

# MINUTES UUCS BOARD MEETING 2022-10-12

## In Attendance:

Board: Mark Lorenz, Bill Roman, Jack Hazerjian, Jackie Mills, Mary Metheny

Treasurer: Adam Winter

Minister: Rev. Aileen Fitzke

## 6:30 Check-in and Chalice Lighting

## 6:45 Action Item Status

### Description

- Review open action items from previous meetings and provide status

### Goals

- Maintain tracking and accountability of assigned actions (see table below). Closed actions will be noted in current minutes and then drop off the tracker in the minutes.

### Minutes

- The transition to the use of the large flat screen in the sanctuary for after-service, virtual Coffee Hour on Sundays remains a work in progress due to the poor sound quality of the audio of the laptop used to host the Zoom call. The ambient noises in the sanctuary during the virtual Coffee Hour could be better counteracted by the louder volume quality afforded by a speakerphone, if one were to be purchased. Bill suggested, as an alternative, of running the Zoom call through the sound board of the church's audio-visual equipment. Bryan George will be contacted to determine next steps for addressing this matter.
- The Committee Fair held after church service recently (October 2nd) was not successful in soliciting volunteers, either for supporting audio-visual needs of UUCS during church service or for collaborating on the various activities of church committees. Mark suggested that perhaps committee heads could convince others to participate through targeting specific individuals with discrete, short-term tasks.
- Membership Committee is scheduled to meet monthly on the third Thursday at 6:00 pm.
- There will be training held on Sunday, November 6th (thirty minutes before church service) for Worship Associates and Board Hosts to have them become better acquainted with the audio-visual equipment and with the order of religious service.
- Rev. Megan Foley is expected to return to UUCS to facilitate another open discussion with the congregation on future plans of the church; the date set for this is Sunday, October 23rd, following worship service.
- Family-centered events that are to be organized by UUCS will be handled by the RE Council.

- It was suggested that the use of the Universal Calendar be re-instated, so that scheduling of church events can be standardized and easily referable.
- The Justice Ministry remains barely active, as no one has stepped forward to lead any sponsored activities.
- A draft of the Committee on Ministry Charter is planned to be reviewed tomorrow (Thursday, October 13th) by members of the Committee on Ministry: Kim Fitzgerald and Denise Lorenz.

### **Decisions**

- None

## **6:55 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**

- Understand financial position so as to make informed decisions that impact UUCS finances.

### **Minutes**

- Mark shared with the Board a number of charts that he had prepared on the trends of UUCS's 2022-2023 budgeted levels and expenditures since the start of the fiscal year (July 1, 2022). Cumulatively up to the present, the gap between costs exceeding revenue has been growing as the amount of pledges fell off after the first months of this current fiscal year. While monthly expenditures are relatively easy to project, the pattern of moneys coming in from congregants is harder to predict.
- Mark reported that Terry had suggested to him that UUCS sell some of its possessions (chairs, for example, that have remained unused for years) in order to free up storage space in the church. If done, then rental of UUCS's space to another church could be practical and more certain, given that availability of a designated room to store items for religious worship would be very attractive. Perhaps a spring-cleaning event could launch this effort; rental fees from another church would certainly be a helpful boost to UUCS finances.

### **Action Items:**

- Continue producing monthly updates of UUCS finances, with some revisions to better ensure their readability and informative content.
- 

### **Decisions:**

- None

## **7:25 Subtenant Rentals**

### **Description**

- Subtenant rentals of our space is a reasonable painless way to increase our income. We might consider advertising our space through our webpage and Facebook page

### **Goals**

- Increase income without compromising our ability to use our existing space

### **Minutes**

- Nicole Fainsan has expressed interest in renting out the sanctuary space one morning per week for her violin practice sessions; her part-time lease is expected to run from January through June in 2023, and will cost her either \$50 an hour or \$75 weekly. While not a substantial source of revenue (\$650 or \$975 altogether), it is a positive development in UUCS's cash flow problem.
- Mark noted that for facilitating the rental of its space to those outside its church, UU Reston re-designed its website to have a rental application form available on a pull-down menu on its website. We might use their web page as a guide.
  - We would need to create a tab/pull down on our website to advertise. We'd put Jenny's phone number and contact info on it. Also, a brief description of the available space and available dates/times.
- We would need to evaluate each request on a case by case basis.

### **Action Items**

- Board will ask UUCS Administrator to make changes to the church's website to include a rental application form as a pull-down menu option. Jackie said she would help.

