

UUC Board Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2020

Approved April 9, 2020

In attendance: Pam Philips (ex-officio), Steve Keighton (president), Wayne Neu (president-elect), Sandy Powers (treasurer), David Hundley, Nancy Norton in person, and Nancy Bodenhorn (secretary) via zoom.

Not in attendance: Dan Kominsky,

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Wayne)

Check-in

Review and Accept Agenda – approved with a change in order to accommodate member forums

Member Forum – Karen Holstein attended to understand how the Board works and to express her views and perspectives on an animal policy at UUC. Service and therapy dogs are not the same. UUC as a church, is not bound by the ADA. Explained the difference between therapy dogs and service dogs. Karen reported that her understanding is that, for a service dog, special training and a vest are not required. Disability is not required for a service dog and disability cannot be questioned. Karen believes that some of the other members of the UUC have been indicating incorrect information about the need for and registration of service dogs. If we google “ADA service animals” we can see a nine page document with the legal information about this issue. Allergies might be an issue for some, but Karen’s dog is a hypoallergenic dog, as are many service dogs. Expressed reactions such as allergies and fears will be faced for a variety of different issues that we do not adapt to as a community.

The board will consider the information Karen provided as well as review ADA regulations, state laws, and other UU policies as we work toward as we work toward establishing a policy.

Linsey Marr also attended virtually with some information about coronavirus. She is not a doctor, but has been studying the transmission of diseases in general, and now is studying the corona virus. The age group of deaths shows that impacts to the older generations (over 50) is pretty staggering. Linsey suggests that based on science of transmission, and the quickness with which this infection seems to be spreading, that to avoid being part of the problem we not meet on Sundays. Definitely no handshaking. If weather is nice, meeting outside if possible is safer than in the building. If small groups are meeting, and are not in close quarters they might be okay.

Discussion among the board continued with information about what other churches in the area are planning to do. UUA and Church of the Larger Fellowship suggest that we stop everything now with groups larger than 25. Discussion also included keeping the building open for support groups only. It was suggested that the Cello group be asked to not meet, as they are all over the building when they come. Question was raised about the staff who are working and payment to them, agreed that we could continue supporting them during their virtual work. Recordings and electronic meetings will be developed and utilized. Most of the administrator’s and minister’s work can be completed at home. After the discussions, the decision and unanimous vote was made to close down the UUC building for a month, to be re-evaluated at the next board meeting on April 9. This will impact all UUC activities and meetings, as well as any group that uses the building. As much as possible, meetings and committees can continue to work virtually. Services will be delivered virtually.

Approve Consent Agenda: Approved unanimously. Much glee was shared that Lisa has decided not to retire.

Minister's Report

Administrator's Report

DLFD's Report

Previous Meeting Minutes

Treasurer's Report

Finance committee met and discussed the potential ramifications and plans for budgeting the payments for LFD and administrator retirement benefits. Lisa, the current administrator also decided not to retire this summer, which is welcome news and has financial implications including no time of overlap for new and old administrators, maintaining retirement payments, and the salary continuing at a higher level than would have been introduced for a less experienced administrator. Finance Committee, and as many Board members as possible, will meet together on April 8 to work on a proposed budget for 2020-21. Board will hopefully be able to learn enough about the Finance proposals so that we can vote quickly at the Board meeting the next day.

Old Business:

- Update on Policy Review progress/plan. Brief discussion of need for revisions and meeting with past-president Ellen Plummer, who had been working on policy review. Will need to continue reviewing and make a plan going forward in the coming months.
- Public Witness policy draft update - next step. This was postponed until next meeting.
- Status of Trustees and Board member candidates for next FY. Potential trustees and board members are being contacted and we are confident that the open spots will be filled soon.
- Further discussion on Administrator retirement and possible fundraising idea – not needed as Administrator is not retiring, but as stated above we will still need to work with Finance Committee to explore options for paying back funds used to cover retirement back pay.
- Update on the hiring process/timeline for Administrator – not needed as Administrator is not retiring.
- New date for auction board game night – Scheduled for Saturday May 23, to be reevaluated as to the appropriateness of an event based on Coronavirus status at that time.

