

# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MINUTES

FEBRUARY 16, 2017

Council members present:

Frank Baldwin, Al Horn, Karen Hurst, Bill Sweeney, Karin Wiggins, Peace Young

Council member absent: Christian Logerstedt

Staff members present: Elizabeth Durant, Michael Ellick, Cara Roth

Guests present: Ruth Ann Barrett, Belinda Moos

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 and Frank Baldwin opened with prayer. Belinda Moos was thanked for her delicious mac and cheese dinner she brought.

The record of the e-vote approval of January minutes was entered into this meeting's minutes. January 19<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting Minutes were approved by e-vote on Feb 2, 2017.

**Announcements** were made:

## **Church Archives**

- A contract was signed with Oregon Historical Society (OHS) and archives have been conveyed.
- OHS is cataloguing and storing the documents.
- Archives are available to church members for perusal by appointment.
- Documents not taken by OHS will continue to be stored at church.
- A church historian would be helpful.
- Peace will share this information with the church during Moderator's Moment in worship.

## **Oliver Lecture Committee**

- There is no committee at the moment.
- Congregation Member interest for this committee are still being determined.
- Church Council does not appoint members to this committee.

**Financial Oversight Committee** membership issues were shared:

- Who should be on list to sign checks? It was felt that signers should be church members, that they should be folks who are available when the office is open, that they should be familiar with the budget in order to know what the checks are being written for, and that there should be a sense that some committee members may have a potential future role as treasurer.
- Bill Cunitz was unanimously approved as a new member of the committee.
- Ann Narayan was unanimously approved as a non-check-signing member of the committee.

**Socially Responsible Investing (SRI)** was introduced by Ruth Ann Barrett. She presented her research and findings and distributed a handout. Among her important considerations were the following:

- Institutional investing in socially just ways makes a difference.

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- So does individual investing.
- If our church is a values-driven investor, we should advertise ourselves as such. (It was noted that the church can choose the UCC investment portfolios we put our money into but we cannot make additions or subtractions to what is in a specific portfolio. We can, however, work nationally towards changing portfolio offerings, and towards creating an SRI fund.)
- How can we educate our church family members in their personal investment choices?
- Staff will explore options for education.
- Ruth Ann was thanked for sharing her passion and expertise on this matter.

## **Ministers' Reports** were shared.

- Michael held up his Beloved Community work and reiterated our need for education regarding the possibility of church sanctuary status.
- Elizabeth shared her support of the Facilitators and her work with the Welcoming Ministry group; she highlighted as well her youth leadership, family gatherings, the new story she created for Godly Play, and the up-dated church photo directory now available on-line.

The **Treasurer's Report** included an affirmation of strong financial health, on target with the budget.

- There was a request that OCWM contributions be made quarterly and that this be reflected in the budget.
- It was noted that the the Building Fund was to be set up in 2016 with \$45,000 from the Reserve Fund followed in subsequent years with \$45,000 each year. Since this was not done last year, this will require transferring \$90,000 now from the Reserve Fund, \$45,000 for 2016 and \$45,000 for 2017. The Treasurer will do this
- Bill, Al, and Belinda will give their attention to these two matters.

The **Visioning** topic, **Worship**, was introduced by Michael. He offered questions that we need to take time to discuss:

- How does worship serve anyone who attends on Sunday mornings?
- Is our "tradition" relevant and/or important in shaping services?
- Can worship be transformative?
- Who do we want here?

Frank closed our meeting with prayer and we adjourned at 7:30.

## **Senior Minister's Report to the Board: February, 2017**

### *Internal*

- Pastoral calls/visits: 30+ since last Meeting
- Sunday Worship ongoing,
- Monday meditation groups ongoing.
- Thursday small group
- Supervision of all staff and core functions.
- Gathering of a new “welcoming team” to brainstorm hospitality and church growth
- Meetings with core ministry facilitators one on one...
- Wayfarer meetings internal
- New Immigration Taskforce gathered.
- Fundraising outreach to Lilly Fund, Ford Foundation, and Carpenter Fund, and Hildegard Fund.
- StoryLab on “The Missing Picture,” as part of our ArtReach Exhibition
- Guest workshop on gratitude with Paul Schroeder on 2/14

### *External*

- Outreach to the Cambodian Community in preparation for the February-March ArtReach Exhibition and Programming
- Awakening Leadership Gatherings
- Meeting with our New Mayor
- Interfaith outreach: Tuesday Lunch Gatherings and Interfaith “Council” Meetings
- Women’s March
- “Cultural Diplomacy” Event(s) with Muslim Educational Trust and the Albina Ministerial Alliance (part of the ongoing Beloved Community work...)
- “Silent Prayer in the Public Square” (though I didn’t attend due to my sickness, I was key organizer for this event, which ended up being well covered in the media and helping to prime the engine with our ongoing Beloved Community work)

