

UUC Board Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2024

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

Guests: Sara Dalton (*Social Justice Committee*) and Carolyn Kogan (*Playground Committee*)

Chalice Lighting, Reading, and Check-in

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

Social Justice Committee (*guest: Sara Dalton*)

- History
 - Sara attended an Outreach Summit organized by Gene Gardner in Jan. 2022, where she presented on advocacy.
 - First advocacy group meeting was held in May 2022; resulted in a core group of interested participants.
 - A survey of the congregation was done to evaluate people's interests in social justice. Four areas were chosen:
 - Racial Justice (already existing - Barbara)
 - Environmental Justice/Climate Change (Bob Stimpson; group is "on hold" at this time)
 - Voting Rights
 - Reproductive Justice
 - In Jan. 2023, all 4 teams had an initial meeting.
- Voting Rights Team: main emphasis is voter education within the congregation, through activities such as a public forum on redistricting, providing voter information, information on bulletin board, Sunday Circle presentation.
- Reproductive Justice Team: emphasis on education within group and sharing with congregation. The first attempts at finding community partners weren't very successful; however, in Feb. 2024 Sara was approached by "Our Bodies, Our Choice" group, and it was decided that our in-house team would merge with them (two small groups collaborating).
- Sara is also on the steering committee for the Defending Democracy Group.
- All of the Social Action teams overlap
- Discussion: how can the groups get out information to congregation in an easy (visual?) way?

Playground Committee (*guest: Carolyn Kogan*)

- Carolyn is new so is learning about previous proposals.
- How will new committee implement previous proposals? Options include:
 - "Play vignettes" – small spaces using natural environment.
 - Larger commercial structures as focal point.
 - Hybrid of the two above.
 - Slope life (climbing): slides, ropes, stairs, etc.
- Created budget; each option comes to ~\$40,000. Start to chip away, also do fund-raising. Possibly a campaign late summer?
- Enrollment: Rachel says would rarely have more than 20 kids.
- Plans would integrate the beauty of grounds.

- Plan to survey congregation, parents, as to which option(s) they prefer.

Discussion (Board Member comments/questions):

- The Board will want to know what they're most excited about, and their immediate vs. long-term goals.
- Possibility of capital campaign? Sounds like playground committee would be excited to get momentum going, has vested interest.
- Need to consider on-going maintenance as well as initial cost. Who's going to do it; how much will it cost? Would need to go into annual budget.
- What is relationship between Playground and Grounds Committees?
- Would having the playground open to everyone be a liability issue; also if playground becomes a focal point for neighborhood?
- Carolyn: great ideas, committee will come back with further info.

Approve Consent Agenda

- Rami moved to approve the consent agenda and Margo seconded.
- Reports included the following:
 - June Agenda
 - Minister's Report
 - Administrator's Report
 - Director of Lifespan Faith Development's (DLFD) Report
 - Previous Meeting Minutes
 - Treasurer's Report
- Discussion: Wayne explained the Quickbooks issue – the old version is no longer supported, and new versions (either desktop or online) are expensive. But he was able to get an online version for only \$80/year through an outfit that takes donations of various software for non-profit organizations. Assured by Quickbooks that this isn't just a transition deal. Online version has limited sort options so reports will look a little different.
- The Consent Agenda was approved unanimously.

Old Business

- Laura updated Board on new members for coming year.
- Debrief on congregational meeting:
 - Brainstormed solutions on how to get faster numbers to determine a quorum.
 - Was timing of meeting not great for attendance? Also, was Sunday after Anna's ordination (on Saturday) a problem?
 - Would a mail ballot be acceptable?
 - Laura summarized indications for future meetings: be more organized, be mindful of other events, find another way to register more quickly.
 - Otherwise it all went well.
- Final budget (Wayne):
 - We have more money in pledges; a 9% increase over last year, so we can put money back into budget.
 - Wayne recommends
 - Add \$600 to Bekah's health insurance (covers dental insurance).
 - Ministerial intern fund – restore \$1000 that we removed previously.
 - Bookkeeper increased – offset cost of Quickbooks.
 - Restore \$2000 we cut from repairs and maintenance.

