

UUC Board Meeting Minutes

Date: April 9

Approved May 14, 2020

In attendance via Zoom (required for social distancing): Pam Philips (ex-officio), Steve Keighton (president), Wayne Neu (president-elect), Sandy Powers (treasurer), Nancy Bodenhorn (secretary), David Hundley, Dan Kominsky, and Nancy Norton.

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Pam)
Check-in

Review and Accept Agenda. Unanimously accepted.

Approve Consent Agenda: Unanimously accepted.

Minister's Report
Administrator's Report
DLFD's Report
Previous Meeting Minutes

Treasurer's Report. Fiscal situation is as expected, Board sense is that UUC is in an acceptable financial position up to this point in the year. Looking forward, the remainder of the year, however, is the challenge (see more below).

New Business:

- Gift from Melanie Bussard for \$7000 is gratefully and unanimously accepted.

- Implications of extended closure

Payroll Protection Loan application was submitted on April 7 through National Bank of Blacksburg (UUC local bank). Application was made for \$34,884.61 according to national guidelines. If received, we can use within the following 8 weeks for mortgage interest, payroll (75% must be for payroll), health insurance and utilities. Loan likely to be forgiven contingent on maintaining current number of FTE employees. If not, fully forgiven, the remainder turns into a 1% interest loan over two years.

Cleaning – windows have been washed, can do some deep cleaning like cleaning ovens.

Consistent need for bathroom cleaning, but not needed more than once every month.

In order to maintain good faith relationship with employee, we will ask cleaner to work one quarter of what has been done in the past, but pay half of what has been paid.

Choir director – may be able to transfer the job responsibilities to performances prepared for the services rather than choir direction. Board strongly wishes to maintain her salary.

Members joining – can offer a virtual book signing for new members to join prior to the annual meeting so that they can vote. New member recognition and ceremony will be included in the service on May 17.

Information (May 17) and Annual (May 31) Meetings. Making plans for virtual information and annual meetings. Information meeting will take place on Zoom on May 17 with questions and answers. At the annual meeting, operational procedures will be voted for acceptance (decided prior to meeting and distributed at Informational meeting).

- Cash flow – Projection is that we will be able to manage the next few months, but cash flow will be tight if we do not receive the payroll protection loan, and we would likely not be able to pay remaining UUA dues or fund General Assembly delegates. As the stewardship drive ends on April 15, we will request early payment of meeting 19-20 pledge to help solve cash flow concerns. We will also remind members of avenues to increase cash flow by using options such as IRA interest donations, Kroger, Amazon, etc. In the worst case, we can withdraw some funds from the Vanguard account but since the stock market is so far down now, the timing is not good. If withdrawals need to be made, they should come from the income fund which is down the least.
- Preparation for joint meeting with Finance Committee (April 15th) on decisions for FY20-21 budget. Steve and Wayne will talk with Chris Egan (Finance chair) about how meeting will be run and proceed.
- Vote on GA delegates. Jamie McReynolds, Helen Renqvist, George Lally, Wayne Neu are planning to attend if the assembly is held and be GA delegates. Board approved unanimously to support these members as delegates.

Old Business: (as time allows)

- Public Witness policy – did not have time to discuss further.

Upcoming:

April 15 at 7:00 – meeting with Finance Committee

Newsletter article – Nancy Norton (due April 23)

May 14 Meeting Reading – Dan Kominsky

Next Board Meeting: May 14

Adjourned at 9:10

UUC Board Meeting Agenda
Date: April 9

7:00 – 7:15

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Pam)
Check-in

7:15 – 7:20

Review and Accept Agenda

7:20 – 7:30

Member Forum

7:30 – 7:40

Approve Consent Agenda:

- Minister's Report
- Administrator's Report
- DLFD's Report
- Previous Meeting Minutes

7:40 – 8:00

Treasurer's Report

8:00 – 8:45

New Business:

- Implications of being extended closure

- Cleaning

- Choir director

- Members joining

- Information (May 17) and Annual Meeting (May 31)

- Cash flow

- Preparation for joint meeting with Finance Comm (April 15th) on decisions for FY20-21 budget

- Vote on GA delegates

8:45 - 8:50

Old Business: (as time allows)

- Public Witness policy

8:50-9:00

Upcoming:

