

**UUFCC Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.  
In person (room 6) and on Zoom**

**APPROVED December 6, 2023**

**Respectfully submitted by** Jennifer Glick

**Members Present:** Suzanne Weinstein (president), Gretchen Kuldau (president-elect), Martha Butler (treasurer), Cheryl Bohn, Jennifer Glick, Jeffrey Catchmark, Rev. Tracy Sprowls (ex-officio)

**Members absent:** Elaine Lau (Secretary)

**Action Items:**

- Board will review procedures
- Rev. Tracy will review the Destructive Behavior policy to clarify when to call the police

**The Board voted to:**

- Affirm the email vote to change the locks to the exterior doors of the UUFCC building upon completion of the new fob system.
- Affirm the email vote to approve sealing the driveway.
- Affirm Minister's Housing Allowance
- Affirm hiring Monena Hall for RE Assistant Position
- Affirmed approval of this year's nominating committee: Meg Barton, Graham Corby, Joy Drohan, and Maren Larson.
- Approved a revised Safe Congregation Policy.

---

Strategic priorities - reminder: Ministerial Search, Mission/Vision, Social Action, Program Council.

Meeting called to order: Suzanne **7:04 p.m.**

Chalice Lighting: Suzanne

Reading of board covenant: All

Changes to the agenda: Rev. Tracy requested an added discussion of the sabbatical available to the DLRE to the meeting agenda

**Minutes approved:** September 27, 2023

**Racial Justice Committee:**

Janet Irons attended the meeting on behalf of the RJC to discuss proposals for ways UUFCC might implement the 8th principle and truly build a beloved community. Suggestions from the RJC are divided on inward focused activities (educating ourselves) and outward focused activities (community engagement). The Board and RJC also discussed the need to get RJC, and other committees', events and activities

on the calendar with a goal of institutionalizing committee activities as an integral part of the life of the congregation and the presence of UUFCC in the community.

**Reports to be received and discussed as needed:**

Minister, President, Treasurer and Finance & Stewardship Committee, DLRE (verbal report from DLRE Ashley Hamlin), Program Council (verbal Report from Gretchen)

Strengthening Community- UU Adventurers canceled their outdoor meeting on 10/14 due to weather, pickleball outing is planned for November and a firepit is planned for December. The LRE Team (CARE) is planning a Samhain service for the end of October, a Stone Soup program in November, and the RE Holiday Party in December. Outreach and Faith Formation groups will be meeting.

**Program Council Report**

Gretchen reports that there is ongoing work on the calendar. Details for the Chili Cook-Off were discussed. Holiday party December 17. The Program Council will meet again Nov. 28.

**Policies**

UUFCC Destructive Behavior Policy: Board discussion continued to address revisions to the policy. A vote to approve the revised policy is scheduled for the next Board meeting in December.

Safe Congregations Policy: Board agrees to move forward to vote to approve revisions to the Safe Congregations Policy. Gretchen presented a motion to vote on the revised policy; Cheryl second. Policy passes unanimously.

The Board also affirmed a prior email vote to approve this year's nominating committee; Unanimously affirmed.

**Fiduciary**

Martha Butler submitted the treasurer's report: Multi Peril Insurance from Church Mutual is due to be paid; premium raised 20% across the board. Rev. Tracy notes that these increases are fairly common across UUA congregations. Martha notes that UUFCC has requested a review of our policy based on prior improvements to our physical plant. The review of the policy is requiring some items be attended to: (1) Ivy and tree pruning; (2) Adding non-skid mats to the kitchen; (3) A signed contract to have kitchen vents cleaned quarterly. Martha also passed along an additional questionnaire from the Insurance Company to the Building and Grounds Committee.

**Discussion and Decision Items**

New item to the agenda as proposed by Rev. Tracy:

Sabbatical: Ashley is due for a sabbatical after 6 years based on her contract. She will submit a proposal to the Board at least one year in advance.

Affirmation of Rev. Tracy housing allowance: Martha Butler moved that we vote to approve the Housing Allowance Resolution 23-24. Second by Gretchen Kulda. Board vote in agreement is unanimous.

Discernment:

Board discussion of Ministerial Search Questions and Draft of UUFCC Goals in response to request from MSC. Suzanne Weinstein has provided a draft of the UUFCC goals (short, medium and long term) based on prior discussion and input from the board (as described in the minutes of the September 27, 2023 board meeting). Rev. Tracy recommends that sponsoring a ministerial intern could be a middle range goal. Discussion of reorganizing some priorities such as a Capital Campaign to pay off the mortgage. The Board also discussed how to restart leadership development that stalled during the pandemic. Rev. Tracy encouraged the Board to consider outreach to the community and building partnerships in the community as an additional Board goal.

