

# 2020 January Stewards Minutes

## SEEKERS CHURCH

### Stewards Minutes

January 5, 2020

**Present:** Marjory Bankson, Peter Bankson (moderator), Cynthia Dahlin, Joan Dodge (angel), Michele Frome, Elizabeth Gelfeld (angel), Judy Lantz, David Lloyd, Trish Nemore (meditation leader and recorder), Keith Seat, Vince Shepherd, Margreta Silverstone, Deborah Sokolove, Jacqie Wallen, Glen Yakushiji.

**Absent:** Ken Burton, Sandra Miller, Brenda Seat

**Guests:** Pat Conover, Erica Lloyd

**Meditation:** Trish Nemore invited each of us to name three places in Seekers life that are life-giving to us or where we perceive life-giving energy generally. We shared these aloud and Trish closed with the reflection piece for Epiphany.

**Housekeeping:** Stewards will next meet on **Sunday, February 2** at 5pm at the church.

**Moderator** – Deborah Sokolove

**Recorder** – Judy Lantz

**Meditation leader** – Marjorie Bankson

**Dinner Angels** – Glen Yakushiji & Trish Nemore

**Considerations about parking for Seekers** – Pat Conover

Pat offered us perspectives concerning our location and how to think about our parking needs as well as options we might consider. **Perspectives:** we moved here in part because of metro but not too many Seekers use metro to get here –

- can we encourage greater use?;
- will parking restraints encourage Seekers to move closer to here?;
- how do we think about our outreach – are we a local Takoma/Takoma Park church or do we seek to reach more broadly?

**Options:** 1) metro parking is not likely an option; their plan is to reduce parking spaces and include them only inside an apartment building to be built on current parking lot area (this is 2015 plan information but nothing more recent is available)

2) We could take out our currently underutilized children's play space to get 4-5 more spaces. In conjunction with this approach, we could organize and lobby to get a small play space built in the current metro green space just across the street from us

3) We could buy or lease space in the Dry Cleaner's lot next door, possibly even build a small parking garage there which could generate income for us

4) As we mend our relationship with Torchinsky's, we could try to lease space in their lot.

Pat thanked Michele for working with him and said he does not have further initiating energy for this project but could imagine participating in further conversations.

### **Bokamoso Career Workshop – Dave Lloyd**

The workshop will take place on Tuesday February 4, all day, at Seekers, then again on Sunday, February 9, all afternoon after the Boka team has performed at Seekers during worship. Worksite visits will happen on Thursday, February 6. Nine students and three staff will come this year. The big GW performance is Friday, January 31. Sharon has seven drivers. (N.B. Dave did not say she needs more). Still needed: help in

setting up for the workshop both days and preparing and cleaning up from meals. Dave noted that Sharon has said she will not organize this next year.

**Inclusivity/Clarity Statement re Seekers description of itself**  
– Erica Lloyd and Keith Seat

Erica presented the background for the OMG proposal to modify language on our website to clarify that we welcome people to full participation in community life. After somewhat confusing discussion about what exactly we were changing, we agreed to amend (and Deborah has already amended) the last sentence in the Who We Are paragraph on our website to read:

*We celebrate and welcome people of all races, sexual orientations, gender identities, beliefs, and cultures to full participation in the church's community life, rituals, and leadership.*

(Before amendment, the sentence read: We welcome and celebrate people of all races, sexual and gender orientations, beliefs, and cultures.)

In addition, we created a workgroup to look at our Home Page as a whole and recommend other changes that might be needed. The workgroup comprises Erica Lloyd, Keith Seat, Dave Lloyd, Deborah Sokolove and Katie Fisher.

**SLT Annual report to Stewards** – Trish and Dave

Trish started by acknowledging how helpful it is to have four on the SLT. The year has been challenging for SLT – Kenny Shaw's three hospitalizations between Memorial Day and Labor Day took a lot of SLT's time and energy, leaving little for other Seekers' business and pastoral concerns during that time. But caring for him was a great and successful effort involving more than 20 Seekers. Judy Lantz still is visiting with Kenny once a month. SLT noted its gratitude for Seekers model of dispersed leadership especially during that

challenging period.

Data points concerning challenges of our aging: Jane Lieper was the oldest Seeker at our millennium celebration in 1999/2000 at age 65 (now our oldest Seekers is 96); Peter left SLT at age 75 after serving 25 years. We need to consider a model for leadership that doesn't rely on such lengthy tenures.

After briefly describing how SLT does its business, Trish then acknowledged all the areas of liveliness in Seekers that had been mentioned during the meditation and named a few that stood out to SLT: 1) our level of caring for each other – we don't have a pastoral team whose job is to make hospital visits or bring food – we rely on the entire community and folks step up – for Kenny, for Margreta, Jeffrey and Ozy, for Emmy Lu, among others; 2) a lot of movement in mission groups, both comings and goings and five mission groups currently are accepting new members: Learners and Teachers, Celebration Circle, Time & Space, Mission Support Group and Living Water; 3) Friendship Dinners, which were successfully launched this past year as a way for us to get to know each other informally while sharing a meal together; 4) immigration work through Congregation Action Network, in Sunday school class and now with a possible pilgrimage to Costa Rico to support Nicaraguan immigrants there; 5) Aging with "Down the Road" website and various fora Jacqie and Joan have been and are organizing.

Dave then talked about challenges SLT had identified that may guide the conversations in and work of Stewards during 2020. Children's Team is challenged by the dwindling number of regular children participants, making teacher recruitment difficult; Children's Word needs more participation by men. We all may benefit from greater clarity concerning the areas of responsibility each mission group sees as its own and may now need to start creating a central file with important mission group documents, especially contracts with outside entities. We are a DIY community but may be arriving at a

time when we hire more of our work to be done by those outside the community. Learners and Teachers realizes that many are not willing to drive at night so would prefer some classes during the day – such changes may conflict with our very busy and full building use schedule. How do we continue our high level of caring for each other as many of us have our own health challenges. And to whom do we reach out to grow the community?

## **Pastoral Concerns**

**Two Stewards Sharing:** Margreta and Dave shared from their lives over the past year and looking forward.

## **Soul Talk**