

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
Board Meeting Minutes  
September 8, 2016**

Via email on July 27, in response to a request from David Lally, WSC chair, the Board unanimously accepted the gift of 1 set of paramentum from Polly Stimson.

Via email on September 2, the Board unanimously approved the amended UUA retirement plan. The new plan states that all employees have to be notified that they can participate if desired.

**Present:** Board members Tim Pickering, Bob Stimson, Bill Baker, Carol Kern, Molly Lazar, Bonnie Wall-Lievsay, Jennifer Mercier, Susan Wamsley; ex officio members Don Rollins, Lisa Evanylo; pianist Jared Gibbs, Building chair Dave Lievsay

Bob lit the chalice, and Bonnie provided the opening reading. Molly served as Process Observer.

I. **Agenda** - Bob moved to accept the amended agenda allowing for guests to address Board at start of meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

II. **Music Proposal** – attached. Jared Gibbs met with Don regarding establishment of a Music Committee. Don suggested that rather than a committee, that there be a Music Team and that a music representative be added to the WSC. The goals of this team would be to 1) coordinate music for Sunday services; 2) offer community concerts; and 3) develop a music budget. Pat Traynor and Jared will discuss and incorporate Don’s ideas and come back to the Board in October.

III. **Members’ Forum** – Molly McClintock emailed a request to Board for use of surplus funds. Discussion of surplus discussed later in meeting.

IV. **Building issues** – Dave Lievsay presented several issues for Board consideration.

1. **Holding a fire drill** in October or early November during a service to familiarize all with the sound of the alarm and what to do when it goes off. Dave suggested notifying the congregation at the beginning of the service and holding the drill at the very end of the service.

2. **Request for a poster policy** – Dave suggested that posters be dated and removed if older than 1 month. If not dated, remove immediately. What to do about posters taped to doors?

3. **Wheelchair ramp to podium** – requested by Frank & Marilyn DuPont who could not be at the meeting. A ramp would have to go on the right side of sanctuary which would displace candle table. A wheelchair on the podium would present the danger of falling off if no curb or railing along edge. We should consider whether being able to get a wheelchair on the podium outweighs the problems.

4. **Darkening sanctuary for visual media** – Don asked Tom Bube to look into ways to accomplish this.

A possible way of dealing with issues 3 & 4 would be to put 4 TV sets behind the podium. A camera could be used to project someone in a wheelchair from the floor to the TVs. The TVs would also be used to project words and pictures. If we pursue this, the Sound Committee should become the Audio/Visual Committee. The WSC is currently looking into the idea of using 2 TVs.

All checked in.

**V. Minister and staff reports** – attached.

A. **DLFD report** – Karen will not attend Board meetings for a trial of 2 months to allow her to use allotted hours for other work. Don stated that both Karen and Lisa's hours are within federal guidelines.

B. **Administrator's report** – no further comments made.

C. **Minister's report** – Don discussed the option of a Board member recording the meeting minutes (administrator would not attend meeting). Carol suggested the option of doing away with the past-president position, as other congregations are doing, and adding a board secretary keeping the elected board at 8 members. Lisa and Tim will write up a draft for the position of board secretary. Molly is willing to record the minutes starting in November, and Carol will now oversee council meetings.

VI. **Coffeehouses** – proposal attached. Don would put the group together including publicity, food, sound, etc. The coffeehouses would be held once/month on a Friday evening except for the month that YRUU sponsors their own coffeehouse/fundraiser. Tim moved to approve Don's proposal. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. **Consent Agenda** – Bonnie moved to accept the minutes from June. The motion carried unanimously.

VIII. **Treasurer's report** – attached. Bill gave a presentation on UUC's funds. He will check with Vanguard regarding funds to invest in rather than continuing to use Capital One which only pays 0.3% interest. We currently have a surplus from 2015-16 of \$7106 after allotting \$8200 to the Search Committee. Following a discussion, including the request of \$1200 from Molly McClintock for the Blacksburg Refugee Partnership, the Board opted not to make a decision at this time on where to spend the surplus. Therefore, Bob moved to put the remaining \$7106 into the contingency fund. The motion carried with 4 in favor, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

IX. **Committee on Ministries/Transitional Team** - a CoM will be established when the new settled minister arrives. We currently have a Transition Team consisting of Mark Benson, Don, possibly Patrick Feucht. Three additional members are needed. Send Don and Carol suggestions for filling these spots. The need for a conflict resolution team will be discussed at the October meeting.

