

**FIRST PARISH BROOKLINE
PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
January 4, 2016**

PC Members Present: Sue Andrews, Ben Davis, Steve Davis, Ann Dinsmoor, Elena Garofoli, Ann Gilmore, Stacey Raczek, and James Shillaber. Also present Rev. Rebecca Bryan

Centering and Check-In

Rev. Rebecca led us in a meditative centering activity and then a check-in: What is something that you have heard from a congregant that you have had difficulty in responding to?

Approvals

The revised December 7th PC minutes, and the Minutes of PC Executive Sessions on November 23rd and December 15th were **APPROVED**.

James introduced an HR issue needing our approval – for tax purposes, Rev Rebecca is designating her housing expense for 2016 as \$54, 082, including rent, insurance, utilities, and furnishings. This designation was **APPROVED**.

Announcements

The Transition Team will consist of Anne Copeland, chair, Gene-Thompson Grove, Mark Reynolds, Lilly Marcelin, and Bob Williamson. Others who have stepped up and asked to serve will be notified and thanked by Ann D. This Sunday, Ann D will introduce the Parish Committee, Interim Search Task Force, and Transition Team and will lead us in welcoming Rev Rebecca as our Interim Minister. Following the service, there will be an opportunity to “meet and greet” Rev. Rebecca.

Our next monthly PC meeting will be moved from Feb. 1st to Feb. 8th as Rev. Rebecca will be attending an Interim Minister training in Florida, Feb. 1-3.

Rev. Rebecca has introduced a new format for her monthly Minister’s Report, which she will begin using at our Feb. meeting.

Report on Archives Project

Elizabeth Cousins, a congregant and professional archivist, has been volunteering part-time over the last three years to go through, organize, and categorize our archives. She described her work thus far, and highlighted some of our special objects and documents. Our archives used to be kept in the basement and were transferred up into the loft after the basement flooded. They are musty, but still legible. We have about 120 linear feet of records, meaning that when placed side by side, they would occupy 120 feet of space lengthwise. The records include ministers’ and administrators’ reports, sermons and orders of service, PC and RE committee records, some photos and other objects. The archival records date back to 1717 and end around 1985, at which point our records are digital. We discussed ways to bring our history alive for congregants, especially leading up to our 300th anniversary in October of 2017. Possibilities include creating a timeline of important events/changes in the life of our congregation and sharing short vignettes of our history at Sunday services. We thanked Elizabeth for her countless hours of work and expertise on this project, and encouraged her to seek out other congregants to help.

Finance Report

Stacey circulated and talked us through several spreadsheets she had prepared, including a "Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual" for the period of July through October 2015. Our income from pledges received is on track thus far. Adding our full-time interim minister, while also paying Rev. Jim 5 months of sabbatical, will end up putting us about \$40,000 over budget for FY 2015/16. We are saving \$8,500 by not having the ministerial intern we had budgeted for. The finance council recommends that we use that amount to offset our fundraising goal of \$12,500, reducing that amount to \$4,000. That would allow us to focus our fundraising efforts more on community building and hosting an event that is more accessible to families. The Finance Council suggested an art auction, which would include art from children as well as from adults. This could occur during an extended hospitality period following a Sunday service. Barb Simonetti has kindly offered to co-chair the event with Stacey.

Karla Baehr has graciously taken on the project of selling our silver. She has solicited and received proposals from three auction houses. The appraisals have dropped along with the value of silver to approximately \$100,000, which is about a third of what we hoped for when the congregation voted to sell the silver several years ago. Karla reached out to 5 churches who have sold their silver in recent years, and they recommended Christies Auction House. Christies will display our silver in February and auction it in April. The proceeds will go into our endowment and will more than cover our transition expenses.

Our diligent pledge team, consisting of Dave Demerjian, Karla Baehr, and Bob Williamson, has already identified key themes, a timeline of pledge activities, and targets for our pledge drive this year. A reassessment of the number of current active members and pledge units indicates that we have dropped from 265 active members to 225, and have dropped from 156 pledge units to 140. Despite this 10% drop in pledge units, our goal for Fiscal year 2016/17 will be to raise the same amount in pledges, (\$420,000) as we raised for the current fiscal year.

Transition

Ann Dinsmoor led us in several activities related to this time of transition, based on William Bridges' Change Management Model. She identified three stages of change: 1) the Ending, Losing, and Letting Go. 2) the Neutral Zone, and 3) the New Beginning, along with the feelings associated with each stage. We each had the opportunity to circle our current feelings about the transition and observe how they related to the various stages. She then invited us to share, on an index card, our three biggest concerns and our three biggest hopes for the interim period starting now through this June. She will transcribe and circulate these concerns and hopes to our committee as a whole. Also, we are asked to read [In the Interim](#) for our Feb. 8th meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Gilmore, Clerk