



## UUCK Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes January 18, 2024

### Board Members:

Kay Eckman - approved  
Ginny Horvath - approved  
Kara Kramer - approved  
Heidi Shaffer Bish - approved  
Susanna Smart - approved  
David Weaver - approved  
Carol Weigand - approved

### I. Call to order

**Attendance in-person:** Kara Kramer, Kay Eckman, Rev Steven, Carol Weigand, Susanna Smart  
David Weaver

**Attendance via Zoom:** Ginny Horvath, Heidi Shaffer Bish

**Guest:** Jennifer Gregg

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

### II. Announcements

Board members were reminded to check their Annex mail boxes.

### III. Condition and Needs of Bell Tower

**Status and Request:** Jennifer Gregg presented on the request for authorization of capital funds to fix the Bell Tower. She summarized the condition and damage (present and ongoing) and strongly encouraged remedying the structural damage and risk to the tower. She got a verbal assessment by a structural engineer. She presented a bid from AK masonry. The MET has received her summary and their input is the next step.  
Discussed option of removing the bell tower; doing this would require significantly greater costs.

**Outcome of Discussion:** The Board agreed about the urgency of addressing this issue and will wait for the input from the MET. Jenn agreed to attend next week's MET meeting.  
Discussed the importance and urgency of informing the congregation about concerns, recommendations, resources, and options.

Looking forward, Heidi stated that she will soon be ready to explore getting the building on the National Historic Registry and to apply for grants.

### IV. Agenda Review - agenda reviewed and agreed upon.

### V. Consent Agenda

- Minister's Report: [December 2023 Minister's Report](#)
- Treasurer's Report - not due
- MET Report - not due

Motion to receive the Consent Agenda was made by Susanna; seconded by Kay. The motion passed.

## VI. Minutes Approval Process

**Goal:** Responding to concerns about communication, the Board discussed a new process to have approved Board Minutes uploaded to the Church web site within 7-10 days after a Board meeting so that the Board's ongoing work is shared with the congregation in a timely way (instead of waiting until the next meeting for approval).

### Discussion and Agreed-Upon Process:

1. The Secretary will send an email indicating when the minutes draft is ready for review and ask Board Members to review the document within 3 days. (Note: the Minister does not vote nor approve).
2. Board Members will review the Google-Drive minutes draft and edit the document or add comments as needed.
3. Board Members will indicate their approval (or not) on the space at the top of the document. If they do not approve, they will add the reason. This step will be completed within the above-mentioned 3 days.
4. The Secretary will check the document for all names within the initial 3 days, and will send a follow-up request to Board members, as needed.
5. Upon approval by a minimum of 4 (a majority) Board members, the Secretary will:
  - a. Edit the Minutes draft title to reflect its approval
  - b. Move the document from the "Minutes Draft" folder to the "Minutes Approved" folder.
  - c. Share the approved minutes document with the church secretary, MaryBeth, who will have adequate time to post it to the web site.

**Outcome:** A motion to approve this process and for Susanna to draft a policy for minutes approval was made by David; seconded by Kay. The motion passed.

## VII. Certify Membership Count

The Membership Committee reports we have 172 Active Members as of January 16, 2024.

Discussion: UUA requests our count.

A motion to certify the membership count at 172 active members was made by Susanna; seconded by Carol. The motion passed.

Kara will inform MaryBeth.

## VIII. Appoint Interim Finance Secretary

*"Ryan Susman has asked if he could be replaced as Finance Secretary so he can focus his time on getting trained for the Treasurer job. Per the bylaws, we need the board to appoint his replacement; we will elect someone to finish out his term at the May annual meeting."*

Discussion: Bylaws require that we appoint his replacement. Ann VerWiebe has held the position in the past and has volunteered to serve through this June 2024.

A motion to appoint Ann VerWiebe as Finance Secretary was made by Susanna; seconded by Kay. The motion passed.

## IX. After-Action Review: Town Hall on Sunday, January 13

- What went well?
  - Kara did a great job of leading the discussion and preparing the slides.
  - Helpful to show pictures (even in future meetings) to repeatedly introduce leaders and their roles.
  - Great participation by people expressing their reactions, concerns and considerations
- What could be improved?:
  - In an effort to maximize attendance and participation in church meetings, at end of service, offer another enthusiastic reminder encouraging church friends to stay for the meeting.
- Action items arising from session (e.g. timing of Town Hall re: budget in March)?
  - Plans to celebrate the previous Hobbs Hall rental team's efforts
  - Budget: The upcoming Town Hall meeting during which the budget will be discussed needs to be planned so that people can eat their lunch. Ask people to brown bag a lunch for themselves. We will have had a month with the new schedule of services. Augment the in-person meeting with a zoom meeting, perhaps the following Monday evening. The Annual Information meeting the following month (in April) will be for final congregational approval. We look forward to hearing the diversity of thoughts, ideas, and preferences of the congregation.