### *In Development*

- ArtReach Reception on 2/18

- StoryLab(s) on the Enneagram and Spiritual Autobiography
- “Teach Me to Fish” Fundraiser with SURJ and the Beloved Community on 2/21
- Regular Morning Prayer at the 18<sup>th</sup> Ave Peace House
- Lent and Easter at First Congregational
- New “welcoming team” still in process...
- Bi-Monthly Book Group with New Members
- Possibility of Physical Sanctuary here at the church... in development with new TF
- “OUT-WORK” Music and Arts Festival here at the church with Genna McAllister
- Development and Fundraising for “Beloved Community,” in partnership with EMO, MET, Unite Oregon, and Race Talks. Currently we’re proposing three stages: 1) rapid response to hate crimes in Oregon by turning out faith communities. This phase will also be used as a “mapping project” to see which communities actually respond and which are dormant on these issues for now. 2) a series of community conversations patterned off the successful “race talks” here in Portland, 3) building of a wider “Beloved Community Coalition.” Hope to use the grant to hire Rev. Hector Lopez and Sho Dozono to help us coordinate and move the work forward. Fiscal sponsor will be either the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon or the Muslim Educational Trust.

## **Assistant Minister's Report to the Board - February 2017**

### *Internal*

- Preached twice in January; once in February; helped lead worship & children's time
- Pastoral care: ~45 calls and in-person visits; outreach to disconnected members
- Called to Care Training for new team members & matching with visitees
- Led Called to Care quarterly team meeting
- Led Family Ministries team meeting
- Promoted kids & youth events (web, email, bulletin board, in-person invites)
- Taught Godly Play (wrote new story "Deborah the Judge")
- Wrote job description for "Child Care Provider"; reviewed with FMT
- Produced "Parent Pages" each week & tidied classroom; replenished activity bags
- Hosted family gathering at Laurelwood (family-friendly happy hour)
- Youth group collective coordination
- "Youth Lounge" time during worship; continuing to make Kiva youth-friendly
- New Visitor Breakfast attended by four potential new members
- Promoted Climate film & connected with St. James Lutheran Climate Group
- Met with Core Facilitators to provide support
- Welcoming Team meeting with Rev. Alison Killeen
- Finished photo directory & sent out to congregation
- Wrote articles for Pilgrim & established 2017 publication schedule
- Proofread bulletin & weekly email newsletter

### *External*

- Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice – Sanctuary Cohort Open House
- Beloved Community Coalition gathering and silent march on January 22
- Albina Ministerial Alliance March for Justice & Police Reform; #NoBanNoWall Rally
- SURJ Interfaith Action Group Meetings & promotion of interfaith events
- Represented church at Central Pacific Conference "Gresham Dreamers" group
- Planning & Facilitation for "Awakening Leadership" (Wayfarer) Meetings
- Central Pacific Conference Justice & Witness Ministry Team Meeting
- Hosted Showing Up for Racial Justice on Inauguration Night
- LGBTQ Clergy Brunch

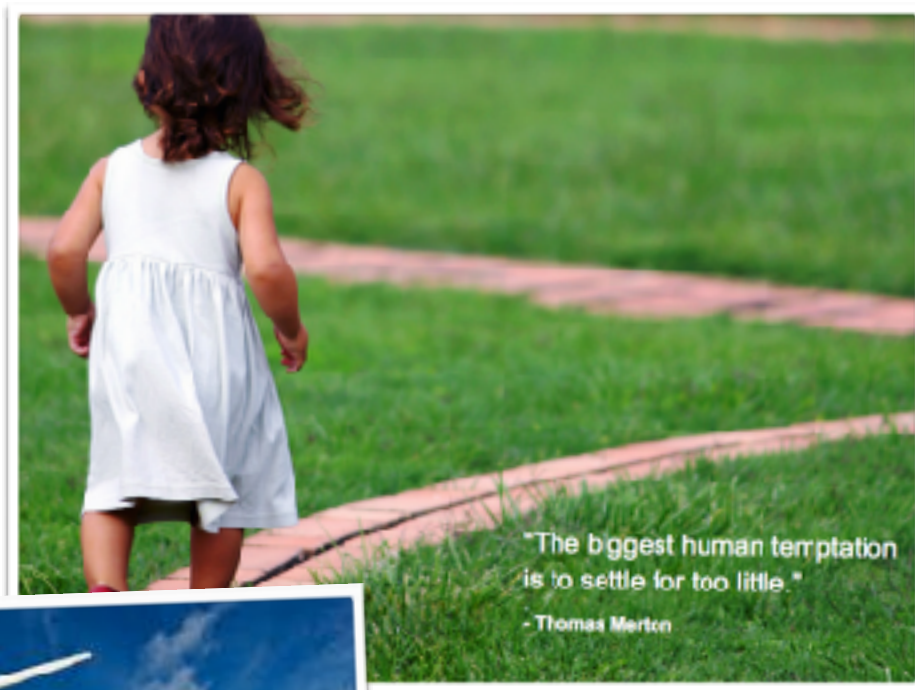
### *In Development*

- Ongoing sanctuary meetings & support of Peacemaking efforts (PPOP in mid-March)

