

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Board Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2018**

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

Tim started the meeting at 7:05 PM, Irene lit the chalice and Ellen gave the reading. Everyone checked in.

1. **Review and accept current agenda** – A motion was made to accept the agenda, agenda was approved. It was also noted that we will begin to put the board minutes in the on-line folder before official approval.
2. **Previous Board minutes** – Previous board minutes were approved. Consent agenda and reports were approved.
3. **Treasurer's Report** – Bill did a PowerPoint presentation on current financial status. He put forth a motion to pay off the member loans that have expired. The motion was approved unanimously.
4. **Old Business**

Report on LDC meeting. Ellen gave a report on the current status. Bill Baker has asked Sandy Power to consider nomination to the board as treasurer. Sandy has accepted. Ann Norris is working on a congregational survey to gather information about interests and things the congregation would like to learn. Ellen is working with Fred Piercy, Mark Benson, and Pam Phillips to create a curriculum around leadership and lay leadership development.

Date for Program Council Meeting – Ellen reports that April 5th is the date for the next program council meeting. A discussion was held about who should be included in Program Council meetings. Jennifer, Tim and Pam will form a sub-committee to look at who should be included in the Program Council meetings.

Support for Black Lives of UU National Program – A discussion was held regarding how we should fund the program. It was decided that we need more information about the financial expectations of the program before moving forward. It was noted that we have raised \$893.93 of the \$2,100 needed for our commitment.

5. New Business

Set date for annual meeting – Annual meeting will be held June 3, 2018. An informational meeting will be held May 20.

Charge to Safety committee to develop comprehensive safety/evacuation plan-
A discussion was held regarding the lack of a safety plan in the UU manual. There is an evacuation plan within the LFD Policy Manual. Darryl Clowes will reconvene the safety committee at the board's request. Pam suggested a meeting with the Blacksburg Police Department and noted that there is a UU trauma response team that could do an assessment for \$650. We anticipate that the safety committee will make recommendations to the board.

6. Set budget priorities for the stewardship campaign –

A discussion was held regarding budget priorities. A general consensus was that priorities should revolve around more support for LFD programs and general maintenance of our facilities. Our goal will be \$370,502.

7. Information Items – Pam's installation is set for April 15, 4 PM

Amy will bring refreshments for next meeting.
Irene will read the opening words.

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

Leads Worship

We addressed the theme of “Intention” in worship in January, including services that explored our congregation’s intentions for the future, our denomination’s intentions around racial justice, and setting personal intentions (this was the first time I based my service on Buddhist principles, and it was well received). Jim Kern led worship with Victoria Taylor on my Sunday off. I must comment on how well the congregation responded to a medical emergency during one of our services—people with emergency and medical skills stepped up to take care of the situation efficiently and relayed information to reassure the rest of us. Thanks to all.

We will be participating in the Blacksburg Ministerial Association’s Ecumenical Lenten Supper Series again this year. I’ll be preaching on March 7th at Blacksburg United Methodist Church and we will be hosting the service on March 21st, with Rev. Catherine Taylor from Blacksburg Presbyterian Church leading worship. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to forge relationships with other people of faith, so consider attending one of these events during Lent.

Officiates Rites of Passage

We held a memorial service for Linda Wilson, whose partner Joyce Graham became a member last fall. Linda was a member of the fellowship herself years ago. The service was so well attended that we needed to open the doors between the sanctuary and Elarth; thanks to Tom Bube for taking time on his Saturday afternoon to help make that happen.

Provides Pastoral Care and Presence

I have visited with congregants in my office, at the hospital, and in their homes. Frank DuPont and Jane Mahone have met with me several times to define our roles in the Lay Pastoral Care Ministry, and I’m looking forward to working with them to plan a worship service to highlight this ministry of the congregation. My great hope is that UUC will become a place where people feel comfortable asking for help—from the Caring Network as well as LPCM—and where members and friends encourage each other to ask for help.

Encourages Spiritual Development

I’m planning on offering *A House for Hope* adult faith development class in March. I’m continuing to meet with adult groups when I’m available (Conversations on Faith, Sages, and the White Allies groups). After two positive sessions with YRUU, the youth have asked that I continue meeting with them during their theological conversations once a month.