April 15 – meeting with Finance Committee

Newsletter article (when and who) –

May 14 Meeting Reading -

Next Board Meeting: May 14

Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

As someone noted, it is good that we explored resilience in February, as we are needing it now. Our worship services went on-line after the board closed down the building for services. The first Sunday, a small group gathered in the sanctuary and broadcast the service via Zoom. Thanks to Wayne Neu, Jared Gibbs, Stephen Henninger, Arthur Snoke, Jamie McReynolds, and Rachel Craine for their participation and flexibility. In the weeks since, we've all participated from our homes. Jared has done an amazing job recording preludes, postludes, and hymns—improving each week in meeting the needs of congregants who want to see the words so they can sing along. Likewise, Katherine Allen and Darla Bray contributed stewardship testimonials. Worship associates Ellen Plummer and Victoria Taylor have also helped lead worship, and Kimberley Homer and Stephen Henninger have provided technical support. Arthur Snoke has worked hard to make sure that audio recordings are available on-line.

Zoom allows us to see how many unique computers or “screens” have logged into worship. Not all users stay for the whole service, and many users represent more than one person watching. That being said, we've had steadily increasing numbers (3/15 - 82, 3/22 - 106, 3/29 - 128, 4/5 - 186).

We invited the people from TJMC-UU in Charlottesville to join us on April 5th, and Rev. Alex McGee and Scott DeVeaux (music director) participated in the service.

The use of breakout rooms for congregational reflections and coffee hour has been quite popular, so we have instituted a mid-week gathering on Wednesdays. The worship team has been enthusiastic about creating this extra worship opportunity. The first week, we had about 10 people, but the second week we doubled to 21 participants.

Sadly, two memorial services—one scheduled for the sanctuary for former UUC member Tom Ward and a graveside service for a member of a UU congregation in Massachusetts whose parents live in the community-- had to be postponed.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

While I have had phone calls and Zoom conferences with several individuals, I have also been setting up systems so that congregants are checking in with each other. I asked the greeters, neighborhood friends, and lay pastoral care ministry associates if they could volunteer to make phone calls to members and friends to make sure that they know how to connect to the congregation and find out if they have any needs. So far, 16 people have been assigned to 76 people. I am looking for more volunteers. My goal is for every member to contact or be contacted within the month. I encourage board members *who have the time* to volunteer (some people are working more these days, not less).

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

Meeting with groups on Zoom doesn't seem the most likely way to do this, but it's surprising how quickly different groups have begun to meet virtually to maintain social contact but also to pursue spiritual and ethical growth. I meet with Sages, Conversations on Faith, and Aging Spiritually groups, and the Meditation group is continuing virtually. Rachel Craine has done a great job adapting and sending out religious education materials each work and making a video about it to share during Sunday services. I was grateful to Leia Durland-Jones for inviting our families to join the Charlottesville church's family worship. Rachel and I will meet tomorrow to plan the multi-generational Easter service. I'm fortunate that I've been meeting virtually with my discernment circle, mentor minister, and spiritual director, so the pandemic hasn't affected my ability to still meet.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

I haven't been able to get out into the Public Square but am looking forward to meeting with colleagues from the NAACP religious affairs committee. I attended “Anti-Asian Panic and the Pandemic: A Virtual Teach-In” sponsored by several groups at Virginia Tech. Member Linsey Marr was one of the panelists.

Leads Administration

The stewardship drive has slowed down because of on-line worship, but I've been grateful for those who shared testimonials and to the stewards who have been contacting members. We are extending the campaign, and I'll be sending a letter to those who have yet to pledge (acknowledging fears and reluctance to make financial commitments but asking for whatever they feel they can pledge). Thanks to Meredith for updating our graphic, Lisa keeping track of new pledges, and Arthur for updating the website. Special thanks to Andy Roberts who has kept us looking forward.

Lisa and I are having weekly staff meetings as we are no longer catching each other in the building. We are in constant email contact as well. We're working on getting a different Zoom account through the UUA (we had to upgrade to 500 participants from 100, which costs extra), but that is still in the works.

We've been able to transfer all committees over to Zoom meetings, including Strategic Planning and Connections. People have been very willing to try new ways of working together.

I set up a Facebook group for UUC, which Molly Lazar has agreed to moderate. We set up an expectation that we abide by our covenant and a few more site-specific rules, to which the members have agreed. This has proven to be a helpful internal communication medium when Zoom changed the link for our most recent worship.

Serves the Larger Unitarian Universalist Faith

Working virtually has given us opportunities to help across the miles, including worshiping with the Charlottesville church and supporting UU's who are also learning how to navigate this new territory. I met with a lay leader of a church in North Carolina who is exploring using Zoom for their worship services. I am participating in several COVID-19 Facebook groups, seeking and offering support. We share problems and solutions as we encounter them.

