

MINUTES, KOL AMI STEERING AND COMMITTEE CHAIR PLANNING MEETING,

July 10, 2011, 3-7 p.m., Don and Hope's house

PARTICIPANTS: Jane S., Don K., Janice C-L, Hope W., Toni P., Michael L., Susan F., Erika F., Peggy R., Lance F., David L., Noel L., Abbot H., Mary K., Britt R., Richard R.

Don introduced the meeting, explaining that it aims to bring together Steering and Committee Chair members to share, identifying the roles of each, plans and priorities. The meeting provides the opportunity to cover a lot of territory; give an overview of the year. Kol Ami committees have broadened out, spreading out responsibilities among more members.

The agenda was reviewed and approved with no changes. The minutes from the Annual Meeting, June 12th, 2011, were also approved with no changes or corrections. There was no treasurer's report, since the treasurer was unable to attend the meeting. Elizabeth requested someone to pick up Kol Ami mail while she is out of the country. Michael Linick volunteered to do this. He will coordinate with Elizabeth and Don in carrying out this task. The Kol Ami membership form was discussed. Two suggestions were made: (1) eliminate the sentence starting "In the past fiscal year, we waived dues ..." (in fourth paragraph), as well as the word, "therefore"; (2) eliminate the phrase "physically or mentally" in next to last sentence, last paragraph. Other suggestions about this form should be sent to Don or Elizabeth.

In order to facilitate coordination between committees and steering, each participant was asked to indicate what role he/she played on Kol Ami committees or steering. Don mentioned that at the monthly meeting of the Steering Committee each committee liaison should report about what the committee has been doing, as well as what it needs approval on. Committee minutes do not need to be presented. The use of the free conference call service that has worked well for the steering committee can also be used for committee meetings.

Planning for the High Holy Days (HH) in September was discussed. The Ritual Committee working with the Rabbi has the responsibility of handling what happens on the bimah, the ritual aspects of HH. In addition, a designated community member manages the logistics of HH services and activities. This includes, for example, the RSVP form on the Web, name tags, machzors, greeters, food. Volunteers for each of these functions need to be found.. Don has asked Gail Seligman who handled logistics for HH last year if she will do it again this year, and is waiting her reply.

Don reported on the issue of scheduling Rabbi Berner's time, based on her contract. In addition to working with ritual and adult education committees, she has been asked to participate in community wide events. This includes leading a Simchat Torah celebration on Friday night and

a Saturday evening Havdalah service and talk. The idea is to increase her presence for kids and families. She will also spend time in the older kids class, and be involved in a community event to welcome new members after HH. Committees should think about ways to involve the Rabbi. If there are questions or doubts about a proposed program or activity, Don or Mary who worked on the Rabbi's contract, should be contacted. They should also be kept informed about what the Rabbi is doing.

The adult B'nai Mitzvah class was discussed. There has been an initial meeting with 8 interested people, at Herb and Janice's house. There is a desire to open the program to more people. The program would like to begin in early August (the 7th), using a classroom at the Unitarian Church. The timing and meeting schedule will be concurrent with JCEP. The teachers will be Herb Cooper-Levy and Mark Grayboyes. The Rabbi will also talk to the class. This new program will be under the jurisdiction of the Adult Education Committee, which has requested a formal proposal outlining the details of the program, including identifying costs. The Adult Education Committee will review and reformat for adults the B'nai Mitzvah document already developed for JCEP, to be used in the program.

The administrator's role was reviewed. She is in charge of scheduling Kol Ami events and activities in the Unitarian Church, so that all committees need to go through her for obtaining space in the Church. Amy will be looking for other space, since the Church's construction plans starting in February, 2012, will affect use of the activity room. Services will be switched to the Chapel, but there will be no access to the closet. Alternative space in the church or in a Pod will be explored. Amy will be doing research to identify these alternatives.. There will be a steering committee meeting with Amy to discuss this issue. In connection with this, the Ritual Committee will need to determine what the needs are for access to the prayer books.

