

UUC Board Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2023

In attendance: Fred Piercy, Wayne Neu, Laura Robinson, Rachel Craine

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Fred)

Feedback Circle Results from the Committee on Ministry (Jane Kepple-Benson)

- *Effective and useful discussions on worship. Will continue with other areas this year. Discussed getting diverse/increased member participation.*

100% Voting Congregation Request (Sara Dalton)

- *After inquiring, Sara reports that the information the 100% Voting Congregation Group wants may be too intrusive. Unless she hears back from them that we can develop our own plan for engaging and encouraging 100% voting within our congregation, she no longer wishes to proceed. Sara notes that our voter's group is doing most of what is on the 100% Voting Congregation Group list already.*

Check-in

Review and Accept Agenda—*Approved unanimously.*

Approve Consent Agenda (including reports from the Administrator, the Director of Lifespan Faith Development, Minister, as well as the June minutes) – *Approved unanimously.*

- *One question on Pam's report regarding sabbatical - The board would like to hear more particulars of dates and plans. The board is not as much concerned with it not being a year away. They just want to know the details.*

Treasurer's Report

- *Wayne gave a thorough tutorial on how to read the documents in finance, using the final June 2023 sheets as examples.*

Old Business

Fred discussed the logistics for mini-retreat/board meeting on September 14

- *5:30 dinner and retreat at Fred's house, 607 Rich Circle, Blacksburg, followed by 7-9 board meeting.*

Appointment of at-large board member

- *Margo Walter – Approved unanimously.*

Appointment of a member for the Committee on Ministries

- *George Lally – Approved unanimously.*

Appointment of a member of the Personnel Committee

- *Don Philyaw – Approved unanimously.*

New Business

Review Board Covenant (discussion)

- *Fred requested that the board read the previous board covenant and share any suggested edits or additions directly with him prior to the next meeting. Fred will then attempt to integrate them into the present covenant for discussion at the next meeting.*

Minister Evaluation Process (information)

- Rev. Pam is up for evaluation this year. The Committee on Ministries (COM) will come up with procedures for this and will implement the review.

Renew of Support for a Sponsored Group - The Transgender Support Group was *approved unanimously for the coming year.*

Anti-Racism Discussion Questions:

- *The board held a good conversation about class, race, and other inclusion issues. Laura, for example, recalled the conversations practice group she attended with other churches, Rachel talked about a class workshop she attended at General Assembly, and Wayne discussed the Trans Inclusion class.*

Check-out - Did we abide by our covenant?

Upcoming

Next Board Meeting – September 14, 2023 (retreat/board meeting at Fred's House, 607 Rich Circle, Blacksburg, from 5:30-9:00 p.m.)

Reading for September Meeting - *Laura*

Ended at 8:45

UUC Board Meeting Agenda
August 10, 2023

We, the UUC Board, seek informed collaboration and clarity in our work of supporting UUC ministries. We interact with respect, trust, deep listening, and curiosity. We affirm one another, and maintain fierce dedication to diversity and inclusion in our commitment to the community we serve. We communicate directly and with courageous love. When it arises, we engage in productive conflict. We are focused, accountable, and authentic. We laugh together. We maintain the trust and confidentiality of board members' contributions and speak with one voice regarding board actions.

7:00-7:30

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Fred), Check-in
Feedback Circle Results from the Committee on Ministry
Voting Congregation Request (Sara Dalton)
Initial Group Activity
Review and Accept Agenda

7:30-7:35

Approve Consent Agenda
Minister's Report
Administrator's Report
Director of Lifespan Faith Development's (DLFD) Report
Previous Meeting Minutes

7:35-7:50

Treasurer's Report

7:50-8:20

Old Business
 Logistics for mini-retreat in September (discussion)
 Appoint at-large board member (action)
 Committees that need new members: Committee on Ministries, Personnel
 (discussion/action)

8:20-8:40

New Business
 Review Board Covenant (discussion)
 Minister Evaluation Process (information)
 Renew Support for Sponsored Group - Transgender Support Group (vote)

8:40-8:50

Anti-Racism Discussion Questions:
 What have you noticed in this church that gives you hope around equity and inclusion?
 What are we doing right? What else could we do?

