

UUCSR Board of Trustees Minutes

July 8, 2025

6:30 pm

UUCSR Board Room

Board Goals: 2024 - 2025:

- **Financial Stewardship: Fundraising / Revenue Enhancement**
- **Engagement: Board of Trustees / Congregation / Larger Community**
- **Enhancing Communication within and beyond our Beloved Community**

[NOTE: These goals will continue until the Board retreat in September 2025]

Those present:

- **Board members present:** Randy Jones, Robin Marrs, Helga Lemke (Vice President), Carol Daeley, David Reitzell (President), Richard Senghas (Corporate Secretary), Alan Bell
- **Zoom:** Reverend Dr. Tovis Page (Co-Minister), Mary Louise Jaffrey, Amy Yoro, Aphrodite Bellochio (.)
- **Also present:** Kathy Albury (notes), John Mason, Pat Bailey, Era Copone (DRE), Beth Craven (Board Member-elect until 11/25).

Chalice lighting: David

Land acknowledgement: Richard

Approval of agenda & Minutes from May 2025 and June 2025:

- Moved and seconded
- Passed unanimously

Open Mic/Congregational Communication

- Pat Bailey here for the RE Committee:
 - Human Resources and Religious Education committees met last night because the hiring of an Interim DRE is not going as well as we wish due to low wage offer--\$2.00/hr. or \$3,000/year less than the requested wage. There are some blind spots on both sides. We fear losing a well-liked and highly recommended DRE candidate as well as some RE families. We recognize budgets are tight.
 - Our congregation is siloed; we often don't know each other.

- o Many parents do not or rarely attend church or donate. We can raise the money and get a highly qualified DRE.
- o Our overall staff wages are at 85% to 90% of the recommended UUA minimum wage. If we hired the candidate at her requested salary, it would not be lifting up staff with lower %.
- o Pat feels we can raise that money.
- o The current DRE gave us 6 months' notice, so this transition could be smooth—we have failed at that.
- o The requested wage is a few cents under the current DRE wage which was raised only 6% over 5 years.
- o The candidate would take a pay cut to accept this job.
- o Two board members spoke in support of paying the DRE candidate the minimum UUA recommended wage saying that kids are the most important part of our congregation and offered help in raising the money.
- This issue will be discussed in executive session after this meeting.

Check In

Approval of Consent Agenda

- UUCSR Financial Report May 2025: Amy Yoro; bookkeeper since 2003, member since 2007. Ended May well—much better than budgeted. Just about finished with June—looks positive, though a little less so than May.
- DRE Report: None due to not much RE this month.
- Consent agenda approved

Welcome to Rev. Tovis Page:

- Lives in Woodside (San Mateo County) on the peninsula w/spouse, George, kids (Zev and Milo) 14, 16. Has 2 cats and 6 chickens and a new puppy. Ordained at UU Fellowship of Redwood City in 2023 after 2 graduate degrees thinking she wanted to stay in academia. She lost her passion for academic things, so she finished degree and doctorate. After staying home with her kids for a few years, she began studies at Starr King part time. After COVID, her church needed a gap minister, so she filled in. She stayed on doing pastoral ministry with another pastor. She has another job in San Mateo as Program Director for an interfaith clergy organization (Peninsula Solidarity Cohort, <https://pscohort.org>) with about 45 faith leaders, partnering with local congregations being a moral voice on social justice

issues. She has aging parents. Reached out to see if a co-ministry would work with UUCSR. Knows Amy; Palo Alto is nearby. She is excited to work with a congregation just coming from an interim period, with a rich small group ministry, and new Social Justice Council. She has visited our church.

- Co-ministry is hard at first, but we will figure it out. Having two people with different skill sets, different personalities can be a good opportunity.

Welcome to Reverend Amy Zucker Morgenstern (on video as she is on vacation having just wrapped up her previous ministry in June)

- Lives with wife, Joy, and daughter, Indigo, in San Francisco—daughter going to college in Amsterdam.
- Retiring from 22-year full time ministry at UU Palo Alto. She has lived in Palo Alto for 25 years and is going into semi-retirement. She enjoys art, being with her wife, reading, cooking, and petting her cat.
- She is excited that our congregation is devoted to serving the community, values spiritual growth and carrying on in spite of a rough couple of years. She will see us in a few weeks.

Questions:

- Please share over-all idea of the schedule for two of you.
 - Board members got a document.
 - The hours will be equally divided: 20 hr/each/week. Areas of congregational life will be under one minister or the other.
 - Services will be divided in half.
 - Amy lives about 1 hr drive away.
 - Hopes to have 6 in-person days/month.
 - Supervise worship staff; behind the scenes Program
 - Primary lead for pastoral care.
 - Religious Education
 - Tavis lives further about 5 hr. round trip.
 - Willing to spend 2 nights/days/month in Santa Rosa
 - Administration, operation, finance, stewardship
 - Small groups (spiritual community life)
 - Social Justice Council
 - Will split worship services in half.
 - Important to keep communication open
 - Both will attend board and staff meetings.

