



UUCK Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes November 16, 2023

I. Call to order

Attendance in-person: Kara Kramer, Kay Eckman, Rev Steven, Carol Weigand, David Weaver, Virginia Horvath, Susanna Smart **Attendance via Zoom:** n/a **Absent:** Heidi Shaffer Bish

After a brief check-in the meeting started at 7:00 PM with Kara lighting the chalice and offering a reading.

II. Approve Prior Minutes and Receive Consent Agenda

Minutes: [October Board Meeting](#)

Reports received:

Treasurer's Reports: [October Treasurer's Report](#) Discussed the projected need to pull funds from the endowment. The auction fundraising is going well. We still need a fundraising chair; Kay has names of people who are interested in fund-raising. She is also looking for a pledge campaign coordinator.

Rev Steven recently spoke with other ministers about three pillars of church financial health: *pledges, fundraisers, and outside sources (grants)*.

We have not explored grant possibilities. There is a grant possibility through the UUA, especially if a number of our congregation were to be "chalice lighters". Kay is looking for people to be "chalice lighters"; this is a UUA program. People with grant writing skills would be great to bring into this aspect of fundraising. Suggestion that board members be chalice lighters, as a way to set the example and to encourage others.

Kay: Grocery Card program is in place. Kay: Mike Schneider is relatively new and is actively engaged with the church.

Minister's Report: [October 2023 Minister's Report](#)

MET Report: [November 2 MET Meeting](#)

Motion to approve the prior Board Minutes and to receive the Consent Agenda by Susanna seconded by Kay. Motion passed.

III. Receive Board Audit Report

Discussion: Susanna agreed to arrange a meeting with David and Ginny in December. Upon suggestion from Rev Steven, they agreed to audit both the Board Minutes and the MET Minutes from July 2022 - June 30 of 2023. (After this Board meeting, they agreed to meet: Wed. Dec 6th 430-630pm at church. Rev Steven reserved Fessenden for their meeting.)

IV. Board Communication Session

- **Next Session:** November 19
- [Slides link](#) Discussed what needs to be added to the Slides for this meeting.

- **Board Participants:** Kara, Ginny, Kay and possibly Heidi.
- **Topics:** (see [Slides](#) link)
 - Celebration (Electric cost reduction, Service Auction success, listening to congregation wishes regarding which building to meet in and how many Sunday services.)
 - Volunteer Appreciation
 - FY24 Goal Updates (see below, item VI.)
 - December 3rd, *Re-Dedication of Our Sanctuary Service* for the renewed sanctuary
 - Campus signage: it is important to show images of signs and to describe the collaborative process that led to the design. (If able to attend, Heidi may provide an update.)
 - Importance of reinforcing that we are a-work-in-progress and continuing to move forward toward financial goals even though, as things currently stand, we will have to draw down funds to balance the budget. The importance of recognizing the important groundwork that has been and is being done and recognizing these efforts as not immediately solving the financial problem but facing it and responding responsibly.

V. Rentals Shared Responsibility

- **MET Request:** *“Need to bring Board, MET, CART and Katie together to discuss concerns and conflict and get on the same page; resolve miscommunications, and determine who is responsible for what.”*
Discussion regarding the above and the recent pause in volunteerism by some volunteers. The CART met with Lori and there seems to be willingness to bridge gaps; still there are concerns about people not feeling connected and there is a need to nurture these relationships. (See below regarding the recommended meeting with CART, MET, Board, and CoSM, which Lori has agreed to arrange.)
- **Clarification re: Rental Policy Revision Request**
The Board agreed to table the revision of the Rental Policy until the above-mentioned meeting has happened and there is a way to get input from those concerned and impacted by the policy.
Agreed: Rev Steven will communicate to the MET the intention to table the rental policy revision.

VI. Actioning our FY24 Annual Goals & Sharing this at this Sunday’s meeting

At this Sunday’s meeting with the congregation, we will review progress toward the congregation’s goals and address the following areas.

Annual Goals:

Goal 1: Renew our Shared Ministry

Goal 2: Continue to Create and Nurture a Culture of Right Relationship

Goal 3: Progress towards Fiscal Health

How We Are Actioning Our [FY24 Goals](#), How Are We Leading By Example, and How Are We Moving Toward Greater Fiscal Health?: The discussion included identifying needs, brainstorming, and selecting action steps as we move forward. The Board also recognized how interconnected all of the goals and action steps are; moving forward one on goal impacts the forward movement on another. We must anticipate the 2025 budget process and help the congregation identify its priorities.

Legs of the Fiscal Stool: Rev Steven shared that in conversations with ministers of other churches, all congregations are working on the three legs of fiscal health: *pledges*, *fund raising*, and *outside sources* (including grants). It is important to name these and note how we are progressing in each area. He suggested adding a 4th leg of a stool, *time and talent*, and to recognize, celebrate, and encourage this area of contribution to fiscal health.

