

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



**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes - [APPROVED](#)**  
**NOVEMBER 13, 2024**  
***Multi-platform Meeting***

*President Wendy Stasolla called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Also in attendance: Vice President, Karen Kent, Treasurer Denny Rodgers and Secretary Michelle Zechner; Trustees: Maria Baratta, Bob Busch, David Thomas, Chris Marietti, Colleen McCourt; Senior Minister Rev. Kim Wildszewski, Congregational Administrator, Marilyn Gonzalez, Director of Congregational Life, Robin Pugh and Ministerial Intern Lisa Schilansky.*

## **First Hour**

**Consent agenda (no vote):** President Wendy Stasolla and Rev. Kim Wildszewski briefly reviewed their monthly reports. Treasurer Denny Rodgers provided a summary of the church's financial health. At the moment the church income is above projections and expenditures are below projections.

**Board Liaison Updates:** Wendy reviewed the assignments of board liaisons. Trustee Denny Rodgers remains the liaison to Finance and Facilities. Trustee Bob Busch is the liaison to Construction. Trustee David Thoms is the liaison to Congregational Engagement. Trustee Maria Baratta is the liaison to Personnel. Trustee Colleen McCourt is the liaison to the Endowment Committee.

**Congregational Engagement Presentation: Guest Speaker Pam Shadzik:** Pam, the co-chair of congregational engagement (CE), discussed the challenges and changes in their role over the years. Initially, their primary job was to fill leadership slots, but they pivoted to focus on supporting members in finding ways to engage with the congregation's life and work. They have been working on developing an online leadership resource guide and improving the website's accessibility for congregants. They are also focusing on how to gather information in more informal ways and how to connect people with opportunities. Pam emphasized that their role is to support leaders and help them think creatively about their needs, which is a culture shift for the congregation.

The group discussed the role of the Congregational Engagement in supporting committees and engaging with the congregation. Pam emphasized that CE is not there to people committees, but to support them in thinking about how to engage their members. More work is needed to support the congregation in understanding that CE role is to be in relationship with as much of the congregation

as possible. The Board expressed appreciation for the CE's persistence and adaptability during challenging times, including the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 2nd Hour

**Strategic Planning Survey and 11/24 Workshop:** Rev. Kim discussed the low response rate to the strategic plan survey. The board discussed and agreed that the 24th was too soon for the workshop due to the election results and the lack of engagement in the strategic planning survey. The survey will be relaunched in the near future, TBD, and then consider when to hold the workshop. Rev. Kim also mentioned the need to educate the congregation about the survey results and suggested having an all-church conversation to address this. The team agreed to consider relaunching the survey in January.

**Discussion on Endowment Committee:** Rev. Kim and Denny led a discussion about the Endowment Committee's operations and policies. There was discussion about the need for communication and transparency about the process of applying for and receiving funds from the Endowment Committee. Additionally, there was a discussion about better integration of the Endowment Committee into the Finance Committee and the importance of understanding the Endowment Committee's goals and intentions. The possibility of updating or simplifying the Endowment Committee's bylaws was also discussed. The conversation ended with the consensus that a meeting between stakeholders (members from past and current endowment, finance, members who have been very involved) would be beneficial so that all involved could better imagine new ways to partner for the health of the church.

A motion to have the board call for a stakeholder conversation passed by unanimous vote.

Action steps: Wendy will lead a discussion at the next board meeting to identify stakeholders and coordinate a meeting between stakeholders.

**Capital Project Updates:** Staff member Marilyn Gonzalez provided an update on the capital project, noting that the flooring has been installed, the main lobby is being worked on, and the security system is in place. The kitchen is almost complete, and the new conference room is ready. The next steps include patching up small areas and continuing work for another month. The path to the Memorial Garden is pending construction. Homefront is expected to return to the Crossings Room by December 2nd.

### **Congregational Pulse / Check In:**

**Housekeeping & Action Items:** The upcoming Cross Currents article for December, with the proposal to have each trustee contribute their reasons for being grateful to be at UUCWC. The team also discussed the upcoming dedication event on December 8th and the possibility of Wendy speaking at the event. There was a discussion about the Meditation Trail, with some members expressing surprise at its existence.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

***Michelle Zechner***

Secretary, Board of Trustees

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

### **Staff Report**

#### *Minister's Report*

**Thank you for your understanding as the staff and I provide a limited and brief bullet point overview of the last month. Our time and energy is stressed.**

#### **Create Community**

- Since we last met, Sunday services have continued to have strong, consistent attendance. The children and youth program is growing steadily. People are engaged.
- Of course, each Sunday of the last month was preparing us for the election in direct or ambiguous ways:
  - o Deep Listening and Accompanying; Grief and Remembering; Pre-Election Worship in the Round with poetry and a reminder of the long view; Wednesday evening post-election Vespers; Post-Election Bread Communion Regulation service
  - o Please note that the staff offered 3 services in 7 days, not including programming on Election Day. Separately, significantly more services this fall have had more ritual and change of liturgy; the creativity and constant change that I've asked from the staff is significant and they've been partners in every way.
- I've led 3 of 6 Getting Good at Getting Older conversations with our elders, both online and in person. This has been a sacred and privileged time.
- I continue the weekly Lectio Divina sessions on Thursdays, connecting folks from different identities, demographics and parts of the community.

