

**UUC Board Joint Meeting with the Finance Committee  
and UUC Board Minutes  
May 9, 2024**

***In attendance:*** Fred Piercy, Laura Robinson, Barbara Taylor, Wayne Neu, Beth McClellan, Rev. Pam Philips, Rachel Craine

***Guests:*** Members of the Finance Committee (Jim Bohland, Suzie Fry, Ann Ruple, and Rich Gandour, with Chris Long on Zoom)

***Guest joined for regular Board Meeting:*** Jane Keppel-Benson

***Joint meeting of the Board and the Finance Committee convened at 6:00***

- Pam gave update on pledges: now at \$371,472 (97% toward goal). Results in a budget deficit of -\$7,009.00.
- Wayne noted that we are ending up this year with a slight deficit; however, we've spent money on significant things such as the HVAC and playground.
- Discussion of changes to make to the 2024-2025 draft budget provided in Google Drive:
  - Must add one month of administrator retirement (\$267/month).
  - Vanco fee has gone down recently.
  - Insurance went up (now \$7,850).
  - Information technology wasn't in the original draft; added \$1000 for this.
  - Sprinkler system maintenance adds \$2,000.
    - Question: could we take this out of Reserve Maintenance?
    - Consensus: yes, let's do it. This brings Repairs & Maintenance back down to \$6,000, which seems like a generous amount based on what we've used so far. If we come up with a surplus later, we could put some back into the Reserve.
    - After making this change, the deficit is down to ~ \$3,700.
  - Greeting budget? Wayne had guessed \$50; but needed closer to \$75 this year.
  - Guest speakers: we could bring this number back down to \$900; not have guest ministers while Pam is here.
  - Ministerial internship fund: adjust to \$1,000.
  - We will probably have to buy another version of Quickbooks (online). Exact numbers are unknown but will be annual expense. There is too much uncertainty to make budget changes at the moment.
  - Discussion ensued about the LFD budget; the budget numbers seem to lag, probably because credit card statements lag. LFD budget seems to be in a good place.
  - Rental income: suggested that it would be great if we could bring in more.
  - Donations (non-pledge): Last year we boosted the expected donations up to \$10,000 in budget, but only got \$6,200. \$6,000 is a good number to count on.
  - Auction – can we strive for \$21,000 this year? After some discussion, it was decided yes, we can try for that. Discussion about stripe fees: Next year we'll encourage people to write checks instead. Is there a way to transfer the fees to the buyer?
- Making the changes above brings the budget to a -\$1,476 deficit.
- Discussion of other potential money-makers: for example, bake sales, a craft fair from Thanksgiving to Christmas where we could take a % of sales (also could do this for artwork we display here). T-shirt sale?

- Salary and raises: determined using UU Fair Compensation per size of congregation. Rachel has been far under the guidelines for several years; this is why her raise is more than Pam's this time. With raises: Pam will be near top of scale, Rachel will be ~middle, and Bekah will be near bottom. (Since she has just started, she would not get a raise yet.) Having a visual slide to show the congregation would be great. Rachel volunteered to make PPT slide for the Informational Meeting

*Joint meeting with the Finance Committee adjourned at 6:55*

## **UUC Board Meeting**

### **Chalice Lighting, Reading, and Check-in**

- Fred called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Barbara offered a reading.

### **Committee on Ministries Report on Grounds Ministry Feedback Sessions (*guest: Jane Keppel-Benson*)**

- Jane explained the process on which the report is based:
  - Talked to 35-40 people (4 groups, approximately 10 individuals per group).
  - Provided individuals with 14 questions to answer concerning how the grounds are used, how people feel about the grounds, whether there are any suggestions.
- Hopefully the report will be useful to the Grounds Committee. Fred offered that it was important to everyone. Jane said there were differences of opinion, but everyone had the same overall goal.
- The Grounds Ministry has a 10-year plan that they will send to the Board for approval.
- The opportunity to hear more voices than just the committee will help them make transitions to new leadership and make new plans.
- Jane noted there is consensus on how important and beautiful the grounds are, although not a consensus on how much maintenance should be required. Still, there is much appreciation of what the Grounds Committee does.
- Some feel there should be a balance of more a manicured area near the church; more wild area up the hill.

