

UUCSC Board of Directors Meeting

January 3, 2024 via Zoom

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

Call to Order: 6:03 PM by Nancy Richman

Reading of the Covenant: Nancy Richman

Invocation: Rev. Denis L. Paul

MOTION: Nancy moves to ratify the December Board minutes that were approved via email. **PASSED**

Staff reports: Appended. Mary Alice commented on how valuable it is to have Sue Rogala prepare the reports so she can be the second set of eyes on financial reports, etc.

New Business:

Motion: Nancy Richman moves to approve the Finance Committee's request for up to \$15,000 to replace the air conditioning in both the sanctuary and the Oneto room. **PASSED** unanimously.

Russell Stokes will be speak as Board liaison with the Facilities chair about how the congregation's values might influence the choice of service vendors.

MOTION: Nancy Richman moves that the Board approve the Personnel committee recommendation for a change in policy. The policy for background checks will now read: All hires and all RE volunteers are required to get one federal background check (Bureau of Criminal Investigation-BCI). Temporary teachers or instructors, such as those of the O.W.L. program, must present evidence of a BCI. Parents of children in RE and visitors are exempt. See our Congregational Administrator to complete the BCI. **PASSED** unanimously.

Liaison reports: Charlie will direct those concerned with the website to address their concerns with Etta Zasloff and Will Bender.

Qualities and Practices revisited: Board members received a digital copy of the items previously discussed.

All Congregational meeting February 3: From 10:00 to 12:00 followed by a light lunch.

Group discussions of UUCSC strengths, challenges, opportunities, and aspirations will be recorded and prioritized.

Board congregation read: People will be asked to register so that emails can be sent with the Zoom link and questions about *The Light We Carry*.

Adjourned: 8:10 PM

Mary Fulton, Clerk

Next Board meeting: February 7 (via Zoom) 6:00-8:00pm

Next Coordinating Council meeting: January 10 (via Zoom)) 4:00 - 5:30pm

Staff Reports

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

Revised January 3, 2024

Dear Members of the Board of Directors,

Since my last report, I've led the following services:

12/10/23 "The Little Things," with Lee Cowan and Barbara Nowicki

12/23/23 "Christmas Eve Eve," Featuring Mike Galib and the choir, with several readers

Following are my thoughts on the three areas of ministry:

Worship Life

First off, I'm amazed that I only led two services since our last meeting. There was no service on Christmas Day. Lee led an amazing solstice pageant on 12/17, and Amber once again led an informal service on the last Sunday of the calendar year, both indicators of the amazing Human Resources we have available to us. A great sign of health in a congregation is when things go well without the minister.

The first week in December, which we have been dedicating to celebrating UU values with our own traditions and rituals built around the returning light and personal reflection had an odd feel to it this year, now that we can no longer call it Chalica. The thing that was clear to me though is that our folks understand why we need it, love the traditions we've adopted, and want to continue. In fact, most of the feedback I got was that next year we should start preparing in early November, together, so that folks can really celebrate well at home. The trick of course is going to be preparing without creating all the pressure that makes winter holidays so difficult.

Another point of clarity: *our* new name for this week will probably be “Luminescence,” or some form of that word. (It’s actually the name another congregation has been using for more than a decade.)

We have trainings and reflections coming up for the worship committee and worship assistants who periodically help out with services. Thankfully I was able to use Christmas week and study week to catch up on reading, plan outlines, gather resources, and create titles and blurbs for all the services I will be leading through the end of the congregational year.

Congregational Life

It continues to be a pleasure to work with lay leaders in the congregation and to accompany board chair Nancy as she thinks expansively about the role of the board and other key committees in the congregation. The board and the coordinating council especially are taking seriously your role in adapting to the changes we are facing.

Mike, the new chair, and the rest of the facilities committee have a lot of work ahead of them, as they prioritize necessary repairs and maintenance on the building. During the holidays, the crumbling plaster on the inside of the exterior walls of the sanctuary really stuck out. My understanding is that it looks much worse than it actually is, but given everything, it’s becoming more clear to me that a capital campaign is unavoidable at this point.

Meanwhile, I want to congratulate Nancy for leading the charge on an amazingly successful end-of-year appeal. And I want to thank here the **anonymous donor** who gave the **generous \$3,500 matching** grant that started it all. This is the kind of generosity that defines this congregation, the kind of generosity of spirit that will keep it thriving.

