

UUCSC Board of Directors Meeting

September 20, 2023 via Zoom

Present: President Nancy Richman, VP Trish Hindley, Treasurer Mary Alice Kimball, Clerk Mary Fulton, Directors Charlie Donnelly, Bethany Sorrentino, Russell Stokes, Rev. Denis Letourneau Paul

Call to Order: 6:02 PM by Nancy Richman

Reading of the Covenant: Nancy Richman

Invocation: Rev. Denis L. Paul (loving, thinking, doing)

VOTE: Nancy moved to ratify the August Board minutes that were approved via email.
PASSED unanimously.

Staff reports: Appended.

Treasurer's report: Total cash is \$233,018.32.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Treasurer's role revision:**

The transition is going well with Sue Rogala doing the cash position report, so Mary Alice has more time to work on the year-end report. Money received in the 2023 fiscal year from prepaid pledges and Dining 4\$ payments was recognized as of July 1 in this fiscal year (released into operational funds).

NEW BUSINESS

VOTE: Nancy Richman moved to approve the Finance committee's recommendation to increase rents for offices 9, 11, 12 and the conference room by \$10/month.
PASSED unanimously.

- **Retreat Follow up:**

Discussed the "big question" identified at the retreat: *How can we BE our best selves, living more fully into our mission within our congregation and in the wider community?*

- Brainstorm: How do we want to BE? (as a congregation... as a Board...) (See Addendum below)
- Rev. Denis reviewed the many "experiments" he has tried to help UUCSC more fully live its mission – from trying new things during Sunday worship (different chair arrangements, different types of services like World Café...) to opportunities for the congregation to build relationships (quarterly dinners, Beverages & Banter, kayaking...). Most have been successful. The Board brainstormed possible experiments to try (see Addendum)

Adjourned: 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Fulton, Clerk

Next Board meeting: October 4th, in person, Oneto Room

Next Coordinating Council meeting: November 8 (via Zoom)

Addendum

1. Brainstorm: How do we want to BE? (as a congregation... as a Board...)

- Empathic, listening deeply and actively to each other on the board while getting tasks done.
- Caring, Asking how people are feeling about the work they are doing / Caring for each other's well-being
- Assuming good intent
- Generous (time, talent, financial...)
- Intentional / self-reflective
- Curious, being inquisitive by asking questions
- Having fun together
- Open to joy
- Passionate about learning; loving to learn; learning together (Board common read?)
- Seeking justice
- A community with relations between the generations
- Trusting each other
- Covenantal
- Welcoming
- Spiritually nourishing and restorative
- Focused on building on the many moments of meaning and inspiration, rather than focused on what is wrong and needing to be fixed. Paying attention to what is here now
- Rooted in the mission
- Fused more on relationships and living into the mission rather than primarily task-oriented
- Trusting that living into our mission will lead to increased sustainability

2. Brainstorm - possible experiments for the Board to try

- In meetings:
 - Spend time connecting as a Board – talking about our lives / have more time for check-in going beyond the superficial
 - Throw out a question and each person would reflect and share their thoughts/feelings about it (perhaps something more personal)
 - Play “Two Truths and a Lie”
 - Bring a favorite song / create a Board playlist
 - Finding ways to have more fun in meetings
 - In-person meetings at least periodically
 - Close the meeting with a haiku or limerick written during the meeting
 - Common read with discussion each month
 - Pick a question within the broader question posed above to discuss in depth at the next Board meeting
 - Discuss something related to the monthly worship theme
- During Worship
 - Rotate chalice lighting at Worship services among the Board
 - Have a Board member do the Sunday service “Welcome”
- Other experiments for the Board
 - Chalice side chat every month or two for a Board member to share what the Board is thinking about
 - Finding ways to ask congregants what they need/want and then create experiments to meet those needs
 - Put out Suggestion boxes
 - Put out Answer boxes - Ask a question on a Sunday and in the Newsletter each month and have congregants put their answers in the box
 - Multi-generational playdate
 - Ministry of silly walks / silly laughs
- Experiments for Nancy to be accessible to the congregation
 - Wear a silly hat, sit at a table in the Oneto Room after a service, with a sign “Ask Me Anything”

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○ **APPENDIX**

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

September 16, 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:

