

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



**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - FINAL**  
**December 10, 2025**

### ***Multi-Platform Meeting***

*Co-President Chris Marietti called the multi-platform Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:04 PM. Also in attendance: Vice-President Karen Kent, Treasurer Denny Rodgers and Secretary Michelle Zechner; Trustees: Bob Busch, Patty Mikes, Wendy Stasolla, David Thomas, Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildzewski, Congregational Administrator, Marilyn Gonzalez, and Assistant Minister Lisa Schilansky, Director of Congregational Life, Robin Pugh Excused: Bob Alt*

## **First Hour**

**Consent agenda (no vote):** Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildzewski identified future monthly board meetings as being multi-platform so that trustees may attend in-person or online. Changes to this practice will be communicated to all members prior to the meeting. Treasurer Denny Rodgers noted that the church remains in a deficit budget and the incoming pledges have not grown. Congregational Administrator Marilyn Gonzalez reviewed the new online giving platform implementation and the new ways to donate, including a method to offset transaction fees by donors if desired.

**Assistant Minister Position and vote:** The Board discussed the upcoming departure of Rev. Lisa in April and the desire to keep a part-time Assistant Minister position. The Board noted that hiring a part-time Assistant Minister was important at this time of increased pastoral care needs and the growth of the congregation. Hiring a new Assistant Minister is a long-term process and will take multiple steps and month. After discussion, the Board voted to begin the process of hiring a half-time Assistant Minister for this year. The vote was unanimously approved. Rev. Kim Wildzewski discussed potential alternatives if we are unable to hire a half-time Assistant Minister and recommended using funds to support a ministerial intern if an Assistant Minister could not be identified. The Board voted to approve funds for a ministerial intern if we do not acquire an Assistant Minister, which

passed unanimously. Rev. Kim will share this information and check-in with the congregation about this.

**Cash Reserves discussion and vote:** Denny reviewed the Financial Health Task Force recommendation of shifting one-third of planned reserves to the operating budget as recommended by the Financial Health Task Force to address the budget deficit and help to fund the Assistant Minister Position. The board approved reducing operating reserves from 3 to 2 months to free up working cash for congressional investment.

**Upcoming Events:** Rev. Kim outlined a schedule of events for December and January, including a chili cook-off (12/14), blue holiday Vespers (12/17), 12/21 bake sale, 12/28 generations service, 1/11 service and party celebrating the retirement of Director of Congregational Life Robin Pugh, 1/11 rental for a spanish guitar event, and 2/7 winter Board retreat. A memorial service for member Sue Saddlemire is scheduled for 1/3/26.

## Second Hour

**Board Trustee Resignation and Nominations:** Co-president Chris Marietti noted that a Board member resigned, and noted that additional nominees are needed to fill the now empty slot. The Board identified several potential members to fill this slot for 1.5 years. Denny will contact a potential new member to assess interest. The Board also discussed the Finance Chair role. The current Finance Chair is willing to continue for another year and the search should begin shortly to identify a future candidate.

**Congregational Meeting Planning:** Rev. Kim discussed plans for a major all-church communication event scheduled for February 8th, the Sunday after the board retreat, which will coincide with Stewardship Sunday. The event will focus on sharing financial sustainability recommendations, board goals, and the decision to begin a search for an assistant minister, with the format including both in-person and online participation. This will be an opportunity for comprehensive communication and discussion.

**Immigration enforcement policy:** Assistant Minister Reverend Lisa and Trustee David Thomas discussed a new immigration enforcement policy, with Rev. Lisa explaining the hierarchy of who should be contacted if immigration officers arrive. The policy was reviewed with the group. David presented examples of judicial and administrative warrants. There was a call for a vote to approve the new immigration enforcement officer engagement policy which was unanimously approved.

**Chancel update and Recognition:** Marilyn provided an update on the sanctuary renovation project, noting that carpet installation would be delayed until next week due to measurement issues, while painting was expected to be completed by Friday. The Board expressed gratitude and recognition for the church members who have supported the accessibility of the chancel and completion of the project.

**Congregational Pulse Check-In:** The Board reviewed recent guest speakers and the length of services. There was also discussion about strategies to promote upcoming Vesper services. Additionally, there was a brief discussion about grounds improvements regarding the flagstone path near the front door, as there is a large gap between flagstones and the front door. It was noted that Congregational Engagement is active in speaking with new members.

