

UUCSC Board of Directors Meeting
March 15, 2023 via Zoom

Present: President Elizabeth Donovan, Clerk Mary Fulton, Treasurer Mary Alice Kimball Directors Charlie Donnelly, Russell Stokes and Rev. Denis Letourneau Paul

Absent: VP Trish Hindley, Director Elaine Stannard

Guest: Nancy Richman

Call to Order: 6:00 PM by Elizabeth Donovan

Reading of Covenant and chalice lighting: by Elizabeth Donovan

Invocation by Rev. Denis Letourneau Paul

MOTION: Elizabeth moves to ratify the February Board minutes that were approved via email. PASSED unanimously.

Staff reports: Appended.

Treasurer's report: The 2023-24 budget timeline was shared. All dates back up from the June 11th Annual meeting date. A congregational presentation can be done and the Board can expect a presentation by May 2nd. Collection of pledged money is falling behind. The anticipated deficit of \$11,000 is now expected to be \$17,000. \$15,000 was allocated to a restricted account for this type of expense. Other savings are also available should the operational expenses exceed what is available in the checking account. Money has been budgeted to buy a new computer for the office and a vacuum cleaner for the Clean Team. A dust buster has already been purchased for their use. The lease agreement on the copier will expire in October. It will not be renewed and a copier will be purchased thereby eliminating the \$200 monthly fee. Committees have been asked to submit budget requests for 2023/24 so Finance can begin planning a budget to be presented at the Annual Meeting.

Scholarship money is available if requested by delegates to the General Assembly. UUCSC can send 3 delegates. Interested parties are asked to speak with President Elizabeth Donovan or Rev. Denis.

Stewardship: Mary Fulton. At this time 72 Pledges have been made totaling \$160,000. Although more phone calls have been made and another set of announcements will be made via e-news and the Sunday service, it is not expected that pledges will rise to last years level and again the stewardship goal will not be met. Rev. Denis pointed out that this financial trend is pervasive among UU congregations. How to keep our doors open may become a serious consideration in the next few years.

Committee on Ministry (COM): A form and plan was shared for the ministry evaluation that will begin in May. Elizabeth Donovan will represent the Board during this process.

Nominating: The committee is contacting many people for positions as president, treasurer, director and nominating. Anyone interested in these roles with the appropriate skills should contact Linda Whyte Burrell, Gail Burchard or Val Follett.

Membership lists: During the pandemic these lists have become incorrect. A small task force met to make a plan as to how to handle updating the members/friends lists and the directory. Documents were produced and shared with the Congregational Administrator who will be primarily responsible for updates in the future.

MOTION: Elizabeth Donovan moved that the Board approve a proposed Member Status policy. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Member Status Policy

Once a person signs the Membership Book and becomes a member, they are considered a Member for Life unless:

- They choose to be removed from the membership roll. Name is moved to Removed List.
- A member is moved to the Removed List as a result of the following process as outlined by the bylaws: If a member has not been seen in church or pledged to the congregation in two years, the Board Clerk will meet with the chair of Membership and the Collector to determine who should be sent a letter regarding their intentions as a member or friend. If an answer is not received within thirty days, the member is moved to the Removed List and is no longer listed in the Directory.
- A member can choose to become “inactive” because they are living elsewhere or some other reason. They may remain in directory with an “I” for inactive status and their address may be updated so UUCSC members can contact them (per the bylaws).
- They are deceased. Name is moved to Deceased List.

The date and reason for inactive or removed status should be noted after each name on the lists. It should also be noted in the Membership Book in pencil. Date of death should also be noted.

Inactive members may not vote unless they request to reactivate their membership 30 days prior to an election or other situation requiring a vote.

Inactive members are not counted for the purpose of reporting to the UUA.

Policy Manual - tabled till April
Tree of Life chalice side chat - tabled until April

Adjourned 8:02.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Fulton, Clerk

Next Board meeting: April 19, 6-8pm Zoom
Next Coordinating Council meeting: May 10, 4-6pm Zoom

**Minister's Report to the Board of Directors
UU Congregation of South County
Rev. Denis Letourneau Paul**

March 10, 2023

Dear Members of the Board of Directors,

Following are my thoughts on the three areas of ministry:

Worship Life

Since my last report, I've been involved in the following services:

2/26/23 "Four By Six," with Elizabeth Donovan

3/5/23 "Permeable Aliveness," with Nancy Richman and Betsy Dalton

3/12 "Lift Every Voice," with Barbara Nowicki

The ten-part sermon series on the Principles continues. I've been hearing from a number of folks that they'd like to see all of the services, including spiritual reflections and readings, reprinted in one place. My hope is to assemble as much as I can, mindful of the complexities of copyright laws, to be posted on the website.

In April, we'll be rearranging the sanctuary again for Easter, and hosting a Good Friday Tenebrae service as we did last year.

The worship Committee is continuing to look at options now that sound has become so terrible when the choir sings. None of the Zoom fixes seem to be working, so right now it looks like we will have three choices going forward:

1. Leave things the way they are and live with the awkwardness;
2. Move to a different platform like Facebook Live, which will have great sound and easy access, but no capacity for viewers to interact with each other; or

3. Simulcast on Facebook, and invite folks to log onto Zoom for conversation and reflection after the service.

In my conversations with some of the more regular users of live-streaming, it's looking like interactivity is valued more than high quality sound during the musical elements. I'm grateful that everyone has been patient through our experiments, and understanding that every platform has limitations we can't overcome within our means.

