



## Board of Trustees

268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road

Titusville, NJ 08560

## Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - **APPROVED**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2025**

### ***Zoom Meeting***

*President Wendy Stasolla called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Also in attendance: Vice President, Karen Kent, Treasurer Denny Rodgers and Secretary Michelle Zechner; Trustees: Maria Baratta, Bob Busch, David Thomas, Chris Marietti, Colleen McCourt; Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildszewski, Congregational Administrator, Marilyn Gonzalez, Director of Congregational Life, Robin Pugh and Ministerial Intern Lisa Schilansky.*

### **First Hour**

**Consent agenda (no vote):** President Wendy Stasolla and Rev. Kim Wildszewski briefly reviewed their monthly reports. Treasurer Denny Rodgers provided a summary of the finances noting higher than expected pledges and lower expenditure rate. He also reported that Stewardship packets have been distributed to all households.

**Review of Strategic Visioning Workshop & Next Steps:** Rev. Kim led a discussion about the strategic visioning workshop, emphasizing the importance of differentiating between technical and adaptive changes. She also highlighted the need for a diverse group of volunteers to take the next steps, suggesting a team of three to five people. The team also discussed the need for a board member to announce the initiative to the congregation. Kim suggested that two board members could take this task forward, and she offered to work with them to clarify the expectations and timeline. Wendy and Vice-President Karen Kent volunteered to share this duty.

**Stewardship Committee's Progress and Meetings:** Rev. Kim expressed her appreciation for the Stewardship Committee's work and the team's efforts. She mentioned that the team has already brought in around \$60,000 in pledges. She requested the Board of Trustees and staff to pledge before Sunday. She also asked for two Board members to host at each of the upcoming cottage meetings. Wendy, Denny, and Michelle agreed to host on certain dates.

## Endowment Task Force

Wendy reviewed the recent meeting with Endowment Committee members, interested stakeholders and board members. She noted that the tone of the meeting was encouraging, fostering open discussion and collaboration. The meeting focused on the history of the endowment, its current state, and potential future directions. The group discussed the need for revised policies on giving to Endowment and of dispensing funds. A task force was formed with five volunteers to explore these issues further. The meeting also touched on the importance of preserving the principle of the endowment while considering inflation and growth. The task force members were identified as Sandi Steinberg, David Schumann, Bonnie Gilbert, Lynn Molnar, and Mike Hansen.

## 2nd Hour

**Kitchen Use and Policy Update:** Rev. Kim discussed congregational requests for the use of the kitchen for non-church related activities which are related to our mission. This prompted a discussion on the potential use of the kitchen by the Food Ministry, existing policy review and the need for a policy update.. The board agreed to form a task force to address the issue, with Dennis and David volunteering to initiate the conversation with the Food Ministry to gather their input and concerns. The status of the water system was also discussed as a current concern, with Administrator Marilyn Gonzalez confirming that they were waiting for permits from Hopewell Township to install additional filtration systems.

*Follow-Up Needed: Review of policy on kitchen use as it is currently within the Rental Policy. Review of roles within kitchen use such as Rental Coordinator*

**Update about social media and directory security:** Marilyn updated the board about a recent event where the church directory was inadvertently shared as a result of a phishing scam that claimed to be coming from Wendy. This resulted in a new security practice to safeguard member information including creating a password protected file. Marilyn also noted that a new church information management system will be initiated in the near future where members will be able to create a sign-in to access the directory and other church information. The Facebook community page was made private due to security concerns. Church communications are discussing a more formalized social media plan including sharing of marketing information and updating website.

**Congregational Pulse Check-In:** Reviewed updates from board liaisons and church committees

### Housekeeping & Action Items:

- A doodle poll will be sent this spring about the board retreat
- Cross Current articles
- GA will be in Baltimore June 18-22

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

***Michelle Zechner***

Secretary, Board of Trustees

## **Appendix: Executive, Staff and Treasurer Reports**

### **Executive Report**

Executive Summary February 9, 2025

By Wendy Stasolla

The Strategic Visioning workshop was well attended and resulted in some fresh ideas and enlightening conversations between congregants. Michelle Zechner is writing the February board article about the workshop.

We discussed a timeline for more formally thanking the Capital Campaign team by the end of May. We plan to present each of them with the gift we talked, gratitude notes and perhaps in-person accounts of what each is enjoying about the new building. Any other ideas are welcome!

Stewardship starts having cottage meetings on Sunday, February 16 at UUCWC. Members of the board are being asked to sign up and cohost each meeting and enthusiastically participate as well. Denny will provide an overview of the current budget in case we need to field any questions.

The Endowment discussion/meeting went very well and resulted in a Task Force being created to write some formal policy and discuss whether to make any changes that were proposed during the meeting.

I will be meeting this week with Lenore Bajare-Dukes who is our contact from UUA's Central East Region team. We're having a check-in chat and I'll report back on how that went if there's anything I feel would be helpful to share.

I registered to attend the UUA Investment Fund meeting via zoom on Tuesday February 25th. Let me know if anyone else is interested in attending and I'll send you the information.