**Housekeeping & Action Items:** This month's CrossCurrents article was written by Secretary Michelle Zechner, and co-Presidents Bob Alt and Chris Marietti will write a piece in January. Rev. Kim noted that there is a draft new covenant that will be reviewed in the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02.

Respectfully Submitted,

***Michelle Zechner***

Secretary, Board of Trustees

## Appendix: Executive, Staff and Treasurer Reports

### UUCWC Executive Meeting - 12/3/25

In attendance: Rev. Kim, Dennis Rogers, Chris Marietti, Bob Alt

- Financial Task Force recommendations follow-up
  - Denny will write up his perspective on the Task Force recommendations and share w/ Board. (Denny, before 12/10/25 Board mtg.)
    - For vote at next Board meeting: Reducing cash reserves from 3 to 2 months.
  - Plan to host a congregational informational meeting in late Jan./early Feb. (after mid-year Board retreat) as a "State of Union" summary where we review goals progress, talk about Financial Health Task Force outcomes, and share news of initiating search process for Assistant Minister. This timing will also help kick-off the Stewardship drive.
    - Kim will pick date, coordinating with Marilyn on church calendar, before end of year. (Kim)
  - Draft mid-year retreat agenda, share w/ Exec team (Bob, Chris)
- Assistant minister posting
  - Next Board meeting: Solicit vote/approval to proceed with initiating the search process for Assistant Minister. (Denny)
    - Willing to consider an intern as contingency plan if don't find candidate.
- Chancel update and post-chancel recognition
  - Chancel is looking great. Carpet to be installed tomorrow. Furniture, etc. to be moved back to the chancel but this coming Sunday will still have chairs "in the round".
  - Plan for public thank you acknowledging all members who shared a long term vision, and for making it happen. Written thank you will follow. Additional idea considered for a dinner recognition, to be given more thought before decision.
- Board update
  - Patty will be resigning from the Board. We will need a replacement, ideally for 1.5 years, but .5 year (until end of this fiscal year) could be an option.
  - Parker Cohen expressed interest at the committee fair but is not available yet. Will solicit candidate ideas at next Board meeting.
  - We likely need a congregational vote. Need to check bylaws.
- Robin's retirement party
  - Jan. 11. Susan Vigilante taking the lead, using her sister as caterer. \$2000 budget being used for food, flower arrangements, decorations. Kim creating a Kudoboard for congregation to sign and RSVP.
  - Gift certificate for Kripalu, yoga retreat center, and a home-made stained glass item from congregant.
  - Food drive for Interfaith Food Alliance in Morrisville will also occur at the party.
- Key staff updates

- Re-allocating Robin responsibilities is happening. Adult RE up and running. Working on Chalice Group facilitators and community engagement. Also working on new styles of communication needed for connectivity with Robin's departure.
- Dates for future Exec Meetings
  - Move back to Thursday at 7:00pm. First Thursday of each month.
  - Bob will send out invites on calendar.
  - January, will move to Jan. 8th at 7:00pm.
- Next Board agenda
  - Vote on Assistant Minister hiring process - Denny
  - Vote on cash reserves - Denny
  - Update on Patty / Board candidates - Bob/Chris
  - "State of the union" congregational meeting - Kim/Bob
  - Chancel update and recognition - Chris
  - Pulse check on the congregation- All
  - Upcoming key dates

## **Senior Minister Board Report December 2025**

I'm grateful that the last month has been comparably more manageable. Thank you all for your continued leadership and participation that has made that true.

### **Worship**

Since we last met, Sundays have been full, challenging and meaningful. While still in the round, awaiting the chancel renovation project to conclude, we welcomed activist and lawyer Jim Johnson; for the second year, we hosted the Hopewell Valley Transgender Day of Remembrance and Resilience service; through a metaphor of hill running, and "trusting our training", I told the congregation that we would not be hiring for Robin's position and wondered together about filling Rev. Lisa's; Congregational Engagement switched out the lanyards of our in-person members and friends (white for long term and green for members and visitors of 1 year or less), giving me a perfect opportunity to kick off December on small, slow miracles, and to introduce image descriptions, too.

One change in Worship that I hope you've noticed: thanks to the wisdom at a recent Worship Associate meeting, we are now including an online chalice lighter. We hope this helps our remote folks feel better connected, and more known.

I'm turning my attention now to our Blue Holidays Vespers service, Christmas Eve, and the rites of passage services that will grieve and remember Sue Saddlemier and Lydia McMorrow.

Additionally, I want to offer that the congregation has been generous, engaged and offering themselves for small and large leadership opportunities throughout the last month; it feels active and connected on Sundays and throughout the week.