Amy also has responsibility for monitoring phone calls to Kol Ami, which go to her cell phone. She then forwards the voice mail. She prepares "This Week", which is sent by email to the community and to an external list (subscribed to via the website). Abbot mentioned a need for access to this service, since he has not received it. Amy uses what has been placed on the website calendar for "This Week", which comes out each Wednesday. The deadline for inclusion of items for "This Week" will be Tuesday at 5 p.m. The number of weeks the item should be run needs to be indicated to Amy. It was suggested that other information, such as hosting for services and the website, should be included in "This Week". Amy also maintains the JCEP and parents list, as well as the new member directory. She updates the members directory, using it to print out name tags. Participants were reminded that the best way to obtain volunteers for committees is to use the directory and make telephone calls. The list of those who signed up for volunteering at the last community meeting in June, 2011, was distributed. It was decided to have another community meeting early in 2012.

Website and web training for committees will be planned. Each committee is responsible for looking at their section on the website, seeing what is there, and getting event information on the website. The committees need to post their events with a blurb describing the event. It was suggested that a person on each committee should be designated to have this responsibility. Website and web training will be provided by Don. He will handle one-to-one or small group training, once the person on each committee is identified.

Lance and David who are responsible for sending content to Amy as part of outreach activities need a policy document that indicates when to send out information about events. Amy will handle the logistics of sending this information to different promotional sites.

The Kol Ami budget indicates what funds are available for each committee. Don can send this information to those committees who need it. Richard Ruth for the adult education committee reviewed planning of adult ed programs for the coming year. He prepared a written description listing the current adult education activities, and requested input from participants. He is interested in trying some things, to see what works and what doesn't, in a low key, user friendly way.

Janice indicated that the Care and Concern program will continue its efforts, and develop relationships with people needing its services. Harriet can help with developing a resource list for elder persons. The Program can include working with the yearzeit list. Mindy and Toni are interested in this. Yearzeit can be coordinated with fund raising.

Hope indicated that JCEP received a grant for use with B'nai Mitzvah planning. The teachers were thanked for their tremendous efforts. Rabbi Gilah will continue with JCEP, with a contract developed for this work. Rabbi Leila has also been involved with JCEP. The aim is to get a student rabbi for HH. There are two B'nai Mitzvah planned for 2012. The new parents have been involved with holiday celebrations. There is a need to involve post B'nai Mitzvah kids in a program. A possibility might be developing a junior congregation to get them involved. It was mentioned that there is a local Chabad program aimed at this age group. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College may also have developed something in this area.

Noel presented ideas from the Kol Ami fundraising committee. He indicated that it is important to determine the level of fundraising needed; to set priorities for fundraising, what is acceptable to the community. This should flow from goals or criteria determining what to do. The community needs to be involved in this process. There is a need to identify specific things to do, and the effort required. A follow up meeting will be planned with Don, Noel and Abbot. Then ideas will be brought to the steering committee for discussion. Afterwards they will be presented at the next community meeting.

In relation to outreach, Lance reported that advertising for HH will be done, in coordination with Amy Stutt. "Rules for the Road" for this coordination will be developed. The successful participation of Kol Ami in Israeli Day will continue.

Jane indicated that the Ritual Committee is filling roles for the HH services. An opportunity for a meditative session between the Yom Kippur services is being planned. The lounge will be used for this activity, which will include a meditation, a study session on the book of Jonah and a minhah service. The Committee is exploring a tashlich service for Rosh Hashannah. Rabbi Leila's dates for Shabbat services until June have been set. Shabbat babayit services have been taken off the calendar, but if someone wants to do one, this can be included. Other dates will be coordinated with Laura and Diane Ivonne. The Committee will be considering planning for Sukkot.

Mary explained that strategic planning is in its second year. She raised the question about when the audit forms should be sent out, what would be most useful to committee chairs. After a discussion, it was decided to send the forms out after the HH, and in the spring. The strategic planning task force will be reviewing the process of committee work, to see where we are and what we need to be doing.

Peggy reported for Tikkun Olam that we have signed up for a gleaning activity at a fall date, to pick food. The committee will be planning for a food drive with the Arlington shelter that we have worked with before. She will coordinate with Maddie to work with the food bank drive undertaken during the HH. She will also explore with George L to see what the Committee can do in relation to the Sukkot in April activity.

Under new business, Richard Ruth announced that the poetry book is in proof, and will be set to launch on September 10th. It will be given to those who contributed poems, and will be on sale to others.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be a conference call on Tuesday, August 9th at 8 p.m. Don will send out an agenda for this meeting.