

# MINUTES UUCS BOARD MEETING

## 2021-11-03

### **In Attendance:**

Board: Mark Lorenz, Steve Dick, Jack Hazerjian, Susan Reese, Yvonne Centala, Maggie Lum, Sharon Williams

Minister: Rev. Aileen Fitzke

### **Absent:**

Board: Adam Winter

6:30 Check-in

6:40 Chalice Lighting

6:45 Finance Committee Update

7:00 Reopening

7:20 Subtenant Policy

7:35 Social-Racial Justice Ministry

Board Retreat Follow-up

7:45 Organization Review and Planning

7:55 Recap

6:30 Check-in

6:40 Chalice Lighting

6:45 Finance Committee Update

### **Description**

- Report from the finance committee about status of revenues and expenses with respect to baseline projections at the start of the year. (Adam)

### **Goals**

1. Understand financial position

## **Minutes**

- UUC/Sterling Board Treasurer provided earlier on the day of this Board meeting an updated document on actual and budgeted expenses for the first quarter (July-October 2021) of UUC/Sterling's current fiscal year. Given his absence at the Board meeting, detailed analysis of the report was deferred

## **Action Items**

- Adam will be asked to provide analysis on this report at the next Board meeting.

## **Decisions**

- None

# **7:00 Reopening**

## **Description**

Summary of recent Task Force meetings. Decide on questions raised by the Task Force (Rev. Aileen & Mark)

- Discuss lessons learned during reopening. Any adjustments needed?
- Provide guidance for other church operations as needed (e.g. Auction)
- Discuss Facility Improvement Committee progress (Rev. Aileen)

## **Goals**

1. Ensure the Task Force and Facility Improvement Committee have the tools and resources needed to accomplish the reopening.
2. Ensure accommodations, as identified through the survey, are in place for in-person Sunday services.
3. Act with flexibility and compassion.

## **Minutes**

- With recently-released statements by the FDA and CDC on the approval of vaccinations against the coronavirus for children five to eleven years of age, UUC/Sterling will be able to soon welcome a greater percentage of its church members into the sanctuary for Sunday worship, given the prerequisite that church service attendees be vaccinated. This applies particularly to parents with young children — although not those with infants and small children.
- Last Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, UUC/Sterling happily and successfully re-opened its building for in-person attendance by congregants who have been vaccinated and remain masked inside the church. UUC/Sterling also continued its provision of YouTube streaming and pre-recordings for at-home viewing of worship service by those who have compromised health conditions or other limiting factors. For this first session, there were 30 persons altogether gathered in the sanctuary, including 16 individuals involved with worship service, UUC/Sterling's band (in performance that day), and sound and streaming technical support; in addition, 28 individuals remotely watched the simulcast of the worship service.
- "SignUpGenius" was adopted as a free, online app for managing the pre-registration of seats for those wishing to attend Sunday service in-person; thus far, only a relatively low percentage

of congregants have responded to the weekly, emailed request to sign up or not for attendance. To ensure more assured communications with church members, the weblink to "SignUpGenius" has also been included in the weekly, e-newsletter, "Illuminate." Additionally, Rev. Aileen, Mark Lorentz, and Terry Dick, among others, have telephoned church members who have not been active viewers of web-streamed church sessions. It was suggested that a more methodical review of the current listing of UUC/Sterling congregants be undertaken to prevent some individuals from being mistakenly overlooked.

- Occupancy of 35 persons has been set as the preliminary maximum level, although restrictions may be eased over time. This approach is seen as more palatable than one where tighter restrictions are subsequently imposed after negative consequences arise from "opening up too quickly."
- Even after careful deliberations that established such operational procedures, there still remains some dissatisfaction, as expressed by a few congregants who have small children. Their in-person attendance of Sunday worship is precluded because their children, too young to be vaccinated against the coronavirus, are not yet allowed on the church premises. One disenchanting congregant had claimed of not "being listened to," which was explained during the Board meeting as being inaccurate and more likely an indication of frustrated unhappiness with the current guidelines for in-person attendance at UUC/Sterling.
- A hypothetical scenario was presented during this committee meeting — small children would be kept away from Sunday worship in the sanctuary while they were attending religious education sessions in other (back) rooms within the church building. Responses to this raised the concern that the ventilation is suspect in these rooms, due to their limited size (even despite the possible use of air filter units that had been crafted by the husband of one church member). Additionally, the age of religious education instructors could be a risk factor with exposure to small children, even those masked, over a sustained period and in close surroundings.
- One idea proposed during this committee meeting was the organization of an inter-generational service one Sunday a month, whereby families and their children would convene and help lead worship service. Other congregants with concerns for possibly higher risk of exposure to the coronavirus from their attendance to this could opt to remain at home and attend remotely.
- Rev. Aileen did highlight that UUC/Sterling re-started religious education for children four weeks before in-person worship was re-instituted, with sessions scheduled after the religious service. Moreover, she mentioned that the church had organized a few outdoors events, which allowed welcomed socializing among all church members: Trunk or Treat on the early afternoon of Halloween and two picnics at Pavilion 2 in Claude Moore Park, held earlier this year.

