

**Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church
Unitarian Universalist
BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUGUST MEETING
August 17, 2016**

DRAFT AGENDA

TJMC Covenant Statement

In order to create the beloved community we all desire for ourselves, we, the Congregation of Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church Unitarian Universalist covenant to:

Communicate with compassion and respect, especially when we disagree

Celebrate diversity and nurture our inclusivity,

Promote social justice within our congregation and the larger community,

Generously support the ministries of the church with time, money and enthusiasm, and

Lovingly call each other back into covenant when we have fallen short.

Board Goals 2016-17

These will be determined over the next couple of months.

Board Members Present: Karen Ransom - President, Katharine Maus, Leia Durland-Jones – Ex Officio, Christina Rivera – Ex Officio, David Mick, Jen Larimer, Erik Wikstrom – Ex Officio, Anita Holmes, Laura Horn – Past President, Ann Salamini - Treasurer

Board Members Absent: George Maris – Secretary, Breck Gastinger, Jeanine Braithwaite

Guests In Attendance: Edith Good

I. Opening--(25 minutes total) Opening/Closing Words (Ann), Snacks (Ann), Time Keeper (Karen), and Process Review (All)

1. Opening words – Ann
2. Check-in – This month we are invited to check-in relative to Rejuvenation.
3. Acceptance of Agenda
MOTION: Accept the Agenda.
Unanimously approved.
4. Public Comment - none
5. Correspondence - none

II. Reports

1. President’s Report (written) – Karen Ransom
Please sign up for congregational meeting tasks with Laura at break and respond to the Sign Up Genius email regarding pot luck contributions for the Board retreat.
2. Vice President’s Report (written) – Jen Larimer
Another job description was approved at the last Social Justice Council meeting. When several of these have been collected, she will bring them to the Board.
3. Treasurer’s Report (no report) – Ann Salamini
4. Minister’s Report (written) – Erik Wikstrom
Overnight August 16-17, the Black Lives Matter sign was removed from the Wayside Pulpit in front of the church without damage to the case. A new sign has been printed and put in place. Chris filed an incident report with the police and also alerted the UUA regional staff, as the UUA is tracking any incidents involving congregational support of Black Lives Matter.
Comment – Scott’s music and singing during the services has been wonderful. It is evident he is “on fire” after attending the UU Musicians Network Conference.
5. Director of Faith Development Report (verbal) – Leia Durland-Jones
Leia brought copies of the new Children and Youth Programs

prospectus. It's a busy time of the year. The cramped office space doesn't seem so bad now that the AC is broken.

6. Director of Administration and Finance Report (written) – Christina Rivera

The yearend financial statement is 99% done. When the Endowment report comes in, Chris expects a surplus of not more than \$1000.

The cleaning service interview process is complete. We will hire a sexton team of husband and wife who will split the cleaning and light maintenance duties. After the yard sale and before their start date on September 1, there will be a 3-4 day deep clean of the main church building by a cleaning crew. This will include the first floor and three upstairs rooms, but not the Lower Hall. – Is the sexton team from the church? – No, they came through the recommendation of a congregant. Chris will announce the news through the weekly update. Some meetings will have to be moved during the deep clean.

Cathey Polly and Adam Slate are working on a list of significant outstanding pledges from 2015-16. Board members will be asked to make two or three calls each to clarify and wrap up these pledges. The amount has already been reduced from \$50,000 to about \$20,000.

How will we find out how the TJMC endowment which was transferred to UUA management is doing? – The Endowment Committee will report that to us.

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor

8. Board Liaison Reports

- Communications Task Force (written) – Achsah Carrier
- Racial Justice Steering Committee Public Witness Subgroup (written) – Kate Fraleigh

It's interesting to see the comments from the congregational conversations. 58 attendees seems a good attendance. The Board should think about how we can encourage and insure a good attendance at the Congregational Meeting on Public Witness in October. We should each communicate that this public witness stand is an important step for the church. The senior

staff members are also brainstorming ways to encourage attendance.

As we continue to evaluate the ways we communicate with the congregation, we should ask this group about the effectiveness of various elements of their strategy. What worked?

