

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



**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - APPROVED**  
**Wednesday August 12, 2020**

## **Zoom Meeting due to Covid-19 Virus Social Isolation**

*President Nathalie Edmond called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:06 PM. Also in attendance: Vice President, Sue Saddlemire; Treasurer, Jim Sanders; Secretary, Colleen McCourt; Scribe, Michael Howe-Smith; Trustees: Michael Waas, Jamie Evanini, Patrick Kahney; Senior Minister, Rev. Kim Wildszewski; Congregational Administrator, Susan Irgang; and DLRE, Robin Pugh. Absent: Jeffrey Lang, Trustee*

# First Hour

**Consent Agenda** - see appendix for complete reports.

## **DLRE Title Change and Contract Amendment**

- The Board reviewed a recommendation from Robin Pugh, Director of Lifespan Religious Education, to change her position's title to Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement. This change reflects the more contemporary language currently in use by the UUA, and more accurately reflects the nature of Robin's role at UUCWC, which continues to evolve beyond religious education into other aspects of congregational life and support.
- The Board also reviewed a proposed amendment to the DLRE contract that would formally document the terms of future sabbaticals; while UUCWC has supported a DLRE sabbatical in the past, it was not previously formalized in the contract.
- Additional details can be referenced in the appendix.
- There was a motion to approve both proposed changes. The Board passed the motion unanimously via Zoom poll.

## **Treasurer's Report and Related Discussion**

- Board Treasurer Jim Sanders reported that UUCWC continues to be in good financial shape overall. **ACTIONS** and items of note include:
  - While we ended the month ahead of budget, annual program fund dues to UUA were mis-posted from September to July; correction is in progress.
  - The July electric bill was unexpectedly high. Congregational Administrator Susan Irgang and Capital Campaign Treasurer George Faulkner are investigating the issue with PSE&G to ensure that solar panel offsets are being properly tracked and applied.
  - Jim Sanders sold 13 solar credits in July.
  - Insurance payment was completed in July according to budget.

- Due to very low rate of return, funds in CDs were recently moved to a cash account, where they will collect more interest while the Finance Committee continues to seek other types of potential investment accounts.
- Annual pledges are coming in steadily but a bit slower than usual.
- Congregational Administrator Susan Irgang is reconciling the Paycheck Protection Program loan that was made available to UUCWC to pay for staffing as a result of the CARES Act. Reverend Kim is reconciling the UUA's Chalice Lighter Grant which supported the assistant minister position. Funds sent to UUCWC in error after the term of these loans/grants will be returned.
- Final auction figures included gross income of \$41,472 and net income of \$37,696. We may have to issue some refunds due to COVID-19-related cancellations.
- Additional details can be referenced in the appendix.

### **Finance Committee Roles and Future State Considerations**

- Jim Sanders and Board President Nathalie Edmond summarized the findings of recent discussions with members of the current Finance Committee as well as past UUCWC treasurers. The meetings were held in an effort to understand the current allocation of congregational volunteer work, to evaluate the sustainability of current practices, and to enable informed succession planning for the future.
  - As we look to transition to new Finance Chair and Treasurer roles next year, the goal is to address the short-term need while also considering the congregation's needs for the next 3 to 5 years. As we continue to grow, workload and responsibilities on Finance Committee members continue to increase and are potentially unsustainable.
  - **ACTIONS:** Potential infrastructure investments could include purchasing new software that would increase efficiency, as well as hiring part-time book-keeping staff or adjusting Congregational Administrator Susan Irgang's portfolio to include more financial duties. The Board will continue to engage in information gathering with Reverend Kim and staff to understand the potential impact and recommendations associated with Susan taking on more responsibilities.
- Additional details can be referenced in the appendix.

### **Policies and Procedures Review**

- The Board re-reviewed the "Disruptive Behavior" Policy and "Removal of a Board Member" Policy. While both policies were approved by the Board in May of 2020, the Board decided to review each policy's respective clauses regarding calling the police in certain situations, in light of current national conversations on policing.
  - The Board discussed potential theological and logistical considerations in detail, and **held a Zoom consensus poll** to determine whether to send the policies back to the Right Relations Committee for further discussion. Based on the results, which were not a unanimous consensus, further discussion was held. The Board ultimately decided that Nathalie will speak to Right Relations, but that this should also be part of a larger conversation within the congregation in the future. The Board will consider ways to engage the congregation as part of its larger goal-setting discussion in September.

- The Board re-reviewed the draft of the The Faith Expression and Funding Team (FEFT) Policy. Upon review last month, the Board requested edits to the policy that would reflect a focus on financial equity and centering the 8th Principle. A motion was held to approve the policy with these new revisions in place. The Board passed the motion unanimously via Zoom poll and the policy will be posted to the UUCWC website.