- They will meet together weekly and with the Board President as needed.
 - There will be a check-in in about 3 months to see how things are going and what else is needed
- o They will do a lot on Zoom and keep communication open about what isn't working
- We're used to having minister on site. You two will be here 10 days all together; how do you think that will work?
 - o Many congregations have different kinds of ministry; some ministers live across the country. This is being done in a more extreme way in other churches.
 - o Some churches have shifted to virtual office managers, etc.
 - o For people and groups who want to meet in person, Rev. Tovis will be here on Mondays.
 - o For Social Justice, the ministerial role will be more support; will visit when there is a big community event happening.
- Pastoral Care—when people need to talk; do you have remote office hours, or are you available on zoom?
 - o Rev. Amy will be primary on pastoral care; will probably be a variety of offerings.
 - o She can meet in person on days she is here, or will meet on Zoom
 - o We need to be more hybrid in this day and age for inclusivity and accessibility. Owl (360-degree camera and microphone for Zoom meetings) technology is fantastic.
- We have an ordained American Baptist minister who is a member and who is the heart and soul of Social Justice. Likes that she preaches occasionally She has preached in the past but pulled back to be careful and not step on things.
 - o We will make a collegial covenant with her about what she will and wouldn't do.
 - o There are several Sundays available for congregational speakers or other ministers to preach.
- There will be no single Head of Staff? Rev. Amy and Rev. Tovis will be sharing that.
 - o Co-ministers tend to supervise people in the areas they are the primary for.
 - o Rev. Amy would supervise DRE, worship staff.

- o Rev. Tovis would supervise administrative staff.
 - o Perhaps alternate who leads staff meetings.
- Congregation needs to have a covenanted role
 - o We will have to work on that. Congregants need to step forward as congregants to make this work; will have to be willing to take the lead.
 - o Idea of shared ministry is very important.
 - o Congregants need to think of themselves as part of the ministry.
 - o Often with 2 people you actually get more coverage.

Discussion: How to involve the congregation in transition to the new ministry.

- Congregation was looking forward to a single settled minister; this is working out to more the Board making the selection.
- Both ministers plan to preach together in September and then have some sort of Town Hall.
- Will do Water Communion as regular Ingathering together.
- May send out a video of them together for the congregation.
- August 15 start date; first time in pulpit the following week.
- Rev.Tovis@UUSantaRosa.com
- Rev.Amy@UUSantaRosa.com
- Rev. Tovis will come to the Worship Retreat and any Pastoral Care Retreats
- Aphrodite—will try to schedule a meeting with staff before Tovis goes on vacation.
- Suggestion to put the introductory video link in the newsletter and on Facebook.
- Rev. Tovis does not sing; perhaps Rev. Amy does.
- Rev. Tovis
 - o Asked that there be an Onboarding Committee to set up meetings with key committees or a one on one with the leads.
 - o So many small groups; would like to go the meetings over the first few months.
 - o Understands that there is anxiety; as long as we keep communication open, honest, and transparent, we will be fine.
 - o Era will keep Rev. Dave's files, so you will have access to them.

Task Force Reports

- Glaser Center:
 - Rumi's Caravan will be performing here as a benefit for the Saturday Breakfast. Poetry, textiles, etc.; have hosted it here before.
- Saturday morning breakfast--none
- May need a Task Forces for a policy on policies
 - We have haphazard document control. It's getting better-- bylaws have helped; this transition time seems like an opportune time to do this.
 - Get the Handbook for Members updated and take some of the policies out of it.
 - In the past they have been hard to maintain.
 - What to prioritize?
 - Could the handbook be digital? Will probably be both. Create it digitally.
 - Era offered to put the current Handbook on the website.
- Draft of Anti-Harassment Task force report presented by Era—13-page document
 - Thanks to John Mason and Aphrodite for their help.
 - This came up because we had an incident, and it was handled in a novel way. Harassment is very confusing when it does occur.
 - Define harassment, sexual harassment, harassment based on protected classes.
 - What groups are responsible for dealing with harassment? How are people trained?
 - When people who represent UUCSR and commit harassment, they will be handled according to our policy.
 - Era quickly reviewed the draft.
 - For this to work we need a Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) and/or a Right Relations Committee--Alan, Lucia, Susan B. are on a Right Relations committee that is not functioning but could be reconstituted and the tasks divided.
 - Are these trainings available?
 - Leadership training—looking at the UUA version. Insurance companies often have them. Looking into it.
 - Era (in new role as IT person) will be looking at cyber computer security.
 - Need to consider mandated reporting.

- o What is next? Please make comments. Maybe one more meeting w/ Task Force
- o Financial component? Leadership training ideally at the start of every year.
- o David will connect with Rev. Dave or UUA Rep, or Insurance about trainings.
- o Our insurance does not provide anything; we could consider buying—would need to be in next year's budget.
- o Complaint form? On our list of things left to do.
- o Please keep in mind that Rev. Tovis is in Preliminary Ministry Fellowship and needs 3 years of renewals and assessment. She needs a Ministerial Formation Committee or Committee on Ministry to assess her at the end of the year and complete forms for the UUA to complete her Preliminary Fellowship.

Lost Church Update—Aphrodite

- We have signed 3-year lease and have the deposit, first and last months' rent.
- They will start moving in in August. It is costing them \$70,000 to move in and get started.
- There will be an assessment at 2 years. They really want a 5-year lease. We might be able to negotiate a rent increase or some sharing of the space then.

Action items

- Set up Onboarding Committee for Rev. Tovis and Rev. Amy.
- Future business: Set up COSM and/or Right Relations committees.
- All: Read and make comments on Draft of Anti-Harassment Task Force report.
- David: Connect with Rev. Dave, UUA Rep, or Insurance about anti-harassment trainings.
- Aphrodite: Will try to schedule a meeting with the staff before Rev. Tovis goes on vacation.
- Era: Will preserve Rev. Dave's files so they will be available to the new ministers.

Meeting moved into executive session.

Executive Session Notes by Richard Senghas:

Responding to a 7/6/2025 memo from the HR Committee and input from congregants, the Board met in executive session to review and discuss staff hiring and compensation issues. Based on issues of equity and proper procedures, some adjustments were made to both an offer currently outstanding, as well as another staff member's current compensation.

Draft