## **Assistant Minister's Report to the Board - February 2017**

- Support recruitment for Hospitality & Community positions
- “Teach Me to Fish” Fundraiser for Celebration Tabernacle
- Lenten White Privilege Study at Bridgeport UCC
- Safety/maintenance review of supplies/facilities for nursery and classroom
- Movie Night with Youth Group in Kiva area
- Continue monthly “Youth Lounge” on third or fourth Sunday of the month
- High School & Middle School Mid-Winter Retreats
- “Camp Sunday” in March to promote Summer Camps
- Inter-generational Spiritual Autobiography StoryLab
- Serve as LGBTQ Clergy for Drop-In Spiritual Care Hours at Q Center once a month

# Socially Responsible Investing (SRI)



# Discussion Paper

## First Congregational Church Portland

### Goal

From a sustainability perspective and as an advocate, I'm encouraging the adoption of cross-over terms and activities to help overcome the problem of talking to the choir by focusing on building relationships with people who do not share the same bubble, silo, profession, ism, discipline, neighborhood or faith, but clearly have mutual interests.

SRI is an important cross-over opportunity, particularly for individuals with pension and retirement plans ([see note 1](#)) and the institutional investors that represent employees - teachers, unions, non-profits, and faith-based organizations who are most likely to share sustainability values of interdependence, inclusivity, resiliency and have a track record acting on behalf of Mother Earth and her children. And there is plenty of evidence that performance need not be sacrificed!

As reported 11/14/12 by Bloomberg, "Hospitals, retirees, pensions, banks and religious institutions used sustainable and responsible investing (SRI) strategies for \$1 out of every \$9 invested in the U.S. at the end of 2011. Total investments guided by such strategies increased six-fold since 1995. More on Performance and SRI [here](#)."



## 2017 Objectives

- begin educating our members on how to invest in a socially responsible way;
- attract the boomers and millennials ([see Note 2](#)) to the Church as prospective members;
- show support to the CPC for their commitment around divesting from private prisons ([see note 3](#)); and
- partner ([see note 4](#)) with organizations who are active in SRI and have skills and expertise in this area. ([see note 7](#))

### Divestment Education

Private prison divestment as a search term does not have enough data to show up as a trend just yet, but it presents an opportunity to join with the divestment movement focused on fossil fuels and for the FCC community to be a leader in expanding the category to include private prisons. ([see note 5](#) for SRI groups and [note 4](#) for investing in equality)

One way to lead, *after making sure the organization is walking the talk*, is to educate (seminar series) both individuals and institutions on looking more closely at

- why portfolios should reflect the values and beliefs of individuals and organizations,
- using an economic tactic to support both environmental and social advocacy, and
- identifying Portland's faith-based organizations who are joining with the investment community around socially responsible investing, often as part of a sustainability initiative, and more recently, under the banner of climate justice, another cross over term ([see note 6 on Faith and Climate justice](#))
- **how to do it, both individual and organizationally.**

### Resources - Voices of SRI

As background, there are 15 videos on EarthSayers.tv in the special collection, Investing and Sustainability, and in that collection is a video, [What is Fossil Fuel Divestment](#) by The Guardian, [The Rise of Responsible Investment](#) by James Gifford, and in the climate justice special collection, [CEO Tim Brennan](#) of the **UUA** *how investments match their values*. The video content in EarthSayers.tv, voices of sustainability collections has been curated for relevancy and quality.



### April 2017

Ceres sponsors an annual event which is April 26 and 27th (2017) in San Francisco. I'm going to pursue getting a press pass as EarthSayers.tv to cover the conference. There may be someone in our Church who might want to represent the Church. I will be doing interviews of people attending the conference and will focus on those folks who address sustainability, climate justice and other categories of divestment such as prison prisons.

The Ceres conference is an opportunity to cross-over, so to speak, and influence a choir of institutional investors such as UUA's Tim Brennan did at the 2013 Ceres conference.

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## Notes

### Note 1

This email references the New York Times [article](#), Nonprofit Employees, Already Underpaid, Face Special Challenges in Retirement, which addresses the work of Mary Brunson. "Her cause is the tens of thousands of diocese employees who are saving money in workplace [retirement](#) plans. That issue may not have attracted a lot of attention, but it is a serious problem nonetheless. That is because many of the plans not only cost too much, they also invest in companies that do not align with the church's values. Ms. Brunson spends her days tracking down local church officials, one by one, trying to persuade them to do things differently.

