

September 20, 2026-Town Hall Meeting Minutes

Present (including online). Thad & Jo Curtz, Mary Beth Harrison, Dick & Betty Hauser, Nika Keller, Karen Lohmann. Hugh O'Neill, Corey Passons, Penny Purkerson Kathy Pruitt, Carol & Jamie Rainwood, Pat Starzyk, Leeann Tourtillott, Karen Tvedt, Robert Walker.

Racial justice centering. Corey noted that this part of Town Hall provides intentional space for reflection. He talked about a series of devastating storms on Aug. 11 that hit Northwest Indiana, killing at least seven people and causing one of the largest power outages in US history. Gary, IN, which is close to 80 percent Black and with a poverty rate of 1/3, was especially hard hit. The power company reported that 27,000 customers in Gary lost power; many were without electricity for up to two weeks. Corey noted that as we consider climate and environmental justice, we need to recognize that often communities of color are left behind. For instance, race is correlated with data centers; 57 percent of data centers are being sited in low-income communities.

Volunteers to lead Town Hall racial justice centering for the year include Hugh, Betty, Leeann, Kathy and Jamie.

Review of May 31, 2026 Town Hall Minutes-Karen T. There was discussion about the need for someone to help with the CIC Harlequin fundraiser (especially given Gene Maltzef's announcement that he is unable to get fish for a fundraiser this year). Jamie noted that she is considering the role but needs additional information before deciding.

Minister's Report-Corey shared the following:

- He did a gathering this summer for people interested in exploring CIC membership. Karen Ray participated as a long-time member. This contributed to six new people joining CIC during Reunion Sunday.
- He also initiated a two-session book group this summer on "Original Blessing" by Danielle Shroyer. He plans follow-up sessions with supplemental texts, e.g., Matthew Fox.
- The hospitality group met this summer to explore how well we greet new people on their first and second visits and, two-or three months out. It's hard to be new, especially for introverts. A ritual with the new host badges will be shared during an upcoming celebration.

- The celebration planning team was restarted prior to Corey's sabbatical and was so successful that it is continuing. (It was also acknowledged that Corey helped by doing a huge amount of preparation before his sabbatical.)
- Corey will miss CIC celebrations twice this year: on Oct 25 when he is going to Mexico with Bethanie to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary and on Nov. 22 for the Interfaith Works, Setting the Sacred Table event.
- Children's Program. The program is operating with Miriam plus one educator. Exploration is ongoing about a middler's program (we have several kids on the cusp of middle school) and how it might be staffed, i.e., an educator or volunteers. A parent meeting is planned for October.

Financial Report (Thad Curtz)

- A budget sheet was handed out showing expenditures through June 30th- attached in Minutes binder.
- Thad noted that there isn't much to report except for paying Corey's salary. Rent was paid for the year and we paid \$380 Miriam under Teacher 2 when she filled in. There was a question about the \$788 spent in the Special Programs Expense Fund (SPEF). Corey will check on.

Call Shepherd-no report but several announcements

- We need more people to donate snacks for the children's program. Betty will have a clipboard at celebration next week to sign up volunteers.
- As discussed earlier, we need a volunteer to help with the Harlequin fundraiser (in addition to Jamie, Gene may be willing to help).
- Cindy would like to end her call as call shepherd. The Steering Circle was encouraged to think about possible replacements and do outreach.
- Call list needs to be updated.

Committee Reports

- **Social Justice Committee:** Betty reported that the committee met recently with four people in attendance. Upcoming events/issues include:
 - Combatants for Peace-Sept 24 (12-1 at Squaxin Park and 7pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church).
 - Sept 29, Compassion Meditation at Center for Spiritual Living.
 - Oct 17, next No Kings rally. Focus will be on getting people out to vote.
 - Nov 3, General Election. Library levy will be on the ballot.
 - Nov 11, Interfaith Works, Setting the Sacred Table.
 - Sergio's box will be initiated at an Oct celebration. Also announce training for Code Blue events.
 - Card to give street people to let them know what resources are available in Olympia.

- Former Olympia city hall/police station is now Squaxin land. A convention center is planned.
- Corey is reaching out for another CIC representative to the Interfaith Works Program Council. (Kristine Forbes is stepping down.)
- **Building Renovation:** Betty reported that the work is done; there was a recognition event acknowledging the installation of solar panels. All told, United Churches raised \$1.27 million for the renovation; CIC contributed \$41,000 of that amount.
- **Community Kitchen** - Hugh provided report from Alan Hardcastle – we continue to assemble a full contingent of volunteers. We provide around 336 meals each month. Consider using more of the food available at community kitchen?
- **Community Needs.** Sabra, Melanie and Bethanie. Ongoing support to Bev.
- **Connections Committee** - Annual Evaluation completed and publicized in Wavelinks. Hugh said he is taking note of the request that everyone get their say during Town Hall.
- **Retreat Committee** – Millersylvania is reserved for May 14-16, 2027.
- **Fundraising Committee** –
 - As noted, Gene is unable to supply fish for a fundraiser this year. We have enough money in the Benevolence fund to cover our community kitchen commitment this year (we have a total of \$26,000).
 - Harlequin fundraiser (June 27). Leeann noted that we need to apply every year so we should be cautious about taking this fundraiser for granted. It was suggested that we do more outreach to non-CIC members this year.
- **Pledge Shepherd**
 - Penny noted that she will serve as pledge shepherd for one more year. She wonders about having someone who could shadow her.
 - Thad will draft a budget for Steering Circle consideration increasing this year's line items by three percent (the total would be about \$76,000 which is in line with this year's pledges). This will allow Penny to begin the pledge drive.

Next Town Hall is Nov 1, 2026. Annual Meeting is January 24, 2027.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 pm