- Gay Straight Alliance (written) – George Maris

III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions

1. Approve July 2016 Draft Board Minutes.

2. Record electronic vote on the following motion submitted to the Board on August 4:

MOTION: It has been moved (by Karen Ransom) and seconded (by Laura Horn) that “The TJMC Board of Trustees authorizes the DAF to make expenditures to cover the cost of a new AC unit servicing the staff offices in the amount of no more than \$8600. This expenditure is to be funded via the following: no more than \$4K from the Building Reserve Fund with the balance from the operating budget with the understanding that any special funds raised will off-set these expenditures.”

Passed with 9 affirmative votes.

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda.

Unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business

1. A look at the Strategic Plan and work not done – Karen (30 min)

This is another preparation topic for our Board retreat where we will talk about mission and come up with our Board goals. This is the third year of the Strategic Plan (SP), so we’re looking at what has and has not been done and also considering updating the SP. Do all the things we promised to do in the plan represent a good use of Board and volunteer energy? This follows our resolve to do few things better instead of many things not so well.

Here is a quick overview of the plan. There are 3 goals

- Expanding and deepening our spiritual life, which covers worship, connecting social justice with our spiritual lives and connections with our space.
- Strengthening our connections, which includes Communications and Governance task forces, integrating RE families into the congregation, denominational connections and “in-reach,” or connections within the congregation.
- Stewarding our resources, including volunteers, facilities, spiritual generosity and fiscal responsibility.

Breck’s presentation at the May 2016 Congregational Meeting included one slide called “Things to Work On.” The list includes:

- Campus Maintenance Plan
- Stewardship
- Ground Master Plan
- Sustaining Volunteerism
- Follow Through on Governance

Some specific items suggested in the SP should be reconsidered at this point:

- Continue the annual pulse survey to assess and evaluate trends. The first survey took up a lot of energy and resources. Should we repeat it next year? If you want to establish trends, you have to collect data. Is this survey the best way to tap into how the congregation is feeling about things? If it is, what else will we not do in order to have the energy for the survey?
- Build a database
Stewardship is in conversation about this but haven’t acted on it yet.
- Develop future Capital Plan
We’ll talk about this later in this meeting
- Create structure to sustain annual canvass volunteer effort
This has been talked about and needs to be implemented this year.

What is striking about this plan is that it is not visionary. It’s about getting our house in order. There was a strong sense that we had a lot of specific work to do, much of which we have done or are

doing. Now we need to decide where we're going. We need to feel that our work is leading us somewhere specific, to give a reason to do things. Once the vision is established, our work will be clearer and more fulfilling and the energy and volunteers will be available.

To start the discussion, consider this question: When you think about TJMC-UU in your own mind, or when you talk to someone else about it, or when you read an article about our church, what would you say? What would you expect to read in the article?

- The connections with people and sense of belonging to the community
- The welcoming of diversity and the eclectic approach to helping people find their own spiritual paths; a willingness to live with differing points of view and paths
- Sunday worship experience and robust children's education
- We are uniquely educating the next generation of UUs to be the leaders, activists and heroes that our country needs.
- There is good work going on here where I can lend my hand to do good in the world
- You can have a wonderful community that doesn't do anything or a very active community that doesn't like each other. TJMC does both.
- This is a place to raise my kids which also feeds me; it becomes part of the fabric of our lives. My children learn to see me in the context of other adults who share values.
- A place to discover what kind of person you want to or could be and slowly develop into that person

What is it that we do that no one else can do - for ourselves, our community, our country? How can we focus in on that and make our mission dynamic? What should we be doing?

- We are an ally church to Black Lives Matter
- Our religious education program, including OWL and Coming of Age
- Exciting Sunday morning services with incredible music

So how do we focus on these things and move toward them? How do we pick the right way forward from among the many ideas people have? For instance, we combined the ideas for a party to kick off the pledge drive and a party to celebrate the Lower Hall into one

grand celebration.

Another question: What are the six words that describe us?

