

**Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist (CCUU) of Palatine IL
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

Date: December 18, 2024

Location: CCUU, Room 1

Attending: Lisa Gilley (President), Gary LaBedz (President-elect), Mike Berry (Vice President), Debbie Lee (Treasurer), Pat Wydell (Secretary), Nancy Frenk, Jerome McDonnell, Peggy Simonsen, Ryan Schaeffges, Dan Yokas (Trustees); Reverend Pam Rumancik (Minister)

The regular monthly meeting of the CCUU Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Lisa Gilley. Lisa shared an opening reading and the Board members recited the Board Covenant. A quorum of trustees being present, the meeting proceeded with business.

Last Month's Minutes: Lisa moved to accept the November 20 minutes; Dan seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

New Business

Mind the Gap Giving Campaign: Debbie Lee reported that we have met our goal of raising \$18,000 through the "Mind the Gap" campaign. A total of 45 donors contributed. We welcome additional donations that would help us launch initiatives that are currently unfunded.

Questionable Behavior Response Policy: A revised version of the CCUU Questionable Behavior Response Policy was provided for the Board to approve. Lisa pointed out some very recent revisions to the document. Questions were raised that might require further revisions to the document. Voting on the policy was postponed till the January meeting in order to give Board members time to review the revised document.

Donation/Gift Guideline: The Board discussed the revised Guidelines Regarding Financial Donations/Gifts. Debbie moved to accept the revised Guidelines Regarding Financial Donations/Gifts; Dan seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Housing Allowance for the Community Minister and Contract Minister: Pat moved and Lisa seconded the following motions, which carried unanimously:

Rev C. Scot Giles, D. Min designates \$24,000 for 2025 from his pastoral practice as a housing allowance for tax purposes. Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist shall have no responsibility for the payment or raising of such funds.

Rev. Pam Rumancik designates \$32,000 for 2025 from her income as a housing allowance for tax purposes. Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist shall have no responsibility for the payment or raising of such funds.

Gender Specific Affinity Groups: A former member has requested that the Feminine Divine Group be opened to male membership. The Board recognizes that, as a congregation, we should strive to create spaces where everyone feels welcomed and valued. At the same time, we also recognize that certain affinity groups are designed to provide a supportive environment for individuals with shared lived experiences. The Board discussed the request and unanimously

affirmed that there is value in having affinity groups, such as a women-only support group or a Young Adult group or Men's group, sponsored by Countryside Church. These groups allow for a depth of connection and understanding that is sometimes more difficult to achieve in broader, mixed spaces. The Board supports the Feminine Divine Group in its wish to continue as a woman-only group.

Implications of and Response to the New Federal Government Administration: The Board discussed at length what our response should be to the challenges of the incoming administration. We are aware of threats to the safety of immigrants, as well as threats to LGBTQ rights, racial justice, and the environment. We recognize that we cannot predict what will happen but agreed that we must continue to work with and support groups in the community, including Partners for Our Communities (POC) in Palatine, Illinois Community for Displaced Immigrants (ICDI), and local churches that we already partner with on Chalice House. These organizations offer expertise and resources that will be valuable. Members of the Board offered to spearhead efforts to contact organizations and find out what they might need from us. In future communications, we will share with the congregation our discussion and our plans for continued work and support with our partners.

Ongoing Business

Update on CCUU Website Development/Logos/Marketing: Jerome reported that a contract has been signed with a UU website designer who was originally recommended by Rev. Denise Cawley: Elaine Meszaros of EM Graphics. The Board was given links to websites that she has created. Elizabeth Van Orden did a training session on using our new logo, colors, and fonts. The team plans to ask the Board for a marketing goal for the next year to provide guidance on where our efforts should be directed. Once they have a goal (e.g., number and/or type of new members, or a financial goal), a team will implement a marketing plan. Debbie asked that any marketing financial needs be estimated and added to next year's budget.

Ditch Burn update: Gary reported that insurance issues and contract issues have been resolved and we have agreed to a contract with the company Pizzo & Associates, Ltd, to do a controlled burn of our native prairie garden in the back ditch in early spring. Various permits are required, which Mike Calwas is working on.

Financial Update: Debbie reported that pledges and plate cash are coming in above budget; our income was \$40,000 over budget on Nov. 30. However, pledges often drop after the new year, and expenses will certainly increase in January. There have recently been unanticipated expenses for repairs. The furnace has a defective heat exchanger, and the cost to replace it is \$4,824. Ryan moved to approve this capital expense; Mike seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously. Debbie reminded us that we have \$137,000 in the capital reserve, and we will be using that money soon for capital improvements.

Restricted Funds: At budget time the Board approved, and the congregation voted on, moving \$8,717 from restricted funds to the operating budget. These amounts have been in these accounts for 4 or more years. (This is NOT something we plan to do on a recurring basis, as we need to use operating income to support operating expenses.) Debbie had Laurie Lantz transfer the following amounts to the operating budget from their restricted accounts:

Flagstone Project	\$2350
Memorial Garden Project	\$1175
Minister Intern Fund	\$1000
<u>Fair Trade</u>	<u>\$1000</u>
Total	\$6525

We still need to transfer another \$2200. This may come from various restricted fund accounts including (but not limited to): Social Justice, Denny Music Fund, Green Sanctuary. Debbie will have discussions with the affected groups and we can discuss these transfers after such time.

Leadership Retreat Follow-up: A sign has been purchased and displayed out front. At the moment it is promoting our Winter Solstice ceremony.

Closing Reading & Adjournment: Lisa shared a closing reflection and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Submitted by: Patricia Harrington-Wydell, Board Secretary

Next BOT Meeting: January 15 at 7:00 p.m.

Readings for Future Months

January 2025	Mike Berry
February 2025	Pat Wydell
March 2025	Nancy Frenk
April 2025	Gary LaBedz
May 2025	Peggy Simonsen
June 2025	Ryan Schaefges