

UUC Board Meeting Agenda
January 9, 2025
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 (Rachel), Check-in
- Review and Accept Agenda

7:20 PM - 7:30 PM

- Member Forum
 - Jenny Fairchild, Congregational Administrator

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 Dancing Through the Decades (Jan. 25). (Laura)
 - Appoint committee for Isabel Berney award
 - Update on 2025-2026 Budget requests (Wayne)
 - Update on local needs for the UUA Disaster Relief Funds for Hurricane Helene?
 - Update on Grounds Committee meeting held on Jan. 6. (Laura)
 - Encouraging member engagement: identify 1+ action to be completed by Feb. 13. (Goal: Encourage member engagement)

8:30 PM - 8:55 PM

- New business
 - Approve potential members for Committee on Ministries
 - Feedback from congregants (Joe)

8:55 PM - 9:00 PM

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

Upcoming

- Next Board Meeting – February 13
- Reading for the next meeting?

January 2025 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 Presence in December, including a consideration of the Presence of the Divine. The UUC Breakfast Club participated in this service, including singers of all ages. We had a spirited multigenerational no-rehearsal version of the *Grinch Who Stole Christmas*, with a fabulous performance of "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch" by Wayne Neu and excellent props, costumes, and sets designed and created by Rachel Craine, who also directed all the participants, young and old. Several people remarked that it was the "best ever" and we could do it every year. Our Christmas Eve service was well attended and included the voices of Cynthia Baute, Earle Irwin, and Kristine Reid. The last Sunday in December was ably led by Denise Martin and guest minister Rev. Janet Onnie. January's theme is Living Love through the Practice of Story.

I will be officiating at the celebration of the life of Annette Burr on January 18th.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

I've met with people in my office, over the phone, and in their homes. I've agreed to do couples counseling with two couples and look forward to becoming experienced enough with the Prepare/Enrich program for couples counseling to be able to provide a group opportunity for couples in the fall of 2025.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

The first session of New (or not so new) to UU had to be on Zoom only because of the winter weather, but 11 of the 13 people who've registered were able to attend. I'll be meeting with Soul Matters small group facilitators in the next month to support them in their work.

The Conversations on our Faith group is discussing *The Road to Wisdom: On Truth, Science, Faith, and Trust* by Francis Perkins, which is proving fascinating and timely. The Interfaith Book Group has paused our discussion of *The Battle for God: Fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* by Karen Armstrong so that we can discuss *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World* (last year's UUA Common Read) by Danya Ruttenberg, who will be speaking at Blacksburg Presbyterian in March. I highly recommend that congregants read this book and join us (this Sunday at 3:00 at the Blacksburg Jewish Community Center).

Jamie and I enjoyed attending Sunday service at the UU Church of Delaware County in Media, Pennsylvania. It was a lay-led service, and they were very welcoming.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

I'm mindful that the Defending Democracies organizing team is undergoing changes, trying to determine next steps as some participants have stepped away completely or from leadership roles. As the new presidential administration gets underway, it will be important for us to join with other organizations and congregations in the community and wider world (state and nation) to advocate for our values.

Leads Administration

The threat of snowy weather in December reminded us to revisit the inclement weather protocol. Jenny has included information in the email announcements and newsletter on how to find out if we are closed (website, UUC phone message, WSLs school/church closings), but we are looking at other ways of communicating that information. Fortunately, the snow/freezing rain has not forced us to cancel in-person services, but we will go to all-Zoom services if need be. The most recent storm left a fair amount of ice on the sidewalks and parts of the driveway and parking lots. It didn't seem worth getting Linkous out to plow

Administrator's Report to the Board January 2025

I am continuing to settle in and get a handle on the day-to-day tasks and ongoing responsibilities of the administrator. I look forward to getting those under my belt so that I can start looking at some more **long-range goals**. Ideas include website enhancements, improving our rental procedures, and other projects determined in consultation with Rev. Pam and other UUC leaders.

Communications Committee (ComCom) chair, Graham Glynn, will meet soon to get a Communications Committee meeting planned. One thing I'd like to propose to Graham is the possibility of recruiting a few new members. And of course we will discuss the project given to us by the Board: the awareness campaign for member engagement. I hope we can schedule a meeting of the ComCom within the next few weeks.

I am scheduled to attend the upcoming Finance Committee and Stewardship Committee meetings. I will reach out to other teams this week to make plans for their meetings.