Lots going on and more that I'm sure will show up in other reports.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

*Minister Report*

### **Minister Board Report**

**February 12, 2025**

### **Create Community**

Community engagement, most notably on Sunday mornings, is ticking up each week. We've seen robust Sunday attendance both online and in person, regardless of the weather, the additional meetings, and holiday weekends. When I recently shared our attendance numbers with colleagues (averaging over 170 per Sunday with a membership of 288) one very established and data-driven colleague responded, "Hell yeah! You're killing it!". Apparently, we are killing it...!

As a reminder, since we last met, on our Sundays we

- Considered the Buddhist parable of the second arrow and how we injure ourselves
- Held a congregational meeting to vote on Lisa's ordination and a pilot Assistant Ministry
- Lisa prepared our spirits for the inauguration,
- and the week after I reminded us that we are not a people who proof texts our way to despair.
- As we moved into February we shared in our joys and sorrows ritual grounded in the practice of staggered breathing and geese in flight.
- It was that Sunday that we also held our Strategic Visioning Workshop wherein people named their need for clarity, focus and engagement.
- This past Sunday I offered stories, songs and catch phrases to remind us what Unitarian Universalism is and how to speak about it.
- This Saturday, Sunday and the afternoons and evenings after, we go head first into Stewardship.

The worship staff team is looking to ask the congregation (and so I am asking you) your thoughts on two worship elements: 1. What do you think / feel about the welcome music we've been beginning services with? Is this something you enjoy or find meaningful? 2. For those who have joined online in recent months, do you feel the transition slides meaningful (eg: gathering community, finding inspiration, etc)?

Lastly to note: Due to the numerous unexpected and additional needs of the community, I have only met with the Worship Associates *once* this year (in the late summer, early fall). We are meant to have at least quarterly, if not every other month, meetings. Thankfully this group is self sufficient and skilled, but it is not good for community building or engagement.

## **Celebrate Life**

There have been many pastoral needs, as there always are. From a child in the hospital to a notable uptick in health issues in our younger boomers (our, "not elders") - heart attack, spine issues, unexpected exploratory surgeries, and more. It's a time of deep fragility in the country where anxiety and distraction is high; our bodies are experiencing this stress, and stress of their own.

I am glad to continue connecting with folks through my weekly Lectio Divina offering.

There are currently 16 potential new members and 3 members in our path to membership, whose aim is not membership but relationship, connection and information sharing.

## **Change the World**

Between the Congregational Meeting in which we approved piloting an Assistant Ministry, the Endowment Stakeholders meetings, conversations around Kitchen ops and use, Stewardship preparations, and the Strategic Visioning workshop – we are working to change our internal UUCWC world, in order to change the communities and world of which we are a part.

It has been a busy, challenging and forward-thinking month. I believe we are on the right track, with the right momentum to go from talking to plans, and from plans to action.

*Director of Congregational Life Report*

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski, Personnel Committee

From: Robin Pugh

Date: 2/12/25

Re: Monthly DCL Report

**Celebrate Life (Worship and Rites of Passage)**

- Our services are full. We have visitors coming every week. I seek out visitors to welcome before services and at coffee hour. It helps that I keep track of who attends our services online. People often attend online first before they attend in person.

**Create Community (Small Groups).**

- 16 new people joined our Path to Membership class. It concludes in March.
- I continue to send emails to visitors highlighting upcoming events and explaining one aspect of the worship service each week. Visitors thank me for these emails.
- I was happy to work with Lisa on a small group program on Inauguration Day. This was well attended. The people who came were grateful that this was offered.
- Chalice circles, Wellspring small groups are ongoing. I support the facilitators and lead 3 groups. I also lead Tending the Flame, the UU Parent group.

- Congregational engagement and I are working with the auction team on a pilot project. We are feeding the auction need for volunteers with newer members. These people will be teamed with a more experienced buddy (who has been trained by me or cong. Eng.) . We hope that this model, with other volunteer opportunities, can be used to integrate newer members into our community in the future.
- Kim and I will meet with the Food ministry this week to discuss ways for it to continue its mission into the future. New volunteers may need smaller discrete tasks.
- I'm meeting with several interested people this week to discuss the UUA's Building the Beloved Community Beyond the Binary and how we might be a host congregation.

## **Change the World**

- Homefront tutoring on Monday nights is going well. We continue to tutor about 27 kids with as many tutors.
- UUCWC is a safe place to be together with like-minded people who share our values. It is a place to recharge and continue working for justice. People need it and want it in our current political environment.

This primarily serves as an FYI about my professional development opportunities that benefit my leadership at UUCWC.

I attend the UUAMP, (the Association of Membership Professionals) weekly meetings when time permits. I see a Spiritual Director monthly.

## **February 2025 Board Report**

### **Intern Minister's Report**

**Lisa Schilansky**

## **Celebrate Life (Worship & Rights of Passage)**

This month brought many opportunities to provide leadership from the pulpit. On January 12th, I had my first moment of leading the Joys and Sorrows ritual on a Sunday when Rev. Kim offered the homily. This was a helpful learning moment as I continue to study the unique ways that UUCWC does this ritual.

