

**Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing**  
**Board of Trustees**  
268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road  
Titusville, NJ 08560



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Open to You.

**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - APPROVED**  
**August 13, 2024**  
**Zoom Meeting**

*Acting President and Board Member Maria Barratta called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:03 PM. Also in attendance Trustees: Bob Busch; Colleen McCourt; Karen Kent; Chris Marietti; Dave Thomas and Michelle Zechner; Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildszewski, Director of Congregational Life Robin Pugh, Congregational Administrator, Susan Irgang, and Ministerial Intern Lisa Schilansky. Absent were President Wendy Stasolla and Treasurer Denny Rogers.*

## **First Hour**

### **Consent agenda (no vote):**

#### Executive Team Report discussion

- The Strategic Plan Survey team has been identified. One person has also been identified for the next phase of implementation.
- There is the need for clear policies distinguishing between fundraising and rentals. Reverend Kim Wildszewski convened a workgroup to begin discussions and will draft a policy for board approval in September. This will then be reviewed by the Finance Committee.

#### Treasurer Report discussion

- Discussed uncollected pledges for Capital Campaign from FY 2023-2024. Additional discussion about the potential for a bank loan, loan refinancing fees and new expenses emerging from the building project. There are enough reserves to cover these costs. Board members remain hopeful that a surplus might be achieved if all pledges are paid by 2026. Discussed strategies to encourage early Capital Campaign pledge fulfillment and methods to inform the congregation of this request including pledge reminders. Susan Irgang will speak to George Faulkner about how the database may be helpful.

The group suggested that the Treasurer report of the board meeting contain a verbal report going forward for the board in in order to clarify questions and comments.

#### **Update on Strategic Plan**

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- The visioning workshop for the strategic plan was moved to November 24th, and updates were given on the construction schedule and the grand reopening, with anticipation of completion by the end of September and the celebration on October 13th.

### **Construction Schedule & Grand Re-Opening**

- Susan shared that the 'crossings room' had undergone renovations, including the installation of acoustic panels and the removal of a large duct.
- A special service was planned for October 13th to dedicate the building, with formal invitations to be sent in early September. The stained glass window from the 'crossings room' was moved to Room 103, but its new location in the building was still to be determined.
- The office setup was reconfigured office from initial plan to offer space for a ministerial intern.
- Susan's retirement will take place on 10/6 after service

## ***Second Hour***

### **Board Goal Revisions for 2024-2025**

- Reviewed UUCWC board goals and proposed goal revisions. A Discernment circle was requested to offer feedback from all board members. Revised goals based on input from board. Consensus generated for the revised goals, and the board voted to accept the new board goals.

### **Susan Irgang Celebration & Staff Transitions**

- Susan's retirement celebration will take place on 10/6
- New staff member begins full-time on 9/5

### **UU the Vote**

- Lisa discussed the upcoming national mobilization efforts for voting, particularly focusing on Pennsylvania as a target state. She highlighted two main events: a weekend of action in Philadelphia, including a revival and door-knocking campaign, and

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national phone banks hosted by the Vote. Lisa expressed her hope to create a supportive community for these activities and encouraged others to host similar events. She also mentioned her home congregation's involvement in an interfaith racial justice organization. Maria and Kim requested that Lisa provide written information about the UU the Vote's activities for future reference.

### **Congregational Pulse Check-in**

- Some new visitors are coming looking for opportunities to be engaged in UU the vote and may bring in new visitors.
- Parents are curious about what OWL will look like in the fall. Clarified Email went out to parents early Aug about OWL that OWL will be partnering with another UU church. Pgm starts Oct. Will rotate monthly location. OWL will happen during service. Webpage has been updated with new information. No HS OWL at this time.
- Yardley potluck needs a new leader.
- Rev Kim will be hosting a new discussion called Getting Good at Getting Older book discussion online 6 sessions for primarily older adults.

### **Discuss format for meetings-Zoom, multi-platform, or continue hybrid/alternating all zoom and multi-platform**

- Discussion about in person possibility. September will be a multi-platform.
- Noted September meeting will be Susan's last. The plan is that new staff member will not attend. Board may need to consider if staff person attendance is required.