- Bottom line: these changes would result in \$642 deficit (cut from previous version).
- Wayne moved to adopt the four changes. Barbara seconded.
- Wayne's motion passed with one abstention.
- Approve GA participants
 - Barbara moved to approve, Wayne seconded. The GA participants were approved unanimously.
- Reflections of outgoing Board Members:
 - Barbara: it's been a pleasure, nice to be on the Board again.
 - Rami: joined Board 2 years ago; being on board is labor of love, act of service to congregation. Been a pleasure to be on it. Might come back sometime!
 - Fred: we've made it easy to do, felt like we would always come up with solution even if we don't all agree. Enjoyed creating and being together.
 - Rami complimented Fred on running a good meeting (we all agreed!).
 - Wayne: leaving and coming back. Sees it as a service, an effort he's glad to do. Been a long time on the board – 7th year in a row as President-Elect, President, then pulled back in as Treasurer. Feels very strongly about making this contribution.

New Business

- Laura:
 - Board should be available July, August, September if needed, especially since Rev. Pam will be on sabbatical.
 - Board Retreat in August:
 - Agenda items in document posted on Google Drive.
 - Liked Fred's ice-breaker from last year, may use it again.
 - Margo suggests adding "have fun!"
 - Laura –What are Board goals for coming year? Brainstorm ideas? Wayne: covenant & goals often go together. Very important: idea that Board speaks with one voice. Always been part of covenant. New people need to see that.
 - Margo: transparency is very important. What does it mean? It's a positive thing. Fred: we should let people know that they can always attend a board meeting.
 - Rami: sharing a meal together is important.
 - Calendar on Google Drive:
 - Do we want to meet in July? Beth moves we don't meet unless something comes up. Fred second. Approved unanimously.
 - When does retreat happen? Best to do it before first meeting (August).
 - Should retreat and August meeting be combined?
 - Fred thinks they should be separate; new people should have chance to get to know us.
 - Laura will send out scheduling poll for retreat date.

Did we abide by our covenant? Yes.

Upcoming

- Next Board Meeting will be held on August 8, 2024
- Reading for the August meeting will be by Laura.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

UUC Board Meeting Agenda
June 13, 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.

7:00-7:15

Chalice Lighting, Reading (Fred), Check-in

7:15-7:35

Social Action Committee

- Community Service Team (Molly McClintock)
- Social Justice Team (Sara Dalton)

Member Forum

7:35-7:45 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

7:45-8:30

Old Business

- Playground Committee plans (Carolyn Kogan, representative)
- Slate of new board members (Laura)
- Debrief the Congregational Meeting and budgeting process this year. (Fred)
- Final budget and suggested budget changes (Wayne)
- Reflections of those transitioning off the board (Fred, Wayne, Rami, and Barbara)

8:30-8:50

New Business

- Dental Insurance for Bekah (Fred and Pam)
- Next meeting and board retreat (Laura)

8:50-9:00

Check-out - Did we abide by our covenant?

Upcoming

Next Board Meeting – ?

Reading for next Meeting ?

Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

May's theme was Pluralism, which we explored in part by celebrating rituals of youth bridging, flower communion, new member recognition, and religious education volunteer recognition. The bridging service was inspiring, thanks to the youth and the support of their advisors, and three youth bridged to young adulthood. We welcomed eight new members and explored ways we could be even more radically welcoming to people who find their way to UUC. Memorial Day weekend, we explored the multiple meanings of the holiday and acknowledged those who have suffered loss because of war. This was also Adam Magee's last service as worship associate, as he is moving to Michigan. We will miss him.

June's theme is Renewal, and we explored how both I and the congregation can find renewal in the period of my sabbatical. Victoria Taylor will be heading the Worship Team in my absence. We have guest preachers and speakers lined up for the rest of June, July, and most of August already. I will be sharing the UUA General Assembly Sunday worship on June 23rd.

We ordained the Reverend Anna Tulou in a service on June 1st, along with the UU Church of Roanoke. It was a wonderful service, with the participation of nine ministers and seminarians from around Virginia and beyond. Thanks to all who helped plan the service and reception, including the greeters, those who brought flowers and set up the tables, and those who brought food. Special thanks to Polly Stimson for organizing the food and Gene Gardner for getting an article about the ordination in the Roanoke Times.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

I've had the opportunity to visit several congregants in their homes and health facilities. The Surviving Spouses group will take a hiatus over the summer. I met with Ellen Plummer and Jane Mahone to discuss pastoral care during my sabbatical – they and their contact information will be listed as who to contact for pastoral care during my absence.

