

UUC Board Meeting Agenda
March 13, 2025
[\(Zoom Link\)](#) Location: UUC, Blacksburg, VA
[Google Folder Link](#)

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 (Laura), Check-in
- Review and Accept Agenda

7:20 PM - 7:30 PM

- Member Forum

7:30 PM - 7:35 PM

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

7:35 PM - 8:30 PM

- Old Business
 - Vote on General Assembly delegates for the Unitarian Universalist Association's Annual Gathering in June 2025
 - Update from the committee for Isabel Berney award
 - Review our policy regarding due dates
 - Do we have any nominations yet?
 - Update on the stewardship campaign and the 2025-2026 Budget (Wayne)
 - Update from the Grounds Committee (see email)
 - Food Pantry (Chris)
 - Possibilities of grants? (Cassy)
 - Board's Goal: Encourage member engagement.
 - Leadership Development Committee
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8:30 PM - 8:50 PM

- New Business
 - Joint budget meeting with Finance Committee: May 8 at 6 PM
 - Select a board representative for the Newcomers Orientation on April 12, 2025: Chris Long
 - Personnel Committee (minister, board member, and 2 others): review annual employee evaluations; advise Board of recommended agreements prior to final budget development.

8:50 PM - 8:55 PM

- Upcoming:
 - **April 10, 2025:** Reading for the next board meeting?
 - **April 12, 2025:** Newcomers Orientation
 - **May 18, 2025:** The Board will host an "Information Meeting and Q&A about the Proposed 2025-2026 Budget and Slate" on May 18, 2025, immediately following the service in the sanctuary.
 - **June 1, 2025:** The UUC will hold its "Annual Congregation Meeting" to vote on our 2025-2026 budget and slate of Board Members. This meeting will be after the service in the sanctuary.

8:55 PM - 9:00 PM

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

Leads Worship and Officiates Rites of Passage

We explored the theme of Living Love through the Practice of Inclusion in February. Worship themes included including the spectrum of who we are (particularly expanding the gender binary), all parts of ourselves (even the parts we don't like), and the wide variety of faith traditions practiced by members of the congregation. This service included reflections by Carolyn and Greg Kogan, Courtney Roberts, Rich Gandour, Ryan Bagchi, and David Warner. Thanks to them all! We also explored threats to inclusion from the current administration's policies. This month, we're exploring the theme of Living Love through the Practice of Trust, beginning with the Stewardship Brunch service celebrating "In UU We Trust." Jared Gibbs and the Breakfast Club provided entertaining music (particularly Wayne Neu's and Jim Flowers' solos), and Dick Bauman and Gail Dutchess provided moving testimonials. The whole stewardship committee and many, many volunteers made this another wonderful meal and service. Victoria Taylor and Ellen Plummer led the most recent service on Faith and Trust, with a testimonial from our newest member, Kieran Lindsey.

I officiated at a private wedding service offsite.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

This past month has seen an increase in pastoral care needs which led to visiting several health care facilities in Roanoke, Salem, and Blacksburg. I also had several visits with folks in my office who were navigating family and personal crises and transitions. I continue to meet with the Surviving Spouses group, and I'm grateful for Dan Kominsky facilitating a Caregiver's Support group, Lisa Evanylo and Katherine Allen facilitating a Parent Bereavement support group, and the two NAMI support groups (to which I have referred congregants).

I was so pleased to deliver a "memory book" to longtime member (since the mid 1960's!) Mary Houska before she moved to a memory care facility nearer one of her daughters. Mary loved it, remembering many people who contributed messages and identifying members in photographs. Thanks to all who contributed.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

I'm preparing to start a new workshop series this Sunday afternoon using the book *A House for Hope* to explore liberal theology. We have thirteen people signed up for this hybrid program so far.

I took study leave last week, going to St. Francis Springs Prayer Center so that I could spend time reading, meditating, walking a labyrinth, and walking trails through the forest. It was time well spent.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

Along with attending NAACP Religious Affairs committee and Dialogue on Race Jim Crow/White Privilege meetings, I've been contacting my congressman on a fairly regular basis. I also have been visiting the UUA's *Side With Love* [Action Center](#) website to get updates on threats to our values and opportunities for action. I wrote about this site in my newsletter article and encourage everyone who is interested in finding ways to act in support of our values to bookmark the site and visit it weekly.

I attended the excellent presentation by Anthony Flaccavento from the [Rural Urban Bridge Initiative](#) sponsored by the Defending Democracy group, learning a lot about how we might be contributing to the political polarization. Other UU ministers are interested in hearing his presentation, possibly at a cluster gathering.