Is your church providing opportunities for members to build connections across racial lines? Where do you see this happening or holding the most potential?

8:50-9:00

Check-out - Did we abide by our covenant?

Upcoming

Next Board Meeting – September 14, 2023 ('retreat' at UUC, 5:30-9:00 p.m.)

Reading for September Meeting - ?

Other activities?

**Administrator's Report to the Board – written by Rev. Pam
August 10, 2023**

Maternity Leave Update: Ericka had her baby Paulo on Tuesday the 25th. They are home, healthy and happy.

Financial Matters and Rentals: Ann Ruple has been doing a great job doing most of these administrative tasks. Lisa Evanylo has been updating PowerChurch data.

Announcements: Rachel Craine sent out the twice-weekly UUC News & Updates through the month of July and Rev. Pam will be sending them out in August and September. The new Announcements form has been very helpful in getting announcements to us in a timely manner.

Attendance/Members: See the Attendance/Numbers Google doc.

August 2023 Minister's Report to the Board
Submitted by Rev. Pam Philips

Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

June worship on the theme of Delight included a service on Delighting in Pride, in which Denise Martin offered a reflection that received a standing ovation, and we had a Glitter Blessing. We had another service with Denise and Victoria Taylor on Delightful Surprise. There were technical difficulties at this service, due to some wifi problems which have since been resolved.

The July services were varied. One service included viewing the UUA General Assembly Sunday worship. The next service had congregants sharing spiritual practices, led by Victoria Taylor and Gretchen Luke. We had another video service with a 3-year old sermon on congregations as community of communities which I recorded for other Virginia UU congregations during the COVID shut-down. The UUYA's led a service encouraging us to embrace the flinch. Finally, Ellen Plummer, Jim Kern, and Brian Peters led a service on mysticism. The worship team agreed that it was one of the best summers of worship, and I'm grateful that the worship associates and congregants who participated did such a great job.

August kicked off with a service offered by the congregants who went to General Assembly, sharing their experiences and insights.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

Before leaving on my vacation, I was able to visit several members in their homes who have not been able to come to the services for various reasons. Since then, the Connections Committee has come up with the idea of congregants making such friendly visits. Contact Lisa Evanylo or Pauletta Copenheaver if you'd like to make such visits.

While I was away, Jennifer Mercier and Rachel Craine fielded calls and requests for pastoral care.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

In addition to GA worship services and workshops, the annual Ministry Days preceding GA gave me much spiritual sustenance. I was especially intrigued by a workshop on the Spiritual Practice of Mussar. I enjoyed attending worship service at Blacksburg Presbyterian and the UU Church in Eugene, Oregon during my study leave / vacation.

I attended the first Interfaith Discussion of [Dangerous Religious Ideas: The Deep Roots of Self-Critical Faith in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam](#) on July 9th at 4:00 in the Fellowship Hall of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church and hosted/led the discussion here at UUC on August 6th. Our Conversations on Our Faith group has started reading the book as well.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

I'm pleased to hear about all the work that our social justice groups are doing. Sara Dalton shared a list of activities planned in anticipation of the upcoming elections. I met with Bob Stimson and Anita Puckett to discuss ways the Climate Justice group can engage the congregation in deep conversations about how the climate crisis and what we can/should do.

Leads Administration

Carol Kern and I attended a workshop on Stewardship at GA.

The Committee on Ministries submits this report on the results of our Feedback Groups on Experience of Worship. Please review it before the meeting so you can ask Jane Keppel-Benson any questions you

may have. They will begin a ministerial assessment process this fall (according to my letter of agreement -- *An assessment of the work of the Minister will be initiated by the Committee on Ministries at the end of the first year and every three years thereafter in addition to a periodic review and renewal of the leadership and ministry of the Congregation* – and my last evaluation was completed in 2020).

