

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Board Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2018

Present: Board members Rev. Pam Philips, Susan Wamsley, Ellen Plummer, Tim Pickering, Amy Pruden-Bachi, and Jennifer Mercier. Bill Baker and Irene Peterson were absent.

Tim started the meeting at 7:00 PM, lit the chalice, and gave the reading. Everyone checked in.

1. **Review and accept revised agenda** – A motion was made to make changes to the agenda. All accepted the new agenda.
2. **Member forum** - No members were present for the forum.
3. **Consent Agenda:** – All reports are available on One Drive. The consent agenda was approved.
4. **Treasurer's Report** – There was no formal report because Bill is out of town. The Board discussed Pam's housing allowance. Ellen made a motion that for the coming tax year the housing allowance for Rev. Pam Philips is \$1600/month with a total of \$19,200/year. The motion was unanimously approved.
5. **Old Business**

Leadership Development Committee (LDC) – The Board discussed the direction we should give to the LDC. The following items were recommended: create a list of possible candidates for leadership, develop a polling system to collect a list of resources/talents/interests among the congregation, and create an orientation program for new Board members and/or other leaders in the congregation. These will be presented to the LDC at their next meeting.

Information Item—The date for Pam's Installation ceremony as our settled minister will be on Sunday, April 15.

Set Spring Council Meeting Date—Ellen is going to create a Doodle poll to propose two Thursday evenings (Feb 1 and April 5) for the Program Council to meet.

Next Steps for Policy Review and Update—Tim led a discussion about the organization of our Policies and Procedures. He showed the Board a website for another UU church (<https://www.thefuun.org/policies-procedures/>). We are working towards a goal of achieving something similar for UUC. Tim reported that he is halfway through the process of breaking up the policies and procedures into smaller segments so that they can be reviewed by the appropriate committees/people. He has also taken all three policy manuals and added the updates and will convert this to pdf format for posting on our website.

Budget process, time line and priorities – Tim told the Board that the Stewardship group is getting ready to start the annual campaign. They would like to know what the Board's priorities are for the congregation. The Board will be discussing this in-depth next month. Tim asked the Board to focus on the mission and vision of the UUC and move beyond just paying the bills. Pam asked the Board to consider thinking of the budget as an expression of our values. She also encouraged us to look at the poll data about the congregation's interests collected during the search process. She will send this information to the Board to review.

DLFD request – Karen has requested to have \$500 extra funding for professional development because of the courses offered this year close to Blacksburg that she would like to attend. Ellen made a motion that we support the DLFD's proposal for additional funds for professional development training. The motion was unanimously approved.

Email vote—The Board unanimously approved the gift of a dishwasher from Tom Bube over email since our last meeting.

6. **New Business**

Discuss staff recommendations on website practice—Pam explained that the Members area of the website will be changed so that the only things password protected are directory and financial information. Pam requested that we direct all questions about the website or for Kelly through Lisa. This will prevent duplicate requests to Kelly. Pam would also like the Board to review the proposed website and let her know if we find anything that is inaccurate or outdated.

The Promise and Practice of our Faith—The UUA has launched a new initiative to overcome past injustices to minority members of our faith, especially among professional employees. They are asking member congregations to make financial and other commitments to this effort. Pam showed the Board the website (<https://www.uua.org/giving/areas-support/funds/promise-and-practice>) that provides further information on this campaign. With respect to the financial commitment, Pam explained that if we pledge \$10/member, then our pledge will be matched by a donor gift to UUA. We have done one BLUU collection and will do another one on Sunday. The Board discussed whether the financial commitment should be a congregation-led or individually-led effort. There will be further discussion on these topics and what our commitments should be in future meetings and worship services.

UUA survey and congregational poll on CS/AI proposals – The Board discussed the UUA CS/AI study proposals. Susan made a motion that we support both proposals and this was unanimously approved. The proposals are posted on OneDrive.

Recruit new leadership for the Auction committee—The Board learned that Joe and Linda Powers are stepping down as auction chairs. We need to recruit people to take up the duties of the auction committee.

Ellen will read the opening words for next meeting.

Jennifer will bring refreshments.

The meeting ended at 9:20 PM. Next meeting February 8, 2018.

Section 4: Congregation Poll

Vote on whether your congregation thinks either of the two following Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAIs) should be added to the 2018 General Assembly agenda for four years of study, reflection, and action. 25% of all certified congregations must participate and a majority of those congregations participating must vote in favor of the CSAIs to be included in the agenda.

CSAI: Undoing Intersectional White Supremacy

Racism is fundamental to U.S. social systems. White supremacy culture operates economically, institutionally, politically, and culturally, shaping everyone's chances to live healthy, fulfilling lives. It is also the nation's most toxic export, shaping policies and practices that do profound harm to the Earth and all living things.