- All are welcome – How do you program toward that? – This place is supportive and welcoming no matter who you are or what you believe. I didn't fit into other churches.
- Do we need to be unique? Good universities (and churches) are doing much the same things and that's fine. I'm skeptical of branding our own uniqueness.
- If we step into our Board leadership shoes, how does that help us think strategically to lead TJMC forward and keep the doors open into the future.
- We are not explicitly Christian. We offer a breadth of religious traditions to help people who are fleeing other religious dogmas. We offer a place to explore and develop our own beliefs.
- What is our goal in this conversation? If declining revenue is an issue, a goal might be to insure that TJMC is viable long after we're gone. Identifying steps to insure viability is the purpose of the SP.
- Rather than think of how we're unique, think of what we're really good at and put our focus and resources on those things.
- A church should create freedom to explore a spiritual path but it should also offer some help, to push us to explore.
- As to the use of 'the six words that describe us,' they can help us to change our narrative. We hear a lot of 'we don't have enough.' We can replace that with 'all are welcome' or 'raising the next generation of UUs.' Developing a clear vision of ourselves helps create a clear narrative. There are many possibilities, but eventually you have to choose one and pursue it.

We'll continue this conversation as part of our retreat and throughout the year.

BREAK AND GRATITUDE CARDS - (15 min)

Please think of people the Board should be recognizing for their recent contributions to our church community.

2. Governance Task Force Next Steps – Laura (15 min)

This is a follow up to the Governance TF report to the Board last month. The task force completed major work which they related in their report and recommended significant changes to governance at TJMC. They suggested a comprehensive introduction of these changes at the October 2016 Congregational Meeting, with a vote to take place at a specially called Congregational Meeting in January 2017.

This is a partial summary of their recommendations:

- Move to a 7 member board with two year terms for all positions
- Change Executive Committee tactics, specifying that board agendas be created in email and meetings be the exception
- Establish a Policy Group
- Eliminate Administrative, Worship and Lifespan Faith Development Councils
- Institute an Administrative Response Team
- Revamp committees to make them less meeting-bound
- Specific changes were suggested for those committees reporting to the Board – Finance, Endowment, Leadership Development

How this fits in the big picture of our year:

- Planned work on church size and optimal operations may also inform governance
- Board needs to be in strong, knowledgeable support of specifics before this goes forward
- Holding a Congregational Meeting entails a lot of work for staff and board; late Spring Congregational Meeting is in place to deal with elections and governance.

MOTION: Approve the following directives:

- Ask Governance Task Force, in collaboration with Executive Committee, to present brief (under 10 minutes) high level, mission-centered overview of the GTF work at the 10/2 Congregational Meeting.
- Ask the Governance Committee to continue to work with Executive Committee and board to finalize specific recommendations and bylaw changes.
- With the Governance Task Force, take changes to Congregation for vote in late Spring 2017 Annual Congregational Meeting.

Discussion – Karen has spoken with Governance Task Force about the Board’s thinking on their recommendations. Their goal is to institute flexible changes which pare down governance and make it nimble. They are comfortable with postponing the bylaws change vote until Spring.

Since the task force’s work is scheduled to end with this year, they will start writing the bylaws changes soon. The Board must make its decisions in time to facilitate their remaining work.

What is the best way to take these recommendations to the congregation? Changes need to be considered in the context of what the Board has the energy to do. The task force will meet August 27 or 28 to work on their presentation at the October 2nd Congregational Meeting. It needs to be fairly brief, as that meeting is focused on racial justice.

Will their recommendations make the bylaws more flexible and simple? – Yes. The whole bylaws should probably be rewritten. It may be the best process to do that step-by-step, with this as the first step. If we are all very well prepared for the congregational meeting, it will be a good experience for everyone.

The motion is called for a vote.

Unanimously approved.

There is a Board subgroup which will meet with Governance Task Force members on Wednesday, August 24 at 6:30 in the Social Hall to move forward on this collaboration. Those who have indicated they will attend this meeting with Donna Baker, Sally Taylor and Bev Thierwechter of the Governance Task Force are Laura, Ann, Leia, Wik, Chris and Jen. All are welcome. The Board commits to finishing the work we asked them to undertake on our behalf.

V. New Business

1. Capital Building Projects and Funding – Chris (30 min)

Before embarking on this topic, there is a small matter to deal with.