I attended the Connections Committee meeting and they will be signing up groups in the congregation to provide snacks for after the Sunday services (except for Second Sunday Potluck days). Having visited a UU congregation that provides snacks after the service and seeing how many people stayed after to socialize, particularly those with children, this seems like an excellent community building opportunity.

I have given Fred Piercy the names of people to consider appointing to the Personnel Committee and committee on Ministries.

I finished the rest of the staff evaluations and have a meeting set with the choir director next week to coordinate and choose music for the year ahead.

Serves the Larger Unitarian Universalist Faith and Leads the Faith into the Future

I look forward to exploring the revision to Article II in the year ahead in anticipation of the vote during next year's General Assembly. I encourage board members to read about the revisions and attend any workshops we schedule.

Time away from Blacksburg and UUC

August 10-12: 10th Anniversary Get-Away to an unknown location

Special Request

According to my letter of agreement with the congregation:

The Minister shall use sabbatical leave for study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional and religious growth. Sabbatical leave accrues at the rate of one month per year of service, with leave to be taken after four but before seven years of service. No more than six months of sabbatical leave may be used within any twelve-month period. The dates of the sabbatical plan must be approved by the Executive Board at least one year in advance.

I should have made the request earlier this year, but I hope that the board will approve my beginning a sabbatical next spring – starting in either April or May – that will last up to four months. [I will need to make sure that our ministerial intern has completed her required hours before I go on sabbatical.]

DLFD Report to the Board – August 2023

Children and Youth Programs:

- **Summer RE** went smoothly, with lots of volunteers making it work. Preschool and Nursery attendance was light, but the K-5 program was well attended.
- **2023-4 Registration Numbers:** Currently 37 families and 67 children have registered for 88 activity slots. Considering Fall RE hasn't started yet, this is a good number.
- **Fall RE** begins this Sunday—this is a new, earlier start date. This fall the curriculum is:
 - PreK—Chalice Children (Rooms 1&2)
 - K-1—Picture Book World Religions (Room 4)
 - 2-3—Books and Cooks (Room 5)
 - 4-5—Holidays and Holy Days (Room 6)
 - 6-7—Building Bridges (Room 3)
 - 8-10—OWL (Library)

Room Usage: Due to an extra class, Room 2/3 has been split. The best meeting rooms downstairs for adults are now Room 6 if you want tables, or Room 3 if you just want big chairs.

- **YRUU and MSYG** will begin in September. Planning meetings with advisors and YAC take place this month.
- **OWL**—grades 8-10 OWL will take place on Sundays during the service beginning Aug. 27. We have 11 youth registered so far.

Adult Programs:

- Adult OWL will be offered this year—in the fall for young adults, and in the spring for older adults.
- Building Bridges for adults will also be offered—in conjunction with our middle school program.
- Jim Bohland will do a discussion group on threats to democracy in the fall.
- Sunday Circle—we are experimenting this fall with 11:30-12:30 Sunday circles once a month, and continuing 8:30-9:30 circles once a month.

All Ages Activities:

- This summer 3 “Family Fun” days were offered. June 18 was very successful, with at least 25 participants. July’s Saturday picnic only had 2 families, but one was new—so although I probably won’t do one in July on a Saturday again, it was good. And the last one is scheduled for this Friday night—Welcome back potluck.
- Parent Covenant Group will begin again on September 9th

Other DLFD activities:

- Had a great time at GA with colleagues and with our youth.
- Teacher training took place on August 5th. We have 36 volunteers between RE, Youth Groups, and OWL!
- Registered for LREDA Fall Conference in Milwaukee (Oct. 11-16)
- Signed up for 2 Renaissance Modules—one on UU Identity and another on Systems Theory. Thinking about starting the credentialing program.
- Covered for other staff during the month of July and wrestled with our internet issues and security breach. SO GLAD PAM IS BACK!