Congregational Life

Newcomer activities are going beautifully. We have people signed up for the April 2 "New to UU" class, and it looks like we will have a respectable number of folks signing the membership book in the coming weeks. Meanwhile, Sunday attendance is starting to feel pretty close to pre-pandemic levels.

I've heard only a bit of negative feedback about moving to a mask-optional status on Sunday mornings. Overall though, I think people understand that we are trying to meet a huge variety of needs, and that three years is a long time to feel like we're in limbo.

Overall, the energy and mood of the congregation is positive, upbeat, and forward-looking, with an abundance of generosity of spirit. If any congregation has the tools, mission, and mutual trust needed to thrive in this environment, it's UUCSC.

Community Life

A couple weeks ago I got to join a dozen interfaith clergy, including five other UU ministers from our district, at social justice action event in Fall River, protesting the reading to children by a conservative Christian minister a transphobic picture book. The experience was surreal, and worthwhile. Since the terrorist insurrection of 2021, too many of these actions of prophetic witness feel scary, like violence could erupt at any moment. We all need to be involved in this work more than ever, this work of representing love and compassion.

Meanwhile, the social justice council has been involved in the preliminary stages of forming a justice-oriented interfaith council of local congregations in South Kingstown. I'm so looking forward to working with everyone on something meaningful and impactful. These days, that kind of interfaith work is a rarity.

Next Furlough Week: March 13-20

In Peace, Rev. Denis Letourneau Paul

March 2023 FA Report to the Board

Dear Board members,

This month I have continued to do some work on the UUA Pension transfer to Empower. They have changed the reporting requirements and the payment submission. I will be working with Mary Alice to finalize the reporting, hopefully in the next week. As you are aware the budget process has started and I helped Mary Alice send requests to Committee Chairs. Later this month I will be working with Mary Alice on the returns of the 2022-2023 budget preparation requests. I will also help with estimating various administrative expenses for the upcoming fiscal year budget which includes electricity and gas summaries for others to review. Monthly and daily financial activities and email activity continue to take the majority of my time. This includes reviewing and making all payments in a timely manner.

Regards,
Sue

Office Administrator Board Report, February-March, 2023

Membership Welcome cards have been updated and printed. There are new envelopes for the visitor's packets. Yellow Cards for the hymnals have been updated and we have worked out a system for recording information people submit on the cards.

Stewardship The membership list has been updated with correct status information (members, friends, inactive). The stewardship campaign materials have been prepared, sent, are in the process of being collected and tabulated.

Meetings I attended a meeting of the Communications Committee, just to be in the loop about their work and any concerns. It looks like I will be more involved with the scheduling of Zoom meetings going forward. I also attended a meeting regarding creating an accurate membership list and the best way to update membership information.

Ongoing I continue to perform various tasks in support of the work of many of the committees. I continue to maintain the online calendar, to produce the order of service weekly, to work with Etta on the newsletter and website, and to take care of the mail, email and phone messages and getting the bills to Sue Rogala.

Best,
Sara Kaplow
Office Administrator

March 2023
DRE Lee Cowan Board Report

Dear Board,

I feel like I just wrote last month's board report and now here we are ready for a new one! Time is flying. It's been pretty quiet and gentle down in RE and it's been lovely. We've been talking about our big emotions during this month of "vulnerability:" how to identify them, how they feel, what colors and shapes and symbols represent different emotions. We also did a really cool experiment to show what happens when we get upset and our heart rate increases and what we can do about it. We started by calculating our resting heart rate (mine was 84 bpm), then having a dance/jump/cartwheel party and counting our heart rate after that (136 bpm). And then! Doing some mindful breathing and a lying down body scan and counting our pulse after that (mine dropped to 60!). Everyone's dropped to below their original resting heart rate! It was so cool. That might be more than you wanted to know about our RE time, but I just think it's such a great demonstration of how much we have the power to influence our experience of this world.

In other news, OWL is chugging along. I got to teach another double session of the 7-9th grade class at WUC all about bullying and internet safety. It was fascinating and I think everyone there (including the facilitators) learned a lot. The 10th-12th grade class had a break for a few weeks but starts back up next Sunday. The adult OWL online training started and I haven't heard how it's going, but I'm excited to find out.

The RE Committee is helping me to start a child-elder connection where we will match up kids with UU elders. So Barbara Pagh is contacting some of our congregation's elders and I'm finding kids who are interested in doing a short interview with them. We will be posting pictures and answers to the kids' questions in the Oneto room.

We're gearing up to host some multi-gen hikes and trash pick-ups as the weather warms. We'll also start planting the raised bed in the backyard and revitalize the flower garden that's up against the building. And does anyone know that we have a compost pile? It was made last fall by an Eagle Scout and I'd like to start educating the families and congregation about using it. This will be part of a month of earth-based activities and learning.

I'm finally updating the RE brochure with Sara's help and support. And I'm also working with the Policy Committee to update the RE Handbook.

Thanks all!

Lee