### **Decisions**

- None

## **7:45 Listening Circle and Town Hall Meetings**

### **Description**

- We held two listening circles after our Town Hall meeting. We also gathered input submitted via email. We need to evaluate suggestions for viability and whether to implement them. Some may need approval of the congregation
- We have a follow-up Town Hall meeting on October 23 with Megan Foley to facilitate
- We are now alone. All Souls is extending their search period by a year to focus on stewardship due to a \$400K short last fiscal year. They want to become financially sound before going into search

### **Goals**

- Discern next steps for our congregation around finances, new minister, facility, resource sharing, merging.

## Minutes

- The discussions that have been held at the church (Town Hall meeting [September 25th], Listening Circles [September 29th, October 2nd]) have dealt significantly with the need to find a replacement for Rev. Aileen, who will leave at the end of the fiscal year on June 30th, 2023. Mark commented that her departure, and succession by a less costly, part-time minister, could help UUCS to focus on living within its budget and on growing the congregation.
- There is limited desire to do a re-pledge drive or focus on trying to raise \$30,000 this year, particularly since even if successful, it might only be sustainable for a year. Similarly, the activities to grow the income would require significant effort from volunteers for which we seem to be stretched already
- There is limited desire to go back into the formal search process through UUA. Finding an interim (part-time) minister might be seen as a compromise, but until we have a financially fit budget, UUCS may not be attractive to a full-time minister.
  - Mark said that he would reach out to Rev. John Monroe to see if he would be interested in serving UUCS as a quarter-time minister. He also raised the consideration that, for those Sundays not led by a minister, there would need to be lay services organized by Worship Committee members (Rosalie Clavez, Kim Fitzgerald, Mark Lorenz and Denise Dittmar), who are already doing so for the one Sunday per month that Rev. Aileen is off. This suggests that either more UUCS members become engaged with the Worship Committee, or that a different type of session (musical performance, discussion) be organized to substitute for lay-led service.
- Many of the comments were related to keeping our current facility rather than looking for another. However, we might be more open to subtenants, which would help financially.
- Sharing resources between churches is another way that UUCS could stretch its dollars. Mark said that he would meet with UU Loudon Board President to get a better sense of how that church is trying to confront its also troubling financial state (possessing its own church building, a historical site, that is badly in need of extensive repairs).
  - The talk of merger between UUCS and UU Loudon – as had been raised within UUCS circles but not an initial topic to be discussed between the Board Presidents -- has had concerns voiced that the congregations have “different” cultures. Also, given their respective locations, Sterling and Leesburg, which lie a considerable distance apart from each other, there would be a huge disincentive if one congregation had to travel much farther to church because of the merger.
- While there were many comments supportive of our current congregation and the benefit received, there were others that touched upon “political correctness” from the pulpit and the ‘oversized’ attention on social/racial justice matters that UUCS tends to pay towards it. However, others countered that, with UUCS sustainment or even its growth, its future lies in attracting a larger number of younger people, who have stronger support for such matters than the older congregants.

- In contrast, the Evangelical churches have growing congregations, especially for younger men, who are believed to feel that these churches are “safe places to feel” and express what they like. Conversely, UUCS has a credo and a culture that are the antithesis of “toxic masculinity,” loving and accepting all others, despite the range of personal and demographic differences.
- Bill Roman thought that the credo of UUCS, and its profound difference with the orientation of Evangelical churches, should be stressed by the congregation by having UUA’s Seven Principles presented on the large screen before each Sunday service, discussed during service, and posted on its front door for congregants and visitors.
- Rev. Aileen added that Sunday service should include both discussion of contemporary topics along with UUA teachings, as the early UU ministers would preach from the pulpit with a Bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other.

#### **Action Items:**

- Mark will contact Rev. John Monroe to see if he would be interested in serving UUCS as a quarter-time minister.
- Mark will meet with UU Loudon Board President to get a better sense of how that church is trying to navigate the issues that it is facing with an aging congregation and operational challenges

#### **Decisions:**

- 

## **8:15 Review Board Liaison Reports**

#### **Description:**

Review board liaison reports.

- Committee on Ministry — Jack
- Institutional Vitality Ministry — Adam
- Worship & Arts Ministry — Mark
- Justice Ministry — Jack
- Lifespan Faith Development Ministry — Jackie
- Care & Connections Ministry — Mary
- Welcome & Engagement Ministry — Bill

#### **Goals:**

- Understand activities of these ministries, their issues, and solutions

#### **Minutes:**

- Due to the time, we did not have significant discussion on reports from the liaisons.

