

UUC Board Meeting Agenda

September 5, 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.

7:15-7:30

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Laura), Check-in
Review and Accept Agenda

7:30-7:40

Approve Consent Agenda

Minister's Report

Administrator's Report

Director of Lifespan Faith Development's (DLFD) Report

Previous Meeting Minutes

Treasurer's Report

7:40-8:10

Old Business

Committee assignments and expectations

Goals for the coming year vs goals for last year (how will we know if we've had a successful year)

New policy manual - where do we go from here?

For discussion: This year's board covenant

8:10-8:40

New Business

Accepting Finance Committee's policy recommendations from Di Ross and Linda Powers

For discussion: Fred's request of the Finance Committee to consider options around undesignated funds (see letter in September file)

For discussion: Bulletin board in Elarth (Fred)

Information: Meeting with past presidents (Pam, Fred, Laura)

8:40-8:50

Check-out - Did we abide by our covenant?

Upcoming

Next Board Meeting – October 12

Reading for September Meeting - ?

Other activities?

UUC Board Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2023

In attendance: Fred Piercy, Laura Robinson, Rev. Pam, Rachel Craine, Margo Walter, Barbara Taylor, Wayne Neu, Rami Steinruck, Beth McClellan

Chalice Lighting, Reading

Fred called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Laura lit the chalice and shared a reading.

Discussed results of group activity, which you can find in the September folder.

Review and Approve Consent Agenda

Approve Consent Agenda (including reports from the Administrator, the Director of Lifespan Faith Development, Minister, Treasurer, as well as the August minutes)

Discussion:

- Nursery: attendance really light over summer, low in parents with babies.
- Pre-K taking time for families to come back after Covid.
- Attendance in folder 2023 UUC Board Files.

Updates about administrator's report: (added after we started): Newsletter is out.

Consent Agenda approved unanimously.

Old Business

Board member committee assignments/volunteers:

- Personnel Committee: *Rami Steinruck*
- Leadership Development Committee: *Laura Robinson*
- Stewardship Committee: *Wayne Neu*

Goals for coming year vs. previous year?

- What are our overarching goals?
- Specific – finance committee decision? (see Fred's letter to Jim Bohland and Wayne's email in Treasurer's Report).
- Do we want to do a capital campaign? Bigger picture - money matters (want to upgrade playground, need a bigger picture view) Or use unrestricted funds?

Board's organizational structure. This will be discussed and hopefully acted upon in the coming year.

New policy manual – where do we go from here?

- The manual is now posted on the website (Members area)
- Be sure to read thoroughly and bring to discussion anything that needs attention.

| This year's board covenant?

- Updated the diversity and commitment statement.

New Business

Di Ross's recommendations for finance committee: *Accepted unanimously.*

Fred will send letter to Don and Linda thanking them for service on the Finance Committee.

Discussion:

- Fred's letter to Finance Committee: Fred explained his thought process, wanting to get a document from committee with pros and cons of using undesignated funds vs. holding on to them. The Finance Committee will discuss after Jim is back in town.
- Questions were raised to Wayne for clarification regarding Vanguard ETF (longish investment) and PT (pass-through funds). NOTE: Wayne explained some of this during August board meeting. The video of his explanation is available to board.
- Big question to Finance Committee: how much money do we want to keep in reserve?
- Rev. Pam will reach out to colleagues at other UU congregations to see what they are doing.

Bulletin board.

- Bulletin board now has photos of all board members.
- Front page of policy manual is posted; Rachel will add QR code to it.
- We can put anything we want the congregation to know there.

Winter newsletter: Margo volunteered to write an editorial for the winter newsletter.

Pam, Laura, Fred will meet with as many past board presidents as possible (15 have said yes so far). Meeting will take place on October 25.

Barbara will be responsible for the "New to UUC" table on Sept. 17 after the service.

When will the Board volunteer to provide snacks after service (via Connections Committee)?
First open Sunday is Nov. 5. To be discussed at next meeting.

Upcoming

Next Board Meeting – October 12

Reading for October Meeting - *Rami*

Meeting adjourned at 8:45.

Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

We hosted modern folk duo Friction Farm, who were well received. I preached a sermon on Prayer – the topic suggested by Marilyn DuPont, who purchased it at the spring auction. We had rituals to commemorate the beginning of the school year – a backpack blessing – and the congregational year – water communion. Labor Day weekend, we had a service that explored the connection between Universalism and the holiday (Universalist George Pullman). It was a delight to weave worship with Rev. Jamie McReynolds on September 10th.

We are beginning a year of exploring themes that are related to the values in the proposed revision to Article II of the UUA bylaws, which I addressed most directly in the ingathering water communion service, but first we'll explore the themes of Welcome (September) and Heritage (October). The worship associates will hold a retreat this fall to give instruction/practice on the technical elements of worship and some consideration of writing homilies and sermons.

We had a private ash scattering for a family on the grounds in August. I'm looking forward to officiating at a couple weddings this fall and winter, off-site and at UUC. Anna Tulou will be officiating at a memorial service later this month.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

I continue to meet with individuals at their homes, in health care facilities, and at UUC. I'll be doing a brief training for a group who are planning to make friendly visits to UUC folks who are unable to come to services. I meet regularly with the Surviving Spouses group and occasionally with Sages. The LPCM associates have been offering a ministry of presence as well.