The Blacksburg Ministerial Association is meeting on-line, and I attended the first virtual Interfaith Brown Bag Dialogue at Virginia Tech.

Leads the Faith into the Future

We have all been pulled into the future with the restrictions of physical distancing. I have learned so much about Zoom and video editing over the last month. I'm excited to know that some of the innovations we've had to make in response to the pandemic will probably serve us well in the future, including collecting joys and sorrows using a Google form (so that people can share even though they aren't able to make it to the service). I've also had requests to maintain virtual opportunities for worship and other gatherings, particularly from those who are unable to come to the meeting house.

Time away from Blacksburg

Leaving this category here for now, but I don't expect to be away from Blacksburg until at least June 10th. However, I may take some study leave time later in the month. It's been difficult to observe my sabbath/day off as we've had to ramp up in this new reality. As soon as it feels like basic necessities are up and running, I plan to take some leave.

Administrator's Report to the Board
April 9, 2020

Stewardship Update: Our current numbers are: 137 pledges for a total of \$286,540. There are a good number who told their steward that they would pledge but have not done so yet.

Vanco texting service and app for donations: We are in the process of adding a texting service and the use of a mobile app via Vanco for donations but currently waiting for Vanco to update me from only having access to the account to view and update donations to being an actual primary contact who can add these services. Sandy Power is currently the primary contact. We have submitted the paperwork for this change which normally takes just a few days, but I imagine they are swamped right now with so many congregations needing to update to virtual donations that we are still waiting. Once we upgrade, we will be able to have ½ plate collections during the service.

Volunteer and Assistance Request form: Thanks to Alyssa Short for coming up with the idea and preparing the form. She is also the contact between those offering services and those requesting help. So far, we have over 20 who have offered to help but just a handful requesting help. I assume this will change as time goes on and more are struggling or possibly get the virus and needing assistance with meals and such.

Zoom account: Through a deal with Zoom, the UUA is offering congregations the opportunity to have a Zoom account with up to 300 people on at once for \$110 per license (vs. over \$200 if purchasing separately). We have purchased one license and will possibly purchase a second. Pam is the contact for our license.

I am so glad that so many of our groups are still carrying on via Zoom and that we have so many joining our Sunday services. It is a joy to see all the faces while sitting isolated at home. I love that some former members who moved away are joining us for services.

I have been extremely busy updating and changing our calendar and website among other things but assume that as time goes on, things will slow down. Looking forward to the day we are all together in person. Stay healthy!

Attendance/Members: I am only recording the number of households that log in to our virtual service. Some households have 2 or more online at once so numbers are deceiving.

DLFD Report to the Board – March/April 2020

Submitted by Rachel Craine, DLFD Assistant

This Month

- Has been crazy
- RE has transitioned to RE at Home. Each Sunday, families are sent a lesson with links and videos that correspond to the topic they would normally be having in class.
- Starting in the next couple weeks, we will offer two storytime/gatherings each week for our prek-5th grade families, one led by me and one led by Pam. A survey went out today to determine the best times for this.
- MSYG was cancelled in March, but we are planning to start a zoom meeting this month, and hoping to do this biweekly for our middle school. (YRUU has already transitioned to zoom meetings)
- I am working with Pam and our families to make an Easter Play for our multigenerational service next Sunday.
- The annual egg hunt for the humane society has been postponed indefinitely. I am working on a virtual egg hunt for families and hope to collect for the humane society in one of our summer sessions.
- OWL 8-9 began in late January and has been postponed indefinitely, as it was decided the content must be covered in in person meetings.
- Coming of Age has transitioned to online meetings, and report that it is going well.
- Our teacher appreciation events scheduled for April (India Garden Luncheon and Parent's night out) have been cancelled. Volunteers will receive a hand written thank you and a gift card to a local business (this should still come in under budget—India Garden was expensive!)
- Teacher recruitment for fall 2020 is now underway. So far we have several returning teachers. Yay!
- The summer curriculum "Books and Cooks Volume II" (written by me) is going to be postponed until summer 2021. Kids and cooking and indoors don't seem wise at this time, assuming we are back this summer. I will be selecting some outdoor games and crafts that minimize contact in order to be prepared for summer programming as necessary.
- I expect to go way over my hours this month but to make up for that in May/June.
- The digital binder Karen created for me has been very thorough and everything had been running smoothly until the Plague...not so smooth now....

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