Celebrating and Encouraging Volunteerism: We will ensure that the congregation has access to

the results of the survey on interests and volunteerism and name coordinator positions - those filled and unfilled. We will celebrate the current Adult RE team which has recently been formed: Lori Mirkin-McGee, Dawn Albright, Vivien Sandlund, Nicole Penny, Rev Steven

New idea of “My Offering” cards to be used as part of Sunday services: Citing a comment from a recent visitor who observed that “not many people contribute to the offertory” on Sundays, Ginny suggested that pre-printed cards be made available in pews on Sundays so that people can acknowledge their contributions, even if they are not making a monetary donation to the offertory basket. A brainstorming discussion led to the concept of pre-printed cards (for example, white card with rainbow colored font for different ways of giving.) The card would list the various ways that people contribute.

During Sunday services at the time of the offering, people would be asked to hold the cards for a few moments in order to reflect inwardly on *how* they contribute (electronically, paying their pledges, through their time and talent...). For example, the card would list statements like, “I support this congregation through my service” or “through my monthly pledge payment”, etc. The card would symbolically represent their contributions, regardless whether they offer money at the time of collection. They would be encouraged to place their card in the offertory (without writing name or details on it), along with any monetary contribution they may be making. In this moment, they symbolically demonstrate, to self and others, their contributions which contribute to the well-being of our church community.

Ginny agreed to draft the card and to make up some cards for use in an upcoming service. Ginny will also share an image of the card in the slides for this Sunday’s Congregational meeting. The cards will be more formally introduced during the *Re-Dedication of Our Sanctuary Ceremony* on Dec 3rd.

Acknowledge in gratitude the community efforts to help each other: Both spontaneously and with Helping Hearts teams, multiple people have been instrumental in helping some ill congregants or congregants having health crises.

Community Outreach: Currently, the youth of our congregation are leading the way in terms of outreach to the community. In addition, members of the congregation are active with community groups such as the Kent iEnvironmental Council and the Haymaker Market. The Board agreed that community involvement and outreach is an important area to continue to promote, going forward. Our new campus signs will help greatly with this, as will a fully-functioning and utilized Hobbs Hall.

Relationship Building and Nurturing: The Board discussed interests in promoting relationship building and relational education, citing several helpful approaches including, *Grounded Curiosity*, *Appreciative Inquiry*, and *Leaders Stop Trying to Be Heroes*.

We might consider including *right relationship explorations* in Adult RE. How might we reach people more broadly (such as integrating this topic and educational tid bits into services), and how we can have different voices to present ideas. One idea might be a breakfast before service or lunch afterward in order to recognize individuals who are contributing.

Other opportunities include:

- March Pledge Drive and National Volunteer Month (April) are times to recognize specific people’s contributions.

- Ministry Moment of recognition in service

- E-NUUs recognition

- Unsung Heroes: thinking of what someone did that mattered to you.

- Keep in mind: some people don’t want to be named although they may feel OK with having their offering appreciated.

- Human Library: engaging the congregation in storytelling; Ginny is willing to explore this and share about it with the Board, in the future.

Progress towards Fiscal Health. The Board acknowledged this goal as most pressing although all three goals interweave and support one another. We must anticipate the 2025 budget process and

identify congregational priorities and actions we will take: Kay will share that the Financial team has formed and is working. It will meet again in January 2024 to further the budget process; this work will then be shared with the congregation.

Leading by Example: For example, the Board might agree to set dates for the Board to provide Coffee Service. *Note:* In addition, Renee will do an announcement at service about Coffee Service to recruit future helpers.

VII. Congregational Project

This item was held over from the October meeting: *"I request that the Board and I have a conversation to brainstorm ways to engage the congregation more fully. A project or focus, Phase II of our renovations, something to get the congregation energized and working together toward a shared goal that is tangible. Now that Hobbs Hall, the solar panels, and the sanctuary renovation are complete, the energy needs to be channeled in service to our mission and vision."*

The Board discussed the merit of engaging people in multiple smaller ways rather than taking on a large and potentially stressful, new "project". Again, the financial health of our congregation is central to our efforts.

VIII. Process Review

Board members described the following experiences:

- feeling more comfortable
- valuing integrating vision and specific ideas
- appreciating the variety of insights and multiple voices
- appreciating the tone and the kind respectful approach
- loved the boost from the ideas shared
- appreciating spontaneous and experimental approach

IX. Extinguish the Chalice and Adjournment

Kara extinguished the chalice and the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Next meeting date: Dec 21, Solstice evening

Next Board meeting chalice lighting and offering of readings: Rev Steven

Respectfully submitted,

Susanna Smart and Carol Weigand, Co-Secretaries