I'm excited about offering couples counseling through a program called Prepare/Enrich; I trained to become a facilitator during my study leave time. I've started working with a couple and look forward to offering group sessions in the future.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

I led another one of the interfaith discussions on [Dangerous Religious Ideas](#). We've kicked off the adult Building Bridges sessions with a multi-age group (ranging from adolescent to older adults) meeting to explore Judaism. I led the first class, and Rachel will lead the second one, but throughout the year we hope to co-lead classes with people who have experience with the different faith traditions.

I'm in the midst of putting together Soul Matters groups and have trained some new and returning facilitators. The Soul Matters themes will explore the values in the revised Article II, so it is a good time to try joining a group if you haven't before. Here's the [form to sign up](#).

Preaching on prayer in August gave me the opportunity to revisit a prayer practice that I did during seminary. The service elicited much feedback, as did earlier services on spiritual practices and mysticism, which makes me think that people are more and more interested in spiritual development.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

I invited all the social justice teams at UUC to contribute articles to the Autumn newsletter and hope getting the word out will help them to gain members and momentum. The Voting Rights team has done a great job of getting information out on the upcoming elections. I was pleased to see several UUC members at the forum for School Board candidates. The Environmental Justice team has just gotten UUC designated a "cool congregation." I'll be joining them at their next meeting.

I've taken on leadership of the NAACP religious affairs committee while our former chair is dealing with a full-plate. We're planning an October 30th event at the Church on Main with Dr. Sylvester Johnson speaking on bridging the gap between politics and religion.

I attended the summer summit of the Dialogue on Race on August 26th, along with several other UUC members.

Leads Administration

The Connections Committee has had good response to their after-service snacks sign-up. The snacks provided by the Community Service team on the first Sunday in September were delicious and people seemed to stay and socialize longer.

The Committee on Ministries is embarking on my evaluation and looks forward to hold feedback circles on the Grounds Ministry this fall. Darla Bray has had to step away from the committee, so we need to appoint two more members.

I convened the Grounds Ministry twice to help them make the transition to new leadership. Amanda Morgan and Valerie Bidwell have agreed to take on co-leadership for six months as we embark on discussing a new ten-year plan and assessing the congregation's wishes for the grounds. They will be holding monthly work days (in addition to the annual Fall Put-the-Grounds-to-Bed workday) to give more people more opportunities to take care of the grounds.

I met with the Memorial Committee to go over roles and responsibilities with new committee members. They are interested in investing the money they currently have as they anticipate needing more money in the future when we run out of spaces in the columbarium.

I have been sending out twice weekly emails and put together the Autumn newsletter in Ericka's stead (thanks to Rachel for doing the emails and other administrative tasks in July). People are getting more accustomed to using forms to request announcements and rooms, which has streamlined those processes. I'm especially grateful to Ann Ruple for her invaluable contribution to maintain the financial aspects of the administrators job. We all look forward to welcoming Ericka back at the end of her family leave (September 24th).

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

I've begun meeting with Anna Tulou as she begins her final year of internship with us. I also attended the Meadville Lombard internship supervisor orientation zoom with the director of contextual ministry. I look forward to attending the first Joseph Jordan Cluster of UU religious professionals meeting in Charlottesville next week.

Time away from Blacksburg and UUC

September 18/19 in Charlottesville for JJC meeting

September 23-25 in Washington, DC for a wedding

**Administrator's Report to the Board – written by Rev. Pam
September 14, 2023**

Maternity Leave Update: Ericka is planning to return on Sunday, September 24th.

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: Rev. Pam has been sending announcements out in August and September. The new Announcements form has been very helpful in getting announcements to us in a timely manner.

Newsletter: We sent out a great big [newsletter](#) covering the months September-November. Read it if you haven't yet, especially the president's message.

Attendance/Members: See the [Attendance/Numbers](#) Google doc.

DLFD Report to the Board – September 2023

Children and Youth Programs:

- **Registration Numbers:** Currently 47 families and 86 children have registered for 114 activity/positions in the 2023-24 year. Enrollment is ahead of where it was this time last year, and there are a few families that are coming but have not yet registered.
- **Programming:**
 - The early kick-off for children's programming had mixed success. We are now in full swing with good attendance in most classes. The 2nd and 3rd grade cooking curriculum has been especially popular. Next year I will wait one more week before starting fall programming, so that I have an open week between the switch over from summer to fall, and the youth start the week after school starts, rather than the week before.
 - 8-9 OWL is going great, with 10 youth participating. It is putting a bit of a space restriction on the Library, because they meet from 10-11:30 on Sundays, people who want to use the Library after the service need to wait a bit.
 - YRUU Kicked off last week, with 11 of 18 registered youth present. I am optimistic about this year—I think the youth leaders and advisors are in a better place this year, and the parents meeting went well.
 - MSYG—middle school kicks off this Friday.

Adult Programming:

- Building Bridges for Adults began last week, with 8 attendees in person, and 21 registered. This is offered in person, on zoom, or as recordings after each session. I am excited that multiple families are interested in learning along with their middle school youth. Our first visit will be to Temple Emmanuel in Roanoke Friday, Sept. 22.
- Young Adult OWL also began last week, with 8 of 11 registered adults attending.
- The first parent covenant group met last Saturday, with 5 families in attendance, 2 of whom are new this year.
- The first Sunday Circle is next week, with a new start time—11:30. We are going to see if more people attend the later start time. For this semester, 1st Sundays will start at 8:30 and 3rd Sundays will start at 11:30.

Other Activities:

- I began my first Renaissance Module (which will go toward credentialing) on System Theory—online through september.
- Finished [2023-2024 prospectus](#) and completed updating Learning section of website
- I will be taking Sunday morning off on September 24. I'll be in North Carolina with Liz, but will be back that afternoon for adult RE classes and YRUU.