On January 19th, I offered a service that was part history sermon, part justice call-to-action. Here I looked back at the rich relationships between UUs and the Civil Rights leaders of the 1960s, recognizing that our way forward in this terrifying, unprecedented time, is not through dominant culture saviorism, but through building genuine relationships with those most affected and taking their lead. This was also my first time participating in a fully virtual service at UUCWC, learning helpful things that I was able to take back to our Worship Team.

For January 26th I provided liturgical support and the prayer for Rev. Kim's service holding the anxiety and needs of the congregation following the first week of the new administration. Finally, on February



2nd, I again offered the Joys and Sorrows ritual paired with Rev. Kim's homily, enacting the different lessons I had learned just a few weeks prior.

Our 5th Vespers service was held on January 22nd. Due to an HVAC issue in the sanctuary, this service was also held online. Pivoting to an online-only format required four additional hours of work beyond what had already been provided for Vespers prep. I am incredibly grateful for Rev. Abbey Tennis and the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia who shared their pre-recorded audio files with us. I was able to hand build audiovisuals and reimagine the Vespers script to offer a comprehensive service, albeit one very different from the typical Vespers. After implementing a multipronged marketing strategy, and framing the service as another grounding opportunity during Inauguration Week, the attendance was quite high with twenty-one participants. I hope to build on this momentum with February's multi-platform offering on the 19th. It will be good to be able to have lay musicians supporting the service again.

Online inclusion for worship and programming continues to be a passion of mine. I was glad to be able to offer such rich online-only opportunities across the church and to be able to provide the technical support for participation of those online for the February 2nd Strategic Plan Visioning Workshop.

### **Create Community (Small Groups & Pastoral Care)**

Breathe continues to be a vibrant offering and January's session had the highest attendance yet. This includes individuals who are not very active elsewhere in the church and those who live geographically far from the church. There is a small dedicated group who come most months and each month there has continued to be at least one new attendee. At this point, approximately thirty different people have connected with Breathe. Once I am back in my new role as Assistant Minister, I will be thinking through creative offerings to ensure that those who were served by Breathe can be best served by another option which can reach a higher number of people.

I offered an additional small group program on Inauguration Day. This was well attended bringing in a broad cross-section of demographics across the church. I was delighted to plan and co-lead this with Robin. While the winter weather required us to pivot to online only, it was a vibrant group. We heard from many people how rich and necessary the offering was for that day.

My pastoral care offerings continued to increase this past month as I was able to step in to assist Rev. Kim when her scheduling needs required it.

### **Change the World**

Justice for the trans and non-binary community (both at UUCWC and more broadly in the world) continues to be a focus of my ministry. This is aligned with the Right Relations needs of UUCWC. On January 14th I offered a second iteration of Gender 101. While this had a significantly smaller attendance than the first offering (as this was held on a weekday evening, not a Sunday after church), there was a shared identity among the participants. All but one of the participants had trans loved ones and were attending this program to process their own feelings, but more importantly, to spare their loved one's trans labor. This highlighted a potential need and offering that I might make in the future around support for those who are parents and grandparents of trans and non-binary people who are looking to better educate themselves on language and a changing world.

I supported a UUCWC family who went down to DC for the National People's March on January 18th, connecting them with local DC clergy who were organizing their congregations. I did outreach to all of the

NJ and PA-area UU congregations to drum up support for the Philadelphia satellite march of the National People's March. Approximately twenty UUs marched together with the biggest showing being from First Unitarian Philadelphia. A few UUCWC members had hoped to attend but the cold weather day-of prevented them from being able. I heard from many people that my report back from this march was helpful, particularly the organizing strategies that were occurring at the pre-march rally.

In this rapidly changing time when news is flying at us at a mile a minute, my justice work is to help our people think clearly, respond from a place of grounded passion, and to best discern what their best course of action will be. I am utilizing Side With Love's materials, particularly the Love Resists: Risk, Courage, and Discernment document.

On a personal note, this will be my final board report as your Intern Minister. I am so incredibly grateful for the board's support across my eighteen months of learning. This is a very special group and I am delighted to get to return on March 30th in the new role. May our learning together continue in this new adventure. Thank you, everyone.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration,

Lisa

*Treasurer Report*

*Submitted by Denny Rogers*

## **Treasurer's Report for February 2025**

### **Cash Analysis**

After Reserved amounts and Restricted amounts are subtracted we are left with Non- Restricted/ Reserve Cash Available of \$198,281.

After subtracting:

\$37,207 operations deficit

\$7,200 in unbudgeted construction expenses.

\$64,000 Cap loan

\$12,750 to pay assistant minister position April-June 2025

We Are left with \$74,124 Non-Restricted Reserve Cash Available

+\$65,000 Est. Cap pledges to 2026

\$139,124 Opportunity Money

After Assistant Minister salary in fiscal year '25-'26 we will still have \$88,124 in reserves

**APPROVED-** 12 February-2025 Minutes