I have just begun completing research and gathering information to update our **rental procedures**. This is to improve the process as well as prepare us to increase our renters and therefore income. We have wonderful grounds and facilities. Sharing these with community partners help us be good stewards of our resources, offer hospitality, and also bring in additional income. Once the new procedures (including updated fees and pricing schedule) I'd like to consider how to best market our rental facilities.

Member Contributions have been entered into our database and I am spending this week going back through files and our database for a small audit. In the next few weeks I will prepare and send out 4th Quarter 2024 statements as well as Annual 2024 statements for tax purposes. With two staff administrator staff transitions within one calendar year, there may be some discrepancies. In the letter that will accompany the statements, I will encourage members to look closely at their statements and let me know if anything needs to be fixed. Thanks for helping encourage folks to be patient during this process. 😊

Questions for the Board

None at this time.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Fairchild
Congregational Administrator

because there was so little snow. However, I spent a fair amount of time salting and shoveling (as did Jamie and George Lally) to make sure people were safe. I would like to revisit the policy on inclement weather to identify volunteers who can help with these tasks.

The Grounds Committee had planned to meet on Monday, January 6th, but poor weather cancelled it. I will meet with them this Friday to discuss ways to move forward.

The Committee on Ministries collated the feedback they received from the four listening circles on congregants' experience of music at UUC in this [report for the board](#). I also met with Jared to discuss the results from his survey of congregants who are interested in supporting music at UUC. He has created a calendar for music for the rest of the church year, including monthly rehearsals and performances by the "Breakfast Club" – an ad hoc group that meets on the Saturday before singing in the Sunday service. We hope this will give more people the opportunity to sing during services. He will also contact volunteers who have expressed an interest in working with children so that we can incorporate children's singing once a month. Because he has been working far beyond the expectations of his letter of agreement, acting more as a music director than a pianist, I would like the board to consider compensating him for the extra time and duties. I will also make a recommendation in the budgeting process to hire him officially as a music director. At the end of the church year, we'll assess whether we have the interest and the commitment of enough people to warrant hiring an interim choir director for 2025-26.

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

I met with a person in ministerial formation who expressed interest in becoming a ministerial intern at UUC. They are still in the process of getting aspirant status with the UUA and will need to complete Clinical Pastoral Education and a Career Assessment. I've put them in contact with folks who can give them good advice on the process and offered to mentor them.

As part of the Congregational Certification Process, we are being asked to weigh in on a poll to see if certain Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAIs) should be added to the agenda at this year's UUA General Assembly. I'd like input from the congregation – either from the board as its proxy or through a survey of members. Please take a look at the [poll questions](#).

Also, thanks to the Board for the snugly warm heated blanket. It was a lovely gift (and timely).



DLFD Report to the Board –January 2025

Children and Youth Programs:

- **Registration Numbers:** Registration has held steady with 48 families and 78 children registered for 107 activity positions.

- **Programming:**
 - RE continues to go well. There were only 2 weekends in December that had class, due to the holidays. Attendance was a bit lighter, which is normal for this time of year.
 - The new semester begins on Jan. 19, with all curricula staying the same except 2-3 class will switch to “Let’s Learn with Bluey.”
 - Teacher training for Spring will be held on Saturday, Jan. 11 on Zoom. We have lots of returning teachers and only 1 newbie. I am so lucky to have such a great group of teachers!
 - Registered Angela Parrish and Peter Binkley for 7-9 OWL training (online in Feb.-Mar.). OWL training has increased rates (\$350/person for online training) and my next budget will reflect that.
 - Many congregants appreciated the gifts delivered by MSYG before the holiday.

Adult and Multigen Programming:

- Received lots of positive feedback on the no-rehearsal Grinch multigen.
- Sunday Circle in January (Political Cartoons) had about 10 people in attendance.
- Adult classes in January include:
 - Date with Death (Jan. 20)
 - 5th Dimension for Adults (Wednesdays at 7pm)
 - New (or not so new) to UU (Sundays at 1pm)
- All ages game night Saturday, Jan. 11 from 5:30-8:30
- Still registering for Feb. class–The Common Read “Authentic Selves–Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and their Families”

Other DLFD Activites:

- Registered for a UU History course online starting in January.

- In addition to the 5 vacation days and 2 holidays I took, I also took 3 sick days in January. Finally feeling better :)

Picture of my 4 kids and their Gingerbread Chicken Coop, for fun.

