UUC Board Meeting Minutes – APPROVED
May 8, 2025

In attendance: *Laura Robinson, Cassy Kost, Margo Walter, Chris Long, Beth McClellan, Joe Cooley, Wayne Neu, Rachel Craine, Rev. Pam Philips*
Visitors: Members of the Finance Committee: Jim Bohland, Ann Ruple, Suzie Fry

Chalice Lighting, Reading, and Check-in

- Laura called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and lit the chalice. Joe offered a reading.

Approval of Agenda

- Beth moved to accept the April agenda. Cassy seconded. The agenda was approved without objection.

Meeting with Finance Committee

- Wayne presented the revised 2025-2026 budget proposal.
- Non-pledge donations are running above what we expected, so these are increased in the revised budget.
- Although our dividends from Vanguard haven't been included in the budget in previous years, we're getting a significant amount now. Wayne has added an estimated $7,500 in dividends into the budget proposal.
- The insurance bill was much higher than the $8,000 we had previously budgeted (closer to $10,000).
- The suggested revisions leave us $1894 in the red.
- Discussion of specific points:
  - We're raising the rental rates for the building, so should be actively marketing it for rentals.
  - The half-plate donations are running under the $12,000 we budgeted for this year. Jim noted that the Finance Committee has had discussions about the half-plate, especially concerns about the unevenness of contributions from Sunday to Sunday, and how this is distributed to organizations. He thinks the committee may want to revisit this.
  - Auction – projection for 2025-2026 is $24,000. We've collected nearly that much from this year, so the projection is fine.
  - Salaries: raises for staff were established when the budget was first proposed; we have to pay retirement for two staff members, and will need to start the administrator's in fall. Wayne hopes we don't need to touch any of these numbers.
  - Copier lease is changing, but will probably stay about the same amount.
  - Facilities and grounds escrow – Liz recommended increase in repairs and maintenance because of major expenses coming up (e.g., hvac).

- Discussion – adjustments to the budget resulted in a slight surplus. Decision is to put it back into facilities and grounds escrow.
- Margo moved to accept the budget and Chris seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Consent Agenda

- Reports included the following:
  - **Minister's Report**
  - **Administrator's Report**
  - **Director of Lifespan Faith Development's (DLFD) Report**
  - **Previous Meeting Minutes**
  - **Treasurer's Report**
- Cassy moved to approve the consent agenda. Margo seconded. The consent agenda was approved without objection.

Old Business

- The Board approved the purchase of furniture for the library. Kudos to Rachel for planning, organizing, and with some help, putting it all together last night. Rev Pam has ordered some vinyl table clothes for the Men's and Women's meals.
  - The four old tables can now be used for potlucks.
  - The less we move the new tables the better. The new chairs are comfortable!
- Wayne presented an update to Policies & Procedures, Section IIE, to include a statement about a Music Director.
  - Beth moved to accept the update. Wayne seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Wayne will insert the update into P & P.
- Update on Leadership Development:
  - Laura asked if we could provide the 2025-2026 Board slate at the May 18 informational meeting? Rev Pam replied – yes, thinks we'll be ready.
- Rental Fees (Rev. Pam):
  - Rev. Pam presented a table of current rental fees and proposed increases for 2025-2026.
  - Possible revisions were discussed, but no firm decision was made.
  - We will revisit this at the June Board Meeting.
- Planning for May 18 information meeting:
  - Board members attending: Margo, Beth, Chris, Wayne, Laura.
  - The proposed budget sheet and information, including 2025-2026 slate of officers, will be emailed out to the congregation on Monday (send to Jenny; she will send out to Members Only email list).

- The President will have a PowerPoint for presentation. Microphones will be needed for questions from the congregation.
- Will give out the Board email address for anyone who wants to ask questions later – Laura will answer individually.

- Planning for June 1 – Annual Congregational Meeting
  - Laura and Wayne will be speakers.
  - Rachel will make sure extra childcare is provided.
  - Chris and Margo will check people in (members and proxies). They can recruit helpers if needed.
  - Must make sure we have a quorum (including those on Zoom).
  - AV help and microphones needed.
  - Laura will email Frank Dupont to ask if he can be the parliamentarian again this year.
  - Members of the congregation can offer amendments; will vote on if offered.
  - There will be an up and down vote on the budget (as amended if needed).
  - Joe and Cassy will count votes where needed.
  - Beth will take the minutes.
  - The Isabel Berney Award will take place during the service instead of during the congregational meeting.

- Annual reports of committees:
  - Most committees have been asked to do one; these will be posted on the website.
  - Changes to Board Annual Report: Laura moved that expenses for the Isabel Berney Award come out of the Board budget. Chris seconded. The motion passed unanimously,

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

Upcoming

Next Board Meeting – June 12, 2025.
Reading for the next meeting? Laura

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

UUC Board Meeting Agenda
May 8, 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.