I've been providing couples counseling to two engaged couples, giving me more experience with the Prepare/Enrich program. I hope to offer a group for couples next year.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

I've enjoyed facilitating a Soul Matters group whose facilitator had to step down for health reasons. The Conversations group finished Holy Envy, as did the interfaith book discussion group. I look forward to attending worship services at many local congregations during my sabbatical to experience different spiritual practices.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

We hosted the Jim Crow/White Privilege group of the Dialogue on Race in May – our first in-person meeting since the pandemic. It was good to be together (including a zoom participant). I continue to meet with the Religious Affairs committee of the NAACP, and we are planning a panel discussion in the fall to discuss how different faith traditions call us to work for racial justice.

Leads Administration

I worked with Bekah to prepare for the Annual Meeting – getting annual reports and getting the list of members to check them in to assure we had a quorum. Part of that included contacting congregants who have either moved away or been inactive for a long time. We changed eight members to "inactive" status in PowerChurch based on those communications. Bekah assembled the summer newsletter, her first, and we will update the directory next week.

Thanks to the efforts of the Stewardship Committee and all the stewards, as of now, we have 181 pledges for \$376,072 toward our goal of \$379,000 (99.23%). Members of the committee met to debrief the campaign and are already thinking about ways to be more effective next year.

The Safety Committee had a very productive first meeting and will begin their work by reviewing the UUC policies pertaining to safety and recommending additions and revisions. Lauren Oliver agreed to chair the committee, that also includes Joe Cooley, Liz Craine, Rachel Craine, and myself.

The Committee on Ministries has agreed to act as the Sabbatical Committee during my absence. They will contact me if something happens that I want to be aware of (such as the imminent death of a congregant, the death of a congregant, or some other emergency). They will work with those who are covering different aspects of ministry (worship, pastoral care, administration) to ensure all goes well.

The Connections Committee held their annual Salad Supper for all those who support their work – the greeters, coffee makers, potluck organizers. We discussed how the year went and ways we can be more welcoming to newcomers. This is an incredibly important group of people who do a great job AND are always looking for ways to improve.

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 attended the UUMA (UU Ministers Association) annual meeting last week and will be attending UUMA Ministry Days and UUA General Assembly next week.

Sharon Day, Dan Brown, and Ann Ruple have all offered to be delegates at GA for UUC. Please vote to approve them.

Time away from Blacksburg and UUC

June 24th - September 23rd – Sabbatical

Administrator's Report to the Board June 2024

General: We made it through the Annual Meeting and made quorum! Committee annual reports were received and posted on the website with the help of Arthur. The Summer Newsletter has been posted; it is available on the homepage of the website via [link](#). My next big task is updating the directory and figuring out the best way to distribute that. I am still working on organization overall especially within my computer file directories and in my office.

Stewardship Update: Stewardship postcards arrived and are in the process of being handed and mailed out. 99.23% of the goal amount has been raised. I look forward to being part of this process from the beginning next year. Payments for 24-25 pledges are coming in without being denoted and the only reason I have been able to catch some of them is because of being familiar with that person's pledge for next year.

ComCom Committee: ComCom has an upcoming scheduled meeting on the 23rd. My t-shirt attempts have not yet proven fruitful (I do have my fingers crossed for one last vendor that I am supposed to touch base with this week or next). I did have the stickers printed and those seem to be fairly popular so far. I hope this committee can lean towards congregational leadership next year and I can play more of a support role.

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

DLFD Report to the Board – June 2024

Children and Youth Programs:

- **Registration Numbers:** Registration for the fall is underway. So far about half our families have registered—many probably won't register until the fall begins.
- **Programming:**
Summer programming has started, with Lego ValUUEs in the K-5 class and Sunday Fundays in the preschool. There will be 3 family fun days over the summer—byo picnic, games and waterplay for kids (and adults.) These will take place after the service June 16, July 7 and August 4. All ages welcome.

Adult Programming:

- Currently working on setting up adult programming for the 2024-5 year. Daniel Vogel would like to offer a “Parents as Tutors” class for families. I think Cynthia Luke will lead a “Date with Death” class. I would also like to try adding multigen game nights as social events next year, I have gotten feedback that these might be better attended than the movie nights.

Other DLFD Activites:

- The playground committee has been actively working on playground improvements and plans.
- Teacher recruitment is mostly complete—still looking for 1.5 positions for fall.
- Met with LFDC to discuss how this year went and what we are planning for next year.
- I will be attending virtual GA June 20-23.
- This year I have taken 8 sick days, 14 vacation days, and 4 Sundays off. I plan to take a couple more vacation days at the end of June, exact dates TBD. Next year I am going to try to take more Sundays off (and fewer sick days!!!)

Important Dates for RE:

June 2-Aug 4—Summer RE

Aug. 11—No RE

Aug. 18—RE starts for 2024-5 year