#### **Action Items**

- Rev. Aileen, along with Terry Dick and Susan Reese, will organize a Zoom call to consult with those families with young children who are desirous of more relaxed standards for those wishing to worship in the church's sanctuary.
- A topic of discussion with these individuals would be inquiring about their level of interest in helping to organize an inter-generational service one Sunday per month.

#### **Decisions**

- None

## 7:20 Subtenant Policy

### Description

Last year, the board approved a policy to hold off on having subtenants for a period of time to allow us to understand how we use our renovated facility. We have an opportunity to revise or reaffirm this policy.

- There have been two requests from members/friends that desire to rent our facility for their group.
- We could revise the policy only for members/friends and not general tenants or open up completely. However, we should be consistent in our application of the policy.

### Goals

1. Ensure we don't preclude UUCS from using the facility because of scheduled time by others
2. Promote goodwill within our congregation

### Minutes

- Turning to another topic, the re-institution of renting church space to outside groups on days and times that are not in conflict with UUC/Sterling events, there was interest expressed by two groups that had such an arrangement with the church prior to the pandemic: a painters' group (having some representation of UUC/Sterling members, but who are currently also seeking out alternative spaces) and a Suzuki violin class instructor. The need for large, unwieldy tables to be set up each week by the painters raised concerns for risk of scratching the newly-laid, composite-wood flooring in the church sanctuary; there has already been prepared a guidance document for renters on this matter of minimizing damage to the floors.
- The question arose whether or not there should be imposed a pre-condition of being vaccinated against the coronavirus by those who would be occupying the church building as participants to events organized by UUC/Sterling renters. It was realized that enforcement would be impractical, although mask wearing in the building would be firmly encouraged. Also, the scheduling of these events a few days before Sunday would mitigate the risk of exposure to potentially contagious droplets lingering in the air, since they tend to settle onto the floor after a few days.
- Rev. Aileen informed the Board that the UUC/Leesburg was seeking a space larger than its own church in order to hold a "Transgender Day of Remembrance" on Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, at which there would be a recitation of the names of transgendered individuals from around the world who were victims of violence. About thirty persons are expected to be in attendance. This affords an opportunity for UUC/Sterling to partner with other UU Churches in the area as well as contribute to social justice causes.
- The rental use of UUC/Sterling's sanctuary by the two groups and the shared use of this space by UUC/Leesburg was each put to a vote by the Board, and unanimously there was agreement to proceed with these initiatives.

### Action items

- Rev. Aileen will advise UUC/Leesburg that UUC/Sterling would happily grant its church building for holding a "Transgender Day of Remembrance" on Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Terry Dick (Facilities Committee) will follow up with the two groups (the painters' group and the Suzuki violin class instructor) about terms and conditions for renting the sanctuary space.

- UUC/Sterling's Finance Committee and its Office Manager need to be apprised of the presence and schedule of these two groups.

### **Decisions**

- The rental use of UUC/Sterling's sanctuary by the two groups and the shared use of this space by UUC/Leesburg were both met with unanimously approval by the UUC/Sterling Board.

## **7:35 Social-Racial Justice Ministry**

### **Description**

We would like to be able to respond to emerging situations related to social and racial justice such as:

- Afghanistan Refugee Settlement support (Collections via Lutheran Social Services or other, Sponsor Refugee in partnerships with UUCS UUCR)
- Haitian refugee treatment at the border and asylum
- 8<sup>th</sup> Principle

However, the social-justice committee is fractured and needs leadership

### **Goals**

1. Identify a leader for the Social-Racial Justice Ministry
2. Relaunch the Social-Racial Justice Ministry; provide board support as needed
3. Develop a plan for UUCS's support for the Afghanistan Refugee Resettlement. Identify a lead for this project:

### **Minutes**

- As referenced recently and repeatedly at UUC/Sterling Board meetings, there is an especially compelling need for a church member to lead the church's work — in combination with other UU Churches in Reston and Fairfax — to promote social-racial justice. There are indeed opportunities to collectively engage in activities to support disadvantaged populations, both those US-born and refugees (e.g., newly-arriving Afghanis).
- Sharon Williams volunteered to support the search for someone to lead the Social-Racial Justice ministry, which was newly-formed within the past two years. Kim Cleland had earlier voiced her interest in the Social-Racial Justice ministry, and this will be followed up by Sharon.

### **Action Items**

- Earnestly recruit a church member to lead the Social-Racial Justice ministry.
- Seek out opportunities to partner with other UU churches in conducting social-racial justice work in northern Virginia.