8/13/23 "Inherent Worth and Power," with Jeanne Arthur

8/20/23 "Three Monks Walk Into a Monastery," with a bevy of Barbaras

9/3/23 "Blessing Our Work," with Lee Cowan

9/10/23 "The Way of Water," with Lee Cowan

The worship committee continues to do great work with a lot of appreciated support from the staff, including Lee. She and I have been planning the continued art installations at the front of the sanctuary, reflecting monthly themes and incorporating the care of the whole congregation. On October 11, I will be facilitating a "Worship Assistant Grounding" with folks who regularly participate in leading worship, many of whom are not on the worship committee. It's not a "training" because the gathering is more about the art and practice of evolving into being well-grounded and highly resourced worship leaders, rather than learning tangible skills.

Congregational Life

One to one meetings continue, as an important on-going part of my ministry with you. We continue gathering regularly in informal groups to kayak, talk over coffee, and share cacophonous dinners, fulfilling the regularly expressed desire of members and friends to have more opportunities for engagement.

The new committee on Ministry will new meeting for the first time on 9/28. The new configuration includes Mary Finnegan (convener), David Fulton, Sarah Dinklage and Dennis Skidds.

As I work with Board chair Nancy Richman to rethink how the Coordinating Council Functions while we narrow down the focus of the board, I think the joint Board Retreat hosted by the regional UUA staff in Lexington today was a big success. It got us to consider together the cycle of act/reflect/adapt as a tool for discernment about how to be more relevant and sustainable into the future. My understanding of the first draft of the question we'll be asking ourselves as leaders this year is something like "How can we be more ourselves, living into our mission within our congregation and in the wider community, and meeting the needs of the people there?"

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- **Office Administrator Board Report, September, 2023**
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- **Winter hours** I am adjusting to the return to winter hours and am looking forward to having more time to get up to speed on the new Breeze system and to explore its capabilities.
- **Facilities** Recent adventures in dealing with the air conditioning required some coordination with the facilities committee and more than usual contact with some of the tenants. More groups are returning to in-person meetings, so the calendar is fuller than it has been. It is encouraging to see!
- **Membership** I have assisted Val with several small projects, preparing materials and recording contact information for people who fill out visitor cards.
- **Ongoing** I continue 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
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September 2023 FA Report to the Board

Dear Board members,

This month I have continued to help Mary Alice with some of the reporting that she has done in the past. I also updated some of the payroll reporting for the monthly reporting to the payroll agency, Empower for pension payments, and FICA payments made to Rev Denis. I also continue to perform the monthly and daily financial activities. This includes reviewing and making all payments in a timely manner, bank account reconciliations, updating QuickBooks, completing all General Ledger entries requested by Mary Alice and running all monthly financials for Mary Alice. This month some additional time was spent looking at the entries for the Hurdis Fund with Mary Alice.

Regards,
Sue

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September 2023
DRE Board Report

Dear Board,

I'm so happy to be back! The last two Sundays have been wonderful, co-leading worship with Rev. Denis. The blessings service and water communion were both well attended and well received. I can't wait to do more.

I've also been planning some workshops for parents (and anyone else who is interested). The first will be "bringing the UU faith into the home" based on a workshop I helped to create during a Renaissance module. I am also working with a parent to create a workshop/discussion on neurodiversity. I plan to offer these once a month, starting at the beginning of Oct.

I'm also planning one-to-one conversations with parents this year, borrowing from what Rev. Denis did when he first started here. My goal is to meet individually with all the parents in the next few months to get a better understanding of what's going on in their lives and how RE can support them and their kiddos.

Rev. Denis and I are excited to launch the sidekicks program on a congregation-wide level. Our pilot program last year was wonderful, with families making some connections with other congregants. We've been laughing ourselves silly getting ready for this, it's gonna be fun.

And along those lines, I'd like to invite more people from the congregation to come visit RE this year, as well as special guests from outside the congregation. People will be invited to either just spend time with us, or offer a skill or project that they'd like to lead or share.

And OWL is coming back! UUCSC will be hosting a training Nov. 17-19th in person for elementary aged OWL classes. We have two facilitators lined up and volunteers from our congregation, from Westminster and from First U Providence who are planning to attend. I will be advertising to the wider UU community this week.

Rev. Denis and I are also planning quarterly dinners again with our first one coming up on October 13th.

Have I mentioned that I love this job?

Lots of love,
Lee