Discussion of hiring/firing procedures. Rev. Tracy notes that the bylaws state that the Board is the final say on hiring and firing decisions. This may be a red flag for new ministers or staff as an indicator that the congregation does not trust the minister. She suggests the congregation should look to change the bylaws in the long run. In the short term, the Board could add text to procedures so that it is clear that hiring and firing is a joint decision between the minister and the Board. Martha Butler notes that, in this case, there needs to be a change in the ministerial contract language to make it clear that hiring and firing decisions are made by the minister in conversation with the Board.

Midyear Meeting Planning: Jen Glick and Gretchen Kulda will check members in as they enter and affirm a quorum is in attendance. Jeff Catchmark and Cheryl Bohn will count the votes of the members. The agenda is set and materials will be emailed to members this week as required.

## **Adjourn 8:59**

NEXT MEETING: December 6

REMINDER: Sign up for Fellowship lock-up duty and chalice lighting.

UPCOMING DATES:

**\*75 Year Anniversary Coming Up in 2025**

## **Attachments**

- Interim Minister's Report
- DLRE's Report
- President's Report
- Financial Report

## **Transition/Interim Minister's Report**

**Rev. Dr. Tracy Sprowls**

**October 2023**

### **Congregational Life**

- I am feeling my own pressure to get a few things cleaned up before my time as transition minister ends. Some of these are with committees. Some with process. Some with vision. Some with staff responsibility.

### **Pastoral Care**

- I continue to work with the Caring Committee and try to attend their monthly meetings. I am confident that the committee keeps in touch with those who are homebound and in need of some care (like meals). I visit people in critical care or who request a visit. Our system is a good one.

### **Sunday Services**

- The worship committee still could use more members. We are working on shifting the mindset from having to do the lay services themselves to offering this opportunity to not only others in the congregation but to guest speakers from Penn State and ministers. I think this is part of the challenge of getting new members on the worship committee (I am repeating this from Sept because this is an ongoing conversation)
- The WC also seems to struggle with the info sheet on guest speakers. We will review this.
- I am changing the order of service a bit to incorporate more somatic experiences aimed towards calming, healing, and building resilience.
- Please look at this link for Sunday numbers: [Event Attendance Count - Google Sheets](#)

### **Administration and Personnel**

- Christine, our new financial secretary, has done an incredible job assessing systems and process and updating and streamlining where she can

- HR met and would like to recommend:
  - Wait until January before searching for a new sexton. Better timing.
  - Change Bhakti's job description to Administrator rather than Office Admin at that time. This allows for her role with building issues.
  - Cathi updated the HR manual and I am reviewing that now
  - Some conversations regarding hiring/firing
  - Adding another member to the team
- Have you seen the website??

### **Professional/Personal**

- My time at the Dietrich house ends mid-December. Frans, the Razems, and the Shorts have stepped in to help me with housing through June 30. Thank you!
- Each month, I meet with my NJ ministerial colleagues (I am president this year) and I meet with the Liturgy and Latte group. I cannot meet with the interfaith clergy group in State College because they meet the same day I meet with the NJ ministers. And I would usually join with the LREDA group but they meet when the Finance Committee meets.

My self-care includes walking, yoga, meditation, knitting, writing, talking with friends and family. I am joining the YMCA in October and hope to take up pickleball.

### **Community/Social Justice**

I will be working with the Board this year to review and possibly restructure our Social Justice work. I am part of the Interfaith Coalition on Gun Safety. I am supporting the interfaith work Ashley does in our community.

DLRE Report to the UUFCC Board  
October 25, 2023

Rachel Cole and I just hired and started a new childcare provider (they started this past Sunday). We have 1 more applying soon. At this moment we have 5 rotating childcare providers on our team and this helps us staff our Sunday mornings and other events (mainly Parents' Night Out).

We started our anti-racism (Growing Anti-Racist UU's) with our elementary kids this past Sunday with volunteer teachers leading and dividing the class into two parts - 1st-2nd grade and 3rd-5th grade. The lessons went very well and it is exciting to be doing explicitly anti-racist work with our kids.

Colleen and I have led several Social Justice Music lessons now for kids and families during RE Hour and are having fun teaching the songs and the stories and musical education around the songs so that our kids get a sense of African music and how it translated into the music of the African American community during slavery, Jim Crow era, and the Civil Rights era. We are excited to create a service around this for MLK Sunday.

October is LGBT+ History month and so I collaborated with Centre LGBT+ Network to focus on LGBT+ awareness and education all month. I have run a fundraiser for trans clothing, banned books and monetary donations to support the Center. I brought in some of their folks to facilitate a discussion on gender for Hot Topics which also became an interfaith offering with UBBC and led to a meaningful conversation in which folks learned a lot and even changed their minds based on deeper understanding. And, the Center helped to create our film event fundraiser. I also led a Family Chapel in October on supporting transgender people and Laurie Parmele, Laura Liermann, and I have created lessons focused on LGBT+ history and issues for our Middle School youth.