#### **Action Items:**

- None

## Decisions:

- 

## 8:25 Summary of Upcoming Events

- **October 23: Town Hall Meeting with Rev Megan Foley**
- **November 19: UUCS Auction:** (Jack Hazerjian lead)
- **March: Stewardship Drive**

## Action Items

Action Item	Action	Assigned	Status
2022-03:13	Conduct inventory of UUCS possessions, and document findings on UUCS's Google Drive	Jack	<b>Completed</b>
2022-07:04	Coordinate with the Live Stream Operators and Worship team regarding use of the large TV for Coffee Hour. Required new webcam. Later we discovered that the speakerphone was not sufficient for cutting through ambient noise in the sanctuary	Mark	Sent message to the LSOs asking for thoughts on design of this capability. Webcam was purchased and set up. Conducted meetings and realized speakerphone was not powerful enough to cut through ambient noise. Need a different one.  One no-cost option is to run the sound through the house system. We'll try that for a couple of Sundays.
2022-07:06	Create a broad announcement to be given during the service for the open volunteer positions, including the auction. Include announcements on peg board	Mark	In Work
2022-07:07	Contact the Arts and Aesthetics committee to purchase/create a bulletin board for posting volunteer positions and for sign-ups for help at events, etc	Mark	Contacted Denise Dittmar, who is working on it. Denise has ordered the bulletin board and will install it after receipt. It has been installed and is in use. <b>Completed.</b>

2022-07:08	Organize committee fair for October 2. Contact committee leads for participation and will create announcements	Mark and Rev Aileen	Sent email to Rev Aileen to identify committees. Committee Fair held <b>Completed</b>
2022-07:09	Issue Semi-Annual Chalice Lighter announcements based upon board calendar entries. Locate UUA information on the program.	Mark	Proposed announcing in October and May (different months than other fundraising activities). <b>Table discussion</b>
2022-07:10	Create announcement for a date to agree on split plate beneficiaries. Hold the meeting and agree on beneficiaries based upon attendee inputs	Jack	Not yet started
2022-07:11	Schedule and deliver Quarterly "state of the congregation" message to the congregation. Consider verbal (recorded video?) and written	Mark	September, December, March, June would be good months. First one scheduled for September 25 <b>(Completed)</b>
2022-07:12	Coordinate Ministry Minutes to be given by Committees (in addition to Committee Fair) at least once a month	Bill	Reached out to worship. Added column to Schedule tab of this document.
2022-07:13	Schedule board member to participate in worship services. Conduct training along with Worship Associates	Mark	Schedule was emailed to the board; Need to put it in the worship calendar.  Sent email to Worship Associates for training. No responses.
2022-07:14	Get us on Rev Foley's calendar to initiate the Mission Vision, Covenant work	Rev Aileen	Meeting scheduled for September 14. <b>Completed</b>
2022-07:15	Ask the Membership Team to create a plan for facilitating the recruitment, organization, and promotion of the church's social engagement activities. Explore approaches to attract yongber members	Bill	In work
2022-07:16	Prepare for organizing online presentations on either artists/art history or foreign films for adult recreation at UUCS	Jack	Not yet started
2022-08:01	Coordinate with Rev Aileen regarding her revitalizing the Justice Ministry	Mark	In work
2022-08:02	Prepare discussion points for the Board retreat on how Board members can better provide guidance to UUCS ministries and committees on setting goals and objectives	All	OBE. We created goals and projects during the retreat. This will be a continuing topic as part

			of the liaisons. <b>Completed.</b>
2022-08:03	Request that the Committee on Ministry review the draft charter that was previous prepared to ascertain whether it is still applicable and whether it needs adjustment.	Mark	In work
2022-08:04	Coordinate “Committee Fair” for Sunday, October 9th. Contact committee leads for participation and will create announcements	Rev Aileen and Mark	Contacted committees for action. Committee Fair was held. <b>Completed</b>
2022-08:05	Broad announcements will be during the service for open volunteer positions within UUCS, as well as promotion of its annual auction in November. Also, post volunteer positions on peg board	Mark	In work
2022-09:01	Support UUCS choir and band to expand their presence at Sunday services and at other, social engagements held at the church	Rev Aileen and Mark	Contacted Kris with the request. We will continue to coordinate with her.
2022-09:02	Contact finance committee about getting timely financial reports prior to the board meeting	Mark	Ongoing
2022-09:03	Search for lead of the Social Justice Committee will be a focal activity during the “Committee Fair”	Mark	OBE. Denise Dittmar has assumed leadership of the committee. <b>Completed</b>

#### Board Decisions

Item	Decision
2022-07:01	Board Liaison assignments are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee on Ministry —no assignment needed anymore</li> <li>• Institutional Vitality Ministry —Adam</li> <li>• Worship &amp; Arts Ministry —Mark</li> <li>• Justice Ministry —Jack</li> <li>• Lifespan Faith Development Ministry —Jackie</li> <li>• Care &amp; Connections Ministry —now Mary</li> <li>• Welcome &amp; Engagement Ministry —Bill</li> </ul>
2022-07:02	We agreed to hold the board retreat on August 26 and 27.

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

Owner	Topic
-------	-------




**Next Meeting:** November 9, 2022 @ 6:30 pm