**X. Info items**

A. **Discussion of Board goals from retreat** – to be added to October agenda.

B. **UUC 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary on October 9** – Carol will discuss how to celebrate at the gathering of past-presidents on September 30.

C. **Ministries and program fair** - September 18 after service. Mark Benson is leading the effort.

D. **Program Council Meeting on October 2**

E. **Auction** – Board members should plan to attend the auction on October 22 and get donations in.

F. **Cottage Meetings** – being held in September and October to provide info to Search Committee.

**G. Updating Policy & Procedures Manual** – the manual must be updated ASAP as it was last updated in March 2014. All should look through the 3 parts as much of the manual is outdated, and our governance structure has been greatly changed. Molly will pull together all the policy changes since the last update.

XI. **Next meeting** (in library) – October 13 at 7 PM. Jennifer will provide the opening reading, Bob will provide refreshments, Don will provide the closing reading, and Tim will serve as PO.

XII. **Process Observer report** – Molly stated that the conversation flowed well, the meeting didn't get too bogged down, the tone was relaxed and respectful. She suggested chairs be set out for visitors as they should not be sitting at the Board table.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**Lisa and Tim** - write up draft for position of Board Secretary

**All** - send Don and Carol suggestions for additional Transition Team members, look over 3 parts of P&P manual as is very outdated

**Carol** – discuss celebrating UUC's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary at past-presidents gathering

**Molly** - pull together all policy changes since the last P&P manual update in 2014

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

Music Team proposal

Conflict resolution team

Discussion of Board goals

Carried over from previous months:

Should we allow restricted gifts? (much info on UUA website)

Policy for new projects/activities

Ad hoc committee to research UUC name change

Lisa Evanylo, Administrator

UUC BOARD MEETING AGENDA  
Thursday, September 8, 2016

7-7:05 Chalice Lighting & Reading	5 Minutes
7:05- 7:15 Check-in	10 Minutes
7:20-7: 25 Review and Accept Current Agenda	5 Minutes
7:25-7:30 Members Forum	5 Minutes
7:30-7:40 Music Committee: Pat Traynor or Jared Gibbs	10 Minutes
7:40-7:50 Building Issues: Dave Lievsay	10 Minutes
7:50-8:00 Minister and Staff Reports Administrator's Reports DLFD's Reports	10 Minutes
8:00-8:05 Consent Agenda and Old Business Previous Board minutes for June—approve	5 Minutes
8:05-8:15 Break and Refreshments	10 Minutes
8:15-8:35 Treasurer's Report/ Surplus Discussion	20 Minutes
8:35-8:40 Action Items	5 Minutes
8:40-8:50 C.O.M. Ministry/Transitional Team Discussion	10 Minutes
8:50- 9:00 New Business Discussing Board Goals for the year/ results from board retreat	10 Minutes
9:05-9:10 Information Items Timeline, special events	5 Minutes
9:10-9:15 Select refreshments, process observer, and closing words volunteers for October Process Observer Report Extinguish Chalice	5 Minutes

Next meeting: October 13, 2016

REPORT TO THE BOARD  
Don Rollins  
9/8/16

Big Picture: It's been a busy but good start. I've been making the rounds, and am getting a good feel for how things work and who does what at UUC. I'm especially impressed with the quality of your leaders (staff and volunteer), many good habits, and amazing building and grounds. Barring any major distractions, we should be in for a very productive year. 'Glad to be here!

Staff: I've met all UUC staff members, and held individual meetings with everyone except Joe and Rachel. Lisa, Karen and I meet every other Wednesday.

Administration: I've visited the following groups at least once since August 1: Worship; Strategic Planning; Connections; MHJC; Transitions; Worship Associates; Board Executive; Search; Stewardship.

Pastoral Care: I've met with four persons regarding pastoral needs.

Adult Ed: I'll be leading "Building Your Own Theology" – a longstanding UU curriculum – for four weeks over Oct/Nov.

Discretionary Fund: 3 disbursements for total of \$300 (\$2,700 remaining)

Athens UU Fellowship: Per our communication in May, I began a very part-time consulting ministry with this congregation on September 1. My primary duties are leading worship and programs on my weekends-off from UUC.

