

UUC Board Meeting Agenda
December 12, 2024
Location: UUC, Blacksburg, VA

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, recognizing experiences and perspectives from all.

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 PM - 7:20 PM

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

7:20 PM - 7:30 PM

- Member Forum
 - Update from the Stewardship Committee (Mary Ann Hansen)
 - Update from the Finance Committee

7:35 PM - 7:45 PM

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

7:45 PM - 8:30 PM

- Old Business
 - Update on the Board's vote by email regarding the donations from the UUC craft fair in December being earmarked for the UUC playground. (Laura)
 - Update and make decision regarding the UUA Disaster Relief Funds for Hurricane Helene. (Rev. Pam)
 - Our accessibility assessment (Joe)
 - What specific goals does the Board want to focus on in the next six months? (Laura)
 - Update on Dancing Through the Decades (Jan. 25). (Laura)
 - Guidance for the Communications Committee (a follow-up from October)

8:30 PM - 8:55 PM

- New business
 - Which committees should the Administrator (Jenny) meet with once versus on a regular basis?
 - Approve the housing portion of minister's salary for 2025.
 - Discuss Leadership Development needs.
 - What do members of the Board think has helped them personally in developing their leadership potential? Are there programs we could take advantage of?

- Which committees are looking for leadership?
 - Endowment Fund Committee vacancy
 - Grounds
 - Treasurer (ideas for an Assistant Treasurer to train with Wayne and then take over as Treasurer in June 2025?)
 - Additional Finance Committee member(s)
- Upcoming:
 - Timelines for stewardship campaign
 - Who wants to be a steward? Laura will inform Mary Ann.
 - Budget requests
 - Nominations for Isabel Berney award

8:55 PM - 9:00 PM

- Check-out - Did we abide by our covenant?

Upcoming

- Next Board Meeting – January 9
- Reading for the next meeting?

December 2024 Minister's Report to the Board
Submitted by Rev. Pam Philips

Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

We explored the theme of Living Love through the Practice of Repair. The highest bidder on my auction sermon, Courtney Roberts, asked if she could claim her sermon on the Sunday after the election, and because her suggested theme was sitting in the darkness, it seemed very appropriate. She offered a well-received reflection, and people appreciated her suggested musical choices as well. We had a record number of attendees (125 in person and 28 computers), as did most UU congregations in the wake of the election this year and eight years ago. The next Sunday, guest speaker Dr. Brandy Faulkner preached a well-received sermon on Radical Love. In our final service in November, on repairing relationships, we welcomed 10 new members to UUC and had special music from the Breakfast Club and soloist Cassy Kost.

In December, our theme is Living Love through the Practice of Presence. The first Sunday focused on being in the present moment, and we incorporated a music video (several people in our Music Listening Circles affirmed the use of music videos in services). This past Sunday, we explored the presence of absence – the people, places, and things we miss especially around the holidays. We included a Memory Tree, on which people put their memories of those they miss, written on glittery paper cut outs. Many people suggested we make this an annual ritual.

As noted above, we are making sure to bring special music into the services during this time of transition in the music program, with another UUC Breakfast Club scheduled for this coming Sunday. Gratitude to Jared and all the singers.

On December 7th I officiated at Gary Wamsley's memorial service. I also officiated at a small wedding that afternoon.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

Our Sunday services have been more pastoral given current events. I've also met with congregants in my office, in their homes, and over the phone, in addition to meeting with the Surviving Spouses and Sages groups.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

I'll be teaching a New (or Not So New) to UU class in the new year and will follow up with a class exploring *A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-first Century* by Rebecca Parker and John Buehrens.

Personally, it's been good to get back to a daily meditation practice.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

This year's vigil on the annual **Transgender Day of Remembrance** on November 20th was largely organized by the new PRYDE group. It was lovely to spend the evening with young people who lit candles for all those who died in the US because of who they were. Rev. Sarah Wiles from Blacksburg Presbyterian Church also participated in the service.

Leads Administration

I'm pleased and relieved that Jenny has taken over all of the administrator tasks that I've been doing since I returned from sabbatical. She has already made improvements to the email announcements and the slideshow announcements, and we've begun discussing ways to improve the website.

The Committee on Ministries held four listening circles to receive feedback on their experience of music at UUC. They are currently collating the responses and will probably have a report for the Board in January. Jared Gibbs has also created a [survey](#) for congregants who are interested in participating in music in a variety of ways. I encourage Board members to fill out the form, even if they don't consider themselves musical, as there are many ways to support the music program.

The Connections Committee had a very successful Newcomers Orientation and helped welcome ten new members to the congregation. The Circle Suppers are meeting. Over 50 people attended the Thanksgiving dinner at UUC, coordinated by Seth Leonard, Amanda Morgan, and George Lally. The Connections committee's next community event will be a Chili Cook-Off, dubbed Hearts on Fire, for February.

I met with the Stewardship Committee, which has already planned a leaders' lunch on January 19th and a steward training on February 23rd to support the kick-off of this year's campaign on the first Sunday in March.

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

We hosted the Blue Ridge sub-cluster of the Joseph Jordan cluster of UU religious professionals in November. I was grateful for people to make the drive down to Blacksburg from Waynesboro, Staunton, and Roanoke, as well as those who attended online. I attended a UUMA leaders meeting in November, in my role as president of the Southeast UU Ministers Association, as well as a Southern Region Ministers call in December.

