

Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing
Board of Trustees
268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road
Titusville, NJ 08560



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - FINAL
August 13, 2025
Multi-Platform Meeting

Co-Presidents Bob Alt & Chris Marietti called the online Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Also in attendance: Vice-President Karen Kent and Secretary Michelle Zechner; Trustees: Patty Mikes, Wendy Stasolla, David Thomas, and Assistant Minister Lisa Schilansky. Excused: Treasurer Denny Rodgers ; Bob Busch, Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildszewski, Director of Congregational Life, Robin Pugh, Congregational Administrator, Marilyn Gonzalez

First Hour

Consent agenda (no vote): Co-Presidents Bob Alt and Chris Marietti reviewed the Executive Report. Assistant Minister Lisa Schilansky provided updates. The group discussed the Treasurer Report.

Chancel Access Improvement Presentation: UUCWC Members Holly Bussey and Sandy Muccioli presented on a proposed chancel accessibility project, highlighting the need for a scaled and ADA-compliant plan that integrates with the sanctuary space. They emphasized the importance of balancing functionality and compliance, referencing a previous proposal they had submitted a year ago, and expressed concerns with the existing proposed plan. They shared an alternative plan that further enhanced ADA compliance and aesthetic appeal. Bob A. thanked them for their work in bringing accessibility to the board's attention, noting that a generous anonymous donation had made it possible to revisit the project.

The board members discussed the project and raised concerns about ramp installation on the right side of the chancel in regards to aesthetics, functionality, and accessibility. Rev. Lisa and co-presidents Bob Alt and Chris Marietti will discuss these concerns and share the alternative plan with UUCWC member Farzad Shadzik to better understand how the existing plan meets ADA compliance, specifically regarding the right side of the chancel extension and ramp. It was noted that the lighting improvement proposal was previously voted upon and approved at an Ad-Hoc Board Meeting on 8/3/25. Upon further discussion and reflection, the co-presidents suggested a vote to extend the 1st Tier of the chancel, hide the wiring and an accessibility

ramp on the left side, and if the funds permit to drop microphones near the piano. It was noted that more information is needed for the *right* side of the chancel accessibility ramp, therefore the board requested that this work will be voted upon separately once all of the information is gathered (e.g. ADA compliance and cost). The vote to extend the 1st Tier of the chancel, hide the wiring, add an accessibility ramp on the *left* side of the chancel and drop microphone (if funds permit) passed unanimously.

Second Hour

Upcoming Events: Rev. Lisa noted that Water Communion will be held on 9/6. The children's faith engagement programming will begin on 9/13. Robin's retirement party will be held on 1/11/26.

Board Liaisons: Co-Presidents discussed the current board liaisons and made requests for volunteers. Following discussion the following assignments were determined:

Congregational Engagement: David Thomas

Endowment: A member of the group is needed. Trustee Wendy Stasolla offered to be a liaison if one was still needed.

Facilities: Denny Rogers

Personnel: Karen Kent

Stewardship: Patty Mikes

Strategic Implementation: Bob Busch

Safety/ Digital: Wendy Stasolla

Safety/Building: David Thomas

Online Community: Wendy Stasolla, however, there was discussion about whether this falls under Congregational Engagement

Discussed the role of the liaison briefly. Committee liaison's are asked to share relevant information and needs back to the board. They are also to be a point person for the committee to the board.

Final Financial Health Task Force Charter: Bob A. covered the finalization of the Financial Health Task Force Charter, which aims to address budget balancing for the years 2025 to 2028, considering factors such as revenue streams, cultural norms, and expenses. Bob A. read the charter and highlighted key considerations, including the congregation's use of cash savings for

staffing and the impact of volunteer capacity changes. This will be provided to the task force for consideration.

Congregational Pulse Check In: It was noted that there is a need for additional baby changing stations as the only one currently is in the gender neutral restroom which will be undergoing renovations. It was suggested that the Building Committee should consider this and perhaps install one in the nursery.

Housekeeping & Action Items: Co-Presidents will submit an article as co-chairs this month to Cross Currents.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Zechner

Secretary, Board of Trustees

August 2025 Board Report
Minister for Justice and Pastoral Care's Report
Rev. Lisa Schilansky

Celebrate Life (Worship & Rights of Passage)

This board report covers the latter half of Rev. Kim's sabbatical and the latter half of my four consecutive weeks of preaching. Recognizing the heaviness of the current events and the seriousness of the charge I had previously given from the pulpit, I intentionally went into the 13th and 20th with more of a pastoral, heart-centered, levity-driven approach, exploring our interconnection in a Joys and Sorrows service and then exploring the joy of nostalgia. On August 3rd I guest preached at one of our sibling congregations, an important part of Unitarian Universalist ministry, extending Washington Crossing's outreach to South Jersey. Finally after many weeks away, it was a delight to return to the sanctuary this past Sunday to join with Rev. Kim and offer liturgical support for her service.