### **Approve Consent Agenda**

- Laura moved to approve the consent agenda and Barbara seconded. The Consent Agenda was approved unanimously.
- Reports included the following:
  - May Agenda
  - Minister's Report
  - Administrator's Report
  - Director of Lifespan Faith Development's (DLFD) Report
  - Previous Meeting Minutes
  - Treasurer's Report
- Discussion regarding Treasurer's Report: Wayne is concerned about the slow pace of pledge income coming in. Is part of the problem that some payments weren't recorded

as pledges? The bottom line would look worse if not for extra income from Vanguard statements. We're at 80% of what we expected; usually about 88% by this time of the year.

## **Old Business**

### **Delegates for General Assembly**

- Rachel is a confirmed delegate. Nancy Bodenhorn has shown interest. Ellen Plummer may be interested. Jamie is willing to take a spot if needed.
- Pam moved that Nancy, Ellen, Jamie, and Wayne be voted on provisionally. The motion was approved unanimously.
- [Side note: the Board approved Fred to send a letter of congratulations to Ellen for her graduation from Star King.]

### **Isabel Berney Award update:**

- Barbara explained that the committee is making their nomination based on the selection procedure and criteria.
- The IBA Committee recommends two IB awards be given this year: one to Pauletta Copenhaver, and one to Dick and Cynthia Luke.
- Barbara moved to accept the nominations; Wayne seconded.
- Discussion:
  - The awards will be announced at the Annual Meeting.
  - Question: Should we let the recipients know ahead of time so they can plan accordingly? It was decided that it should be kept secret until then.
  - Someone will need to shop for plaques. According to Barbara, Margo volunteered.
  - Can we give the awardees something such as an engraved chalice? Pam will look for possibilities.
- The Board voted on the nominations and approved them unanimously.
- We can hold the June newsletter until the 2<sup>nd</sup> so an article about the awardees can be included.

## **New Business**

### **Update on Rev. Pam's sabbatical plans**

- She is meeting with the Committee on Ministries next week and will provide a write-up on her plans.
- She would like to take a couple of weeks of vacation in June, then go to General Assembly, then begin the sabbatical in July through part of September.
- She has met with a minister who is willing to provide pastoral care. Jane Mahone and Ellen Plummer can do coverage in-house; Emily would be on call if needed.
- There are 4 confirmed ministers and a couple more who will be in the pulpit during the sabbatical.
- Bekah can check in with Erika if she has questions; also, Lisa and Ann Rupel can help.
- In August, Pam normally helps with the Board retreat. Ellen says she's happy to help.
- She is working on getting someone to set up Soul Matters groups in August-September.

- In June she will give a service on the importance of “Minister’s renewal.” She plans to create a webpage for the congregation on who to call while she is away.
- The Committee on Ministries will be the gatekeepers. If there is a catastrophe (ex: someone close passes away), they will contact Pam. She will be there.
- Wayne (as treasurer) asks about contracts for guest ministers. Pam replied that each guest service is \$300. She will communicate with Wayne a list and timing.

#### Slate of members for 2024-2025 UU Board

- Laura is nearly done with the slate, which includes Laura as president, Chris Long as president-elect, Wayne for one more year as treasurer, with the intent that he will train his successor for next year (an assistant treasurer), Beth continuing as secretary, Margo continuing as member-at-large, and Joe Cooley as a new member-at-large. We need one more member-at-large; that person is pending (should know in the next week). Fred, Rami and Barbara are cycling off.

#### Planning for Informational Meeting and Annual Meeting

- Informational meeting (May 12):
  - Fred will introduce the current board, and Laura will introduce the proposed 2024-2025 board.
  - Fred will explain the rationale for the meeting: to introduce the proposed budget and explain what will happen at the Annual Meeting.
  - The congregation will have an opportunity to email questions to the Board subsequent to the Informational Meeting if they think of questions later.
  - An email will be sent to the congregation after the meeting with the PPT slides for those who missed it or need a reminder.
  - Pam will keep Zoom open after the service so those on Zoom can join the meeting. It will be recorded.
  - The meeting will begin about 20 minutes after the service ends.
- Annual Meeting (June 2):
  - Fred will do the introduction. Wayne will answer specific questions that come up.
  - Fred will explain what the Board does, and what it has done this past year.
  - Will have the budget on PPT slides; can make some hard copies.
  - The primary objective is to have a quorum to vote on the budget for the upcoming year.