# Second Hour

## Executive Session

The Board entered executive session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss general aspects of church policy.

## Board Liaison Reports - Finance/Capital Campaign

Per Michael Howe-Smith, Board Trustee and Scribe, and the Board's Liaison to the Capital Campaign Committee, the Committee made a recommendation to refinance existing mortgage debt now, knowing that it is too early to seek financial obligation on the planned expansion. There was a motion to approve this recommendation. The Board passed the motion unanimously via Zoom poll.

## Housekeeping and Other Action Items

- There is a Council meeting on 10/20.
- Board Trustee Jamie Evanini will write the Board's Crosscurrents article for September.
- The Board deferred some agenda topics to future meetings and/or the upcoming Board retreat due to time:
  - Reflections from General Assembly
  - Continuing Board roles for new year; the Board may wish to evaluate ongoing need for timekeeper and process observer roles during Board meetings in the future.
  - Consideration of "essential ministry" for this year will be discussed at the Board retreat on 9/26; the Board will also solicit information from the congregation on this topic at an upcoming Board chat in September (to be announced).
  - The Board agreed to read "Simple Church" in preparation for the Board retreat.

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Michael Howe-Smith**

Scribe, Board of Trustees

**Colleen McCourt**

Secretary, Board of Trustees

**Appendix: staff, executive-team, and treasurer reports**

## Treasurer Report – August 2020 Board – July Financials

### **The month in review:**

July, being the start of the fiscal year that remains virtual is a good time to compare to last July as a starting point to see patterns that will allow us to make our end of quarter decisions, re budgets in October.

### **INCOME**

Overall, the Total income for this past July stood at \$53,257, 89% of last year's \$6,800. Some of this income was the sale of SRECs to the tune of \$3,512. Much of the difference is roughly \$11,000 in pledge income below last year, but still 96% of budget – this difference may very well be fewer prepayments prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **EXPENSES:**

While the expenses are tracking 25% below budget, several items to note. Our APF support is paid on a quarterly basis, but the budget still is reporting on a monthly basis which show a savings as \$5,997 was not spent in July.

The electric utility bill came in at over \$900, 33% over budgeted amount. That is being investigated by Susan and George Faulkner, as PSE&G states that the solar panels are not reporting what is generated properly.

With a net income for July of \$10,342.80 and with the UUA APF due of \$5,997, our **realistic budget surplus for the fiscal year to date is \$4,345.80 vs \$10,526 (after APF removed) for July 2019.**

### **TREASURER TRANSITION:**

A meeting was held on Sunday August 9<sup>th</sup> with representatives of Board, Finance, Staff and all recent past Treasurers to move forward on a conversation around how to move forward this year and plan for the future as it relates to Treasurers, Finance Chairs and Staff job outlines. See Executive team minutes and Presidents notes on that meeting for more detail. We will be discussing this at the month's board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Sanders, Treasurer

**Minister's Board Report**  
**August 2020**  
**Rev. Kim Wildszewski**

**Create Community**

I am working to reenter the community with intentionality; setting fair expectations for myself and the congregation and trying to model my ministry through my unavoidable public mourning.

I have set up a reentry support group made up of four trusted colleagues including my Coach Rev. Jen Crow and Beloved Conversations co creator Rev. Ashley Horan. One colleague offered that it would undercut my work with the congregation on grief, authenticity, and boundaries to reenter pretending all was normal for me.

With the start of July I have resumed my regular summer schedule of leading worship every other week. Lay members and professional clergy are filling the pulpit. As of June, there is now a public list of supply preachers who are POC. When filling the pulpit with clergy this will be our priority list. On a similar note, our payment guidelines have changed rather drastically. For our geoindex it is now \$385 to compensate a preacher, even for one virtual service (previously it was \$250 for one service, \$300 for two). This may affect our request for more money for next year's worship budget.

I've participated in or listened to webinars on virtual worship, public theology in times of covid, and a civil rights summit. I've met with the Worship Associates once and the leadership numerous times. I'm leading the WA retreats (two part) August 10 and 18 and have recruited five new WAs: Noelle Kahney, Justin Roth, Lauren Shallish, Jen Couchoud and Gina Turner. I tried to prioritize POC as well as parents of younger children who are often excluded from this leadership position due to the time constraints. The pandemic is allowing access to congregational life for some in new ways.

