

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



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - APPROVED
October 14, 2020

Zoom Meeting due to Covid-19 Virus Social Isolation

President Nathalie Edmond called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:03 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 DLFE, Robin Pugh. Absent was Trustee Jeffrey Lang.

Also present for part of the meeting were Mary Baltycki representing the Finance Committee, and Joe Schenck, Marty Friedman and Lynne Quinto representing the Personnel Committee.

First Hour

Consent Agenda - see appendix for complete reports.

Discussion Related to Consent Agenda

- Reverend Kim Wildszewski lifted up Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement Robin Pugh's ministry and leadership with groups and individuals. Rev. Kim also highlighted the contributions of the virtual worship technical team. **ACTION:** Board Secretary Colleen McCourt will send written thank you notes to the technical team on behalf of the Board.
- Rev. Kim and Congregational Administrator Susan Irgang provided a brief update on UUCWC's future reopening plans. Key points included:
 - The Reopening Task Force recently reviewed a reopening plan from another church in NJ, but concluded that it was not translatable to our facility and congregation.
 - There are no current plans to open the building for Sunday worship services. However, the Reopening Task Force is considering potentially opening the sanctuary for small, planned intentional gatherings to facilitate connection, meditation and community (e.g. on election night).
 - Such events would be limited to under 25 people and would follow the guidelines of the task force, including considerations on exit/entrance traffic, flow and distancing within the space, HVAC and circulation, etc.
- **There was a motion to approve** opening the sanctuary for groups of 25 under the specific conditions recommended by the task force. After brief clarifying discussion on the task force's

recommendations, which reflect CDC guidelines and widely used best practices, the motion was approved unanimously via Zoom poll.

Treasurer's Report and Related Discussion

- Board Treasurer Jim Sanders summarized key points of Finance Committee Chair Mary Baltycki's report as follows:
 - September was a good month; both plate and pledge income were on budget.
 - Overall it's challenging to project the timing of pledge payments against the budget; ultimately the budget may need to be adjusted to account for this.
 - Contribution statements were sent out to the congregation documenting pledges paid to date.
 - Expenses are generally on track and Susan Irgang and Building Committee Chair George Faulker continue to research discrepancies in utility charges.
 - Communications to congregation have improved tracking and reconciliation of electronic plate and pledge payments; the staff and treasurer will continue to look into ways to make payment and tracking easier.
 - We will pursue enrolling in the Amazon Smile program.
- A discussion about specific memorial funds led to a more in-depth conversation regarding donations and the pros and cons of donating to the general church fund vs. restricted funds
- Themes included:
 - "One budget, one church" budget model is a healthier overall approach and is more in keeping with a "Simple Church" mindset; donating to the general fund vs. restricted funds is easier to administer and more useful in supporting the church's holistic goals; donating to the general fund can still honor the individual's memory and the donor's intention.
- **There was a motion to approve** the practice of accepting financial donations to the church general fund rather than using restricted funds. The motion passed unanimously via Zoom poll.
- **ACTIONS:** Jim will close the loop of communication with specific individuals currently seeking to make donations. In the future, the Board may commission/develop a policy and procedure outlining "the journey of a congregational gift."

Second Hour

Personnel/Staffing Proposal

- Representatives from the Finance Committee (Mary Baltycki) and Personnel Committee (Joe Schenck, Marty Friedman and Lynne Quinto) arrived to discuss a staffing proposal presented by Rev. Kim.
- The Board had previously engaged in high-level discussions around staffing and succession planning, and formally reviewed the staffing proposal at its annual retreat on 9/26/2020.
- The proposal was designed to align UUCWC's current resources with our future goals and UUA best practices, ensuring ongoing sustainability for continued growth and centering of our mission.
- The proposal was developed based on targeted input from staff, Treasurer, Finance Committee, the Board and a UUA coach. Constituents provided documentation of current workload portfolios and how tasks are distributed, identifying potential opportunities for improvement.
 - Recommendations focus on potentially outsourcing/hiring additional resources for bookkeeping, media/website design and administration of children's lifespan faith engagement.
 - The proposed changes reflect the growing and evolving responsibilities of UUCWC staff, Treasurer and Finance Committee, and the need to envision, plan for and invest in the congregation's future needs.
- Discussion focused on high-level timing and approach.
 - Each proposed change would be intentionally phased in to avoid undue burden on current staff and processes.
 - The consensus is that the priority would be to focus on the financial/treasurer/bookkeeping responsibilities first.
 - **ACTIONS:** Representatives from the Finance and Personnel Committees indicated they would conduct further research and information gathering to fully capture the combined financial roles and responsibilities, and assess potential bookkeeping costs.
 - It was understood by all parties that this will be an ongoing discussion and process, and that the Treasurer and Finance Committee should maintain oversight from a logistical and fiduciary perspective.
- **There was a motion to approve** the Finance and Personnel Committees moving forward to research the staffing recommendations. The motion passed unanimously via Zoom poll.

