

## **COM Discernment**

**February 20, 2020**

In Attendance: Sue Ferbrache, Ruth Garwood, Anissa Glaser-Bacon, Amy Gopp, Brent Gundlah, Nayiri Karjian, Donna Lane, Luke Lindon, Nannette Pitt, and Bill Smith

Absent: Bentley de Bardelaben-Phillips, and Allison Gallaher

Check in.

### **10:30 am Kim Nagy, 3rd draft Ordination paper**

-Amy prayed. Kim thanked Luke and Brent for their help. Third draft wasn't as tedious and infused more theology into the paper, wasn't as bad as she thought. Nannette said that it was a good idea to weave the Lorax and found the right balance. Kim says her ministry feels really good so far, a year and a half in. Getting to know how to work with the staff and people takes time and how things work and function. Feels like she's hit a stride going into Lent. Some favorite contemporary theologians Kim likes James Cone and liberation theologians, Kenda Creasy-Dean from Princeton. Resources: Shine for children (lots about peace-making), youth group is more social justice and not study, and adults drive their own, currently with Joan Chittister with Pastor Amy. Job through the lens of SPEAK UP UCC guide. Committee voted to approve for full committee interview.

**Parking Lot:** Spoke about MID lunch and how many showed up. Consensus was about communication from COM and process. Nannette is working on a process overview which would be 1. MID Status 2. Plan of Formation 3. Ordination Paper 4. Final interview. Mentors need to be trained as well, or come from our COM group.

Luke spoke about Mathew Hogue-Smith and meeting with him and how he's fired up to take a run again at the ordination paper after CPE.

Nannette spoke about at the luncheon for our COM for us to get our ship right. We need to clarify our needs and the process and what we're looking for in the ordination paper. We've been rolled into a process on-going, so the committee decided that March will be our time for orientation and righting the ship.

NEOSOM is the other elephant in the room. Feels like a closed off, secretive group and the issues abound.

**11:15 am Leila Jindra, checking in as MID** - we have not seen her in 2 years licensed pastor a small DOC church, Christian Temple in Lorain. Nayiri prayed and asked how she's doing. Leila says things are going well, a year in. First year was settling into their pattern of doing things, but now she's entering in a time of discernment of what changes to make. Very supportive. Lots of mission work for being such a small church. Commissioned/license. Amy asked what brings you most alive in your ministry? Leila said mission. Mission is: stepping out of the building and into the community. They have a food pantry and a food service, but now trying to take a next step.

Maybe move into a community garden. Nannette asked after the commission from the DOC as she knows it's defunct. Leila says that there is no regional, but still has a functioning committee on commissioning and she meets once a year. Her membership is with Medina UCC, she left before Luke got there. Leila has been a MID since 2015. She's in Lexington in her 5<sup>th</sup> year, should be done in July of this year. Looking to graduate in June 2021. Maureen Weber is her mentor for the association and Sharon Alberson is for LTS. Nayiri asked for an updated plan of formation which was last submitted in 2016.

Started in Brunswick UCC before it folded. Didn't have enough \$ for another minister so folks took turns. The congregation asked her in 2005, and she stepped up and thought "what would it take to be a minister." She got up and preached the first sermon and it was an incredible experience. Never been a public speaker, and is introverted. But felt this sense of calm and did it. She knew it was the Holy Spirit and decided to go along for the ride. Started Partners in Ministry (now NEOSOM). Brunswick transitioned into something else, found her way to Medina. Felt the call to seminary and to ministry. Sharon Alberson, associate at Medina at the time who asked, "When are you going to give up and just go to seminary?" Long journey, fought it every step, but now feels like she's not fighting it and going with the flow. After she became a parent, she understood more of God's grace toward God's children. If she feels the love toward her kids, then how does God feel? Changed it. Going into a dying profession, it's hard, but it brings so much joy.

Nayiri will send the guidelines for the new plan of formation to Leila to update her plan with the new marks.

### **12 pm Deborah Holzworth, 3rd draft ordination paper**

Committee feels it's a better paper. Still traditional and a slight "judgey feel" but best offering so far. Clearer call. Luke had to leave. Nayiri took the following notes as the meeting continued:

Additional conversation about our concern for Holzworth's readiness for ordination. She is volunteer at Southern Hospice Care. Our feeling is she does not need ordination to do chaplaincy and we are not convinced that she has articulated her call clearly. We are not convinced that we can affirm ordination for her.

Difficulty in articulating theology, faith perspective... Difference between chaplaincy and pastoring... Professional growth... Mother dies last July causing more pondering and reflection about call.

Unanimous agreement to move forward by ending the discernment process.

Submitted by Luke Lindon