UUMA Chapter Mtg: I plan to attend the chapter meeting, 11/14-17.

Coffeehouse: Per the attached proposal, I'd like to start a monthly coffeehouse at UUC, starting in October.

The aim: to provide a chemical-free, supportive, open-mic forum for amateur poets, musicians, storytellers, etc. I draft a small crew to coordinate refreshments, publicity and sound, and serve as emcee and play some, too.

I've been using this format since seminary – It really is a great thing, especially once the youth and non-church folk start showing up.

Okay if I move ahead?

## PROPOSAL: UUC COFFEEHOUSE

Don Rollins

9-16

Described below is the model I've used to start coffeehouse at UU congregations. In the case of UUC, we could schedule the first installment for October, with an eye toward any already existing programs. Details:

- The mission of the coffeehouse is to provide a monthly forum for area performing artists: musicians; poets; storytellers; comedians. (I've seen jugglers, unicyclists, and mimes, too.) Performers are unpaid, but are not expected to give the suggested donation.
- A task force of 5 or so is recruited to develop and oversee the coffeehouse. A name, day and times are chosen. The basic tasks include: publicity; refreshments; recruiting area performers; setup/teardown; sound; emceeing; and collecting/processing income. (I strongly suggest the coffeehouse be treated as a fundraiser for the general fund.)
- The coffeehouse can be set up on a trial basis if desired – say for six months.
- It can be considered as a probationary program of the church, and may need some ramp-up money (light promotion) to be repaid from the donations.
- Per state and federal guidelines, there is no “door charge”, rather a minimal donation (usually \$1 or \$2) is requested. Nobody is turned away for lack of funds.
- Canned items are requested and donated to an established local food program.
- Refreshments can be done in a number of ways: committees/groups can take turns; a youth group, with coordination from the task force, can see to that piece; or, two or so members of the task force can coordinate refreshments.
- The format is simple. Performers are invited to sign-up (on newsprint or whiteboard) before and during the coffeehouse. Time limits are suggested, depending on the number of performers. If several people have come ready to perform, I may limit each to 6 or 7 minutes. If not, I still suggest time limits, but begin a second round. (I have plenty of material to use as filler, but really prefer to let others carry the night.)
- In some settings, the task force has scheduled a brief intermission, during which a local social service agency representative presents a short profile of his/her programs. The goal is to network, add another service-based element to the coffeehouse and increase contact between the church and area agencies.
- The length of the coffeehouses is around two hours, after which I coordinate a short closing jam and/or lead the audience in a song. I announce the next date and bid everyone good night.
- Attendees are asked to help with the teardown, setup and cleaning.

While some congregations do some variations on this model, I try to keep things more or less as described above. It's been road-tested. ☺

## **Administrator's Report to the Board September 8, 2016**

**Committee Meetings:** I am attending monthly Stewardship and Auction meetings.

**New Directory:** At the end of the month, the directory will be updated, and only those with no internet access will receive paper copies (done once/year in the fall). The updated directory will be on the member area of our website and is updated quarterly. Note that you can download the directory to your desktop, and every update gets included with the weekly announcements.

**Bulletin covers:** Staff opted not to have bulletin covers with the order of service each Sunday as has been done in the past to be more cost-effective and green. It was suggested to Connections Committee that they develop, with help from Don, a "visitor's packet" that would include the information from the cover. This is on their agenda for their next meeting. Although the greeters collect the covers and bulletins each week, somehow about 20-30 covers disappear each week, and it's costly to print new ones.

**Search Committee Cottage Meetings:** Although many are taking the survey from the Search Committee, VERY few have signed up for the cottage meetings. Hopefully Board members will sign up and encourage friends to do so also.

**Use of Bookkeepers:** Now that we are using a bookkeeping service as of July 1, paychecks are being done via direct deposit, and bills to be paid are being paid via the bank's free bill pay service except for those that require we receive a paper check as when there is a form sent with the check such as the 1/2 plate donations for which I include a letter of explanation. There has been some confusion now and then as the system gets worked out.