Refinancing /Bank Loan Update

- Finance Chair Mary Baltycki presented the next steps in the process of moving forward with refinancing the church's loans through Northfield Bank.
- The Board was required to approve a draft resolution letter that Mary will present to the bank.
- **There was a motion to approve** the resolution letter as vetted by Mary, without further action needed from the Board. The motion passed unanimously via Zoom poll.
- **ACTIONS:** Mary will work with the bank to fill in the relevant date fields and then present the resolution letter to them, signed by Colleen. Mary will also work with Nathalie to execute

additional procedural letters that may require the Board president's signature. Further, Mary will present an update on the church's finances at the Council meeting on 10/20/2020.

- Nathalie and Reverend Kim thanked the visitors from Finance and Personnel, who then left the meeting.

Review of 2020 Board Goals

- Board President Nathalie Edmond presented the formal 2020/2021 Board goals draft for approval. The draft was based on discussion and themes from the Board's annual retreat on 9/26/2020 and reflects the input of the Board and staff. It was reviewed by the Board Executive team on 10/5 prior to presentation to the full board.
- **There was a motion to approve** the goals as drafted. The motion passed unanimously via Zoom poll.
- **ACTIONS:** Nathalie will communicate the goals to the congregation in various formats, beginning with publishing them in November's CrossCurrents article and sharing them at the Council Meeting on 10/20/2020.

Housekeeping and Other Action Items

- Nathalie will write the CrossCurrents article for November, which will outline the Board's goals for the year.
- The Board will review resources related to 2020 election planning scenarios that were developed by the UUA and shared by Rev. Kim.
- There is a Council meeting on 10/20.
- A discussion regarding a proposal regarding the technical aspects of virtual services was deferred to a future agenda/parking lot item.

Meeting adjourned at 9:09 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Howe-Smith

Scribe, Board of Trustees

Colleen McCourt

Secretary, Board of Trustees

Appendix: Staff, Executive Team, and Treasurer Reports

Minister's Board Report October 2020 Rev. Kim Wildszewski

As a pilot, I've shifted my board report titles to reflect the Simple Church model.

Celebrate Life (Worship & Rites of Passage)

Virtual worship continues, and we are growing in our capabilities in large part due to Susan Irgang's coordination of Communication and the Worship Tech leadership. If you haven't signed on early yet, the ten minutes before service begins welcomes folks with centering music, images, intentional welcoming and informational slides, and more. Our UUCWC chimes have been introduced and these leaders have been working on creating more. Each week we experience new technical issues, distractions or learnings but overall, I feel very proud of the lay and staff leadership for making virtual worship something that feels professional and sustaining. Nancy Neff, MJ Hansen, and John Harvi deserve accolades (perhaps written from the BoT?) for their commitment in this time.

Joys & Sorrows are offered each week, but we are figuring out how to honor all that is shared, as well as how to cull what is shared on Sunday for the Tuesday Caring email. Each week I am striving to bring in UUCWC voices or faces beyond the Worship leadership; POC authors and artists; ways to connect with our bodies; and an honoring of the world rather than commitment to the theme / sermon title. Our attendance has remained rather consistent, an average of 175.

Through the recent UU the Vote service, and the National Service of Universalism out of Minneapolis, I believe this virtual time has given us a clear opportunity to expand our notion of Unitarian Universalism beyond UUCWC.

In other ways of celebration: I officiated the marriage of Laura Wall's son, Patrick, at an in-person socially-distanced wedding.

Pastoral care concerns are mainly focused on anxiety over the election; congregants with illness and challenging diagnoses; caretaking of family members with illnesses including Covid; and parenting children in virtual schooling while working.

I am working with colleagues and our own worship leadership on a plan for the day before, of and after the election.