New Business:

- Safety proposals. Board decided to approve purchase of blood pressure cuff, but to hold off for the time being on purchase of AED based on Safety Committee recommendations.
- Animal policy – will continue to collect sample policies from other congregations and continue discussions via email and will attempt to develop a draft policy to consider in April.
- Comments on beehive plans (any reason for Board to even weigh in on)? Board decided we do not need to weigh in on this and feel positive about this proposal in general.

8:50-9:00

Upcoming:

Newsletter article (David Hundley, due March 26) -

April 9 Meeting Reading – Pam Phillips

Next Board Meeting:

April 8th joint meeting with Finance Committee

April 9 Board Mtg

Adjourned at 9:20

March 2020 Minister's Report to the Board
Submitted by Rev. Pam Philips

Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

We explored Resilience through February. I was grateful to Jim Bohland for sharing his expertise through his book and conversation. Several people have expressed interest in his ideas. Our guest speaker in February was Chris Alderman, who shared his story of resilience and recovery. His was a powerful testimony, but it was also triggering for several people in the congregation. We'll be talking in our worship meeting about how to create a safe space in worship when potentially triggering topics are addressed.

This month we are exploring wisdom, and Kimberley Homer shared a powerful reflection during the kick-off for the stewardship campaign. Likewise, John Imbur shared an excellent reflection the following week. We used the large television screen (the middle school RE class was off-site and so weren't using it) to project words to hymns and readings and show a brief video.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

I made one home visit, three hospital visits, and five pastoral visits in my office since my last board report, in addition to email communication and less formal interactions with congregants in the course of Sunday services and day-to-day activities. I'm particularly mindful that the coronavirus has been alarming to people and will be checking in with those who don't feel safe being in large gatherings.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

I've learned that meditation is particularly helpful during stressful life transitions—such as moving. Meeting with my mentor minister and spiritual director have also proved invaluable.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

I attended the environmental justice strategic planning workshop, along with 20 members of the congregation. Thanks to Greg Evanylo for spearheading this effort and inviting a facilitator to help us with this work. I am excited that we have some concrete plans to pursue and am hopeful that we can engage more of the congregation in this vital work.

Leads Administration

Our first strategic planning committee meeting was very productive. The group has decided to share leadership, with rotating note-taking. In addition to discussing and deciding on how we will operate, we decided to review data already available to us (including the survey and congregational record from the search process, the start-up weekend, annual reports, "water drop" and "bumper stickers" from worship services, notes from past presidents meeting, budget requests). We are using a spreadsheet on the Google drive to report our review.

I've met with Mark Benson to talk with him about the January workshop and how best to follow up. He has some great ideas about how we can engage more of the congregation in social

justice efforts and how we might collaborate more with allies in the community. The LDC is also hard at work filling the slate for new board members to be voted on in June.

The stewardship campaign is off to a great start. I encourage board members to volunteer to be stewards and contact members of the congregation who have not yet pledged by contacting [Andy Roberts](#). Thanks to Andy for his leadership and the whole stewardship committee for putting together the campaign (including Lisa Evanylo and Arthur Snoke for putting together the materials and putting them on-line and Meredith Hundley for creating a creative alternative to a thermometer to keep track of our progress).

I met with the Safety Committee to discuss purchasing AED and blood pressure cuff and to make recommendations for how to best deal with the coronavirus. The committee recommends that we do buy a blood pressure cuff (an electronic version from Omron). We discussed the AED, and several spoke to the ease of use after training, but given the infrequency of events that require an AED and the proximity of EMS, it was decided that it would be more effective (and cost effective) to have more people trained in CPR/First Aid training. The committee also reviewed a letter from another UU congregation and recommended sending out a similar letter.

The administrator search committee was set to meet to begin the process, but we were joyful to have to cancel the meeting when Lisa decided to continue working.

Serves the Larger Unitarian Universalist Faith

While I was in Charlottesville for our UU religious professionals meeting, I met with a member of the Charlottesville congregation who is discerning her call to ministry. We had discussed our calls to ministry before I went to seminary, and I'm excited to see her taking steps to answer the call. I've signed up for General Assembly and hope that the gathering will not be cancelled given concerns about the coronavirus.