CSAI: Dismantling Intersectional Oppression

Systemic injustices intersect across environment, race, gender and all other forms of oppression. Identifying the underlying mechanisms which enable systemic and intersecting injustices enables us to mitigate their harm. Intersectional justice calls us to work together across oppressions and become a movement of movements.

Your congregation may vote Yes, No, or Abstain, for these two CSAIs.

- **Yes** means your congregation wants the CSAI to be added to the 2018 General Assembly Agenda.
- **No** means your congregation does not want the CSAI to be added to the 2018 General Assembly Agenda.
- **Abstain** means your congregation is participating only to contribute to the necessary 25% quorum.
- Congregations that do not wish to participate in the poll at all can opt out.

To view the complete text of the CSAIs, go online to uua.org/statements/current.

Section 5: Questionnaire

A new addition to this year's certification, this brief survey of 14 questions will help the UUA gain a sense of what is important in the life of your congregation and how we can help support your work. It should take no more than ten minutes to complete. To review each of the questions, see the attached questionnaire copy or go to the Questionnaire Worksheet on your account home page. You may wish to share these questions with different professional and volunteer leaders in your congregation before responding. Please submit responses online through the certification portal.

Please note: this questionnaire not address UU World Magazine, General Assembly or UUA Insurance Programs for congregational staff, which use different forms of surveys and assessment.

Congregational Questionnaire

COPY ONLY – SUBMIT ANSWERS ONLINE

1. In the past year, how helpful has the UUA (including your regional staff) been to your congregation in advancing its mission and addressing key challenges?

Likert scale 1-5, Not at all helpful, somewhat unhelpful, neither helpful nor unhelpful, somewhat helpful, very helpful

Additional comments (optional):

2. Which of the following are currently addressed by Safe Congregation policies in your congregation?
 - Children or classroom safety
 - Youth safety
 - Limited access agreements
 - Disruptive behavior / right relations processes
 - Building safety and/or emergency preparedness
 - Employee conduct and/or sexual harassment
 - None of the above
3. Have you collaborated with another UU congregation in your area or cluster on any of the following over the past year?
 - Informal conversation or support
 - Shared project or program
 - Community event
 - Shared staffing arrangement
 - None of the above
4. Has your congregation publicly acted in support of any of the following social justice issues in the past year?
 - Accessibility / Disability
 - Climate justice / environmental sustainability
 - Economic justice/classism
 - Immigration
 - Housing / homelessness

- LGBTQ equity
 - Racial justice/ Black Lives Matter / countering white supremacy
 - Reproductive justice
 - Voting rights
 - Other (please specify)
 - None of the above
5. Has your congregation participated in UU international programs this year?
Did you collaborate with any of these offices?
- UUA International Office
 - UU United Nations Office
 - UU Holdeen India Program
 - UU College of Social Justice -- learning journeys or volunteer placements
 - UU Service Committee
 - UU Partner Church Council
 - International Council of UUs
 - International Association for Religious Freedom
 - Other (please specify)
 - None of the above
6. Has your congregation engaged in any of the following multicultural or anti-racism learning programs in the past year?
- Mosaic Makers
 - Welcoming Congregation refresher
 - Building the World We Dream About curriculum
 - Beyond Categorical Thinking
 - Intercultural competence and sensitivity
 - Other (please specify)
 - None of the above
7. Which of the following has your congregation used to help lead faith development or religious education this year?
- Common Read book for 2017-18
 - Tapestry of Faith curricula
 - Our Whole Lives curricula
 - Our Whole Lives facilitator trainings
 - Theme-based ministry resources
 - Small group ministry guides

- Renaissance Module faith development training
 - None of the above
8. Which of the following approaches have you used for your worship services this year?
- Worship services on days of the week beyond Sunday
 - Utilize materials from WorshipWeb -- online collection
 - Monthly themes
 - Experimenting with different styles of music
 - Multimedia - slides, images, presentations, videos, etc.
 - All-ages or multigenerational services
 - Use worship elements (e.g. sermon) recorded or live stream from another congregation
 - None of the above
9. Have you used Standing on the Side of Love resources or engaged with the campaign? (Y/N)
10. What online congregational leadership and management resources or materials from the UUA has your congregation used in the past year, accessed through UUA.org?
- inSpirit Books and Gifts / UUA Bookstore
 - Human resources or church management materials and guides
 - Congregational compensation consultants
 - Stewardship or fundraising resources
 - Stewardship For Us consultants
 - Leadership development or governance resources
 - Communications, website, or social media resources
 - Outreach, growth and membership guides or materials
 - Congregational social justice organizing resources
 - UUA blogs and social media
 - UUA email lists (e.g. UU Leaders, REACH)
 - Faithify crowd-funding platform
 - Other (please specify)
 - None of the above
11. What services, resources or programs from your UUA region has your congregation used or participated in during the past year?