### **Celebrate Life**

As mentioned above, this last month we lost two beloved members, Sue and Lydia. Karen Streit, a friend of the congregation (Alison Barron's mom) also died unexpectedly. Families have lost dear pets; members have lost young friends; relationships are changing, ending and beginning in new ways. The joys and sorrows woven within the congregation right now are not small or light, but we are holding them, as best we can, together.

I want to lift up Jo Wiedman, Barbara Drew, Sandy Metzler and Susan Mitchell who created care packages for our neighbors on Old Washington Crossing Rd. Chapsticks, hot cocoa, trailmix and more were put in mailboxes with a "warm wishes" note from UUCWC. We hope small efforts like this will help with our relationship with our neighbors, and create a greater sense of community and safety in our part of Titusville.

### **Change the World**

Please note the covenant in our pre-reads, as I will be asking the Board to consider it for a vote of affirmation. This covenant comes out of conversations with Heather Edwards, and then Right

Relations, and is an attempt to standardize our expectations and promises of each other throughout the congregation. I will speak more on this at our meeting.

I'm beginning staff evaluations, which likely won't be completed until the end of January.

As mentioned above, I'm working closely with Congregational Engagement as they continue to explore ways of connecting members and visitors with each other and the congregation.

I have met one-on-one with all but two worship tech ministry members, to better understand each person's skills and interests. In January I will be meeting with the whole team to hopefully break some patterns and introduce new models that might create more health in that ministry.

I continue to work to build out Robin's position into lay leadership spaces. I want to again lift up:

Our new Adult Religious Engagement leaders: Kathy Frey, Jim Sanders and Eileen Spedding. These three have already planned out the next winter ARE cycle.

Susan Irgang, Jane Root and Anne Godlasky have also been moving swiftly and thoughtfully around online / remote engagement. By way of their leadership, we have, for the first time, a comprehensive list of who attends remotely and how often. We've only just learned that, while we frequently have around 60-80+ remote attendees on a Sunday, those who have come 70% or more since September is about 20, including 2 frequent visitors. Continuing to track this type of engagement, and additional (non-Sunday) engagement, will help us better understand who this group is and what they might want or need in order to feel a part of the congregation, even from afar.

Lastly on the online community ministry team: the leaders have created a survey and will be offering focus groups to garner more, direct information.

Susan Vigilante and Wendy Stasolla are spearheading our in person community building opportunities. With thanks to these two, Kristin Schoenleber, Jo Wiedman, and John Harvi, we had a great family movie night in the sanctuary a week ago! Up next is the Chili Cook Off, Robin's Farewell, another movie night planned for February, and more.

Additionally, this past Sunday Robin met with the Hosts to begin handing their work off to Rachel and me. I will be facilitating the parent group, Tending the Flame, starting in February. I continue to struggle with shifting / evolving the small group facilitators into something that feels more manageable for me to lead without Robin, and that I believe would be equally beneficial to the group. This will perhaps take the biggest lift, but perhaps also only time.

Lastly, I am relieved to tell you that I've begun coaching sessions with a well respected colleague and coach. Of all the helpful things he and I already discussed, perhaps the one I hope to relay to this leadership team is this:

The most successful large churches are not run or ruled by point by point strategic plans. Rather, a shared vision, dream and values. So: how do we (the congregation) all row toward the same effort, rather than feel consumed by the structure and staffing that, though essential, are not the reason people come to UUCWC?

With respect and thanks,  
Rev. Kim

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

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

Worship continues to be vibrant at UUCWC, an opportunity to gather together. The gasp that people made when they entered the congregation on our first Sunday in the round quickly shifted to affirming exclamations and appreciations. Our construction-accommodating seating arrangement has permitted greater closeness and community-building during a pivotal time of grief and transition in the congregation.

In addition to providing worship support each of the last five weeks, I offered a post-Thanksgiving Sunday worship, a hybrid between our monthly Vespers services and the Sunday liturgy. Recognizing the ways that we all benefit from an opportunity to slow down amidst the holidays, the service utilized music, poetry, and silence for a more embodied, rather than intellectual, worship experience. I had the deep pleasure of co-creating and co-leading this service with Erin who was a vital partner.