### **Housekeeping & Action Items**

- Next meeting consider Board Chats schedule.
- Crosscurrents may be sept/oct edition. Board members will take turns to write about a perspective about the board.
- Susan Colket 9/21 memorial at 11 tentatively.
- Mary Kay Mitchell memorial will be scheduled for November.

*Meeting ended at 9:05 p.m.*

## **Appendix: Executive, Staff and Treasurer Reports**

### **STAFF REPORTS**

#### *Minister's Report*

Dear all,

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My deepest apologies for how delayed this very brief report is. I am swimming upstream and hope this report helps you have a good sense of my last month and the last month at UUCWC. I am focussing this report on the Celebrate Life and Change the World aspects of our mission.

In July I took two weeks of study leave and one week following for vacation.

During study leave I came to a Sunday service in order to offer Sarah Burke a goodbye ritual. More recently I offered a similar ritual for Alison Baron.

I used the last day of my vacation to interview our final two Administrator candidates. We are incredibly grateful that Marilyn Gonzalez has accepted the position and will begin on September 5th. We are now focussing our attention on preparing for her onboarding and, at the same time, thoughtfully preparing for Susan's offboarding and retirement celebration (October 6th).

Most of my study leave was focussed on first round interviews and preparing for the upcoming church year, board retreat and staff planning meetings. Thank you for your time, energy and thoughtfulness at the board meeting. You can find my suggested language for the new board goals in the pre-reads folder.

The day I returned I officiated Ken Howarth's wedding; I signed Marilyn as our new administrator; and the following day I learned about Susan Colket's illness and expected death. The days following were focussed on her care, communication with the congregation at large and individuals and groups with whom she was close. At the same time I was joyfully preparing for Erin Busch's wedding and Sunday services.

I have relaunched the Worship Associates, including a new youth member, Peyton Anderson. The Pastoral Care Ministry met for their quarterly meeting. I am preparing for the Council for Faith in Action quarterly meeting next week. You will find that "It matters that we do something. It matters that we do something together" will be a theme this fall as we approach the election.

I am working closely with Earth and Climate Justice Ministry to make further decisions regarding the Climate Revival. I will be preaching on September 29th on the intersection and interconnection of oppressions with climate as the connective tissue. I've encouraged the ministry team to bookend that service with activism. We are also making plans for the Spring (Earth Day) when more of the Green Sanctuary 2030 work can be done.

On October 13th I will be offering a multigenerational celebration for the rededication of our building expansion.

I will be offering two offerings of Getting Good at Getting Older to our 80s group. I've planned for our upcoming Pathways classes and Lectio Divina. I was disappointed that my book group on the Monk & Robot series was canceled due to low interest.

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I am certain there is more but for now, thank you for receiving this brief report.

Rev. Kim

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*Director of Congregational Life Report*

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski

From: Robin Pugh

Date: August 12, 2024

Re: Monthly DCL Report

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**Celebrate Life (Worship and Rites of Passage)**

- In July, I was away on 2 weeks of vacation and one week of Study leave. I returned on July 22<sup>nd</sup> refreshed, renewed and ready for the new church year. I write this to encourage everyone to help staff take needed time rejuvenate in the summer and I know how hard it is.

**Create Community (Small Groups).**

- In August, I prepare for launching fall faith engagement classes. These classes are important vessels for connection in our congregation. In preparation for Fall FE, I will be recruiting facilitators, training facilitators, advertising and recruiting participants and buying needed supplies for each class offered.  
This fall we will offer:
- 2 sections of the new UU Wellspring curriculum called "Love at the Center". Love at the Center takes a deep look at our covenant and each of the recently amended article 2 UU values in 11 sessions.
- Our 7 chalice circles restart in September. As always in August, I encouraged new people to join, check in on people leaving groups and train new facilitators.
- Kim will be leading 2 sections (one online and one in person) of a 6-session class based on the book "Getting Good at Getting Older".
- Kim will offer our Pathways to membership class. In October and November.