Community Life

Things feel quiet in the community for the most part at the moment. I’m disappointed that I won’t be able to attend the January 3 Poverty Protest in Providence because of so many other commitments (including the board meeting!) that day. Life is just too complicated.

Agape Fund During December, \$500 distributed to a family with emergency need.

Next Furlough Week: January 15-22

In Peace,
Rev. Denis Paul

January 2024

DRE Board Report

Dear Board,

Happy New Year! It’s been good to have a week at home and I hope everyone has had some good rest and renewal.

It was good to have two TFAAs the first two Sundays of December. We plan for kids upstairs when it makes sense to include them, so it’s not on a regular schedule. I loved how we centered our chalice to celebrate our UU values and the kids/families made beautiful homemade ones. Our quarterly congregational dinner on Dec. 8th was delicious as always. And the clean-up process was a success! Even if people ended up helping with something different than their

colored slip of paper, it got almost everyone involved. The next upgrade I want to continue working on is having different people make dishes, even if it's just the guacamole or the chopped veggies.

Our chalice side chat on Dec. 10th created a lot of positive feedback and ideas for a UU summer camp at UUCSC. We had about 15 people sign up to help make it happen! There was excitement around integrating art with UU values. There was also a suggestion to focus on a project that would have a positive impact on the Peacedale community. We will look into logistics like liability, insurance, and cost. I have a date to talk with a DRE who has been running a "Chalice Camp" at her congregation for several years. There were also several suggestions of people to contact who have experience with this. So I will continue to gather information.

The solstice service on Dec. 17th was fantastic. We had 19 kids there that day, including two new families. I think parents prioritize celebratory, multi-gen events like that one. It was so sweet to see all the kids participate in the story and feel comfortable in the sanctuary. I got all good feedback and I hope that it worked well for everyone. The only glitch I saw was that I didn't "enable original sound" for zoom.

The solstice spiral labyrinth walk on Dec. 21st was beautiful. It was a sweet, small circle with two kids and about a dozen adults. I really love holding it outside on the actual winter solstice. But I wonder if being inside is easier for some? And I wonder if a Friday night would be more accessible.

Looking ahead, we are starting Dungeons and Dragons for the middle schoolers on Jan. 14th. And we will start an OWL class for K-1st graders in February. The plan is for all ages to begin together at 10am with our sharing circle, then we will break off into different age groups at 10:30. We still welcome visitors! I'd love for an extra adult from the congregation to be with us each week.

Lots of love, Lee

Office Administrator Board Report, January 2024

Hurdis Fund

Eight Hurdis Grants were awarded at the last meeting of the committee. I coordinated getting checks and letters to 7 of the recipients. One is still pending.

Christmas Eve Eve

Special materials needed to be produced for this annual event, and there was a fair amount of coordinating with Mike.

Doors, Locks and Keys

I don't actually remember if this was last month or the month before, but I fixed the front door so the lock catches and I have not found the front door unlocked when I arrive in the morning since then.

We have started to sort out the mess of keys in the file cabinet and hope to get a better sense of who has keys to which doors in the new year.

The Printer

The printer contract is up in February and as you know we have decided not to renew. The leasing company has been informed and we are awaiting instructions on how to ship the old printer back to them. A new printer has

been purchased and will soon be set up in the office. Many thanks to Aline Couture, Sue Rogola, and Mary Alice and Sky Kimball for making all these things happen.

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 in addition to producing the weekly order of service.

Best,

Sara Kaplow

Office Administrator

December 2023

FA Report to the Board

Dear Board members,

Monthly and daily financial activities have continued to take most of my time this month. Mary Alice did find a few things I missed when performing the November close. Luckily, she caught these errors before the month was finalized. This is why it is so helpful to have someone like Mary Alice reviewing reports. I don't usually make the same mistakes twice, so hopefully this will not happen again. Sara is on vacation this week so I will be checking the mail. I did start completing some financial information for Jeane Burke to file for tax-exempt status. It was taking a little longer than expected and I did have to confer with Mary Alice on it. Hopefully this will be completed in the next week.

I hope everyone had a great Holiday and hopefully next year will be even better for everyone.

Regards,

Sue