Create Community (Small Groups & Pastoral Care)

The latter half of Rev. Kim's sabbatical continued to require extensive pastoral care focus, surpassing the expected time allotted due to the high acuity of the congregational need over the course of those five-and-a-half weeks. Some of this is aligned with the past pastoral needs of the needs of the congregation and some was exacerbated by unexpected emergencies.

In Rev. Kim's absence, I continued to cover the weekly Lectio Devina program where a dedicated group of four-to-five regulars connect deeply with one another, warmly welcoming any newcomer who joins.

With August came the successful second meeting of the Caregivers support group, a larger group than before. The original plan had been to set the group into lay leadership after four or so sessions, but due to launching in the summer and the varied attendance thus far, it will likely take many more sessions to build group cohesion before lay leadership can take over. The intention is that the group will be closed after September to allow the cohesion to form.

This past month I have also been exploring the idea of the ways in which we can foster UUCWC as a community of communities. While there are many pastoral needs at the church that can be met through Rev. Kim and my leadership (such as the Caregivers support group and other programming offerings that may be coming in the future), what informal support might our congregants receive from each other? What messaging can help these relationships develop especially if it is possible that our staffing model might be shrinking next year?

Change the World

This month I continue to connect with area clergy, meeting to discuss ways that we might be able to coordinate across faith traditions to work for a more just world. These connections are important in any justice work and in our church's goal to make a difference in our local community.

Activism 101 (part 1) on July 13th was incredibly well attended and I provided a wealth of follow-up resources. This training focused on how best to identify the different forms of

protest and how best to keep yourself safe. In the fall I will be offering Activism 101 (part 2) on the best practices for communicating with your legislators.

I continue to provide logistical support for our Council for Faith in Action ministries and am working to better bolster our state action networks while beginning to think of ways that we might nonpartisanly engage in the upcoming gubernatorial election.

Last week I attended a permitted protest in Pennsylvania calling for an end to US weapons to Gaza and an immediate allowance for food aid to stop the devastating manmade famine that is occurring. While this was not a protest where I was able to lead congregants in person, I led by example making the congregation aware of this action and continuing to speak out and promote it after the fact, making clear action steps that can be taken.

In this time when it can be tempting to fall into fear and immobilization, I continue to illuminate the horrors in the world and to speak about our moral imperative to respond, while balancing our congregation's need to feel joy and feel their spirits cared for. A daunting and humbling task, and one of which I am honored to take on as your Minister for Justice and Pastoral Care.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration,
Lisa

Director of Congregational Life Report

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski

From: Robin Pugh

Date: August 12, 2025

Re: Monthly DCL Report _____

Celebrate Life (Worship and Rites of Passage)

- My retirement on Jan 11th was announced to the Board and to the congregation. Before I begin to prepare to pass on my duties, it would help to know what of what I do will be done by paid staff and what will be done by volunteers.
- In July, I was away on 2 weeks of vacation and one week of study leave. I returned on July 22nd refreshed, renewed and ready to finish strong on Jan 11th.

Create Community (Small Groups)

- In August, I prepare for launching fall faith engagement classes. These classes are great for connecting people. In preparation for Fall FE, I will be recruiting facilitators, training facilitators, advertising and recruiting participants and buying needed supplies for each class offered.
This fall we will offer:
- 1 section of UU Wellspring curriculum called "Love at the Center". Love at the Center takes a deep look at our covenant and each of the recently amended article 2 UU values in 8 sessions.
- Our 6 chalice circles restart in September. As always in August, I encouraged new people to join, check in on people leaving groups and train new facilitators.
- 2 sections of Creativity Matters, chalice circles using art to reflect on the themes.
- Kim will offer our Pathways to membership class. In October and November.

Change the World

- Our 6 Wacky Wednesdays for the HomeFront children are a big success. Two of the evenings were hosted by UUCWC members at their home: Marcia Whitman for a movie night. Maria Nicolo and David Earling for flower and vegetable picking at Gravity Hill Farm.
- I am gearing up to recruit more tutors and meal makers for our Fall HomeFront tutoring program. I plan to continue to oversee (with a partner TBA) our tutoring program after I retire.

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. I am on the UU Wellspring Board.