**Change the World**

- I've added overseeing our Homefront Monday night tutoring program to my portfolio. This is something I want to do. With Sarah Burke and Michelle Meinhart moving out of state this summer, there is no one functioning as "educational coordinator" on Monday nights. I am learning and doing this role with the plan to recruit a volunteer education coordinator for the program in the next 6-12 months. A theme for the congregation this church year is: "It matters that we do something. It matters that we do something together". With this theme, I hope I to grow UUCWC's participation in this rewarding program. Many people have been asking for a chance to do social justice that has a direct impact. Tutoring or cooking for homefront meets that need.
- In June Pam Shadzik and I met with Kim several times to brainstorm what the structure and focus of the 24-25 congregational year might look like and how Congregational Engagement and Cong. Life can support that focus.
- In early August, I participated in a two-part planning retreat with the staff on the upcoming 24-25 church year. This fall is complicated emotionally with the upcoming election, staff transitions, and the completion of construction all taking place underneath the happenings of the regular church year. Staff is ready to help congregants feel nurtured and supported during this time.

*This primarily serves as an FYI about my professional development opportunities that benefit my leadership at UUCWC.*

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I attend the UUAMP, (the Association of Membership Professionals) weekly meetings when time permits. I see a Spiritual Director monthly.

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**Susan Irgang**

Administrator BOT Report for August 2024

**Create Community**

I have been involved in two potential opportunities for creating community outside of UUCWC using our facilities: Adult Children of Alcoholics, which would like to meet here weekly, and the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum (who brought us the Soul Food Dinner in 2018), looking to rent UUCWC for a concert on 1/18/25. These inquiries offer us a special opportunity to live into our Board Goals and church Mission more information will be shared as it becomes available. I met with a group to help discern fundraisers vs rental and expand our rental policy to cover such circumstances.

I participated in a two-part planning retreat with the staff and how administration will support the plans through communication and logistics. It will be a full fall and we hope to expand our communication reach to draw interest in UUCWC. Chris Piatek has gotten us on MercerMe: [see this announcement about Rev. Kim](#). We are also exploring Patch and other local online sharing sites.

**Celebrate Life**

We currently have 279 church members, 26 Friends, 12 Participants and 29 Attendees.

**Change the (UUCWC) World**

The well continues to be a source of concern with a new problem. While we may not incur consequences for the late testing (per last month's report), the results of that test showed the absence of Total Coliform Bacteria but a high Heterotrophic Plate Count; this is not a health hazard nor is it regulated, but it is a sign that something is not quite right. Our well compliance company recommended another well chlorination, but in discussion, it was judged prudent to delay this until after the kitchen renovation is completed, as any work on the system has the potential to introduce bacteria and we don't want to continually chlorinate the well. A new issue that has arisen is a letter received this week from the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) notifying us of a local groundwater contamination of PFAS ([read more about PFAS and health effects here](#).) They will sample our well in October to see if we are impacted and if we are below the accepted range for public drinking systems. Our well compliance company has said this is becoming more common; they have 25 years of experience working with NJ Spillfund, which will pay for the installation of treatment equipment if deemed necessary. We will know more after the October sampling.

We have seen a tentative 8-week schedule for the completion of construction, which should be substantially completed by the end of September. I have been working with Andrew Kidd, who

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will be doing the ethernet cabling and move of network equipment from the mechanical room. I have also begun discussion with Justin Roth, Building Chair, on post construction needs not covered by the Capital Project, such as security.

I have been involved in preparation for Marilyn Gonzalez, our next Church Administrator, including announcements, finishing a resource document, organizing files, creating with Kim an onboarding schedule, preparing information on projects that will not be completed until fall or later, etc., for her first day on 9/5/24. We look forward to welcoming Marilyn.

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**August 2024 Board Report  
Ministerial Intern's Report  
Lisa Schilansky**

**Celebrate Life (Worship & Rights of Passage)**

This past month brought forth many exciting opportunities to experiment with the Sunday morning experience and to explore how best to hold congregational anxiety as the election is creeping in the background for all of us. On July 14th I preached on stories and provided the congregation an opportunity to explore what stories are most important to their lives. This provided an interactive element to the service. The service on the 14th was also my first opportunity to work directly with a guest musician.

On August 21st I had the opportunity to plan and lead my first multigen service. While most will remember the fun elements of a Star Wars-centered service, this was a great learning opportunity to construct a Sunday service with what was truly a skeleton crew of staff, especially when multigens typically utilize multiple voices.

