

CIC Townhall Meeting
November 5, 2023, 5:50 pm
Meeting Notes

Welcome: Hugh O'Neill, facilitator

Attending: Corey Passons, Hugh O'Neill, Thad Curtz, Karen Tvedt, Carol & Jamie Rainwood, Karen Ray, Alan Hardcastle, Leeann Tourtillott, Cindy & Katie Guertin-Anderson, Jing Lui.

Racial Justice Centering (RJC): Hugh O'Neill led a privilege walk exercise encouraging us to reflect on and talk about the nuances of privilege. Corey asked people to contact him if they are willing to lead the RJC segment during an upcoming townhall meeting.

Review of the September Townhall Meeting Notes: Karen Tvedt provided a brief overview of the Sept. 16 meeting notes; full minutes are posted on the CIC website.

Minister's Report: Corey Passons submitted the following written report; discussion in italics.

- Currently I am looking ahead to the season of Advent, Hanukkah, and Christmas Eve service as these are times of additional planning and coordination. We will be in the Grange this year for Xmas eve and be having a service at 11 am which is a big shift from past years. We will monitor how this works for the community. *Corey noted that he has requested use of "the Barn" for our Easter celebration but hasn't heard back.*
- Currently we have good coverage for celebrations (except for Nov. 26th) into and through January with the annual meeting being on the last Sunday of January.
- I have been serving on the PNW Board of the office of Global Ministries, which is an office shared with the Disciples of Christ. This will be a very busy next half year with a person to person mission going to Colombia in February and the organizing of mission partners coming from Colombia to visit and speak at the Annual Meetings of the PNW UCC and Disciples in late April. I will be directly and heavily involved with both of these efforts and will attend the pilgrimage to Colombia in February.
- CIC is in its 50th year and I want to use Sarah Huntington's upcoming celebration as a way of really announcing this to the community and for a place to begin awareness for work that could happen this winter to determine how we might want to recognize such an anniversary. *Corey said that Sarah intends to do a fishbowl exercise with long-time CIC'ers. He will be making a request for volunteers to help with additional 50th anniversary celebrations this spring.*
- Retreats. CIC did NOT get the Learning Center at Millersylvania for Labor Day of 2024, though we will be at that center on May 17-19 of 2024. So we currently don't have a spot for Labor Day of 2024 and I would like to do some polling to our community about the interest in reestablish our twice-yearly retreat schedule AND to explore location options since Flagler is closed without an opening date set.
- *Corey noted he regrets missing the CIC celebration on Nov. 19 which is when Interfaith Work's Setting the Sacred Table service will be held.*

Finance Report, Pledge Drive and 2024 Proposed Budget: Thad Curtz reviewed the September Budget Report highlighting expenditure patterns and noting areas of under- and more-than-expected expenditures. As of the Sept. report, we are doing fine with \$43,052 in expenses and \$52,846 in income.

- Jamie Rainwood noted that it would be good to know what SPEF expenditures were for, i.e., tech equipment, pizza.
- Corey will follow-up with Miriam Sterlin about whether she has professional expenses she hasn't submitted.
- There was extensive discussion about three items that relate to the proposed 2024 CIC Budget: salary increases; funds designated for UCC Annual Meeting; and number of children's program teachers. Thad noted that the budget number being used by Penny Purkerson for the pledge drive assumes 3% salary increases.
 - **Salaries:** questions were raised about whether 3% salary increases are adequate given inflation in recent years. Townhall participants asked Thad to prepare a revised budget proposal with 5% across the board salary increases (as well as funds for two annual meeting participants). Thad will also research 2024 benefit costs, e.g., health insurance.
 - **UCC Annual Meeting:** Participants agreed we should support attendance of two people at the UCC Annual Meeting next year. Corey will talk with Tara Young-Brown about her needs. Leeann agreed to research estimated costs.
 - **Children's Program Teachers:** Thad asked whether we can justify three teachers given the number of children in our program. Attendees agreed that we should include three teachers for purposes of the 2024 budget given our desire to grow CIC's children's program (publicity recommended) and difficulties we had in finding teachers in recent years.

Children's Program: Miriam Sterlin submitted the following report in writing-

- I am writing in good cheer, with the happy beginnings of a burgeoning children's program! Our three teachers are reliable, responsible, and responsive. We are adapting to the addition of the Wildwood church community to the upstairs space, as Wildwood parents might poke in to grab some toys for their kiddos to use in the sanctuary space. Folks interacting are courteous and appreciative, and we are co-existing well.
- Jaina (Middlers teacher) listens and considers the lessons and stories talked about during Intergenerational time, and puts theory into practice. After Penny's talk about giving to and supporting the community, Jaina and Lynn gave back by washing and putting away all of the snack dishes! We have currently one fairly regular student in our program, hopefully with the addition of two more of our known CIC middlers and more to come now that we have a space and a teacher. Jaina has stayed to help out with the Grade School class when there have not been Middlers present.
- Aubrey (Grade School teacher) is even-keeled with our boisterous elementary aged kiddos, balancing focus and play and helping kids rebalance if/when necessary. Aubrey is a deep listener, and validates each child in what they share with the group in every setting.

