

2021 November Stewards Minutes

Seekers Church
Stewards Minutes
November 7, 2021

Attendance

Present: Brenda Seat, Dave Lloyd, Deborah Sokolove, Elizabeth Gelfeld, Glen Yakushiji, Jacqie Wallen, Joan Dodge (meditation leader), John Morris, Judy Lantz, Keith Seat, Ken Burton (moderator), Margreta Silverstone, Marjory Bankson, Michele Frome, Peter Bankson (recorder), Sandra Miller, Trish Nemore, Vincent Shepherd.

Absent: Cynthia Dahlin.

Visitors: Anita Jackson, Erica Lloyd, Glenn Clark, Liz Gould-Leger, Pat Conover, Sharon Lloyd.

Opening Ken opened the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Housekeeping: Stewards will meet on Sunday, December 5th at 5:00 PM on Zoom:

Moderator – Margreta

Meditation leader – Sandra

Recorder – Marjory

Meditation:

This meeting's meditation was led by Joan, who read "A Thanksgiving Prayer" by Sonya Dyer, from her prayer book, *Growing Our Life Together*, available on the Seekers Church website ([Special Days Prayers – Seekers Church](#))

Action

Review Draft Budget for 2022 (Attached)

Marjory reported that the insurance company has restored the \$18,000 that had been taken from our account by a forged check sent to an international ministry earlier this year. The Stewards expressed their support for our bookkeeper, Debbie Barwick, and members of FOG for their sustained efforts, and working with the bank.

Stewards reviewed the draft budget developed by the Financial Oversight Group (FOG) for 2022. Current income is within the usual range, a bit lower than 75% of the budget, but that is a typical pattern. (This is usually offset by year-end giving.) The FOG draft budget is lower than the current budget by approximately \$4,000 to account for lower contributions for building use by outside groups and individuals.

Several comments and questions were offered:

1. Estimated receipts for "Building Use" are very conservative. (The draft is a cautious estimate.)
2. It is regretful that this draft reduces our external giving.
3. Is designated giving through Seekers Church to an outside non-profit, as an "extra contribution" acceptable? (While such restricted "pass-through" contributions are legal and have been made in the past, they pose a major complication for our accounting and are discouraged.)

Marjory requested that mission groups and individual Stewards give the draft budget a final review, and complete requests for reimbursement for expenses in the current year before the December Stewards' meeting.

Review Draft Stewards' Calendar

Brenda reviewed the calendar of Stewards' meeting for 2022. Three possible schedule changes were considered:

1. The February meeting will be held on the 6th. (This will NOT conflict with the Superbowl, which is traditionally held on the first Sunday in February.)
2. The July meeting will be moved to the 10th to move it off the long July 4th weekend.
3. The October meeting will be moved to the 9th, to clear the first weekend in October for the return of the Takoma Park Street Festival.

Brenda will publish the updated calendar for use within Seekers Church.

Review In-Person Zoom Option for Worship

Deborah reviewed the progress by Celebration Circle and SLT to prepare for a form of worship that will accommodate both participants together in the sanctuary and attending virtually through Zoom. She reported that Celebration Circle is planning the initial trial on November 21st. Our guidelines will conform to the current, and evolving, DC guidelines for indoor gatherings. Elements of the initial experiment will include:

1. Worshippers in the sanctuary will be socially distanced , as individuals or grouped by pods.
2. In an effort to include those participating on Zoom, the experiment will include having those contributing to leadership – readers, song leaders, even those offering the Word or serving as liturgist – to participate remotely as well as in person.
3. The Zoom images of remote participants will be projected on the screen beside the altar table.
4. The order of worship will be projected through the Zoom link for all participants, including those in the sanctuary. We will not prepare hard-copy bulletins, at

least initially during the trial period.

5. As part of this ongoing work, Celebration Circle will develop safe and inclusive liturgies for celebrating Communion.

Brenda then reviewed the current guidelines for participating in worship in person, guidelines that will be used and further developed during the trial period. A copy of those guidelines is attached to these minutes. Elements of the guidelines include:

1. In-person worship will be limited to 25 worshippers plus up to five people who will be offering leadership and supporting the technology.
2. Those desiring to participate in person will register in advance. Priority will be given to half of the community each week based on family name.
3. Seekers may invite guests, but we will not be welcoming people without advanced registration, at least during the trial period.
4. All people in the sanctuary will wear masks at all times.
5. Only vaccinated people will be able to participate in person.
6. Individuals who are immunocompromised, or exposed to the virus, or showing symptoms of cold, flu or the virus can participate on Zoom.
7. Only the song leader will be singing out loud in the sanctuary.
8. We will NOT be offering coffee hour after worship, at least initially.

Several comments and questions were offered:

1. These guidelines are over-restrictive.
2. We could set up an "overflow room" on the street level if in-person attendance exceeded the number we can accommodate in the sanctuary.

3. Why not allow open registration rather than prioritize by family name?
4. I appreciate the caution represented in these guidelines.
5. Will worship include Gathering Time? (Yes)
6. When Covid becomes seasonal, this hybrid model will work for us. (This will become a long-term solution.)
7. It is important that Celebration Circle invite and receive input from the community as we move through this experiment.

Following the conversation, Celebration Circle will continue to develop the hybrid worship model based on experience and input from the community.

Stewards sharing Sandra & Vincent (Vincent had difficulty connecting to the meeting but was able to share by audio through Trish's phone.)

Pastoral Concerns and Soul Talk concluded the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Submitted November 12, 2021 by Peter Bankson

ATTACHMENTS

Seekers 2022 BUDGET REQUESTS (DRAFT)

[Seekers-2022-Budget-RequestsDownload](#)

Guidelines for In-Person Option for Seekers Worship on Zoom (Draft 3)

[Draft-3-11-1-21-Guidlines-for-In-Person-Option-for-Seekers-Worship-on-ZoomDownload](#)