The neighbors in the former UHouse have asked to build a continuation of the fence which already exists 5 feet within church property next to our parking lot, in order to completely fence in their

yard. This would effectively fence off five feet of our property, though ownership would not change hands. They would maintain the property and pay for the fence which will have a gate should we need access. They have had a document written by their lawyer which includes a 30 day Out clause, so we can have the fence removed with 30 day notice if need be. Assuming the Board agrees, we should authorize Karen to sign on behalf of the Board.

Discussion – Will this prevent us from improving the parking lot? – No. We cannot add any parking spaces, just improve the surface and mark the spaces we are allowed to have by the city. What is the communication plan on this? – Chris will put a note in the Weekly Update. – A picture would be helpful.

MOTION: Authorize Karen to review and sign this proposal on behalf of the Board.

Unanimously approved.

The list of Capital Building Projects was created as part of the Strategic Plan. Most of these have been priced. This discussion is to test the Board's appetite for a mini capital campaign. Some of the issues on the list are mission critical, meaning when they come up there will be nothing we can do to postpone them. These items include the boiler, water intrusion caused by gutter and drainage issues and painting needed to seal wood to prevent further rotting. Others, such as audio visual upgrades in the Sanctuary and Lower Hall and beautification of the Sanctuary, affect the rentability of those spaces, especially for weddings.

We need to ask how these projects tie into our mission for racial justice work within and outside our community and also remember the Board's fiduciary responsibility to the church as we gauge our energy for a capital campaign. The Board's work drives any capital campaign.

Discussion

- It looks like \$110,000 to \$145,000 in deferred maintenance and completion of renovations might be a rough goal.
- A typical capital campaign for a church this size is one million dollars or more, since it means building an addition. This mini campaign covers mission critical maintenance.
- There are people who aren't willing to increase their pledge

who have indicated they would give to targeted improvements. We take pride in our space and want it to be beautiful and sound.

- There is a mix of remedial and aesthetic improvements on the list.
- The Capital Campaign circa 2000 to improve the appearance of the front corner of the church property was opposed by some on the Board who didn't favor purely aesthetic projects. They saw more pressing needs. However, congregants responded readily to providing funds to amplify the original project which stemmed from a memorial donation. People with money care about property and are willing to give toward improvements.
- This will be a test of the congregation's appetite for a larger capital campaign.
- The pledge drive will never cover this work. It's our responsibility as stewards of this building. If the boiler breaks before we have funds in hand, we will have to do something desperate and ugly. It will feel good to get ahead of our needs.
- This capital campaign is inevitable. We should undertake it before the pledge campaign starts. It will be a real test of our congregation.
- This conversation ties in with the previous discussion of our "three words." We might be able to raise the money "so the building looks nice and is still standing many years from now." But is that the best reason that UUs can come up with? Chris termed these projects "mission critical" for a good reason. Shouldn't we need the building to be beautiful and last "for something."
- A menu style capital campaign makes sense. Beautifying the sanctuary is one value, keeping the building warm is another. Something visual to show our progress toward each goal would be helpful.

What is our willingness as a Board to do this work? Will we contact people about giving? Will we put together a task force?

- The first job is to recruit a team that is not 95% Board members. We need to support the work and make calls if needed, but we can't run it.

- The pledge drive and this capital campaign will have to overlap. They both must start soon.
- Does the Board have the authority to go forward with this without congregational approval? Is it an exception to the targeted fundraising ban? – The Board approves targeted fundraising.
- What should be sensitive to the politics of this. The congregation shouldn't be wondering if we need permission to do this. We should consider our strategy around introducing the idea.
- What is the Finance Committee's role in this?- We'll have to consider this at another meeting.

As we put together our Board goals, how we roll out a capital campaign will be part of the conversation. The congregation has to share our goals because there is limited energy in the whole congregation.

- What might district staff have to share about congregational buy in to this plan?
- If we have a problem getting non Board members to do this, we could hire a consultant from outside to do the job for around \$10,000. That cost could be built into the goal.

This conversation will continue as well.

VI. Closing Activities (10 minutes)

1. Process Review (all):

- The Lower Hall 2 is a good meeting space. It feels more intimate.
- Our work is easier with a smaller Board.
- A productive meeting
- I'm moved to gratitude that we do this together. I'm excited to move into more detail at the retreat.
- We have to figure out what to do about Secretary duties.

