

First Parish Cambridge
Governing Board Minutes
March 29, 2021, 7-8 pm
(Virtual meeting via Zoom)

Present: Gloria Korsman, Grace Hall, Tod Hibbard, Cade Murray, Jan Puibello, Don Tucker,; Rev. Adam Dyer, Sylvia Wheeler, Monica Bueno, Nina Lytton and Josh Sheldon

This special meeting was devoted entirely to discussion of the plan for the Strategic Plan.

The plan can be considered to have two parts: The first part, comprising the first 4 steps, should be complete by September of 2022 with mission and vision in place. The second part will be the action steps.

The role of the board is to convene the process in step 1, communicating throughout and providing feedback to the Strategy Planning Team at each step. Board members may also be called upon to help with facilitation and will certainly be asked to participate. However, the team, working with staff, expects to develop written materials.

There was a question about the timeline, both the importance of a focus on spirituality throughout and on not being tied to specific dates. Spirituality will underlie the entire process. A timeline is needed to prevent the process from dragging on indefinitely, but it can be a tool to provide guidance to the team rather than being widely shared. It was confirmed that the entire process is iterative and may involve circling back to previous steps at times.

The process will continue to be fine-tuned. It is important to be agile and adjust as circumstances change. This will be occurring in tandem with resuming in-person activities as well as the building project.

Another question was what the first step, “Embracing our Collective Spirituality” looks like. It has already started, beginning with homilies in December 2019, and reinforced through the Sunday morning discussions during the past year. The specifics for this spring have not been worked out.

It was also noted that Phase 1 of the building project contains some money that could be used on the interior. Decisions there should dovetail with step 2, considering our ecosystem.

Question: What is the Strategic Plan? Answer: It is the actions we need to take to meet our mission and vision. That means our action steps constitute our strategic plan (or plans). The implicit plans of ministry teams, made explicit, will constitute part of the plan. We will be looking at our actions through the lens of our vision and mission. We may discover gaps to fill, while some current approaches may be left behind.

Rev. Adam focused attention on the importance of this work by referencing a Washington Post article stating that 10 years ago, 60% of this country’s population had a religious affiliation, but that the number is now down to 40%.

Gloria requested a motion of support for the Strategic Planning Team's plan. The motion (Cade Murray, Jan Puibello), "The Board approves the preliminary plan outlined by the Strategic Planning Team, and gives it's full endorsement to the approach outlined", passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Grace Hall, Clerk

Related documents:

Slides from the presentation on Planning for the Strategic Plan

Approved by the First Parish Governing Board on April 20, 2021
Grace Hall, Clerk