- Regional or district newsletter
- Webinars or workshops
- Online courses through the UU Leadership Institute
- Regional or district in-person leadership school or training
- Consultation with a regional UUA staff member
- Meeting, startup or retreat in your congregation facilitated by regional staff
- Regional or district youth events and conferences
- Regional or District Assembly
- Other (please specify)
- None of the above

12. What is the most challenging thing for your congregation right now?

13. What is most exciting thing going on in your congregation right now?

14. What is one thing you would like more help with from the UUA?

January 2018 Minister's Report to the Board
Submitted by Rev. Pam Philips

Leads Worship

We addressed the theme of "Hope" in worship in December. I used the book *A House of Hope* for one of the services, and several people expressed interest in having an adult faith development class using the book. We had a successful multi-generational service thanks to Karen Hager. The services on Christmas Eve (both morning and evening) were more lightly attended than I expected. Victoria Taylor and Jim Kern provided a wonderful New Year's Eve service, including small group discussions, fire ritual, and setting intentions for the new year.

We're addressing the theme of Intention in January, beginning with a service on how the congregation can be intentional in fulfilling its mission and vision (in part a way to introduce the new endowment fund to the congregation as a foundation to being able to do that work). We'll also be participating in the Promise and the Practice service in response to the UUA (see below).

The Solstice Spiral was a lovely event, spearheaded by the Earth Spirit Sisters, which included a shadow puppet play, crafts, food and drink, and a bonfire with s'mores. Asha Mills (and her family) deserves great credit for taking on this new role, and Carol Kern provided helpful information from past experiences. George Lally was in charge of the bonfire. I'm hopeful that more people will enjoy this unique experience next year.

Officiates Rites of Passage

Nothing to report in this area.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

I have visited with congregants in my office, at the hospital, and in their homes. The transition of LPCM leadership has gone well, with Cynthia Luke providing information and Frank DuPont reaching out to congregants who may be in need of support and coordinating with me and Jane Mahone (his co-facilitator).

Encourages Spiritual Development

I'll be offering an adult faith development class in January and am toying with the idea of offering it both during the day and in the evening to make it available to those who work and those who can't drive at night.

I had a delightful conversation with the youth during their YRUU discussion of eschatology (how the world will end). I've been invited back to their discussion this month on Who is God and look forward to working with them more closely in advance of their service this spring.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

December didn't provide many opportunities for public witness, but I plan to attend the Dialogue on Race Summit on January 20th and the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy Day for All People (an annual lobby day at the General Assembly) in Richmond on January 23rd.

Administrator's Report to the Board
January 11, 2018

Annual Certification with UUA: This month, I will be submitting both financial information and membership/attendance numbers to the UUA (due Feb. 1). This information is used by the UUA to determine our Fair Share Giving for the next fiscal year. Once the Board votes on the CSAIs and discusses the congregational poll (both documents included in the One Drive folder), those results will be submitted also.

Tax Letter Emails: Emails listing all 2017 tax donations to UUC will be sent out to all who donated in the next few weeks. Note that we received many pledge checks for the remainder of this fiscal year due to the new tax laws which will prevent many from itemizing in 2018. We also received several prepaid pledges for 2018-19 and one for 2019-20.

New Website: The new website should launch in the next few weeks. The committee and Pam are meeting next week to work out final details before the launch. Please take a look at <https://staging.uucnr.org/> and, as requested last month, email me with any comments or suggestions.

Directory Photos: The Connections Committee requested that in the next few weeks, I send an email to each family that has not submitted a photo for the directory for inclusion in the next update due out later this month. If you haven't submitted your photo, please do so ASAP.

Committee Meetings: Attended Stewardship and Auction Committee meetings last month.

Attendance/Members: See online Google Doc.

DLFD Report to the Board – January 2018

Submitted by Karen Hager, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Registration

- CYRE: 114 (unique children and youth)
- LFD Activity slots: 148
- UUC Activity slots: 160

This month:

Children's RE:

- Spring teacher recruiting continues; as of this writing, we have three positions left.
- Spring teacher training is January 20, and the spring semester begins January 28.

YRUU:

- YRUU raised \$347.75 at their cookie sale in December. Fundraising is for the Boston trip in 2021.
- QPR training will be held with YRUU on Sunday, March 4, facilitated by Margo Walter. This training (like CPR, but deals with suicide prevention) will be open to the entire congregation.
- YRUU hosts the first film showing of the Environmental Justice Film Series (see Adult Faith Development below), as part of their focus on environmental justice this year.

