The Community Relations Committee (CRC) is charged to promote a congregation-wide culture of open, honest, and healthy communication about all topics—including difficult or conflictual ones—as a core value of the WES Community. WES Constitution, II. B. 2. b.

Chris Chafe and Bob Pokorny, who did an excellent job serving on the CRC for a few years, cycled off the Committee. In January 2019, Laura Tyler and Rajesh Vidyasagar joined continuing CRC members Randy Myers and Jo London, who was selected as chair.

In June 2018, the CRC, pursuant to a charge from the Board of Trustees, began the process of developing a community agreement on how we want to communicate with and act towards each other. Community members contributed their ideas for what we are calling a Community Relations Pact. Randy Myers took the lead in pulling those ideas together and drafting a Pact. The Committee revised that draft until it was deemed ready to be presented to the Community for their review, which was done on April 28th. Comments on that draft were solicited and received. We have considered and incorporated the comments and suggestions we have received and are submitting the latest version to the Community for a vote at this meeting.

In the fall of 2018, the CRC supported a skill-share workshop led by Andrew Batcher on building relationships. The CRC also developed and adopted an internal CRC document outlining the vision, goals, roles, processes, and initiatives of the CRC. The document is called Community Relations Committee (CRC) Processes and Procedures Plan for 2018-19. Jo London was the Lead.

Rajesh will lead an effort to develop a strategy to apply the Pact by improving members’ communication and conflict resolution skills, including recognizing and dealing with structural issues of racism and exclusion. Once that is done, Randy Myers will lead the implementation of that strategy, including a training plan to improve communication and conflict resolution skills.

Laura Tyler will take the lead in developing effective approaches to gathering feedback on WES platforms and other activities and issues. Laura will also publicize the work of the CRC and post CRC records on the WES website.

Rajesh will lead the development of tools to assess the quality of WES internal communications and conflict resolution and a follow-up to the ARAOMC survey. Laura will lead the application of the assessment tools to track improvements.

Respectfully submitted,

Community Relations Committee (CRC): Randy Myers, Laura Tyler, Joanna London (chair), Rajesh Vidyasagar, and Amanda Poppei (staff)