Create Community (Small Group / Relationship Building)

Robin and I met with the parents of children in the religious education program to propose two RE options for the next six months: A. Family Chalice Circles, which are pods of two or three families with children of similar ages, to meet every other week to do multigenerational UU learning and practice (written by Robin and me). B. Parents as Educators, opts children out of the formal RE program for the next 6 months while parents commit to attending one of three small group ministry models including Coming into Connection, Chalice Circles, or a book and reflection group called Tending the Flame which teaches how to raise UUs.

In recent weeks we wrote the first curriculum for the Family Chalice Circles and matched up 10 families for this work (around 20 children and their parents). Robin and I also paired up and launched the newest Coming into Connection pairs and are working to schedule the Tending the Flame participants, which Robin and I will co-facilitate.

I had the opportunity to meet with new visitors and participants to the community and connect with members at the recent Faith Forward Q&A with the Minister. We are changing the name of this session to “Meet the Minister” so that the focus can be on connection with all, rather than question and answer to and from me. On the last Monday of every month I will hold a Q&A open to the entire community, separate from the Faith Forward curriculum, but to stay connected with the community in this virtual time.

I taught a one night class on Lectio Divina, Reading Prayerfully, in which members of UUCWC and my home fellowship NFUUF participated. I am looking forward to doing this again as the night was very successful, and fulfilling for me, too.

I will lead the first Roots, or Curious about UU, session, the Monday before our Board meeting.

Robin is doing more for the Creation of Community but these are the areas I’m most directly involved in.

Change the World (Service)

In recent weeks I met with: the re-opening team for the first time; the worship tech leadership numerous times and on different topics; Andy Kidd to continue to address Stewardship / pledging disengagement; Worship Associates and the Right Relations Committee. The RRC is being asked by our Ithaca congregation to help them create a RRC.

During my Study Leave I participated in a virtual Collective Trauma Summit and throughout the last month attended my Metro NY Chapter meeting, NJ Minister's monthly cluster meeting, a small colleague support group, and led a session for white female colleagues on the book My Grandmother's Hands.

Blessings of gratitude for each of you.

Susan Irgang
Administrator BOT Report for October 2020

To Create Community, Celebrate Life, and Change the World

Create Community

My workgroup with fellow UU admins has completed, and I will review a Communications Strategy plan with the Communications team later this week before sharing the plan with the Board in November. The objectives of a strategy plan, for example, would be to increase our visibility to all target audiences, enhance opportunities to connect virtually during the pandemic and hone the messages with monthly/yearly themes/goals and share them consistently across platforms.

In other Communications work, I have started using the Soul Matters Social Media Toolkit to improve engagement on the Community Building and main Facebook pages, helping our community stay connected during the building closure. While activity on these sites is related to other posts as well, reactions are up 6% and comments have increased by 35% over last month. Lynne Quinto and I will continue to freshen the church website with newer images, changes to layout, and updating pages until her departure, though she has offered to stay connected after her move later this year. Our goal is to create a more inviting and easier to navigate website, especially during COVID closure.

I worked closely with MJ Hansen, Lori O'Neil and others on the creation of an opening sequence of words and images made into slides and a video for every Sunday morning. It debuted on 10/11, and was the result of many discussions and hard work with creative volunteers. Laura Brandt will soon join the work by taking photos and helping to create a resource library of images for use in future videos and communications.

I attended a meeting with staff and Capital Campaign members to review the samples of materials proposed by Shila Griffith of 23 Design, the interior design firm that has been contracted for interior design work on the Capital Project. Each step gets us closer to our new space.

Celebrate Life

Our numbers are 288 members, 28 friends, 47 Participants and 21 Attendees.

Change the (UUCWC) World

The work of the Capital Project team continues, with regular updates provided in CrossCurrents. The amount of work these volunteers are doing is remarkable. I've been involved in only some of the discussions which range from door operation hardware to electrical connections for each space, HVAC layouts, interior design and financing

concerns. Two people who have in recent months offered invaluable contributions are Steve Saddlemire, who looks into every detail and provides weekly progress updates to the group; and Lee Schofer, who, though not on the committee, offered invaluable insights into the Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing discussions and designs. It's a pleasure to work with this highly motivated and industrious team.