The congregation hosted To Our House for a week in February, with over 50 people involved in providing food, hosting, driving, doing laundry, and cleaning up. Thanks especially to Joe Powers and John Kelso for organizing our efforts.

I talked with Bob Stimson about having an “activities fair” style event after a Sunday service to help connect people in the congregation with other organizations in the community who are doing social justice and community action, possibly in April.

Leads Administration

Much of my time this past month has been spent preparing for the Stewardship Pledge drive, including sending out emails to everyone who didn't pick up their invitations to the Pledge Brunch. This took an inordinate amount of time, but it saved a lot of money on postage, ensured that everyone got a letter before the event (the postal service being less reliable of late), and gave me a chance to be in touch with many people who responded with gratitude and concerns. The brunch service itself was a rousing success according to responses, and we received approximately 99 pledges that morning (either on pledge cards or online). I've helped input data as more pledges come in. As of this writing (Wednesday evening), we have pledged \$259,627. We have 21 stewards contacting people who have not yet pledged.

The worship team discussed the question of the rainbow flags in the sanctuary, and we've decided to try placing them on the walls between the windows, hanging vertically. Denise Martin, co-chair of the arts committee, will help with placement. Please let us know what you think of this new display arrangement.

I send out letters to new people who have attended three times (tracked by the Connections Committee), usually 3-4 letters a month. Since October, I've sent out 18 letters. We will be having a newcomer's orientation on Saturday, April 12th.

I have been encouraging the Communications, Leadership Development, and Safer Congregations committees to meet, but there have been difficulties getting those scheduled. I remain hopeful. One issue for Communications to address is our semi-annual drive to get people to donate to the WVTF/Radio IQ fund. Gene Gardner has ably led this effort for several years but needs to step back. One consideration might be to put our contribution into the budget, but I plan to discuss the arrangement with ministers from the congregations in Roanoke, Lynchburg, and Charlottesville before making that recommendation. If we were to pay our fair share, it would come to nearly \$2,000 a year. People can write a check to UUC with WVTF/Radio IQ in the memo line or donate [online](#), choosing the WVTF/Radio IQ button.

Our administrator is on vacation this week, so Rachel and I are sending out the email announcements.

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

I continue to meet with the Joseph Jordan Cluster of UU Religious Professionals (hosting the Blue Ridge cluster meeting on Zoom in February) and the Blacksburg Ministerial Association. We are hosting the March 19th supper, after which Rev. Emily Rhodes Hunter from Blacksburg Presbyterian will be leading worship. If you can help provide food, set up and serve, or clean up, please go to the [PerfectPotluck](#) to see what we need. I will be preaching at the supper on April 2nd at Blacksburg Presbyterian Church.

I look forward to attending the SEUUMA (Southeast UU Ministers Association) retreat in early April and the UUMA (UU Ministers Association) meeting in June before the UUA General Assembly in Baltimore, Maryland.

Time Off/Away

Joseph Jordan Cluster of UU Religious Professionals (Charlottesville) – 3/17-3/18

SEUUMA Retreat (The Mountain, North Carolina) – 4/7 - 4/10

Vacation (Savannah, Georgia) – May 15 - 19

DLFD Report to the Board –March, 2025

Children and Youth Programs:

- **Registration Numbers:** 53 families and 86 children registered for 119 activity positions.
- **Programming:**
 - RE and K-1 OWL are going well.
 - MSYG will do an escape room this month
 - YRUU did a great job at the auction dinner, serving 19 guests. 7 youth will be heading to the Mountain this weekend along with Jim Kern and Ann Ruple. Coffee house on March 8 raised \$108. Turnout was light—possibly due to the beginning of spring break.

Adult and Multigen Programming:

- Buddy project finishes up this month. I think the new format has been easier, and the buddies seem actively engaged. There will be Buddy meeting opportunities downstairs after the services on March 23 and March 30.
- Sunday Circle in March (Gender Identity and Pronouns) had 8 people in attendance.
- Adult classes in March include:
 - Date with Death (March 17)
 - A House for Hope (March 16-May 5) with Rev Pam
- All ages game night on March 1 had 30 participants! The next game night will be on April 5.

Other DLFD Activites:

- Gauging interest in forming an LGBTQ+ Adult social/support group at UUC
- Lots of readings for UU History class...
- Planned [RE curriculum and master calendar for 2025-6 year](#)