6:00 PM - 6:10 PM
- Chalice Lighting, Reading (Joe Cooley), Check-in
- Review and Accept Agenda

6:10 PM - 7:30 PM
- Joint Budget Meeting with Finance Committee

7:30 PM - 7:35 PM
- Optional break

7:35 PM - 7:45 PM
- Member Forum

7:45 PM - 7:55 PM
- Approve Consent Agenda
    - **Minister's Report**
    - **Administrator's Report**
    - **Director of Lifespan Faith Development's (DLFD) Report**
    - **Previous Meeting Minutes**
    - **Treasurer's Report**

7:55 PM - 8:15 PM
- Old Business
    - Update on vote by email on furniture purchase for the library.
    - Update on Policies and Procedures Manual for Music Director (Wayne)
    - Update from Leadership Development Committee - new board members (Chris)

8:15 PM - 8:50 PM
- New Business
    - Rental fees (Rev. Pam)
    - Plan for "Information Meeting and Q&A about the Proposed 2025-2026 Budget and Slate" on May 18, 2025. (Laura)
    - Plan for "Annual Congregation Meeting" on June 1, 2025. (Laura)
    - Board's Annual Committee Report (Laura)

8:50 PM - 8:55 PM
- Upcoming:

    - **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.
    - **June 12, 2025:** Invite new Board members to attend our Board Meeting in June.

8:55 PM - 9:00 PM

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

May 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 Joy in April. One of the services gave us the opportunity to hear from several congregants about what brings them joy. Thanks to Bonnie Moreno, Edie Morse, Chuck Porter, Fox Choiniere, Britton Gildersleeve, and Linda Pfieffer for sharing. We also had a joyful Easter service with the children joining us for the whole service and then going outside for an Easter egg hunt (plastic eggs filled with dog treats). The weather cooperated so we were able to hold coffee hour outside, too. The final April service spoke to cultivating joy and ended with an activity fair in which most groups, committees, teams, activities were represented. This also served as our Stewardship Pledge Drive celebration, complete with a cake.

May will be a month of special Sundays. I met with the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU high school youth group) to help them plan and rehearse their service, which they ably led the first Sunday of the month, during which the seniors bridged into young adulthood and we welcomed seven new members to the congregation. We'll also hear from our Coming of Age youth (8th and 9th graders) on May 18th and have a special music service on May 25th.

I attended a lovely Beltane gathering organized by Cassy Kost and enjoyed dancing around the Maypole. I'm hopeful that a summer solstice event will be planned for those who value earth-centered traditions.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

I have visited with folks in my office, in their homes, in health care facilities, and in phone conversations. I also continue to meet with the Surviving Spouses support group.

Encourages Spiritual Development for Self and Others

We finished up our discussion of *A House for Hope* with a discussion of the role and "good news" of progressive religion. I also attended the Saturday morning workshop on Responding to the Anti-Trans Movement, which was excellent. I encourage everyone to take the self-paced online class which is available to everyone in the congregation (see directions at the bottom of this report).

The week I spent at The Mountain for a SEUUMA retreat was restorative. I've also been taking an online 40-day meditation course with David Ji.

I attended the first of three Minns lectures on De-Constructing Mythologies of Unitarian Anti-Racism 1860-1920 (given by Rev. Dr. Wayne Arnason). The second will be during our board meeting, but the third, given by Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed, next week will be well worth attending. You can register here.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

I attended "Hands On our Community/Hands Off Kilmar Garcia" rally in Christiansburg on April 19th and saw several UUC congregants there. Likewise at the May 1st National Day of Action & Solidarity rally, march, and vigil in Blacksburg. I think it is important for us to register our support for such constitutional principles as due process, rule of law, and checks and balances in this time when they are not being respected.

I attended the UUA zoom meeting "Now What: The Gathering for Congregational Leaders – Build, Connect, Lead" to share experiences and ideas on responding to the administration's actions.

I am on the board of the Blacksburg Refugee Partnership, which held its fundraiser "An Evening of Hope: Celebrating Refugee Resettlement in Blacksburg" at UUC on April 11th. It was very well attended and raised over $10,000. Several congregants attended and even more gave of their time and talents to this important community organization.

Leads Administration

The stewardship campaign raised the highest amount ever, $385,158 as of this writing (Tuesday evening) with 178 pledges -- 96.8% towards our goal. I sent a few emails to folks we haven't heard from yet, so I'm hopeful we'll be a little closer before we meet with the Finance committee to work on the budget. Stay tuned.

The Connections committee held a well-attended newcomer's orientation on Saturday, April 12th. As noted above, we recognized seven new members this past Sunday.

I have been in contact with Brian Mayer, chair of the Leadership Development committee, and we are still working to fill out the slate of nominees for the open board positions (except president-elect). I hope to have more news at the board meeting.

I coordinated the Activities Fair, which was a rousing success, with a full room and lots of activity. A few people have let me know that they were able to get the names of people who are interested in joining their activities/committees. Jenny has entered the "What Brings You Joy" data into a spreadsheet which we will use to help connect people with activities.

I met with the ad hoc Disruptive Behavior Committee to discuss the concern that had been brought to us. They met with the people involved. Expectations were explained and there have been no problematic behaviors.