2. Things to do / communicate –

The Governance Task Force, Board members and Staff meet next week.

All – respond to Laura's call for food at the retreat.

All – sign up for jobs at the October 2nd Congregational Meeting.
All – talk to people about what the Board is doing / thinking about.

3. Closing words – Ann

Parking Lot -

Upcoming Dates

- September 3, 2016 – Board Retreat (9AM– 3PM)
- September 7, 2016 – Executive Board meeting
- September 21, 2016 – Full Board meeting
- October 2, 2016 12:45PM – Congregational Meeting on Public Witness. Food will be available after second service in the hallway.

Future Topics:

- Strategic Plan Survey – Fall 2016
- Developing 2016-17 Board Goals – August
- Board Liaison positions - August

President's Report

August Board President's Report

In these quieter months of summer there is a calm that feels a bit deceptive, but I am trying to take advantage of it in any case! I keep in touch with senior staff and the Executive Committee regularly to discuss and check in on a myriad of issues regarding the church and coming year. I have also been traveling for work. I hope you all are rested and feeling ready to jump into the new church year. As you consider your check in for Wednesday night, please think on the theme of rejuvenation.

We are quickly moving towards our **retreat on September 3** at Jeanine Braithwaite's home. Thank you to Laura for offering to organize food. Please respond promptly to her inquiries as they arrive. I am hoping we will have previewed most of the anticipated work we will focus on for the year and be prepared to create of annual list of

goals related to our ongoing missions work.

Following quickly on our heels will be our first **congregational meeting on October 2nd**. There is much preparation for that including working with the Racial Justice Steering Committee and the Governance Task Force on their presentations. There are many duties for board members as well to keep this meeting running smoothly. Please plan to attend, and pitch in where needed. Laura will help us complete a list of volunteers for necessary jobs at our meeting.

Thank you all for responding to the need to replace the air conditioning unit in the office. Hopefully things are cooling down in there. It does, however, create some pressure on our budget. In addition, there are other facility concerns we will need to be aware of and prepare for. We will explore our appetite for a capital project fundraising campaign.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Ransom

Vice President's Report

Vice President's Report

August, 2016

The Community Life Council met on June 14, 2016. There is no additional updated information since last month's report. Next meeting is scheduled for October.

The Social Justice Council met on August 1, 2016 and was joined by RevWik to discuss the calendar for the upcoming year in regard to spotlighting Social Justice groups on first Sundays. Additionally, the council approved the updated Job Description submitted by PAUN, and highlighted the efforts being made by the Racial Justice Steering Committee and their Public Witness Statement set for a Congregational Meeting in October. The importance of having a representative from each Social Justice group present at the meetings

was discussed, as well as fundraising options for IHS Meal Packets. We noted the importance of collaboration between the different groups that occurs at these meetings, as well as how we can be supporting each other's efforts.

Jen Larimer, Vice President

Treasurer's Report

Lead Minister's Report

Lead Minister's Report to the Board -- February 2016

Worship

Scott DeVeaux has returned from the annual UU Musicians Network Conference *on fire!* Their keynote speaker was a woman named Marcia McFee, who has been a luminary in the world of worship for some time, now. Her focus has been on the collaborative creation “sensory rich” worship experiences. (She says her goal is M² Worship – memorable and moving.) He returned with a copy of her most recent book, *Think Like a Filmmaker: Sensory-Rich Worship Design for Unforgettable Messages*, and a desire to see how we could make use of her approach here.

I have to say that I had encountered McFee's work more than a decade or so ago, and while I was certainly intrigued I was at the time unable to see how her very Christian-centered methods would translate to a Unitarian Universalist congregation. Scott experienced worship that McFee was instrumental in creating at the conference, however, and saw that her *examples* of how to do what she suggests are quite Christian, what she is in fact suggesting is much more universal.

Alex, Scott, Leia, and I will be meeting in two weeks to take a look at the entire 2016-2017 church calendar and to begin planning. When we meet we will no doubt be looking also at McFee's model and be thinking how we can move in the direction of more collaboratively created sensory-rich worship. Scott has already taken the lead on this, asking for more than usual of the readings, etc., for the last service the two of us co-facilitated. He thought about where

else in the service music might be effective – playing underneath one of the readings, for instance, and singing during the prayer/meditation time because of how the song’s style and lyrics matched the service. (He’s even floated the idea of trying to write a piece for each month’s theme!)