Yet again this year, Rev. Kim and I had the honor of providing worshipful elements, in addition to logistical support, as we hosted Hope Rises Up for their annual Trans Day of Remembrance and Resilience vigil. This important service was an opportunity for us to open our doors to the community, live into our values, and provide an important ministry for our trans and non-binary congregants as well. This vigil (and the UUCWC-only one that I created and hosted in 2023) all require quite a bit of labor. If the Assistant Minister position does not continue, it will be very important to have lay support to enact this ministry and to serve as hosts for Hope Rises Up (if we continue to host) so that the onus does not fall solely on Rev. Kim due to the heavy lift it takes to make the vigil happen.

November's Vespers service, unfortunately, was canceled with hours' notice due to a personal emergency. I am greatly looking forward to December's service when I will be co-leading with Rev. Kim for our special annual Blue Holiday service.

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

A greater portion of my focus this past month has been on the pastoral care needs of the congregation. Whether in the hospital, at the church, or over the phone, I have been offering support. With the deaths of Sue and Lydia, I stepped back into the Caregivers' Support Group, offering the newly lay-led group ministerial presence as they processed these losses and their own caregiving relationships.

This month also brought the very successful launch of the new 20s and 30s group. On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, six congregants (and two infants) joined me out at a church-provided brunch in

the community. This was a vibrant group and a wonderful mix of veteran congregants and those brand new to the church. There was great interest in future outings and connections were made at the brunch for future connections outside of the formal group.

Continuing my work around establishing a framework in our church for a Community of Communities, I am in the process of creating a new Caring Cohort for adults feeling overwhelmed by the stressors of caring for aging parents. At this point my focus is on outreach and initial pastoral care support. I will hold an initial convening in January to help make things feel less intimidating as the connections are made and then this will be an informal, lay-led cohort.

This past month, I met with the Caring Ministry Team for our quarterly meeting and continue to stay in close contact with them as they provide vital lay support to our less-connected congregants. At the meeting we had a helpful discussion on the benefits of the two-minister model (particularly the pastoral care portfolio) and what the team will need if the church converts back to one minister. We will hold two more meetings (one additional meeting than the quarterly schedule dictates) before my parental leave this April, ensuring that things are sufficiently covered before the leave.

## **Change the World**

In this realm of church life, most of my energy currently is going into the leadership transition around Loaves and Fishes. This large endeavor, that has occurred every March for the past 30+ years, has long been overseen by Ed and Ronnie Dobrowolski. They both approached me this summer asking for help with a succession plan as part of Rev. Kim's broader plan to direct all one-time and time-limited justice ministries to live under the Faith Action Ministry purview. On December 21<sup>st</sup> I will be holding an information session to help broaden the volunteer pool for this endeavor and I have also been issuing many personal invitations as well, offering it as a lower bar to church involvement for the many people who have been interested in getting involved in justice and service.

This past week, I filmed and distributed a 15-minute Activism-102 training to the congregation on effective strategies for connecting with your legislators. I offer this as a follow-up to Activism 101, a live workshop provided this summer, on keeping oneself safe in moments of protest and other nonviolent direct action.

As always, I continue to support our various justice ministry teams with logistical navigation. I am working closely with our new liaison for UU Faith Action NJ to help them get acclimated into the new role. I am helping Earth and Climate Ministry explore next steps after their November 2<sup>nd</sup> event, and I am supporting the soon-to-be-newly-named FEFT as they continue to examine ways to reimagine their ministry and their leadership structure.

David Thomas and I continue to work closely together on our church's new immigration officer engagement policy, which you will see included as a pre-read this month. This was created in consultation with many of my ministerial colleagues and influenced by a variety of

churches' policies, retrofitted into UUCWC's needs. No policy will completely address the ever-shifting reality, but I am confident that we have arrived at a holistic and safety-oriented option that centers our values.

Finally, on November 16<sup>th</sup> I offered my latest iteration of Gender 101. This Question Box-style program was well attended (both in person and online) and was very illuminating in the need to continue educational programs of this type. Two individuals were repeat attendees (there to learn more), but otherwise everyone else was new and fairly new to the topic. As we engage seriously in the justice and pastoral question of trans welcoming and inclusion, it is vital that we continue to educate ourselves as a congregation.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration,  
Rev. Lisa

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski  
From: Robin Pugh  
Date: December 10, 2025  
Re: monthly DCL Report

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

- I continue to welcome visitors and connect people to groups at UUCWC.