Thanks to the Board for approving the purchase of new tables and chairs for the library using the Chris Brownlie Flack Memorial fund, we have received the chairs and expect to get the tables soon.

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

I attended a UUMA zoom – Chapter Leader Gathering: Resources, Support, and Connection – as the president of SEUUMA and will preside at our zoom chapter annual meeting on May 21st. I've also registered for the UUMA Annual zoom meetings on June 3rd and 5th.

The Reverend Jennifer Raffensperger of UUC Roanoke and I will be meeting with a candidate for UU ministry who is seeking an internship later this month to explore the possibility of collaboration between the two congregations. I intend to discuss if / how this might work with the Ministerial Credentialing Director at the UUA. While we currently have only $2,000 in the intern fund, the sabbatical fund still has $11,700. I might ask the board to consider shifting that money if we decide to become a teaching congregation again.

Time Off/Away

Vacation (Savannah, Georgia) – May 16 – 19
Ministry Days / General Assembly (Baltimore, Maryland) – June 16 - 22
Study Leave – June 23 – 29
Vacation (Columbia River Gorge) – July 18-26

To enroll in the Responding to the Anti-Trans Movement workshop:

- Visit the **course page** and click **Enroll Now**
- Scroll to the bottom and **select the $50 option.**
- Click **"Enroll"**
- On the next page click the red text **"Add Coupon."**
- In the box that appears, enter **UUC_BLACKSBURG** and click "Apply" (the total will be adjusted to **FREE**)
- Continue with enrollment

Administrator's Report to the Board
May 2025

Summer Newsletter Articles needed! Please send articles to me by May 16. If possible, **please use this form.**

The **Stewardship Pledge Drive** is wrapping up and I am providing assistance as we pivot from the active campaign. I continue to maintain the pledges by monitoring the pledge cards; updating spreadsheets and statistics; entering data in our member database; connecting with congregants on questions and comments; and other general administrative tasks. I also designed and ordered thank you cards that our stewardship team has graciously agreed to send us as personal thank you notes to pledgers.

I put out the appeal for **annual reports** from ministry teams to include as an asset at the annual meeting.

I am researching the process for accepting **donations in-kind** (material objects other than money donated to UUC.) This process could help contributors receive tax deductions and could also help UUC better track the cost of our ministries. It is also possible that folks would give items above and beyond their pledge, which would benefit our congregation financially.

We have **renegotiated the contract for our printer/copier** and will begin leasing a new machine soon. The new machine will help our staff complete tasks and provide quality materials for our congregation. That's a nice way of saving the old machine was, well, frequently "frustrating." We have decided to switch to a cost-per-copy contract vs. a monthly allowance (which we have had in the past). We project that this will save us money as UUC is a careful steward of our print resources, particularly compared to other organizations/congregations.

Rev. Pam and I collaborated to make some suggested changes to our **facilities rental rates and procedures**. An additional proposal is included in the board packet. I also created a wedding contract that can be used for those seeking to have their wedding ceremonies at UUC. My hope is this will help us be good stewards of our tremendous building and grounds as well as provide extra income for UUC to further our mission.

Questions for the Board
None at this time.

Attendance/Members: See the Attendance/Numbers Google doc.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Fairchild
Congregational Administrator

DLFD Report to the Board –May, 2025

Children and Youth Programs:

- **Registration Numbers:** 55 families and 89 children registered for 122 activity positions.

- **Programming:**
    - Spring RE finishes on May 18.
    - MSYG will meet for the last time this Friday (May 9) and will welcome rising 6th graders to the group.
    - YRUU had a wonderful bridging service on May 4th. They will have one last meeting on May 18, which will welcome rising 9th graders to the group.
    - Coming of Age will have their service on May 18. We will also have Teacher Appreciation that day and an Ice Cream Social.
    - Summer RE will run June 8-August 17. We will use the CartUUns curriculum, which uses short pixar clips to discuss UU values.
    - No RE will be held on May 25 and June 2.

Adult and Multigen Programming:

- Our egg hunt for the animals was a success last month, raising over $600 in cash and supplies for our furry friends at Montgomery County Animal Adoption Center and Montgomery County Humane Society.
- Sunday Circle in May, *Sanctuary Now and Then (Dan Thorpe,)* had 15 people in attendance.
- Date with Death will have its last class on May 19.
- A House for Hope with Rev Pam finished on May 4.
- The "Responding to the Anti-Trans Movement" workshop went really well, with about 15 people in attendance. It is now available online to people who couldn't come.
- All ages game night on May 3 had around 20 participants. There are no game nights yet scheduled for the summer, but we will definitely continue in the fall.
- The adult LGBTQ+ group has begun meeting, they are called Out@UUC, and have been enjoying connecting with walks at Heritage Park and are planning a potluck this month.

Other DLFD Activites:

- Teacher recruitment for Summer and Fall is underway.

- Fall Registration for returning families has begun.

- I will be taking Sunday, May 25 and Sunday June 2 off.

Pictures from YRUU Service:

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