

UUC Board Meeting Minutes

Date: May 14, 2020

Approved: June 11, 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), Dan Kominsky, Nancy Norton, and Bob Stimson (presumptive president-elect)

Not in attendance: David Hundley

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Dan Kominsky)

Check-in

Review and Accept Agenda – Approved unanimously

Member Forum – Lynsey Marr – consultation on recommendations on re-opening UUC. The VA Governor indicates that congregations can open at half capacity as of May 15 2020, while the UUA recommends that congregations should consider closing until May 2021. Lynsey indicates the governor recommendation is too fast and too many people. Meeting outside with one's own chair and with masks and social distancing would be okay. Small group in a large, well-ventilated room would be okay. Does not have specific information about the sanctuary, but suggests that perhaps 40 people possibly (?) would be safe. Singing and choral music would need to be limited (stopped). Singing with masks would help. Right now, she would not recommend opening for at least a month. Things are changing fast, so opening may need to be considered on a monthly basis. Children's RE would be unwise given the size of the rooms and the ventilation. Air purifying and UV systems can help to clear the air but are pretty expensive.

Discussion also included that we should continue providing virtual Sunday services and meetings for some time even when we do open up so that members and friends have optional ways to attend based on their circumstances. We may need to purchase a video camera and screen, etc. in the way of technology upgrades, and to explore the resources needed to maintain a potential long-term virtual service provision.

Additional brief discussion continued later in the agenda (see below)

Approve Consent Agenda: Approved unanimously

Minister's Report

Administrator's Report

DLFD's Report

Previous Meeting Minutes

Strategic Planning Team report – Neither team member who planned to attend was available, so Pam reported on their progress through some of the meetings she has attended. Developing a survey of the congregation: The team would like some support from the Board members to encourage the congregation to respond to the survey. The Board discussed ways

to advertise their survey and encourage members to respond. The board will be in touch with team members soon. They have reviewed previous data, and met with Mark Benson (Leadership Development), as well as looking at community needs.

Treasurer's Report –

Cash flow is strong, and the budget is on track to come close to balancing for the 19-20 year. This is largely the result of the PPP Loan and several extra donations following the suggestion from the President and President-Elect regarding stimulus checks. The Board is extremely grateful for these. Approximately \$12,000 has been donated/promised as extra donations to the budget from congregants' stimulus checks.

Old Business

- Finalize Proposed Budget. Board discussed some decisions on adjusting the budget with the understanding that the uncertainties of the closings and economy require our best guesses as to the incomes and costs. The budget will be shared and discussed at the Information Meeting this Sunday in preparation for approval at the Annual Meeting.
- Planning for Info Mtg (May 17) and Annual Mtg (May 31).
 - Informational meeting: Virtual ushers will let people in to the meeting. Steve, Wayne and Sandy will be the primary speakers. Nancy Bodenhorn will monitor Chat to open up the microphones of the congregants who have questions in the order in which questions are received.
 - Annual meeting: Proxies will be available if needed
 - Google forms will be used for voting on May 31. Two individuals on the same computer can vote using this technology.
- Changes to GA delegates in response to virtual GA. Jamie McReynolds, Helen Renqvist, Rachel Crane, Wayne Neu will be our delegates (voted and approved). One more person can be a delegate as well.
- Discussion of UUC closure status – Following a variety of guidance as described above under Member Forum, the Board voted unanimously to keep the UUC building closed for use until at least the end of June (a little beyond the VA Governor's "Stay at Home" current window. The board will assess the situation at that point and make a strategy for potential partial opening of the building for at least small groups at our June 11 meeting. The Board is leaning to erring on the side of safety when it comes to any decisions to open the building for meetings or some form of services.

New Business:

- Public Witness Policy finalize and vote. The policy as revised was approved unanimously. The policy will be added to the UUC Policy and Procedures documents and will be shared via announcements and the Informational Meeting.