### **Create Community (Small Groups)**

- Kim and I are working together to transition my duties to a combination of volunteers and staff.  
Sunday Hosts: Rachel will do the scheduling, Kim will do the training, the hosts will self-manage visitor welcoming.  
Chalice Circles: The facilitators will support each other. One facilitator each month will create a template on the topic of the month for all groups to use. Rachel will do the administration.  
Visitors: Hosts, Rachel, Kim and congregational engagement all have a role in welcoming and connecting visitors (online and in person). All parties will suggest people for Pathways.  
Membership: Congregational Engagement will integrate people after Pathways.  
ARE: a new ARE committee has been formed and are meeting.
- A new Pathways class is planned for February/ 2026.
- I held a Host Thank you and what's next brunch last Sunday letting the hosts know how my tasks were being split up between them, Kim and Rachel.

### **Change the World**

- As this is my final Board meeting, I want you to know how deeply the Board has inspired me month after month. While the world often feels on fire, at UUCWC I have been privileged to witness thoughtful, ethical decision-making by kind and generous people who truly care. Watching the Board govern with UU values at the forefront gives me hope. It is a pleasure to be with such good humans.  
I will miss you all.

*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.

**Marilyn Gonzalez**  
**BOT Report for December 2025**

## **Create Community**

Most of the last month was taken up with helping to create an End of Year card with the Stewardship team, dealing with the chancel project, and continuing work on Realm. With the EoY campaign launched at the end of November, I was able to return to the work of setting up Realm. This work is ongoing with training sessions planned to help Lynne Quinto and I set up the system. We have also signed a contract with Vanco which is an online giving platform that will help us streamline the way we do giving. This is all taking up a significant amount of time as we navigate all these new systems with the hope of launching them in time for the pledge season.

Our change to Constant Contact is complete and we have been successfully (for the most part) been getting our church communications out. The new year will bring a focus on our communications strategy including Facebook, a new Instagram account, and re-vamping of our website. It will be a slow and methodical process because social media and communications is so often rushed into and then completely botched, so my plan is to go about it the same way I did with finding the church management system. I want to gather a team of interested parties to explore ways to manage a communications system effectively and sustainably.

## **Celebrate Life**

Our membership numbers are 270 church members, 30 Friends, 16 Participants and 27 Attendees.

In November, we saw the passing of Sue Saddlemire and Karen Streit.

A celebration of Sue Saddlemire's life is scheduled for January.

## **Change the (UUCWC) World**

Water has been a real issue during my time at UUCWC. We recently had the anode rod replaced in the water heater which we (hope) were the cause of the water tasting like sulfur. We need to wait and see if this fixes the situation. Stay tuned.

We have recently also had issues with smells coming from the water. We thought we fixed the problem by hydrating the traps but seemed to have had some more problems this

weekend. Again, stay tuned.

The downstairs bathrooms are pretty much done. There are a few aesthetic issues that need to be resolved, and we will probably just do those in-house. I will be confirming this with Farzad this week. The chancel is closer to being done and I have informed Mizu that we have a December 20 'hard out'. We still need carpeting on the ramps, railings for the ramps, and posts or rails that need to be figured. I'm hopeful that this will be done in the next two weeks.

## Treasurer's Report for November 2025

### November YTD Actual vs November YTD Budget

Plate is at almost 122% of budget.

Pledges for '25-'26 are at 113%. '24-'25 pledges are at 292% of budget.  
As a result, Operating pledges are at 119% of budget.

Merrill Lynch income is only at 87% of budget. This is expected after the \$57K HVAC reduction from ML balance.

Total revenue is at 120% of budget.

Expenditures are currently at 101.6% of budget.

### Cash Analysis

#### Projected '25-'26 final balance

\$102,000	Unrestricted Cash Reserves (savings)
\$14,000	Endowment grant to Board which <u>WAS NOT</u> included in Budget
\$5,000	State PFAS contamination refund
\$4,000	Contractor's Insurance rebate
<u>\$56,000</u>	Reduction of Operations Reserves (from 3 to 2 months)
\$181,000	
<b>\$81,000</b>	Anticipated deficit (\$99K - \$18,000 personnel savings)
\$100,000	Unrestricted Cash reserves (savings).

#### Projected '26-'27 final balance

\$100,000	Unrestricted Cash Reserves (savings)
\$25,000	Cap Campaign pledges due in 2026. *
<u>\$14,000</u>	Endowment grant
\$139,000	
<b>\$60,000</b>	Anticipated deficit (assistant - less personnel adj.)
\$79,000	Unrestricted Cash reserves (savings).

- \$13,000 received as of 10/30/25 held in Cap Account

**SEE TREASURER'S COMMENTS ON THE FINANCE TASK FORCE  
RECOMMENDATIONS IN PRE READS**