I'll be officiating a FaceTime wedding in August and a distanced wedding in October. I've been asked to officiate two memorial services, timing for both are to be determined. My requirements for rites of passage at this time include that they be held outside, masked and with 12 people or fewer. I'll be preaching for the Lyncroft congregation on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. They record their services beforehand and this will give me a sense of another way we might do worship.

Before bereavement leave I created a FaceBook site called UUCWC Lectio Divina where I post a video of myself reading a poem or piece of prose used in the previous Sunday's service. I invite people to reflect on traditional prayerful reflection questions: *What word or words in this passage caught your attention? What message does it have, etc.* Participants use the comment section to engage in the practice collectively. Based on their responses, I write a mid-week prayer to respond and keep folks engaged. It's been a really lovely practice for me, and it connects me to people pastorally.

I am working with Robin to imagine Water Ceremony / Ingathering while we remain physically distanced.

### **Celebrate Life**

We honor Tony Cantazaro, who died in July, after a long struggle with depression and anxiety. I am working with Shelley, his widow, and their daughter.

I've connected with a handful of members on acute pastoral concerns and have reintroduced Joys & Sorrows through the chat at Sunday services, so as to have a better sense of what people are holding. I've had numerous requests to meet in person, distanced, but am currently keeping to phone or zoom options.

I lift up that I am still in the timeframe of responding to people's grief that is about and for me. While incredibly beautiful and deeply appreciated, this is odd work for us all as I try to lead and when my job is, in large part, to care for others.

### **Change the World**

I am working with the Growth Through Service / Leadership Development Task Force and have asked this group to read Simple Church, a text written by Evangelical Christian leaders on the simplification of congregational life for the sake of growth and health.

I've been in conversation with the Personnel Committee in order to finalize the Letters of Agreements. Steve Ryan's contract had revisions that needed further conversation; Robin Pugh's contract was edited including the addition of a sabbatical. **Please note: the sabbatical change needs Board approval and can be found as a pre-read.**

The Worship Tech Team has asked me to write policy and procedures for *after* there is a zoom bomber, inappropriate behavior, and / or emergencies (what happens for the congregation once this person / people are removed; what kind of congregational support is available immediately after the latter 2 cases for the person once they are removed.) I haven't started this and may delegate it to the Pastoral Care Ministry, Worship Associates and Safe Congregation Teams to start.

I've asked the Worship Tech Team to open a "receiving line" chat option for after the service in order to have some feedback and check in with folks following the service. I am working to combine Worship Associates and Worship Techs to be our "Worship Leaders" and understand their work as holistic.

After receiving requests to see the services in full again or to be able to share them, I've asked MJ Hansen to research how we might put the entirety of our services – visual and audio – out for publication on FaceBook Live, YouTube or something else. She will be collaborating with Caryl on copyright concerns, Ed Dolbrowski on editing, and seeking the wisdom of other congregations to explore what they do.

Under Robin's leadership, I am working with the Safe Congregations Team. I am following up on Stewardship and those who haven't yet pledged with Andy Kidd. I've coached our Right Relations leaders through two questions, and am connecting with our justice-focused leaders.

To end, I want to lift up the staff over and over again, who have each handled their own jobs in amazing ways, but also taken on additional pieces of congregational life because they saw the need. Robin, especially, should be praised for her leadership in the Congregational Life role, having taken on and made new so much of what we hired an Assistant Minister for. I am coming back into the system in a manageable way because of the this team.



**Susan Irgang**  
**Administrator BOT Report for August 2020**

**To Create Community, Celebrate Life, and Change the World**

**Create Community**

I started a workgroup with fellow UU Administrators to create a template of a Communications Strategy Plan, inspired by a workshop from our Administrator's Professional Days at GA on *Communications Strategy during COVID*. Once completed, the plan template will be shared by other congregations as well as be used by our own, customized to our specific needs. Such strategy plans, which should be updated annually based on an upcoming year's communication needs, will be a useful tool in improving our church communications internally and externally. Additionally, it has been good to connect with other professionals in my area for collaborative problem-solving and more general information sharing, with an added broad benefit to us and other congregations.

I reviewed construction plans with Susan Vigilante and Steve Saddlemire relative to hardware, security, and other operational needs. Advancement toward construction has been stalled temporarily as we will need to upgrade the electric service to the building, involving a potentially lengthy approval process from PSE&G; this impacts the timeline as well as finances. However, the team continues to scrutinize plans, designs and details so we will be ready for all next steps when we can again move forward.

I had several meetings and discussions with the Worship Tech team regarding expansion of our Zoom accounts and the possibility of posting video of Sunday services in social media; currently only audio files are posted to our website or are podcast. With Rev. Kim, Caryl Tipton and this team, we will determine what is needed (permissions, copyrights, technology, etc.) to extend our reach in the broader virtual community.