The Reopening Task Force met with Rev. Kim to discuss ideas from another church on what needs to be in place in order to reopen the building. Currently the building remains closed to all except staff, for maintenance work or for Sunday worship-related activities. The team will continue to meet to set up what metrics and protocols would need to be in place for reopening, as well as discuss possible ways to use the building and grounds safely to enhance connection.

Bookkeeping work continues. I also continue to make needed arrangements and be at the church at least once a week for mail processing, oversight of repairs or maintenance by outside vendors, and checking the security of the building.

Staff: As you know, Roberto Santiago suffered an injury in a non-work related accident at his home, losing the tip of his right index finger; he is currently on short term disability, and may need surgery and occupational therapy. In his absence, I am covering his responsibilities until we have a better picture of how long he will need to recover.

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski
From: Robin Pugh
Date: Oct 12, 2020
Re: Monthly DRE Report _____

Create Community:

- We are not seeing many families during our Sunday worship, but they are engaged with UUCWC virtually at other times. For families, we are offering 2 programs in place of RE classes: One is Family Chalice Circles, which are pods of two or three families with children of similar ages, to meet every other week to do multigenerational UU learning and practice (written by Kim and me). The other option is Parents as Educators. This opts children out of the formal RE program for the next 6 months while parents commit to attending “Tending the Flame” a once a month UU Parenting class led by Kim and I based on a book of the same name or a Chalice Circle. Fourteen parents elected to join “Tending the Flame” and 2 will join a chalice circle.
- Ten middle schoolers signed up to be in the twice monthly Junior Youth Group which starts on Sunday. I did a continuing education class in September on leading virtual UU Youth groups to learn what’s been successful virtually.

Celebrate Life:

- Twelve High school students are ready to finish the OWL class from last year virtually. I rewrote the last 5 lessons of OWL to be 10 one-hour sessions of human sexuality. We will start it as soon as the 2 facilitators work out a schedule.

Change the World

- Because creating community is KEY during this time of not meeting physically, I am working very hard to let people know what UUCWC offerings might particularly appeal to them. I’ve had good results. 85 people have signed up for Adult Faith Engagement classes this fall. We are currently offering 11 classes including 3 chalice circles and Beloved Conversations (outside UUCWC through the Fahs Center). Eight of the 11 classes meet all year.
- On 10/14, I will complete a 15-hour Renaissance module training (part of DRE leadership training) on Adult Faith Formation (for the second time, this one is newly updated).
- Visitors continue to find our online services. I’ve been tracking visitors since August. We’ve had 41 visitors during that time. Fifteen have come at least 3 times since August 2nd. 10 have participated in an ARE class or Faith Forward in the last 5 weeks. Every visitor that we have an email address for (not everyone, can be a challenge to get on Zoom) gets contacted by me and also receives a weekly email for visitors that invites them to Faith Forward and other Path to Membership opportunities.
- Faith Forward is being offered weekly. Marcia Wittman and I trained several new facilitators. I presented the Children and adult Faith Engagement session in Sept.

Treasurer's Notes

**Jim Sanders
October 2020**

I give credit for this summary report to Mary Baltyki, as this summary is synonymous with what I would have presented to this Board - Thank you Mary

10/5/2020 MPB

NOTES ON YTD BUDGET VS. ACTUAL FOR FIRST QUARTER 2020-2021

For the first quarter of the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year, we had budgeted for a deficit of \$8,090. The actual deficit at the end of the first three months is \$5,166 which is \$2,923 better than budgeted. While total expenses were \$18,895 less than budgeted, our income was \$15,972. below budget.

In terms of Income – the items that jump out are as follows:

(1) Plate Collection looks awesome-22% above budget as a result of ZOOM !!! This could be misleading in terms of what the future holds, b/c dollars received may well represent “prepayments” that some Members have made for future weeks or months. No adjustment to budget at this time.

(2) Pledge Income - Overall, Pledge Income is about 15% lower than budgeted, but by comparing to the timeline in ICON, we may be able to get a handle on whether this is a “timing issue” or a shortfall, which may require some attention from Stewardship and/or Kim. Statements have gone out to Membership, so perhaps we can get a better understanding. (Andy has sent me a schedule of pledge payment timeline, but I have not yet had time to dig into it.)

No adjustment to budget at this time, but we need to keep our eye on Pledge Income as well as try to get a better projection of timing of Pledge payments after reviewing ICON schedule.

(3) The rest of the income numbers look okay (meaning close to budget or “explainable” variance (“SRECS”) so no adjustments to budget at this time.