Witnesses to Social Justice in the Public Square

I attended the MLK Jr. Celebration sponsored by the NAACP at Asbury Methodist Church in Christiansburg (January 14th), the Dialogue on Race Summit (January 20th), the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy Day for All People (an annual lobby day at the General Assembly) in Richmond and Virginia Organizing (January 23rd), and a Community Conversation about Food Insecurity at Asbury Methodist (January 29th). Attending these events have helped

me better understand the needs in the New River Valley, and I am beginning to know more of the people who are working to make change. I was especially pleased to meet four people from other Blacksburg congregations up in Richmond on the lobby day.

Leads Administration

In preparation for filing out my staffing requests for the budgeting process, I was in touch with Kathy McGowan (Congregational Life Staff, UUA Southern Region) and Jan Gartner (UUA Compensation and Staffing Practices Manager). I will be having a phone conference with Kathy later this month. The information I gathered from them and other ministers convinces me that our Lifespan Faith Development program is understaffed; I have asked that we fund the LFD director for 32 hours to better meet our needs.

The Leadership Development Committee had a good first meeting, and the process of finding new board members is underway. They have also found people to help create a database where we can learn the skills/interests/experiences of our membership (Ann Norris) and to explore how we might offer leadership development opportunities. They are also planning to help provide training for new board members.

The stewardship committee is planning to recruit and train stewards during our pledge drive, and I will be taking an active role. The theme—25 Plus One—will celebrate the legacy of those who made it possible for us to have our beautiful meeting house and encourage current members to support our vision for the future.

Pursues Personal Renewal and Professional Development

I have made plans to attend the First Year Ministers' Seminar in Boston in early May and look forward to making collegial connections that will stand me in good stead in the years ahead. Likewise, I am glad to be connecting with clergy in Blacksburg, which is giving me a personal support group.

Jamie and I have enjoyed attending several programs at the Moss Arts Center, an excellent benefit of his new job there.

Serves the Larger Unitarian Universalist Faith

I am really pleased by the generosity of the congregation in our share the plate collection for Black Lives of UU—over \$600 was raised during the Promise and the Practice service. I look forward to UUC engaging in a conversation about how we want to engage in the Promise and the Practice of our Faith.

**Administrator's Report to the Board
February 8, 2018**

Website Update: If you read the recent newsletter, you will know that we plan to launch the new website in another week or so. Kelly Eagan will upload the new site to our current site as soon as she has a free weekend (possibly Feb. 10). Once it's up, please let me know of any errors, dead links, suggestions, etc.

Certification with UUA: The information was submitted to the UUA on January 18 including the survey information provided by the Board (thank you). Our membership number was reported as 205. However, since that time, I've learned of 4 members that are no longer active or have moved. Another member is moving at the end of the month. The number will go back up with the book signing on Feb. 11.

BLUU: As the Board discusses whether to support the Black Lives national program and the requested financial commitment from the congregation, be aware that we donated \$287.50 on 8/20/17 and \$606.42 on 1/14/18 (total: \$893.92) – both from our ½ plate collections.

Committee Meetings: Attended Stewardship Committee meeting last month.

Attendance/Members: See online Google Doc.

DLFD Report to the Board – February 2018

Submitted by Karen Hager, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Registration

- CYRE: 116 (unique children and youth)
- LFD Activity slots: 149
- UUC Activity slots: 161

This month:

Children's RE:

- Teacher training was held in January and the spring semester started January 28. Teachers were also trained on evacuating the building at the spring training.
- I have observed that attendance at our middle school Building Bridges class is much higher this year than it was two years ago, when the class struggled and lost so many kids. I have analyzed the numbers and discovered that I'm correct; although registration was nearly equal (19 kids in 2015-16 and 18 kids in 2017-18; the prior year is larger because it also included 8th graders who are now placed in the Coming of Age program), this year's attendance is 2-1/2 times that of two years ago. This is due, I believe, to the curriculum change that included videos, and to the addition of ChUurchcraft, our activity that uses Minecraft. I am very glad that we seem to have solved our glitch of middle school attendance dropping.
- Offsite church visit attendance is way up, too, this year, with 16 attendees at each of the past visits. Middle school will visit 3 Christian churches over the next two months.