This class is our largest group, with 3-8 kiddos on a Sunday. Aubrey is a great fit for this group, with a “can-do” attitude and an earnest and honest engagement with the kids.

- Sage (Preschool teacher) is a sweet fit for our youngest kiddos. Sage reports being glad to have more kids in the classroom, as last week was the highest week of attendance with 3 kids at once! Sage also helps out in the Grade School classroom when there are not Preschoolers present, and Jaina is with the Middlers. Sage is helpful and willing to show up and be involved.
- I am so happy to have our teachers! In my curriculum planning, I am trying a new structure. Each week will have three main components: 1. a story and discussion related to the CIC theme or holiday, 2. An activity or craft related to the story, and 3. A meditation or mindfulness practice related to the theme. This is all in addition to snack and candlelighting.
- Over the past weeks, teachers have led kids through stories and activities based on honoring Indigenous People and the relationship between salmon and habitat. Kids have heard legends from PNW tribes, e.g. The Salmon Woman, and engaged with videos and materials from the Salmon Defense. We’ve just begun to explore the work of Billy Frank Jr., and that work will continue. We’ve also learned about Dia de Los Muertos, and honored the fall equinox. Moveable paper salmon, flexangles, stormy seas sensory jars, paper flowers and dough skulls, building an Ofrenda, tracing leaves to make zentangle suncatchers; these are examples of some of the crafts children have done each week.
- Thank you for your support of our children’s program! Please get in touch with any questions or ideas.

Call Shepherd report (Cindy Guertin-Anderson)

- Thanks to Kathy Pruitt who has agreed to join the Connections Committee. We will acknowledge Megan Parke’s work on the committee when she returns.
- We will also recognize everyone with calls at the annual meeting.
- Need more Community Kitchen volunteers. Will be highlighting this need at the annual meeting, upcoming celebrations.
- Need additional volunteers for the set-up crew.
- Karen has been clerk for several years and while she’s not in a hurry for a change, she wonders if someone else would be interested in assuming this call. They would be welcome to shadow Karen to check it out.

Committee Reports

- *Community Support:* Corey reported that there haven’t been big requests in recent months, so things are going fine.
- *Social Justice Committee (SJC): Betty Hauser.* The next SJC meeting is Nov 11 at 1:30 pm. Among the topics for discussion are:
 - Is there a CIC outreach committee? We want to do a better job connecting with people after Pride.
 - Can a recording of a celebration be made to people outside the CIC community? It would also be nice to have a poster board with photos.
 - Might we put an “In the Community” page on the CIC website?

- It would be great to make more use of the CIC calendar that's on the website. We would need a calendar shepherd.
- Announcements:
 - a. Look at the interfaith Works website for dates for cold weather host training.
 - b. We would like to put together a celebration about helping the homeless. It would be for next year.
- *Connections Committee (Hugh)*: as noted in the call shepherd report, Kathy Pruitt has agreed to join this committee. Hugh reviewed a summary of the CIC annual evaluation (*included at the end of these minutes*).
 - The responses were overwhelmingly positive including comments like “incredible gift,” “imaginative, authentic, powerful celebration leader,” and “sensitive and available,” about Corey’s leadership in celebrations and the CIC community.
 - Responses about the change to 4:00 pm celebrations were mixed. We discussed whether we have seen more involvement of families with children. This is a hard question to answer although one parent suggested that 4:00 is generally easier than 5:00 pm. Corey will ask Miriam to keep track of the number of children attending each week.
 - Responses suggested that some people would be willing to be more involved and/or feel left out after celebrations. The group brainstormed ideas about doing more outreach to new people, e.g., newcomers tea, having a welcoming committee, encouraging zoom operators to reach out to new people who may show up for celebrations on zoom.
- *Community Kitchen (Alan Hardcastle)*. We continue to experience increased demand for meals and volunteers. Among options discussed was the possibility of cooking more enchiladas (possibly with cooking continuing after we begin serving meals). Karen asked about most people asking for two meals with some coming back for more. Alan noted that pre-Covid when people ate inside, we routinely gave one meal, but people could come back for seconds after everyone had been served. We will continue the practice of two meals, but Alan will find out what other groups do.
- *Audit Committee*. Jamie Rainwood and Mark Collins have completed the 2022 audit and found no issues of concern. Jamie said she’s willing to do it again.
 - They suggest that we track serial and model numbers associated with our equipment. Thad volunteered to record them.
 - In anticipation of future audits, Jamie agreed that she will do an outline of audit recommendations/process.
- ***Fundraiser Committee***: Kathy Pruitt reported on the Oct. 21 Barn Movie Fundraiser.
 - The goals were \$1,900 and a family-friendly event. As compared to the 2022 Barn Movie Fundraiser, fewer people attended (25 vs. 40) and we received fewer donations from non-CIC members. However, with donations still trickling in, we earned \$1,875 (very close to the goal).
 - Comments included: avoid conflicts with school schedules; rain may have “dampened” attendance; movie was a little long, perhaps not a draw; and fish sale and movie fundraisers being close together makes it less comfortable to reach out

for donations from community members/friends. The committee will continue to talk about alternatives.