Time away from Blacksburg

December 26th – 30th – Vacation visiting relatives in Pennsylvania

Request for Housing Allocation

Each year the board needs to approve the part of my salary which will be allocated for housing. This year, I ask that \$8,100 be allocated as housing allowance.

Administrator's Report to the Board December 2024

Settling In

I am about to finish my 4th week at UUC! I am grateful to Pam, Rachel, Lisa Evanylo, Di Ross, and many others who are helping prepare for the job. My first few weeks I prioritized the tasks relating to day-to-day operations (financials, rentals, mass emails, etc.); and the past two weeks I have been slowly taking on wider communications and administrative tasks such as social media, website, worship slides, etc.

Newsletter

The Winter Newsletter has been published and sent out. I made some adjustments to the fonts and margins to make it easier to read on mobile devices and did my best to enhance graphic appeal. This was a fun project that helped me learn more about UUC in the process. What a wide array of meaningful ways for folks to engage at and with UUC.

Member Contributions

Pledges and gifts were processed during the interim period but were not recorded in our database, PowerChurch. I am slowly going through this backlog to get these entered so that we can send out financial statements to members.

Stewardship

I met with Jamie McReynolds and Andy Roberts to pursue PowerChurch's ability to create reports that are most effective to use for the annual pledge drive. PowerChurch has its limitations but together we will do our best to get the best data for our stewards and others to use.

Connecting

I am prioritizing meeting UCC members and community stakeholders so I can be more effective in supporting the organization. I have been in the office 4-5 days a week each week so that I can be available to meet individuals and groups when they are in the building/on the grounds.

Directory. A new UUC Member Directory has been created and is available upon request.

Communications Committee

I'd like this committee to meet in the new year now that I am on board so we can be most effective and strategic in our communications.

Questions for the Board

Hurricane Relief | The UUA sent us a donation for hurricane relief efforts. It was decided that UUC would serve as a pass-thru for this donation and send it along to an organization that is helping with relief efforts in hard-hit areas in NC. Two

organizations we are considering: the small town of [Marshall, NC](#), which was devastated; and [BeLoved Asheville](#), which is providing flood relief, supplies, and support to folks in Asheville. These two groups were recommended by Rev. Dr. Audette Fulbright Fulson from the UU Congregation of Asheville. One possible outcome is to split the \$3,000 and give \$1,500 to each organization.

Community-Building

One-time visits

What UUC groups and/or community stakeholders does the Board think would be helpful for me to meet with once as part of my onboarding?

Ongoing participation

In addition to the Communications Committee, I plan to attend the Connections and Stewardship Meetings as much as they deem necessary. Are there other teams that would benefit from my occasional or ongoing presence?

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Fairchild
Congregational Administrator

DLFD Report to the Board –December, 2024

Children and Youth Programs:

- **Registration Numbers:** Registration has held steady with 48 families and 78 children registered for 107 activity positions. Attendance continues to be high except in our youngest classes.

- **Programming:**
 - Children’s RE continues to go well
 - Classrooms have been rearranged:
 - The 6-7 class was in the room off the nursery, which gets very cold. The preK and K-1 class have had low attendance, so I split the large preK room into two rooms (1 and 2,) placing K-1 in room 2, and moving 6-7 grade to room 6. Now all Sunday morning RE except 8-9 COA is downstairs. COA continues to meet in the library from 10am-11:15.
 - The Mitten Tree was taken down and items were donated to the Montgomery County Christmas Store. This month, we are focusing on the Reverse Advent Calendar collection for the food pantry. Our 4-5 grade is discussing how to fight hunger in our community.
 - YRUU has been using the Soul Matters youth group program and that has gotten some positive feedback. They will have a holiday party on December 15.
 - MSYG met for the parade on Dec. 8. Only 2 youth attended, but they had a good time. Though we have high registration, we have had low turnout for MSYG. May consider surveying MS families about the timing–if a change would be better, either for spring or for next year.

Adult and Multigen Programming:

- Sunday Circles in December (Sustainable Blacksburg) had about 8 people in attendance, which is not bad for the Sunday after Thanksgiving.
- Parent Covenant Group met in November and was well attended.
- Date with Death continues to be very popular, with about 20 people attending last month.
- The all-ages game night in November had a better turnout, with about 4 families in attendance, including a family from the neighborhood. I believe this will become better attended as the year goes on, as people have already asked about the next one (January 11, FYI)
- Upcoming winter classes–Check newsletter for details
 - The Fifth Dimension for adults (zoom, Jamie)

- The Common Read “Authentic Selves—Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and their Families” (Rachel)
- New to UU (Pam)

Other DLFD Activites:

- Worked on winter newsletter.
- Attended the Microaggressions workshop at NRCC with Nancy B. and Jane M. last month, it was very informative.
- Helped PRYDE host the Transgender Day of Remembrance vigil. They continue to meet twice a month.
- Thinking about offering a single parent support group, since at least one congregant has expressed an interest/need.
- Will be preparing “Grinch” for our multigen service on Dec. 22
- Loving working with and getting to know our new admin Jenny!!

Time off this month: December 23-Jan. 1 (includes 5 vacation days and 2 holidays) I will be in town, though, and reachable if a need arises.

Pictures are on the next page.

Pictures of PreK (top) and K-1 class (bottom)