#### **Events coming up to note (yes, this is a lot!!)**

- 11/13 movers come to UUCWC
- 11/20 Trans Day of Remembrance and Resilience service hosted by UUCWC
- 11/23 Mary Kay Mitchell's Memorial Service
- 11/24 Poinsettia Sale
- 12/1 Guest preacher & Book Sale

- 12/8 Reopening & Dedication service & brunch
- 12/15 Chili Cook Off & Big Band Concert
- 12/22 Christmas Pageant
- 12/23 Christmas Eve service
- 12/29 Generations Service

### **Celebrate Life**

- Pastoral care has remained significant. It doesn't need to be said that since the election there is also now a universal need outside of the regular illnesses and heartaches. Trauma and hurt begets old wounds. *The next time I have a 30 minute or 45 minute slot on my calendar for pastoral or programmatic needs is in early December.*
- I am working with caring team, memorial garden leaders, staff and Jim Bicksler for Mary Kay Mitchell's service on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- I am thrilled to relay that we will be hosting the Hopewell Valley Trans Day of Remembrance and Resilience service on November 20<sup>th</sup>. For every person who wonders how we matter to the outside community, I hope they decide to be a physical presence of support and public theology embodied.

### **Change the World**

- The Personnel team is growing stronger as a team and in its understanding of its work and vision.
- We continue to work with Nick Mellis on understanding fundraising v rental events.
- I am working with the Right Relations Committee on their theme to address being in right relationship with trans and non-binary congregants – kudos to Lisa for holding the Gender 101 conversation this past Sunday!
- I have been in conversation with the strategic planning leaders to talk about the workshop and need to push this back which I will speak more to in the meeting.
- The Council Meeting was a success in terms of numbers and deep engagement with our board goals. I was so proud.

## *Director of Congregational Life*

To: UUCWC Board and Kim Wildszewski  
From: Robin Pugh  
Date: November 12, 2024  
Re: Monthly DCL Report

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

- In my October report, I wrote: “In the past 5 weeks, there have been 6 services that required extra attention and creativity from Kim and the rest of the staff. (Mostly from Kim). All the services were excellent (and necessary). “ I am writing something similar this month. I want to highlight how hard the staff (and especially Kim and Lisa) have been working to craft services that meet the needs of our congregation, from the all-souls service, to pre-election, post-election and vespers the day after election day.
- We look forward to being in our own offices soon! In between my regular work, decisions about the needs of my office, ARE, homefront, visitors, and the entrance needed to be made.

### **Create Community (Small Groups).**

- Eleven people have filled out a visitor form since the election. I’ve been busy welcoming them and answering questions. More visitors attended vespers and did not fill out a form. Our post-election vespers service served the community as well as UUCWC.
- Chalice circles and Wellspring small groups are ongoing. I support the facilitators and lead 3 groups.

### **Change the World**

- Homefront tutoring on Monday nights is going well. We continue to tutor about 27 kids with as many tutors. We continue to have the program upstairs until the crossings room is ready.
- We changed up the way we have done the council budget meeting in the past. We deeply focused on the board goals via lectio divina. I hope this was as meaningful and inspiring for our leaders as it was for me. Sandy Steinberg presented the need for submitting budgets

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

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

## *Intern Minister Report*

**November 2024 Board Report**  
**Intern Minister's Report**  
**Lisa Schilansky**

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

- 2nd iteration of Vespers: much better attended
- Post-Election Vespers: approximately 60 people in person, 41 screens online
- 10/13- I preached on Indigenous Peoples' Day and the responsibility for collective atonement
- 10/27- Super Sunday, in with the kids
- 11/3- pre-election: offered liturgical and emotional support throughout the morning
- 11/10- post-election: served as Worship Associate and co-liturgist as we worked to regulate our bodies and respond to the election results
- Will be on site for support for Mary Kay Mitchell's memorial on November 23rd

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

- Election Day support including two offerings of Breathe (online and virtual). Engaged in spontaneous pastoral care throughout the day
- October Breathe- very well attended
- Gender 101- plan to offer future times: 23 people in attendance, rich and robust discussion, corrected a lot of misinformation and misunderstandings in a safe space for people to learn what they did not know
- Targeted pastoral care support to those most impacted by the election.
- Participated in three session Pledging 101 class with Scott Blaydon and Jane Root. Met in small congregational groups and offered them reflections and support during this process.

**Change the World**

- GOTV: weekly emails, support around election anxiety, day-of ways to get involved, October 22nd phonebank logistical support including coordinating with minister and congregants from UU Summit who joined us. So grateful for Maria Baratta who offered on-site support.
- UUA National Mosaic Fall Conference: presented on a panel with four UU clergy about the faith-based response to the rise of fascism and authoritarianism. Co-led a workshop on the importance of Apartheid-Free Communities.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration,  
Lisa

*Treasurer's Report*

## Treasurer's Report for October 2024

### October YTD Actual vs October YTD Budget

Plate is at 113% of budget.

Pledges for '24-'25 are at 97%.

Merrill Lynch income of \$8,596 exceeds budget by 13.7%. (\$2,075 for Oct..)

Expenditures are currently at 91% of budget.

### Cash Analysis

Cash reserves are at \$346,180.

We hold \$150,000 to cover 3 months budgeted expenses. (see 2 cash Analysis Reports)

We budgeted for a \$37,207 operations deficit and agreed to pay \$7,200 in unbudgeted construction expenses.

The Board has approved financing up to \$100,000 construction costs vs taking a bank loan. This will be paid back as Cap Campaign pledges are received into 2026.

**CURRENT PROJECTION IS THAT WE WILL ONLY NEED TO LOAN \$67,400.**

**THAT WILL INCREASE OUR OPPORTUNITY RESERVES (AKA Non-Restricted/Reserve Funds) FROM \$50K TO- \$82,600**