**Attendance/Members:** See online Google Doc. All new Board members should have received the link to the document.

## **DLFD Report to the Board – September 2016**

Submitted by Karen Hager, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

### **Registration**

- Current CYRE: 72 (unique children/youth)
- Children & Youth UUC “slots”: 111
- Registration for 2016-17 still in progress, with many returning families yet to register.

### **This month:**

- I have conducted, or will be conducting, training for the following groups this month:
  - Fall Children’s RE teachers – completed
  - YAC youth and adults – completed
  - Middle School Youth Group advisors – completed
  - YRUU Advisor – retreat scheduled for Monday, September 5
  - Coming of Age facilitators – scheduled for Wednesday, September 7
- Fall Children’s RE begins on September 11.
- YRUU begins on September 11, with a dessert potluck that includes parents.
- MSYG begins on September 16.
- Coming of Age is ready to begin its test as the RE program for 8<sup>th</sup> graders this year, meeting once a month, after the service. Mentors have been chosen for all youth, and two facilitators recruited. Recruitment for this additional class posed some challenges, and required a 30% increase in volunteer recruitment, due to the 1:1 mentor:youth ratio. We will evaluate the test throughout the year.
- Our new curriculum, *The Rainbow Connection*, begins in PreK this year. As a reminder, this is a curriculum that I wrote and for which I retain the copyright.
- We will be holding a retreat for the adult advisors for YRUU and YAC to continue last year’s work on the new YRUU program. Real progress was made last year in providing a structure for the program that youth can then make their own, without creating a program from scratch. YRUU’s mission has been confirmed, and youth will ratify (with edits, if necessary) the YRUU covenant at their first meeting of youth only. Youth YAC members were thrilled to hear that the Board provided \$1500 in the budget toward their Boston trip, and have already begun to discuss where social action efforts might be placed in the coming year. The timing of our Boston trip presents a problem, as the Blacksburg and Radford schools have spring break during different weeks this year. We will be discussing this issue with parents at the kick-off, and getting input on the possibility of youth missing a day of school, or moving the trip to June.
- The downstairs has once again been made child-friendly in preparation of the beginning of RE.
- We ask the Board to consider how they can help support the efforts of Dumbledore’s Army (DA) this year, as they begin their Horcrux fights. September’s fight will be against the Illiteracy Horcrux. DA will conduct a book drive; the books will be sorted by YRUU, who will hold a fundraising book sale in October. All remaining books will be donated to the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library’s “Little Library” program.



# A VISION FOR MUSIC AT UUC

## Introduction

Music is integral to our congregational life, and in the past few years our musical offerings have grown wonderfully. We rely on an informal and ad hoc approach in which individuals and various groups make decisions about music for Sunday services, guest musicians, special events and concerts. While this approach has worked well enough up to now, it is inherently inefficient, somewhat disjointed and ultimately will limit the potential for music at UUC. To ensure continued growth in the richness and diversity of our music and to expand our musical outreach, we will need a more coherent and coordinated approach. Accordingly, we propose to form a Music Committee to bring focus, structure, and cohesion to our music program. This proposal is an initial outline of the responsibilities of a Music Committee. We ask the Board to respond with comments and questions

## Responding to the Present Context

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### **SUNDAY SERVICES**

Music selections for Sunday services – choir anthem, prelude, offertory, postlude – are typically made by the pianist and choir director. Both individuals have had considerable autonomy to choose whatever they liked, though they have coordinated with the minister, worship committee, and congregation members when requested. That coordination has primarily been responsive: those planning a service will say, "We'd like a particular song, or type of song, for a certain service. Can you play it?"

This responsive approach has worked fairly well for a number of years. But the move to a more centralized, theme-oriented approach to worship has shown our present system's limits. For the musicians, the themes can be somewhat abstract, even obscure, and so selecting appropriate music can prove difficult. For the choir, especially, finding repertoire to fit each month's theme has sometimes proved challenging, time-consuming and even frustrating. While we understand that considerable thought has gone into setting monthly themes, they are sometimes mystifying, at least musically. (How exactly should one go about choosing music for the theme, "Yes!," except perhaps to program all music by the band, Yes?) Requests for special music and changes in the theme or topic of a service can be

accommodated if made early enough, but this has not always been communicated in a timely way.