Our Whole Lives:

- OWL 8-9 begins later this month, with 8 UUC youth enrolled. 2-3 additional families from UU Roanoke have also expressed interest in registering for this class. We are requesting a voluntary activity fee donation of \$25 for congregants and \$50 for non-congregants for this class, to cover pizza for the lock-ins and supplies.

Middle School Youth Group:

- MSYG made 31 gifts for Warm Hearth congregants and families last month.
- An offsite visit is planned for January to NRV Superbowl.

Adult Faith Development:

- A discussion group for the UUA Common Read, *Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry*, begins this month and runs for 3 sessions.
- The Environmental Justice Film Series, co-sponsored with the Social Justice Team, begins January 12 with a showing of *An Inconvenient Sequel*. This film is hosted by YRUU, with a discussion to be facilitated by Michael James-Deramo, local organizer for Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. This event, and the remainder of the six film series, will be publicized to the community. All board members are encouraged to attend and to help publicize the event!

Professional Development

A primary resource of training for DLFDs from the UUA are Renaissance Modules. In the past couple of years, the UUA has been offering some classes as online modules or hybrid modules, where part of the class is held online and a final class is held in person. In past years, it has been very rare for in-person Renaissance Modules to be offered within a reasonable drive distance from Blacksburg, and I have only been able to do so once.

The UUA has announced that two modules will be held within a four-hour drive:

- Teacher Development, a hybrid module, with an in-person workshop in Fredericksburg in February.
- Multi-Cultural RE, an in-person weekend module to be held in Spartansburg, SC. in April.

In addition, they have indicated that they expect an online module on UU Theology to be offered running every two weeks from late March through early June.

It is very rare to have these modules run remotely in our area, and I would like to take advantage of the opportunity. However, my Professional Development budget for 2017-18 will not cover all of the costs.

Here are projected costs:

Teacher Development Module

- Module cost \$200
- Required reader \$0 (loan)
- Hotel 2 nights; current online estimate of \$200 + tax
- Gas + food, estimated at \$100 (please note that, by contract, I am entitled to mileage, but plan to contribute that back to UUC as I have done in the past, so am not including that in this calculation)
- Total estimate: \$500

Multi-Cultural RE Module

- Module cost \$250
- Required reader \$38
- Hotel 2 nights; current online estimate of \$300 + tax (but I'll try to get that closer to \$200)
- Gas + food, estimated at \$50 (meals are provided with class; please note that, by contract, I am entitled to mileage, but plan to contribute that back to UUC as I have done in the past, so am not including that in this calculation)
- Total estimate: \$650

Although the Teacher Development module is not posted yet, online modules usually cost about \$200.

My Professional Development budget for 2017-18 is \$1000, of which \$38.52 has been spent. Therefore, if I were to participate in these trainings, I would exceed my budget by an estimate of \$400.

Please note that I have looked carefully at my schedule for the coming months, and believe I have sufficient time to definitely attend the first two modules listed. I will wait to make a decision on the last module until closer to the start date; however, it's unlikely that they will offer this module at another time that fits better into my schedule.

Board action requested:

Approval to exceed my Professional Development budget for 2017-18 for the trainings above.

Leads Administration

Much staff time continues to go into the new website, but my hope is that it will be “live” by the time of our January board meeting. Kudos to Lisa and Arthur, especially, for all the time they’ve put into getting it ready.

I look forward to meeting with the Leadership Development Committee to start a much-needed discussion about leadership as well as beginning the process of finding people to fill openings on the Board for next year.

Pursues Personal Renewal and Professional Development

My monthly meetings with my mentor have been invaluable opportunities for reflection, and I’m finding meeting with the Committee on Ministries helpful, as well.

We enjoyed a short vacation in Charleston, South Carolina, making visits to some tourist sites and eating delicious food.

Serves the Larger Unitarian Universalist Faith

This month we’ll be holding a Promise and Practice service on Martin Luther King Sunday. This is a service centering voices of Black Unitarian Universalists, and is part of a three-part invitation from the UUA. In addition to holding a service, they ask that congregations make a financial commitment to BLUU and a long-term commitment to dismantle white supremacy, racism, and oppression. Please read about the [Promise and Practice of Our Faith](#) before our board meeting as I would like to have a conversation about whether/how UUC might participate in this initiative.

Likewise, there are two parts of the annual certification process that we will want to discuss, both of which are in the folder for this month's meeting. One is to vote on the Congregational Study/Action issues for the upcoming General Assembly. Find more information on CS/AI process [here](#). The other is a new survey to assess to how the UUA may better serve our needs. Please take a look at them in advance of the meeting.