Other? Brief discussion of Rachel’s PPT slides about salaries for the Informational Meeting.

Did we abide by our covenant? Yes.

#### Upcoming

- Next Board Meeting will be held on June 13, 2024
- Reading for the June Meeting will be by Fred.

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:24.*

## **UUC Board Meeting Agenda May 9, 2024**

*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.*

**6:00-7:00**

Joint meeting with the Finance Committee

**7:00-7:15**

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Barbara), Check-in

**7:15-7:30**

Committee on Ministries report

Member Forum

**7:30-7:45 Approve Consent Agenda**

**Meeting Agenda**

**Minister's Report**

**Administrator's Report**

**Director of Lifespan Faith Development's (DLFD) Report**

**Previous Meeting Minutes**

**Treasurer's Report**

**7:45-8:15**

Old Business

- Vote on delegates for General Assembly.
- Vote on Isabel Berney Award nomination.

**8:15-8:50**

New Business

- Update on Pam's sabbatical.
- Update on slate of members for 2024-2025 UU Board.
- Planning for Informational Meeting (May 12) and Annual Meeting (June 2).

**8:50-9:00**

Check-out - Did we abide by our covenant?

Upcoming

Next Board Meeting – June 13, 2024

Reading for June Meeting - ?

Other activities?

### Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

Our theme in April was Interdependence, giving us the opportunity to explore our relationship with the web of life; to celebrate Earth Day by considering what we love about the Earth (led by Victoria Taylor and Gretchen Luke, with special guest poet Mara Robbins); and to consider how we nurture interdependence as a congregation. This last service ended with an “activities fair,” with representatives from different committees and groups available to talk about their activity, answer questions, and sign up new members. Our theme in May is Pluralism, starting with a service on the importance of this value to UU's and the importance of practicing it. The services in the rest of May will include annual traditions such as youth bridging and the flower ceremony.

### Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

In addition to meeting with the Surviving Spouses and Sages group, I've had pastoral meetings in the office, at health care facilities, at people's homes, and via email. While the Lay Pastoral Care Ministry, LPCM facilitator Jane Mahone, and seminary graduate Ellen Plummer will be able to cover most pastoral care needs during my upcoming vacation and sabbatical, I've met with my Presbyterian colleague, Rev. Emily Rhodes Hunter to discuss her providing back-up and support, to which she has agreed.

### Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

The Conversations on our Faith group finished up *On Repentance and Repair*, the UUA Common Read, and has begun the book we've been reading with our Interfaith Book Discussion group – *Holy Envy* by Barbara Brown Taylor (particularly appropriate for the theme of pluralism). I attended a Shabbat service at the Blacksburg Jewish Community Center at their president's invitation.

### Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

The Environmental Justice group sponsored a mini-concert and sing-along with Ash Devine at the lower firepit on the Friday after Earth Day. Twenty or so people – UUC and community members – attended and enjoyed sharing music, poetry, and food. This is the final activity for this group for now; co-leaders Bob Stimson and Anita Puckett need to step down from leadership. I'm grateful for their efforts and hope that new leadership will come forward in the future.

The Defending Democracy leadership group (Jim Bohland, Bob Stimson, Sara Dalton, Mark Benson, and Jamie McReynolds) has been meeting bi-weekly. The four action groups (education, voting, policy advocacy and networking) are developing plans for actions between now and November. I've talked with them about their presence on the internet and will be posting a page describing their efforts on the UUC website.

### Leads Administration

The transition between Ericka and Bekah has gone well, and Bekah is already coming up with suggestions on how we might be more efficient. I will be completing annual staff evaluations this month.

Thanks to the efforts of the Stewardship Committee and all the stewards, as of now, we have 175 pledges for \$368,472 toward our goal of \$379,000 (97.22%). By comparison, last year we had 169 pledges for \$345,012 toward a goal of \$376,000 (92%). After “phase I” of the Stewardship pledge drive ended, I emailed reminders to people who typically pledge but had not yet, and we heard from a few of them. Despite multiple explanations of the pledging process, some people still don't realize that they need to tell us how much they are pledging rather than simply sending in a check. Stewardship chair Mary Ann Hansen has

offered one last incentive for people to pledge or increase their pledge – if we come within \$1,000 of the goal, she will kick in the rest and give out five more Danish pastries.