In terms of Expenses – the items to be noted are as follows:

(1) STAFF expenses are about \$6,000 less than budgeted, as we do not have an Office Assistant, Childcare Provider, Sunday Sexton and the expenses for

Roberto, as our part-time Sexton are about half of our budgeted figure. To the extent that we (Board, Personnel and Finance) are reviewing staffing and exploring the addition of part-time help, making any adjustments to the STAFF budget at this time is not appropriate. As we get further along in the decision making around staffing, the budget will be updated to more accurately reflect the decisions.

(2) OPERATIONS expenses are \$6,700 below budget attributable mostly to reduced maintenance items, specifically Grounds, Building-Non Kitchen maintenance (\$4,400 under budget), Insurance was \$1,350 under budget, Trash was under budget by \$540. There were also savings in expenses related to office equipment and office expense items, but utilities ran slightly above budget. It seems as if there may be an issue related to the solar panel reporting and that is being addressed and hopefully will be resolved this month.

(3) PROGRAM expenses of \$5,085 are predictably much lower than the budgeted figure of \$11,510. I don't think any explanation is needed. We are all so very aware of how COVID has limited this important aspect of life at UUCWC.

The recommendations for adjustments to the budget are as follows:

(1) Reduce Income by \$4,380 to reflect no rental income for the year and reduce the income from airport runs, plant sales, other small events and Amazon Link program. We must continue to monitor income from other sources.

(2) Reduce Operations expenses by \$13,515 to reflect lower maintenance costs, childcare expense, office expenses including equipment.

A review of budget versus actual expenses as of 12.31.2020 will be done to determine if any adjustments are necessary at that time.

I will ask Board/Worship Team for a date to present the first quarter financial reports to the full Membership before the end of the month.

UUCWC Board of Trustees 2020-2021 Goals

7 Practices of Board Leadership and associated goals:

The UUCWC Board of Trustees will:

1. Discerning the Congregation's Mission and Vision

... As we enter this 2020-21 congregational year, your Board of Trustees and staff honors just how challenging this time is for each of us. Through our Board goals, and a Simple Church philosophy, we hope you receive our encouragement to do less and connect more; we hope you will feel supported by your UUCWC community. The Board will center goals that balance the work of the congregation, its mission and the health of its members. Leadership recognizes the needs to be flexible this year and make adjustments as needed.

2. Holding the Fiduciary (Resource) Responsibility

...be aware of the way we develop and utilize ALL resources (people, time, money, space) as we support and collaboratively move forward the:

- a. Capital Project and Campaign*
- b. Redistribution of Treasurer responsibilities in sustainable way*
- c. Review staffing needs (with Personnel and Finance)*
- d. Support Leadership Development Task Force*

3. Capturing Institutional Wisdom by Generating Policy

...continue to update policies and procedures to reflect our new bylaws and current practices. This will be achieved with input from every committee and ministry.

4. Assessing the Health of the Congregation

...continue to invite feedback from the congregation and staff to examine programming, staffing and building needs for maintaining a healthy congregation.

- a. methods: open Board meetings, focused Board chats, council meetings, Board liaisons, scheduled committee conversations at Board meetings*
- b. Board liaisons will be in regular communication with their respective committees/ministries and attend meetings regularly*
- c. ongoing Reopening Task Force to assess and create guidelines for use of church grounds and building*

5. Planning for the Congregation's Future

...investigate what else needs to be done to achieve our mission and realize our vision, including but not restricted to:

- a. *Support pilot of Simple Church philosophy related to Celebrate (worship), Connect (join a small group), and Serve.*

6. Building and Maintaining Relationships

...continued transparency around board actions and decisions. Adapt communication and connection opportunities to fit a virtual world.

- a. *Strengthen our Board liaisons to committees*
- b. *Share agenda, staff and written liaison reports with online meeting minutes*
- c. *Encourage coordination and scheduling of financial requests to congregation*
- d. *Hold focused Board chats and listening circles*

7. Transforming the Congregational Culture

...center the 8th principle to implement fully inclusive practices for all current and potential congregants by focusing on HOW we do things together:

- a. *Shared spiritual leadership*
- b. *Informed, collaborative decision-making based on inviting everyone into a transparent process.*
- c. *Have listening circles related to when to involve police when there is disruptive behavior*