### **Decisions**

- None

# Board Retreat Follow-up

## Description:

Complete SWOT Analysis and Planning activity. Sign board covenant. Review board liaison duties.

- Committee on Ministry - Jack
- Institutional Vitality Ministry - Adam
- Worship & Arts Ministry - Mark
- Justice Ministry - Sharon
- Lifespan Faith Development Ministry - Susan
- Care & Connections Ministry - Yvonne
- Welcome & Engagement Ministry - Steve

## Goals

1. Identify board goals for the year
2. Plan activities for the year.

## Minutes

- The minutes to the Friday evening (October 29<sup>th</sup>) and Saturday afternoon sessions (October 30<sup>th</sup>) of the UUC/Sterling Board's Retreat were compiled by the Board's Secretary and submitted a few hours before this monthly Board meeting to the Board's President for review. As such, more time is needed to study the document
- A recap of discussion points raised during the Retreat and attendant follow-up work by the Board members and others will be offered through future communications with the Board.

## Action Items

- None

## Decisions

- None

1. Perform Strengths, Weaknesses, Challenges, and Opportunities exercise with respect to UUCS going into the 2021-2022 year. Consider board initiatives (and others) and identify priorities for the year:
  - a. UUCS organization, roles and responsibilities, group charters, policies and business processes, document management and archival, staff diversity (hiring policies), leadership development/training
  - b. UUCS facility improvement & reopening, implementing dual platform programming (including technical design, implementation, and testing)
  - c. BHAG Capital Campaign

- d. Initiatives: 8th Principle, Mission, Vision and Covenant, (5 year) Strategic Planning, membership development, volunteer recruitment, Communications
- e. 501(c)3 designation, SJ partners (split plate recipients), SJ partners with other UU congregations

## 7:45 Organization Review and Planning

### **Description:**

Review UUCS organization chart and the composition of the committees. Determine gaps and discuss how to fill the gaps

### **Goals:**

1. Understand the different organizational elements of the congregation and the composition of the different committees
2. Remove unneeded/unused committee; Add needed committees
3. Identify committees needing additional resources

### **Minutes:**

- In the UUC/Sterling Board's review of the church's ministries, under which team and group activities are classified and undertaken, the "Lifespan Faith Development Ministry" was identified as being underachieving in meeting the needs of the congregation. There is currently no religious education for adult members nor adult social programming, e.g., trivia night, movie night. Accordingly, there is need for someone to coordinate, but not necessarily deliver, sessions geared towards adult members; no one on the Board offered to volunteer in this capacity.
- On the other hand, it was reported that Janine Straubhaar-Jones would begin launching in the spring of 2022 a study group on the "8 Principles."
- Michelle Badhwar, who returned to northern Virginia with Raj, her husband, has volunteered to work on the "Membership Team."
- The "Endowment Team," once supported by Judy Gruner, Kathee Myers, and Paul Roche, has no one apparently working on this matter.
- It was suggested that an account of UUC/Sterling's ministries — their achievements, their announcements, and their needs for volunteers and resources — be shared at Sunday service; such a practice of offering "Ministry Minutes" had been once done.

### **Action Items:**

- UUC/Sterling Board will need to solicit the time and good will of church members in filling these abovementioned gaps in ministry work, and the re-establishment of "Ministry Minutes" will be explored.

### **Decisions:**

- None

## 7:55 Recap

1. Review decisions and confirm commitment
2. Review actions assigned and gain commitment for completion. Ascertain if any assistance is needed
3. Outline next steps, as needed
4. Review parking lot items
5. Reflect on the meeting process

### Action Items

Action Item	Action	Assigned	Status
09-08	The Board members will relay ideas for in-person events to each other for consideration.	Board	Ongoing.
10-01	Provide analysis on the Oct financial report at the next Board meeting.	Adam	
10-02	Rev. Aileen, along with Terry Dick and Susan Reese, will organize a Zoom call to consult with those families with young children who are desirous of more relaxed standards for those wishing to worship in the church's sanctuary.  A topic of discussion with these individuals would be inquiring about their level of interest in helping to organize an inter-generational service one Sunday per month.	Rev Aileen	
10-03	Earnestly recruit a church member to lead the Social-Racial Justice ministry.	Mark	
10-04	Seek out opportunities to partner with other UU churches in conducting social-racial justice work in northern Virginia.	Rev Aileen/Mark	
10-05	UUC/Sterling Board will need to solicit the time and good will of church members in filling these abovementioned gaps in ministry work, and the re-establishment of "Ministry Minutes" will be explored.	All	

### Board Decisions

Date	Decision
2021-11-03	The rental use of UUC/Sterling's sanctuary by the two groups and the shared use of this space by UUC/Leesburg were both met with unanimously approval by the UUC/Sterling Board.




**Parking Lot Topics (Deferred to Future Meetings)**

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Topic</b>

**Next Meeting:** December 1, 2021 @ 6:30 pm