After three weeks of holding the reigns, it was wonderful to get to collaborate with Rev. Kim again on August 4th. Staffing limitations (due to planned vacation) also required a pivot to the plan resulting in me filling the role of Worship Associate.

Finally, this past Sunday a service that I have spent the past two months planning came to fruition. It was an honor to support our GA delegation back in June, and it was an honor to help them collaborate with me to create a worship service reflecting on this experience this week. This required a balance of informative and passionate sharing while also ensuring that the Sunday felt inclusive to visitors or newer participants and that it stayed worshipful. Planning for this summer was a collaboration with six different people and offered me the roles of worship leader, educator, and mediator at times. Overall it was a very positive experience and the service provoked many questions from the congregation. I do want to note, however, as has been pointed out by Rev. Kim in the past, that lay-led (or lay-collaborating) services do require a significant more amount of staff time and support. It is an incredible opportunity to lean into our belief in the importance of the shared pulpit, but it would never translate to a "Sunday off" for the staff person.

**Create Community (Small Groups & Pastoral Care)**

During Rev. Kim's two weeks of study leave, I had the opportunity to take the lead on pastoral care. Following a week in June, this was my second opportunity to fill this role. It has been so rewarding to be able to give to the congregation in this way. At this stage in my internship, congregants are reaching out to me personally, relying on the relationships we have formed rather than just seeking me out due to Rev. Kim's absence.

I continue to be a resource for Jewish UU congregants who are wrestling with the realities of the violence in Gaza. These moments often happen impromptu, including this past Sunday before the

service. I am in the planning stages of providing a more formal support to this community, one which we hope will be held this September.

Finally, it was a humbling experience to be in the pulpit on July 14th, the day after the attempted assassination of Former President Trump. Throughout the liturgy, and before and after the service, I supported congregants who were navigating very complex feelings.

## **Change the World**

In July I had the honor of participating as one of the featured voices in a DRUUMM vigil responding to the violence in Gaza. DRUUMM (Diverse Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries) is a UU organization specifically for and by people of color. They have been holding regular vigils since October 7th and often will feature one Jewish voice. This vigil was specifically featuring Jewish voices and it was an honor to be asked to participate.

The waning summer also brought the UU the Vote national organizing call which was very energizing and exciting! I have advised our internal Faith Action network of the many opportunities we will have to participate this fall, including a big national gathering in Philadelphia on September 6-7. This week will bring the start of my organizing UUCWC's participation in this endeavor.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration,  
Lisa

## ***Treasurer's Report***

Treasurer's Report for July 2024

### Preface

July is a wacky month because income adjustments are made for things like prepaid pledges, etc. as mentioned in Controller's (Lynne Quinto) notes. Therefore I will only concentrate on a few highlights below.

FYI - not all line item expenses/revenue are spread over 12 months so we put them in for the month they are due (like insurance) or expected (like pledges). Some items are put in as quarterly. We might make adjustments during the year if anomalies are experienced.

### July Actual vs FY25 Budget

\$5,325 pledge payments paid late toward FY '23-'24 bringing us to 82% of what was budgeted. By comparison, only 69% of FY '22-'23 were paid.

Merrill Lynch continues to generate substantial income. \$2,117.42 for July. This includes extra gain from moving \$50,000 from Northfield checking account.

### Cash Analysis

Cash reserves are listed as \$348,416. It is actually \$355,728. (I noticed that when the CAP escrow amount of \$7,312.50 was entered in restricted funds it was also included in the \$804,842 Cap CampaignA/C for Construction).

We budgeted for \$37,207\* operations deficit and agreed to pay \$7,200 in unbudgeted construction expenses. Allowing for both and also holding \$150,000 to cover 3 months budget we have \$161,328 as OPPORTUNITY RESERVES (AKA Non-Restricted/Reserve Funds)

\* Note that \$9,076 of budgeted deficit is for loan against Cap Campaign pledges due after construction, which may be reduced.

### FYI

In August we will receive an additional \$1,319 from the Richard Knight Estate NJ tax refund. Another \$2,131 is pending from various sources.

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