Adult Faith Development

Like a baton in a relay race, Leia and I have been “handing off” the Fall/Spring AFD Prospectus as our summer schedules brought us into and out of the office. The emphasis is on programming related to racial justice, yet there are other programs as well that will speak to a number of other needs in the congregation. As I passed the baton back to Leia on my way out for this week of study time, I have to say that I’m pretty excited about the offerings that have come together.

Over the past several months I’ve reported on our collaborative work with the Racial Justice Education Group, and I thought I’d say something a little more specific about it. Heeding the experience of others – most especially our own previous Undoing Racism Committee’s – we decided to try to contain our energy and enthusiasm so that we do a few things well, rather than a whole lot of things to low effect. To help with this we created a matrix that will be used each “term” as we build our programming.

Each semester there will a one multi-session program focusing on helping Whites come to a better understanding of institutional racism, white privilege, and why racial justice work is just as important for White as it is for People of Color. “Beloved Conversations” filled that role last year. We’re trying a shorter program this year. We may keep trying different approaches or, perhaps, eventually settle on the one we feel best serves our congregation.

Additionally, each semester there will be two one-shot programs targeted toward “skill building.” These could be programs designed to help people to see things through a different lens, or to be able to listen to other people saying hard truths, or to recognize and handle racist interactions (macroaggressions, for instance). As of now our plan is to offer one – and only one – book study per semester. This will be a challenge because there are *so many* worthy books out there, yet we are trying to avoid burning out either the congregation

(by having too many offerings to choose among) or our facilitators (by asking them to commit to too many things).

Community Building

This has been a discombobulating summer. I have never understood colleagues who took the entire summer off – I have always said that the summer should not be seen as some kind of “down time” but should be treated as care-fully as any other time of the year. But in the past I *have* taken two weeks of vacation and two weeks of study leave together in one block. This summer, though, I scheduled my time out of the office to coincide with the weeks my kids were not in some kind of camp or summer program. That’s meant that I was in for a week, out for two, back in for one, out for one, in for one ... In a word, disjointed. And that’s made it hard for me to feel connected to the community.

I did attend the Social Justice Council’s August meeting, and am glad I did. (I think they, too, were glad for my attendance.) There were only a few people in the room – although Elizabeth Breeden did point out that because of the way the same person is part of several groups there may have only been a few *people* there but there were a lot of *groups* represented! It was an extremely well-run meeting, and extraordinarily productive and helpful. How to get more of our social justice groups’ representatives to recognize what a resource they have in coming together ... that will be focus of some of my energy this coming year.

I also decided that the Leadership Circle is too important to let momentum flag just as it’s getting started, so I convened it’s second meeting during this time off. It was less well attended than the first time, but I had heard in advance from several people who wanted me to know that they would not be able to make it because of their own summer schedule. I look forward to these regular gatherings for our lay leaders to come together not to *do* anything, but to *be* with one another and with themselves. (Since the Leadership Circle meets on the 5th Wednesday, we’ll be meeting again later this month, Wednesday August 31st.)

Public Witness

Over the course of the summer I had reason to write letters to the editor of the *Daily Progress* several times, and I am pleased to say that they have published each one. (The person who calls to make sure that the letter submitted was, in fact, written by the person it says it was and I have started to get to know one another!) While in these letters I do not claim to speak for TJMC, I do consider it a vital part of my ministry to this congregation and in the wider community.

There was a good turn-out of TJMC folk at the action called by the new Charlottesville anti-racism group SURJ (Showing Up For Racial Justice). We stood on the sidewalk in front of the Federal Courthouse with signs declaring that Black Lives Matter (including a beautiful banner Adam Slate had made up which could be used by any TJMC group or could be loaned out to others) – we joined in chants, in the reading of the names of transgender people of color who have been killed in the Commonwealth in 2016, and in being a *presence*. I was proud to be among us.

Last Thoughts ...