**Celebrate Life**

We note with sadness the passing of Tony Catanzaro. With the virtual signing of the book of two new members (Lauren Shallish and Justin Roth), our numbers now stand at 288 members, 28 friends, 45 Participants and 20 Attendees.

Attendance continues to be strong despite not meeting in person. Attendance since we began online worship is up by slightly over 10% compared to March - August last year. New visitors, distant family of members, as well as former members continue to join worship. I have added a link to Sunday worship to our website main page using a URL shortener that should deflect potential zoom-bombers. I will be able to monitor activity on the use of this special link to determine if our reach is expanding in that manner.

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

I continue to make arrangements and be at the church for repairs or maintenance by outside vendors and for other facilities' oversight. Roberto Santiago was brought on as an Interim Sexton effective July 16, 2020, following the expiration of PPP loan funding that allowed him to continue as our Sunday Steward. Roberto will give us as many hours as he can, given his full-time job, but has already made a significant difference: I now have a reduction in the building related upkeep that I took on in the absence of a sexton or due to building closure, and Roberto is independently making minor repairs as he maintains the building and grounds. It's a genuine pleasure to have Roberto in this role.

The Reopening Task Force published the requirements for use of UUCWC grounds as approved by the Board last month. We will have one potential use of the parking lot for a concert for UUCWC in September and one "rental" use of the parking lot for a Nick Mellis (UUCWC Cosmic Concerts) associate (with Nick in attendance) to film a music/light performance entirely outdoors for a local festival. These uses/users will be following the guidelines and may give us added information for any adjustments.

Bookkeeping work continues, with additional attention in the last month to the work needed to officially close the books at the fiscal year end and to gather documentation for the annual Workers Compensation Audit, among other tasks. The Treasurer's report will likely be addressing this as well. I hope to document procedures related to the Finance work relative to my duties to make these once a year processes easier, and to help train/transition newly elected treasurers.

Staffing Note: At this time, we are not actively looking to replace the Assistant position, as we re-examine and re-imagine the needs and responsibilities for that position, as well as our own, during closure as well as changes to past routines after we reopen.

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski  
From: Robin Pugh  
Date: Aug 10, 2020  
Re: Monthly DRE Report \_\_\_\_\_

#### Create Community:

- Our Summer RE program is a virtual one offered by a group of UU congregations in the metro NY area.
- I am working with Kim to re-imagine a meaningful virtual Water Ceremony / Ingathering.
- Some of our families have not been participating at UUCWC since the pandemic. I've reached out to all of them. Some say they have gotten "out of the habit of attending" UUCWC. Additionally, I know that the pandemic is particularly stressful for families. I hope that the church can be a balm not an additional stress for parents. I am working with Kim to provide multiple ways for families to re-engage with UUCWC easily. At the same time, I am leaving space for them to not engage if they prefer, as parents ready their children for return to virtual or part virtual school. Some of the new ways for families to engage with UUCWC that will begin shortly are: children taking part in worship as readers, candle lighters etc., Multi gen and family centered worship (water ceremony and 8/30 service) and parent-only, safe, physically present events that offer community.
- We are having our first parent only masked and physically distanced social on Aug 11<sup>th</sup> on church grounds. There are many parents I have not seen and I hope to be able to connect them to each other and to UUCWC when we meet.
- I continue to offer a parent check in on Monday nights. Parents who attend are very appreciative for the time to talk and connect.

#### Celebrate Life:

- I am still considering options for what children's RE will look like in the fall. UU professionals agree that meeting virtually and doing regular RE curriculum will not work because the kids are "zoomed out". Right now, I am considering 3 age appropriate short zoom small groups on Sundays for children from pk-8<sup>th</sup> that prioritize community building with UU values. 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade will do Coming of Age. The COA virtual curriculum is still in development. The Family Ministry team agreed with these plans in concept. I am still getting feedback from parents. RE does not start until October.
- I am picking up some duties of the congregational life position. This is an area that interests me. I understand that the children's and adult RE tasks are of primary importance. I will let Kim know immediately if the additional congregational life duties begin to impact children's and adult RE. I've been reaching out to visitors individually during the service and staying afterwards in the main room to greet and answer questions. I've identified 11 visitors that attend our worship services regularly. I'm working with Marcia Wittman to restart Faith Forward. Kim and I are thinking about virtual membership, and

- an additional welcome “meeting” for visitors with the minister before beginning Roots and Wings.
- I would like the Board’s affirmation of a title change for my position effective Sept 1<sup>st</sup>. The new title would be Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement. This is the title the UUA uses for its RE office. It would also better reflect the congregational life aspect of my duties. This would mean that the title of children’s and Adult RE would change to Children’s Faith Engagement and Adult Faith Engagement. I’ve been wanting to change these titles since I arrived here 11 years ago. Religious Education was considered “out date” then.