### Note 2

[article](#)

Choi says the study found that about **84 percent of millennials** were interested in sustainable investing. "Really significantly, they're also twice as likely to invest in a stock or a fund if sustainability is part of the value-creation thesis," Choi, 49, says in an interview at Morgan Stanley's New York headquarters. That's only going to become more prevalent over time, she adds. "If you look at the trends of transfer of wealth to women and millennials, it's very striking."

### Note 3

I thought a good place to start a conversation around SRI at our Church is the [CPC's call](#) "to encourage its church members, congregations and conference Finance Management Working Group to prohibit any and all persons acting on their behalf from entering into any financial relationships with private prison companies and their **million shares club investors**, and to divest of any existing holdings in the Corrections Corporation of America, the GEO Group, as well as those institutions owning over 1 million shares in these companies.

### Note 4

Trillium Asset Management, a Portland based for benefit corporation or B corp, and a leader focused exclusively on sustainable and responsible investing, has a new white paper, **Investing in Equality: Integrating LGBT issues into Total Activation**, ([download](#)) a topic of interest I am sure to both present and prospective members. They also have papers on Extracting Fossil Fuels from Your Portfolio and Fossil Fuel Free Investing at Trillium. [B Corporation](#) "provides a framework and certification for companies wishing to benefit society as well as their shareholders."

Note 5

Three organizations of interest are [Ceres](#), [earth folio.net](#), [The forum](#).

Note 6

Climate justice is another important cross-over term addressing three communities - money folks, climate scientists, and community activists organized around the environmental challenge of climate change (e.g. biodiversity, global warming, wildlife conservation) and its growing impact on the social justice landscape to include groups such as Black Lives Matter and Standing Rock. It connects the business functions/ issues of SRI, Environmental Sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and ethical supply chains.

Presently exploring [Faith and Climate Justice](#) from the perspective of increasing awareness of climate change by addressing these broad objectives over the next three years (time running out):

- (1) moving a majority of the faithful in the U.S. to being concerned and alarmed about climate change **and willing to support public policies** that restrict carbon emissions and the use of vehicles, a large source of US global warming emissions;
- (2) reframing with faith-based organizations climate change to climate justice, an ethical and moral issue;
- (3) framing global warming as the mission critical social, environmental, and economic issue of the sustainability movement; and
- (4) launching a Call for Climate Justice by alarmed and concerned leaders through their churches and spiritual organizations.

Note 7

For example, in December of 2014, Portland's City Council passed a resolution creating a Socially Responsible Investments Committee. The committee is charged with recommending corporate issuers for inclusion on, or removal from, the City's Corporate Securities Do-Not-Buy List in the City's direct investment in corporate securities."

## Peacemaking Ministry Report

### Immigration Task Force:

-Rachel Short is the new lead for the Immigration Task Force.

-Stephanie Mullen, Grant Helbley, Carole Scholl, Jesika Gavilanes, Enrique Gavilanes, and Rachel Short have joined the Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice Sanctuary Cohort on behalf of our congregation.

-Stephanie has joined a Portland Immigrant Rights Coalition Sanctuary Group on behalf of our congregation.

-Our Immigration Task Force is planning to present the idea of having Sanctuary in our church space to our congregation in the near future in the hopes of it being a possibility for us.

### Wayfarers:

-FCUCC and wider community Wayfarer's recently began meeting again

Joe: Pursuing ministry work with his touchstones, and possibly taking this to other churches.

Ruthie: Interest in climate justice and sustainability work. She has many ideas in the works.

Terry: Working with our Immigration Task Force.

Tim: Currently recovering from surgery.

### Racial Justice Action Group:

-Will be combining forces with For White Accountability in Racial Dialogue to start a radical reading group with the intention of growing our education and having discussion around racial justice. This will be advertised in the email blast, bulletin, and on Facebook as the start date approaches. We plan to start in March. This will be led by Sara Rudolph from For White Accountability in Racial Dialogue. It will alternate Thursday nights and Saturday afternoons, so that the most people can participate. Stephanie Mullen will be joining the Saturday meetings.

### Outreach/Ron:

-Ron Clevenger continues to do much work organizing many of our congregations outreach programs including, but not limited to Potluck in the Park, Goose Hollow Family Shelter and Our House.

### Misc. Peacemaking:

-Will be having a drive in the near future for Portland Peoples Outreach Project (needle exchange) for items that this organization is in need of. This will be advertised in the email blast, bulletin, and on Facebook as it approaches. Next quarter spare change will be going to Portland Peoples Outreach Project.