YRUU:

- YRUU hosted 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. 4 youth from the Roanoke YRUU came, along with an advisor. I received many positive comments from attending congregants on how wonderful it was to have youth present and to hear their thoughts on environmental justice.
- We are currently working to register for Mountain CON to be held in March. We have invited Roanoke youth to join our group, if they'd like.
- YRUU is also trying to set up a joint OOCE with the Roanoke YRUU at The Launching Pad trampoline park in February. I'm awaiting confirmation from Roanoke.
- Pam has been invited to facilitate the remaining theological discussions with YRUU this year. She has facilitated two already and received rave reviews! This invitation from youth represents an important milestone, IMO, as YRUU has not previously interacted with the minister on a regular basis. I hope it is the beginning of an ongoing relationship.
- We are testing an online fundraiser for YRUU. (Thanks to Lisa for setting this up!) An important goal this year was to decrease the amount of time youth spend on fundraising activities in order to allow them to spend more time on social justice and theological discussions. However, we still have the goal of fully funding trips so that no youth is left behind due to financial considerations, and the youth's remaining fundraising activities will not cover trip costs. So, this online fundraiser will allow congregants and others to make donations, as they like, to the trip and charge the donation to their credit cards. Our hope is that youth will also forward the fundraiser to grandparents and other relatives who would support a UU trip. The fundraiser will be advertised mainly through digital means.
- Additional fundraising activities this year will include the Coffeehouse on March 9 and Jeopardy! on April 6; the Powers are, once again, taking a lead role in Jeopardy! Please plan to attend both!

Our Whole Lives:

- OWL 8-9 began in late January. Prior to our start date, three families dropped out, citing difficulties getting their youth to attend, and one Roanoke family registered another child. Total attendance: 6 youth, 4 from UUC, 2 from Roanoke. OWL continues through April.

Middle School Youth Group:

- MSYG had an offsite meeting in January to NRV Superbowl. 100% of youth – 21!! – attended, along with 2 advisors and 3 parent volunteers. We were definitely NOT budgeted for 26 attendees! Please note that we also requested no friends be brought to this meeting, due to the large group, it being offsite, and to cost. Friends are usually welcome at MSYG meetings, as one stated objective for MSYG is to be a liberal community alternative to Young Life, which recruits in schools.

- We have run the projections for next year based on current youth registration and are projecting 25 kids minimum for next year's MSYG. As kids often bring friends, and 1-2 tend to join each year, this number may edge closer to 30. Our budget request for 2018-19 reflects this increased registration, as well as an increased attendance rate this year. Attendance rates have ranged from 71-119% of registered youth this year, a sizeable increase from prior years. We are obviously doing something right!

Adult Faith Development:

- Our discussion group for the UUA Common Read, *Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry*, began in late January and runs through February.
- The Environmental Justice Film Series, co-sponsored with the Social Justice Team, kicked off in January with a showing of *An Inconvenient Sequel*. We were pleased to host 44 attendees, about half of which were from outside the congregation. I have connected with a group of folks involved with environmental justice work locally and set up a listserv for them, so that they can publicize future events to their groups. Our next movie will be *Plastic China*, held on February 9 from 7-9 pm.

Professional Development

I began attending the online portion of the Teacher Development Renaissance Module in January, which culminates in an in-person training in Fredericksburg on February 10. This training has, so far, exceeded my expectations, as the experience level of attendees is much higher than I expected. It appears that there are many others who also have not been able to attend UUA training because of geographical constraints. All attendees are from VA and MD and all have considerable experience as DREs (there is also one minister attending). Very much looking forward to getting together with everyone in February!

I have also registered for the Administration as Leadership online renaissance module in March and the Multi-Cultural RE module to be held in Spartanburg in April. Thanks for approving the additional funding!