The AED cabinet has been installed between the administrator's office and the kitchen in the foyer. This should make it easily accessible to groups meeting in Elarth as well as the sanctuary.

The Committee on Ministries finalized their [Summary on the Grounds Ministry Feedback Sessions](#). Please read it before the board meeting in case you have questions for Jane Keppel-Benson, who will attend.

The Grounds Committee, now under the capable leadership of Jim Flowers, had a successful Big Event workday and are now having informal workdays on the first Saturday of the month (organized by Amanda Morgan).

The Connections Committee Newcomers' Orientation on April 27<sup>th</sup> had five participants and four children. Several of the participants have decided to become members, as have several folks who have been attending for a while. We will be recognizing new members on May 19<sup>th</sup>, and we need a representative from the board to participate in the ceremony.

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

I continue to meet with the Blacksburg Ministerial Association, UU religious professionals, the NAACP Religious Affairs committee, and the Interfaith Book group.

I will be attending UUMA Ministry Days and UUA General Assembly in June.

We have been busy planning Anna's ordination service, which will take place at 2:00 on June 1<sup>st</sup>. We are asking congregants from both UUC and UUC Roanoke to provide finger foods – folks can sign up to contribute at this [link](#). People can also contribute to the ordination fund by writing a check to UUC with "ordination" in the memo line.

### Time away from Blacksburg and UUC

May 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> – Charlottesville for Joseph Jordan Cluster meeting

June – vacation, Ministry Days (June 17-19), General Assembly (June 20-23)

July - September – Sabbatical

## **Administrator's Report to the Board May 2024**

**Arrival:** I have had a wonderful welcome into the Congregational Administrator role by both the Staff and the Congregation. I have finished my first full month and am becoming more familiar with the procedures, paperwork, and people. There is always something new to learn and someone willing to offer insight and help. I am very grateful to be in this position and am looking forward to serving the Congregation further.

**Stewardship Update:** Pam and I designed and ordered thank you postcards for all of our amazing pledgers. I am currently working on entering in all the 24-25 pledges into Power Church for tracking and to create the mailing labels needed for the postcards. The Danish incentive encouraged 2 people to increase their pledges and one new pledge.

**ComCom Committee:** I have continued with the t-shirt design process and have been working on finding a local t-shirt company to create and fulfill our order. I have made a bit of progress and am hoping to have a company finalized by the end of the week so we can have shirts this summer. We have had 2 new members show interest in the committee.

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



## **DLFD Report to the Board – May 2024**

### **Children and Youth Programs:**

- **Registration Numbers:** Currently 61 families and 107 children have registered for 132 activity/positions in the 2023-24 year.
  - Registration for the 2024-2025 year has opened. Prefilled links have been sent to all families currently enrolled.
- **Programming:**

This year is wrapping up, with the last RE classes on May 19.

  - MSYG will welcome rising 6<sup>th</sup> graders at their last meeting on May 17.
  - YRUU will welcome rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders at their last meeting on May 19.
  - Three seniors will bridge on May 12—Alex Dickerson, Alice Quigley, and Kate Miller.

### **Adult Programming:**

- Building Bridges for Adults meets for the last time this week.
- OWL for older adults finished last week, and the feedback from the group was very positive.
- Parent Covenant Group—will meet for the last time this year next week.
- Sunday Circle: The last Sunday Circle was on May 5 with about 10 people in attendance. Sunday circle will go to once a month next year.

### **Other DLFD Activites:**

- I have been accepted into the RE Credentialing Program. I will be working on becoming credentialed at the “Advanced” level. I hope to complete the program by the spring of 2026.
- The playground has been fenced. We have a new playground committee—Carolyn and Greg Kogan, Sara Bavis, Patricia Wheaton, Jon Petters, David Baker, and the Eagans (maybe)
- Teacher recruitment for summer and fall are ongoing. It has been slow. Hoping to have all slots filled by June.
- I will be taking vacation May 23-27. I’ll be in northern Virginia for daughter Emily’s wedding.

### **Important Dates for RE:**

May 12—YRUU Bridging Service	May 19—Teacher appreciation/ice cream social
May 26—no RE	June 2-Aug 4—Summer RE
Aug. 11—No RE	Aug. 18—RE starts for 2024-5 year