To address this issue, one of the music committee's primary responsibilities would be to coordinate closely with the worship committee. Perhaps the music committee chair, or an appointed representative, would join the worship committee. Or, more simply, we might have the music committee review, well in advance, proposed worship themes and plans, offering their comments, suggestions, and questions to the worship committee. Whatever the mechanism, having a voice dedicated to music as an explicit part of worship planning will surely help clarify and strengthen the role of music within our services, thereby strengthening the services themselves.

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## **MUSIC BUDGET**

The music program's financial needs are considered as part of the regular budget process, however responsibility for preparing the budget request has not been specifically assigned. In some years, certain costs have been overlooked or mis-categorized (should the cost of tuning the pianos be charged to "Choir and Music" or to "Capital and Furnishings" or to "Repairs and Maintenance"?) For the last five years, adequate funds have been available to purchase music for the choir. We have not, however, earmarked money to benefit guest musicians (music stands!) our children (rhythm instruments!) or concert performers (honoraria! publicity materials! receptions!)---all items that would enrich our musical experiences.

To address this budgeting uncertainty, the music committee would be tasked with establishing spending priorities and drawing up a single, cohesive budget request for the entire music program, in accordance with those priorities.

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## **COORDINATING SPECIAL MUSIC**

Special music for Sunday services, in the form of different ensembles, guest musicians, and other novel musical occurrences, presently is coordinated by a single volunteer: our pianist. But the time and energy constraints of normal life have allowed only a limited effort in the past year, so special music has only occasionally enriched our service. A music committee, by having several people to share the workload, would take over the responsibility to bring more special music for more Sunday services. Other forms of special music, such as choir concerts and the Advent Garden and Christmas Eve services, would also be coordinated by the music committee working with the minister.

We have long enjoyed hosting local and out of town visiting musicians; but we also know that musical talent abounds within our congregation, and it is likely that there are new members whose interest and abilities have yet to be discovered. To broaden congregational participation, the music committee would be charged with compiling a list of musicians among UUC members and friends, approaching them about sharing their gifts, and identifying appropriate services for their special musical offerings.

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## **CONCERTS & SPECIAL EVENTS**

At one of the rehearsals for this past spring's contemporary music concert, "The American Scene," one of the cellists joked that the UUC is a wonderful performance hall, which also happens to host a UU congregation every Sunday. Her point was that our sanctuary is an excellent performance space that is presently underutilized. And she's right: we have a wonderful space for performances, both acoustically and aesthetically, which includes an excellent piano. What's more, we have many out-of-the-way meeting rooms where musicians can stash their things and warm up. To top it off, the perfect reception space—Elarth Hall—sits just behind the sanctuary.

In short, our UUC facilities are wonderfully suited for musical outreach. Such outreach is already happening on a small scale: in addition to the concerts organized by individual members—such as the two that Jared Gibbs planned this past year, and the numerous concerts arranged by Leon Kok in previous years—our space is used regularly by Community Cello Works, and at times by the Renaissance Music Academy and other organizations.

It would be wonderful to build on our existing foundation and pursue this sort of musical outreach in a more focused, intentional way, not only hosting more musical events, but also offering greater musical variety, and potentially reaching more varied populations within the surrounding community. A music committee could offer vital coordinated support for such efforts.

## **What Comes Next?**

Music at the UUC is regularly cited as one of our strengths; musical events are sometimes the reason that folks find us in the first place, and the music in our services is, for some, a key feature that keeps them coming back. We have a strong musical foundation here, but a focused, structured effort is required to effectively build on that foundation. But what could that growth look like?

We envision a music program that is both broadly and deeply rooted within the congregation, and that also reaches out broadly and deeply into the surrounding community.

We see *wide participation*— Sunday services that include not only the music of our pianist and choirs, but also frequently feature musical offerings by our congregation's members and friends, both adults and children.

We see *active participation*—services that invite all those gathered to add to the music by singing familiar hymns, by learning new ones, and by being adventurous with rounds, call-and-response, circle singing and other engaging forms of song.

We see *active outreach*—concerts that draw in the surrounding community, offering different music styles and reaching different audiences.

We see the UUC as an *arts destination*—a place known for its wonderful music, its welcoming hospitality, and its warm and generous fellowship.

A coordinated effort is required to realize this vision. And so we propose to form a music committee, a group whose collected efforts can give the music program here at UUC the purpose, structure, and energy it needs to grow beyond its present form.