Upcoming:

Newsletter article (when and who) - Steve
June 11 Meeting Reading – Sandy Power
Next Board Meeting: June 11, 2020

Meeting adjourned at 9:30

UUC Board Meeting Agenda

Date: May 14, 2020

7:00 – 7:15

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Dan Kominsky)

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 - 7:55

Strategic Planning Team report - Stephen Henninger and Frank Napolitano

7:55 – 8:15

Treasurer's Report

8:15 – 8:50

Old Business

- Finalize Proposed Budget
- Planning for Info Mtg (May 17) and Annual Mtg (May 31)
- Changes to GA delegates in response to virtual GA
- Discussion of UUC closure status

8:50 – 9:00

New Business:

- Public Witness Policy finalize and vote

8:50-9:00

Upcoming:

Newsletter article (when and who) - Steve

June 11 Meeting Reading -

Next Board Meeting: June 11, 2020

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

Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

We have continued to explore the opportunities and meet the challenges of on-line worship services using the Zoom platform. The multigenerational Easter service was the best ever, thanks to Rachel Craine putting together a version of the Easter story narrated by children and youth and creating an egg hunt using photographs sent in by families. Thanks especially to the families who sent in video (the Short, McAllister, Mayer, Pruden-Bagchi, and Craine/Rensberger families). Later in April, we also had a guest minister, Rev. Jon Coffee, join us from Knoxville, Tennessee—which was well received. In April the theme was Liberation, and this month, we are exploring the theme of Thresholds. While the themes were chosen long ago, they've proven to be helpful lenses through which to view our current situation. The Soul Matters folks decided to change June's theme from Play to Compassion, which I think will be more useful to us.

Our mid-week gatherings continue to be well attended, and I'm pleased that worship associates have been taking responsibility for planning many of them.

I officiated two memorial services this past month, which could not have been more different. One was at the Memorial Gardens of New River Valley on North Main Street and used technology so that people in cars could hear the readings and remembrances over their FM radio. The other was with four family members in our memorial garden on the grounds of UUC. In a time when so many families are unable to gather to grieve, I was especially grateful that we could.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

It's been gratifying that more people are making appointments through Calendly to meet with me on Zoom (I've had 10 such meetings since my last report). Adding an extra day to my office hours. While I've been unable to make visits in person, emails, texts, telephone calls and even Facebook Messenger have all been ways, in addition to scheduled Zoom appointments, to maintain contact with those who are experiencing times of particular difficulty.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

This time of stay-at-home has given some people more opportunities for spiritual practice, and I'm grateful for my daily meditation and time to meet with my spiritual director and mentor minister. I attended a worship retreat with Marcia McFee, well-known in worship arts; gathering with other pastors who are experiencing similar situations was restorative for me.

The Aging Spiritually group has completed the curriculum I found to use, but we will continue to meet monthly. I used a Google form to survey different topics of interest. I've also found another curriculum offered from a UU church in Texas that is being offered for free that I'll explore.

Story time on Wednesday morning has proven to be a great source of joy. The children who attend have lively conversations as we read picture books.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

There currently are no Public Square gatherings, but I am continuing to meet with colleagues from the NAACP religious affairs committee. We will be reaching out to other faith leaders in the next month. I also have written to Congressman Morgan Griffith asking him to change his request to Governor Northam to re-open the churches before it is safe to do so.

I met with the Inclusion Council (out of the Women's Resource Center); we worked on our mission statement. I also attended Virginia Organizing's annual meeting.

Leads Administration

The stewardship drive has been completed. I've been helping to gather video "thank you's" to help celebrate our success (we didn't reach the goal but did an amazing job given the circumstances). Sarah Kern is busy editing the video. Letters sent to those who hadn't pledged yet yielded some last-minute pledges and communications from folks who cannot pledge at this time.

We were able to get a new Zoom account through the UUA which will allow us to have up to 300 participants and save UUC \$50 a month (the cost for upgrading to have more than 100 participants). Zoom has indicated they will refund the unused portion of the annual fee we paid for the original account.

Most committees are conducting business on Zoom meetings. People have been very willing to try new ways of working together.

