not much planning for Building and Grounds maintenance we need more deferred maintenance.

7. Not enough people seem to be aware of the Making Room for Everyone report, which is one of the best reports of its kind.

8. We need clear communications about our plans.

9. The capital campaign:

--He believes we have the capacity for some more growth than stated in the Making Room for Everyone report.

--The issue/question: will people give money for this, given our stewardship situation?

--We should talk about building priorities – what is the most important: create A, B, & C baskets for most important, next most important, and what would be nice to have if we had the money.

--Upgrades have value, even if they are less than a total package. We should bring someone in who is smart about buildings to help us see efficiencies with space. We might find an 80% solution for a 50% price tag.

*Executive Session

*Mary Branson commented about the DBLE (Dwight Brown Leadership Experience) group that there may be enough people who went through this program to being having an impact on Northwoods. They are looking into developing a covenant for the group.

*Mary offered a reading as a close to the meeting.