Townhall and Annual Meeting Dates:

- Dec 3 Townhall
- Jan. 7 Townhall
- Annual Meeting-January 28, 2024

2022-23 CIC Annual Evaluations Overview

FROM CIC CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE: Hugh O'Neill, Katie Geurtin-Anderson, Megan Parke - October 2023

How have you felt about the celebrations and the CIC community this past year?

- Overwhelmingly positive responses!
- Celebrations have been rich and varied
- Folks who use Zoom appreciate the opportunity
- People love the music and dances (thank you musicians and dance leaders!)
- Themes of appreciation for community, celebration quality and depth, shared leadership and personal stories.

What would you like more or less of from the celebrations and the CIC community? Please also include any suggestions you may have about how to make Zoom celebrations more meaningful. What have you liked or not liked about our hybrid celebrations?

We'd like more of...

- Improved and consistent sound quality on Zoom – many comments and suggestions on this topic – better mic placement, more inclusion of folks on Zoom (e.g words to songs, small group breakouts, etc.).
- Opportunities for connection with self and interaction with others in celebrations
- Songs, dances, small group work, deep sharing and vulnerability of presenters.
- Need more voices in celebrations-not just presenter
- Potlucks are a welcome addition for some.

Please provide constructive feedback about the celebrations or CIC more generally. NOTE: We care deeply about whether you feel safe and welcome at CIC. Please let us know if you find CIC to be welcoming, inclusive, open and affirming. If not--please tell us more. We value any suggestions or reflections you may have.

- Most responders report that CIC feels open, welcoming, safe, and positive (several folks admit they are in our demographic majority).
- Acknowledgement and concern about lack of diversity and young families in community and some interest in working on this

- Concern about new people and whether they feel included (do we need to follow up with drop ins/new people?)
- Some folks feel left out at times after celebrations.

Has Covid or the CIC Covid protocols been a factor preventing you from attending celebrations?

87% No.

This year we experimented with an earlier start time for celebrations, in order to accommodate families with young children. If you have young children, please share your experience with the 4pm start time and whether this helped you attend CIC. If you do not have young children, please share your experience with this earlier start time.

- Like earlier time 11; Not a fan 7; Mixed 10; Prefer mid-morning 1
- Many folks said that they are willing to come at 4 pm if that is better for families with kids.
- Several folks suggested earlier time (e.g. 4 pm) when less daylight (e.g. PST) and later time (5 pm) when more daylight (e.g. PDT).

Do you have a family member who sometimes participates in the children/youth program?

93% No

How would you review the children's story time and/or the children and youth program over the last year?

- Vast majority are happy with story/kid time at celebrations. Love the leader-kid interactions.
- See audio quality and mic position problems above.
- Some suggest more skits and plays
- No Youth program last year.

What feedback would you offer Corey regarding his leadership in celebrations and in the CIC community?

- 99% Positive!
- "Incredible gift;" "a godsend;" "blossoming becoming more interfaith;" "incredible leader;" "imaginative, authentic, powerful celebration leader;" "like the depth of research and sharing;" "great work;" "so fortunate;" "sensitive and available;" "earnest, humble, dedicated leadership;" Much more praise and gratitude and so on...
- We are so lucky! (multiple times)
- "sometimes (sharing is) a little long" was the one suggestion for improvement.

CIC relies heavily on volunteer time, talent, and skills. How do you feel this system is working and how or where could it be improved?

- Most folks are generally satisfied with the system
- Some feel a little guilty for not contributing more time.
- Several suggestions for personally and inclusively inviting contributions from newer folks

Do you feel CIC has received what you have to offer? If not, what might that look like?

- Yes: 17
- Could give more/other or at another time: 7

How do you think governance and decision-making is working at CIC? How or where do you think CIC governance could be improved?

- Overall folks seem to think governance and specifically SC and TH are working well. Lots of appreciation for those who lead and participate
- Suggestions for including more folks in TH (e.g. combo potlucks and TH)
- SC and TH can be repetitive for SC folks
- Publicize the TH agenda ahead of time?
- Is it time for a Consensus refresh?

CIC will be celebrating it's 50th anniversary next year!!! Steering Circle is looking for volunteers for a short-term committee that would meet a couple of times this summer to help brainstorm how we could fully celebrate this important milestone. Are you interested in being a part of a team that would meet to reflect on this upcoming anniversary event?

Yes: 9

Any final thoughts you would like to share not prompted above? Thank you for filling out this survey!!!

- Celebration for/about Teens?
- "Both Meditation and Dharma have more attendees than ever."
- Evaluation summary in Wavelinks?
- LOTS of appreciation and gratitude!