I have interviewed, am working with HR, and will submit for your approval a new RE Assistant and Youth Coordinator person, Monena Hall. I will send you her information separately from this report. Having a RE assistant will help me to focus on the interfaith connections and work I am doing and establishing OWL and other justice programs for our congregation in the community.

I am meeting more PSU students who are visiting the fellowship and hope to work with these relationships to form a group of young adults who are excited and willing to help us establish a campus ministry program. I also met with a professor in the Department of Biobehavioral Health to work on creating connections for sexual health that we can support on campus - Tracy and I are working together to bring opportunities for UUFCC to support the work of reproductive justice on campus and in our community. I am also working with IPL and our Green Sanctuary Committee to work together in environmental justice in State College. We will be joining IPL for a movie night on Saturday, Nov 4 which we can watch at the fellowship and then participate in a zoom conversation with the film's director. We will also put out word about IPL's Annual Conference on Sunday, Nov 5. Green Sanctuary is helping to sponsor this event for UUFCC.

## **President's Report**

**Suzanne Weinstein**

**10/25/2023**

Since our September board meeting I have accomplished the following:

### **Board business**

- Met with Tracy and Gretchen to plan the September board meeting
- Developed the meeting agenda
- Submitted a monthly e-News column
- Collected suggestions for mission/vision changes at the service and online
- Attended Seria Chatters' workshop on microaggressions
- Contacted Phil Halleck to organize a storage tour for the board

### **Midyear meeting**

- Constructed agenda and report TOC
- Wrote Board of Trustees report
- Organized nominating committee bios for report
- Prepared bylaws change document for report
- Advertised discussion of bylaws changes for October 29th

### **Ministerial Search**

- Attended focus group
- Reviewed Ministerial Contract

## **Pledge Campaign**

- Met with Claudia Snyder, Bob Andronici and Shelley Wilk at their initial pledge campaign meeting



22To: UUFCC Board  
From: Martha Butler, Treasurer  
Subject: September Financial Report  
Date: October 21, 2023

September Financial Reports:

In the ***Revenue and Expense Report:***

- Note that the current forecast is for a \$6.5K deficit at the end of the year. This forecast will inevitably change as the year evolves. The reposted **Sexton/Custodian** position has been deferred. We contracted with a new **Cleaning Service**, and the forecast now assumes we will need this service for the rest of the year. That contract can be terminated with 30 days' notice. The current forecast includes a pending 20% increase in the cost of our **commercial insurance** from Church Mutual and an increase in **Childcare Hours** on Sunday from 3 to 3.5. Ashley has hired the requested **RE Assistant**.
- We have transferred more of our recurring expenses to automatic debit (UUA Program Fund, Personnel Insurance, etc.) and will look for more opportunities to do this.

In the **Financial Position Report:**

- The Capital Improvement Reserves Fund now stands at \$44,500. \$18K is committed as half the cost of repairing the **Driveway**, with a matching amount approved by the Endowment & Directed Gifts Committee. The driveway and circle have been repaved and the cracks in the parking lots repaired. Parking lot sealing and striping will take place in the spring.
- The **ADA door opener project** is almost complete, still awaiting a new crash bar on the main door. Then Park Security can complete installation of fob access on the main door. The total cost will still be less than originally estimated when we requested financial assistance from the Endowment & Directed Gifts Committee for the project. We will use the remaining funds in the UUA Legacy Grant first for the balance.

Other finance news:

**SOLAR PANELS:** The solar panel proposal application was not fully approved. We were awarded \$9000 for an energy audit. We are being asked to produce 2 years of all utility bills for the energy audit. We have also asked for a proposal for the solar panels and will also obtain one from another contractor. Estimates are needed for future planning.

**MULTI-PERIL INSURANCE:** We requested a review and update of the underwriting of our policy given the improvements to our physical plant. Church Mutual arranged for an inspection. We have a list of improvements to consider and a very comprehensive questionnaire covering protection in case of power outages in winter. The Building group is considering these.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Committee has 2 policy areas to be considered this year: Records Retention and Gift Cards. Helen Dempsey has updated the procedures for purchasing and selling gift cards and physical inventory. We do not have written procedures for the accounting of the inventory and sales in our financial systems. The credit card accounts have not been reconciled within QuickBooks. We have not made progress on the Records Retention for financial records.

HUMAN RESOURCES: The three-week training period with both incoming and outgoing Financial Secretaries is complete. Over time there will be clearing of both physical and QuickBooks accounting files. Some reorganization of files is likely. Efforts by Christine Eleazer, our new Financial Secretary, may take the place of a formal financial review.