### Change the World

- ARE plans to offer a full schedule of classes virtually in the fall.
- I met with the Racial Justice Ministry to ensure that ARE and RJM programs do not overlap. We decided that RJM is in charge of speakers and forums. ARE is in charge of discussion groups and classes. ARE has the administrative support needed for longer programs. Additionally, because of the sensitive nature of RJ programming, ARE can train facilitators.

## 8/3/20 Executive Team Minutes

Attendees: Nathalie Edmond, Rev Kim W, Jim Sanders, Sue Saddlemire, and Colleen McCourt

Congregational Life Council

- Rev Sue was originally hired to develop congregational life council
- Consists of Membership, first time visitors, ask me table, Greeters and Ushers, Faith Forward, kinship circles, community building, connection team, welcome table Wednesday
- Robin Pugh is overseeing this group
- Feedback that it is hard for newcomers and long term members to know how to start a new project or know who to go to for questions

Website doesn't reflect current organizational structure or how ministries have been restructured

[Need conversation around communication and social media at some point. Susan informally oversees this group.]

Suggestion was made to have CFA quarterly minutes shared with the Board.

Board members can come to August meeting with a summary of what is happening in their committee/task force that they are a liaison for.

How is everything we do connected to the mission and our focus for the year? How do we identify what that is and how we communicate that to committees and ministries?

How does the board and minister be a container for anxiety over this next year?

Work on being intentional for this year and for each quarter so we are clear about where we are putting time, energy, resources.

Kim's brainstorming for what could be focus for this year:

- Spirituality in action led by CFA
- Spiritual practice
- Learning and unlearning
- Connection

The idea is to make decisions based on what fits under these categories.

Discussed having a board chat in first half of September to solicit ideas from members and friends around what they want the church to focus on this year that can inform some of our board goals this year and then we can share goals at October 20<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

Suggestion was made by Rev Kim to read "Simple Church" and Nathalie suggested reading it for board retreat which is scheduled for 9/26.

## 8/9/20- Finance Committee Role Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Susan Irgang, Nathalie Edmond, Rev Kim Wildsewski, Jim Sanders, George Faulkner, Joe Schenk, Jamie Evanini, Michael Howe-Smith, Mary Baltycki, Lynne Quinto

Fundamental Problem addressed in the meeting: This past year the hours related to finance are 80-100 per month between Finance Chair, Treasurer, Congregational administrator. There is also an assistant treasurer role that is 12-15 hours per month. Congregational Administrator does about 5 hours per week on average towards finance/bookkeeping.

- Nathalie met with Jim and Mary on 8/6 to discuss how responsibilities are being divided currently and agreed they will continue this way until a more long term solution is identified. See treasurer team division of responsibilities document distributed previously.
- Mary suggested three options for proceeding:
  1. Continue with current distribution of responsibilities. Challenge is that it is not sustainable and is difficult to recruit volunteers for Finance Chair and Treasurer role and the terms end at the end of this fiscal year.
  2. Increase finance functions in the Congregational Administrator position which would require Congregational Administrator to be less involved in other areas.
  3. Hire additional part time staff or contract it out, either bookkeeper or hands on controller that would do bookkeeper plus additional financial analysis. This would alleviate pressure on finance chair and treasurer roles. Would need to flesh out what the responsibilities of the finance chair and treasurer role are. Still need checks and balance. Benefit is having less turnover in this role which could support and train other volunteer finance positions.
- Discussed making a decision based on our strategic plan for the next 3-5 years rather than solely basing it on current people in the roles and their strengths and capabilities as it may be difficult to replicate in the future.
- Our financial software program is not ideal for efficiency and sharing across users as it is not cloud based. A recommendation was made to review different software systems out there that could better support UUCWC infrastructure. It would require input from larger group of people as it impacts stewardship and membership and other areas of congregational life. Susan and Rev Kim will identify who was previously on this task force.

Next steps:

- Rev Kim and Susan will discuss Congregational Administrator role and how they envision it for the next couple of years.
- Feedback from this meeting will be brought back to larger board
- Mary Baltycki will identify what some of the responsibilities would be for a bookkeeper or hands on controller.
- Revisit forming a task force to review software system that includes previous work done
- Continue to discuss possibility of hiring into bookkeeping role for second quarter and experimenting this year with what the treasurer team roles would look like with this additional paid position. We can then decide for next fiscal year how we want to proceed.