Leads the Faith into the Future

I was honored to attend the installation service of my new colleague at St. Michael Lutheran Church, Rev. Michelle Stramiello. I met her at the Blacksburg Ministerial Association, and I met several other Lutheran pastors that afternoon and am looking forward to forging connections with them.

We may be led into the future in the coming weeks, conducting more meetings via Zoom, and perhaps streaming worship services via Facebook or Zoom, if we are not able to meet in person. The Church of the Larger Fellowship will be providing information on how to do more gathering on-line. I've also joined a Facebook group with other UU religious professionals who are figuring out how best to continue creating compassionate community in the face of social distancing required to contain the virus.

Time away from Blacksburg

VACUUM meeting in Lynchburg, March 17th

Administrator's Report to the Board

March 12, 2020

As you have probably heard (or will hear shortly), after much rethinking, I have decided to stay on as UUC Administrator for at least an additional 2 years due to the economic situation the country is facing, my husband will probably not be retiring (although he is now at 50%) until June 2022, and I love my job. I contacted Pam and Steve for their ok which I did receive.

Stewardship Update: The stewards have been busy making contact with all those who didn't pledge during the "early bird" pledging in February. As I write this, we have received 97 pledges for a total of \$232,672. While some have increased or decreased their pledge a bit, in general, it seems that the majority are opting to stay at the same level as this current year. Most of our younger families with children in RE have not pledged yet although hopefully this will change. The final group gathering info meeting is being held this Sunday, and last I heard from Andy Roberts, only 3 people had signed up to attend. I don't know how many are requesting one-on-one meetings with stewards.

Environmental Justice Team: Hopefully you read the brief review (in online announcements) of the Climate Change Strategic Planning Workshop that was held on February 29. It was well-attended, and lots of great ideas came out of it. Six main areas of focus were selected, and leaders and action plans were decided for each one. Shortly, congregants will be asked to sign on to one or more of these based on personal interests. More info will be in the April newsletter.

Our domain name: I just renewed our domain name, uucnr.org, for 9 more years.

Tree donations: According to Susan Baker, 9 trees have been donated for planting on our grounds even though the Grounds Ministry requested just 6!

Support Groups Update: Just as an FYI – the Parent Bereavement Support Group that meets once/month at UUC has grown from 2-3/meeting to about 7-8/meeting with the majority being from outside UUC. All are so grateful to have this group. The Recovery Dharma group, while not sponsored by UUC but started by a UUC member, has grown so much that they have outgrown room 5 and will start meeting in the nursery. The Transgender support groups continue to grow, and I am often asked to add more names to the listservs. The 2 NAMI groups have also grown a lot since first being started by our former MHJM. I am so glad we are able to offer space to all these community groups which provide comfort and support to so many.

Attendance/Members: See online Google Doc. Note that one member asked to be removed from membership after being contacted by a steward.

DLFD Report to the Board – March 2020

Submitted by Rachel Craine, DLFD Assistant

Registration

Registration numbers to date:

- CYRE: 128
- LFD Activity Slots: 154
- UUC Activity Slots: 165

CYRE refers to unique children; if a child registers for multiple activities, they are only counted once. Activity slots counts the multiple activities.

This Month

- MSYG and YRUU made 12 blankets for Project Linus this.
- There will be a multigenerational discussion on racism with the YRUU this weekend.
- In March the middle school has visited Blacksburg Presbyterian Church and will visit Schaffer Memorial Baptist Church.
- Collection for the annual egg hunt to benefit the humane society is underway.
- Corona Virus planning: The downstairs door handles and tables will be sanitized before and after each Sunday's classes. In the event of cancellation, children's RE materials and links will be sent to families electronically. The summer RE program (currently scheduled as a cooking curriculum) will be changed to a curriculum that emphasizes outdoors activities.
- The digital binder Karen created for me has been very thorough and everything has been running smoothly. As a reminder, I am covering Children's RE, Coming of Age, Middle School Youth Group, and the Library. The main contact person for questions about other groups will be:
 - YRUU/YAC: Jane Keppel-Benson
 - OWL: Andy Roberts
 - ARE: Pam
 - LFDC: Jane Keppel-Benson