My research on how best to conduct voting for the annual meeting has led me to believe that a Google form may be the easiest solution. We can put the link in the chat and have individuals record their votes—requiring names and membership status along with the vote will ensure that we have a quorum, and more than one person can vote on each computer. (The system used by a UU regional meeting addressed the multiple user per screen problem in a way that seemed too complicated.) Another option is for people to type their name and their vote in the chat—but that requires someone to scroll through the chat and count names and votes.

Serves the Larger Unitarian Universalist Faith

I look forward to attending Ministry Days and General Assembly virtually. George Lally is no longer interested in being a delegate, but Rachel Craine will be attending and is willing to be a delegate. (Helen Renqvist, Wayne Neu, and Jamie McReynolds are still planning to attend)

In addition to continuing to lead the UU religious professionals group (formerly known as VACUUM), I've been meeting with several UU ministers to see how we might pool our resources doing virtual worship

services, particularly over the summer. I'd love to see us have more joint services with other UU congregations to get to know one another. I set up a "watch party" at the last minute for the UU the Vote meeting, which a few folks attended.

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

Leads the Faith into the Future

The whole congregation is leaning into the future with our virtual gatherings. I will be looking into more technical strategies for maintaining and improving our connections as we move into subsequent "phases" of our response to COVID-19. No matter what the governor says, I am committed to maintaining opportunities for everyone to stay connected and engaged virtually.

Time away from Blacksburg

I plan to be "away" during Ministry Days and General Assembly the last week in June.

Administrator's Report to the Board

May 14, 2020

Stewardship Update: Our current numbers are: 167 pledges for a total of \$318,070. The Stewardship Committee and some stewards are mailing thank you cards to all who pledged. We already have \$51,204 in prepaid pledges for 2020-21.

Vanco texting service and app for donations: There has been a very positive response to our offering these options, particularly for the ½-plate donations. People are being very generous in light of the need in our area to help those who are struggling.

Request for extra donations: To date, we have received 15 donations (in addition to pledges) for a total of \$9350. There is at least one more coming for \$1200. Because some of the donations were through Vanco via credit card, our actual amount received is a bit less due to fees.

Annual and informational meetings: Just a reminder that I need to email the letter from the Board President about the annual meeting to members on or before May 17 (2 weeks prior to meeting). It should include a link to the proposed budget and short bios on the Board nominees and whatever else the Board decides should be included such as the Zoom link, procedure for voting, proxies (do we need them this year?). If you need a copy of last year's letter, let me know.

UU Administrator Professional Days: These 2 days of education and community for administrators are held just prior to GA and will be held virtually June 23-24. I hadn't planned on attending this year (have gone twice in the past), but since it's now virtual and free of charge, I registered to participate. Awaiting confirmation as number is limited.

PPP Loan Info: Wayne asked me to keep a file with information on staff salaries, utility payments, etc. for the period of our loan to be used when submitting for loan forgiveness.

Cello Rental: The cello school paid their rent for the entire year at the end of 2019. As they weren't able to use the building for 9 weeks, we recently reimbursed them \$684 out of rental income. Also the cello school will not be returning in the fall as it is being disbanded. This is a big loss of income in rental fees.

Committee Meetings: I attended the zoom Stewardship Committee meeting on April 26.

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 – May 2020

Submitted by Rachel Craine, DLFD Assistant

This Month

- Story time has begun, with Pam on Wednesdays and me on Fridays. Attendance has been generally between 3-5 children, but has been much appreciated.
- MSYG has begun on Zoom. They have met three times and plan one more meeting for this year. Online games have been popular, and we have had 5-9 youth at each meeting.
- 46 thank you cards have been sent to our volunteers, most with \$10 gift certificates to a local business. Several volunteers declined the gift, in order to keep the money in the RE program.
- The last official date for RE is this Sunday, May 17.
- Teacher recruitment is just about complete for the prek-middle school. 23 of 26 positions have been filled, most with returning teachers. Additionally, I have some names of people willing to help with summer RE if we end up back in the building.
- If we continue online over the summer, I would like to send the “Books and Cooks Volume II” lessons home each week for families to read and cook together. If we end up back in the building, I will select some outdoor games and crafts that minimize contact in order to be prepared for summer programming as necessary.

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