## Break

## X. Two-Service Proposal:

The Board discussed differences in expectations regarding how the proposal would move forward. Some recalled that in our last meeting, the Board carefully endorsed exploring the service change proposal but did not go so far as to agree to implementation nor dates. Rev. Steven clarified that it is not the Board's role to determine implementation nor dates; that these responsibilities fall to the team leading this proposal, overseen by Rev. Steven.

The congregational response to the presentation about the proposal appeared to grow more positive through the course of the meeting when people had a chance to voice concerns and hear how the proposal took varied needs into consideration. Board members heard comments that people were willing to try this as an experiment. Board members noted, however, that those who were not present for the discussion still need to have a voice in considering the proposed change and in providing feedback about how this new format is going.

The Board agreed that greater advance notice and information about the crafting of the proposal would have been helpful in order to gain wider appreciation of the two-service plan and therefore greater buy-in.

## XI. Finance Team Update

Kay stressed the importance of having Board input in the upcoming meeting next Monday, January 22. The Finance Team recently met; they prioritized church growth areas such as religious education (RE), music, and community dinners. The Team discussed the staff

compensation issue (providing parity) as well as concerns about raising adequate funds to meet expenses.

The Finance Team plans to present details about their concerns and recommendations in the upcoming Monday meeting in hopes of determining a plan for raising money, because the current spending trend is unsustainable. The Finance Team has called a closed meeting to be attended by the non-staff MET, the Board, and the Finance Team.

Rev. Steven shared that he invited Sandy Eaglen and Andrew Rome to co-chair the Pledge Drive this year. They have agreed.

## XII Upcoming Events:

- **CART Appreciation - 1/21/24:** Discussion: Those involved in the CART have been invited to the Appreciation event. (Kara has the list of the some-20 people who have been involved.) Kara has ordered a cake. Rev Steven suggested that a *Certificate of Appreciation* be given to each person; Kara agreed to prepare the certificates. This event will occur after the Sunday service in Hobbs Hall. Kay volunteered to bring a gluten-free brownie recipe. Kara will be sure the event is on the church calendar.
- **Rentals Implementation Ideation Session:** We need to schedule this soon, after the budget Townhall Informational meeting. This was scheduled for: February 24th (Saturday) 90 min. The event was added to the church calendar.
- **Board High Tea - 2/4/24 (2:00 -3:30pm):** Ginny agreed to cheer-lead the Board in preparations. The event will be sandwiched (hey, a pun!) between two other events in Hobbs Hall that day (a Presentation on Wolves and the UUYJ monthly Community Dinner). The event falls on the first Sunday of the new experimental service schedule; we have the room reserved from 1:00 - 4:00 pm.

Ginny will email the Board to coordinate planning and will create a sign-up sheet in Google docs. She has informed ticket purchasers (15 people, 12 of whom are not related to Board members). She has received positive feedback from some, but not heard from all. All Board members will bring something to contribute. Plans include providing small cookies, cakes/tarts, tea sandwiches, and of course, tea and coffee. Refreshments will be set up in the piano side of the room. Ginny will bring tiered trays and will look to Board members to assist with decorations and room-set up. The event will include a raffle of 5 of her teapots, as well as a brief presentation on global traditions of tea.

**Eclipse Party?** On April 8, 2024, Kent will be in the path of totality for the solar eclipse, so the Board discussed the possibility of hosting an event for all ages, perhaps with a pop-up donation. A possible viewing area might be the patio. Kara has brainstormed this idea with Colleen. Parking needs to be considered, as this will be a work day and because of city events.

Note: The City of Kent has many activities planned around the eclipse time in mid-afternoon and is anticipating large crowds. Heidi will share a schedule from the City.

## XIII. TABLED: Review Annual Congregational Goals [Goals](#)

- What progress have we made?
- What edits might be required?
- Where is additional action required?

#### **XIV. Process Review**

*What went well in this meeting?:* Zoom attendees felt included although the Zoom experience is strange. They could hear well, though they could not see everyone.

*Where was there room for improvement?:* no suggestions

#### **XV. Extinguish the Chalice and Adjournment**

Susanna extinguished the chalice, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15 PM.

**Next meeting date:** in two weeks, on **Thursday, February 1, at 7:00 pm**. David will bring a laptop to use during meetings in the next months to facilitate Zoom as needed.

Next Board meeting chalice lighting and offering of readings: Carol (sequence: alphabetical by first name)

Respectfully submitted,  
Susanna Smart and Carol Weigand, Co-Secretaries