There is a reading in the back of our grey hymnal that is typically read around New Years. Written by the incomparable Rev. Kathleen McTigue (whose words are always so wonderful), I think it can be relevant at the time of any new beginning, like the beginning of a “new” church year and the work of a “new” Board. And, so, I’ll close this report with Kathleen’s words:

“The first of January is another day dawning, the sun rising as the sun always rises, the earth moving in its rhythms, with or without our calendars to name a certain day as the day of new beginning, separating the old from the new. So it is: everything is the same, bound into its history as we ourselves are bound.

Yet also we stand at a threshold, the new year something truly new, still unformed, leaving a stunning power in our hands: what shall we do with this great gift of Time, this year?

Let us begin by remembering that whatever justice, whatever peace and wholeness might bloom in our world this year, we are the hearts and minds, the hands and feet, the embodiment of all the best visions

of our people. The new year can be new ground for the seeds of our dreams.

Let us take the step forward together, onto new ground, planting our dreams well, faithfully, and in joy.”

Pax tecum,
RevWik

Director of Faith Development Report

Director of Administration and Finance Report

Membership Report

To: Board members

Re: July 31, 2016 Membership report

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of June 30, 2016: 422 including 19 youth members

Add:

Mandi Crisp, July 17, 2016

Joe Crisp, July 17, 2016

Kit McNally, July 17, 2016

Joel McNally, July 17, 2016

Marcia Brecker, July 29, 2016

Steven Brecker, July 29, 2016

Drop:

Paul, Mo, died, July 25, 2016

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of July 31, 2016: 427 members including 19 youth members

Sally Taylor

Membership Tracker for Membership Committee

Board Liaison Reports

Communications Task Force

Report to the Board from the Communications Task Force

The Task Force currently includes Achsah Carrier, Chair; Holly Dilatush; and Kim Knotts. George Maris has joined us. We are looking for other members.

Website.

The Task Force has spun off website management to the newly reformulated Communications Committee and Website subcommittee. That is going well, and all of the same people are still working on it.

Bulletin, Weekly Outlook, and other church email communications.

Achsah had planned to work this month with Wendy on redesigning the Bulletin to make it mobile friendly and better coordinated with the website. Achsah's summer scheduling got in the way of this, but we hope to do more work in the next month.

Audio-Visual Improvements

The church Audio-Visual Committee (Rob Craighurst, David Heins, Scott DeVeaux, and Mike Ludwick) continued to do slow work this month. David, Rob and Achsah met at church last Friday to do some of the preliminary moving of wires in preparation for Alex Righters next visit (later this month we hope, or September). By this work and Alex's visit we hope to be able to improve sound and recording capability in the sanctuary for the minimal cost of about \$200, which Scott hopes to be able to cover from the Music budget. Unfortunately we discovered a leak in the roof at the same time – so we are costing money despite our efforts to be prudent!

Assisted listening. We are looking at a new assisted listening system that operates via smart phone and church wireless. This would be both

modern and inexpensive if we can make it work. We plan to start surveying the congregation later this month and recruiting help from hearing impaired congregants to test out to this option. A more conventional t-coil system for hearing aid users will be expensive so we hope this option works.

<http://www.audiofetch.com/venues/church-audio-solution/>

Video, projectors. We are not working on this now. This will be expensive, so sound is the first step.

That's it for this month. We continue to work, slowly but steadily to make improvements. We urge the Board, church leaders, and the congregation as a whole to contact us with any concerns. Our email is communications@uucharlottesville.org. This is also the best address to use to reach the web team.

Respectful submitted
Achsah Carrier, Task force chair

Racial Justice Steering Committee Public Witness Subgroup

Report to the TJMC-UU Board from the Public Witness Subgroup of the Racial Justice Steering Committee August 2016

We are preparing for the October 2nd Congregational Meeting where the congregation will hold the final vote on the public witness of a long term nature,
“Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church-Unitarian Universalist Congregational Public Witness in Support of the Black Lives Matter Movement and Racial Justice”.

We have been communicating with the congregation through 6 cottage meetings, direct conversations with individuals and groups, bulletin articles, tabling every Sunday, and announcements in the

order of service and the weekly email.

Between now and October 2nd there will be one more cottage meeting, an educational program on the Black Lives Matter movement, a question and answer session, a bulletin article about the cottage meetings, development of fact sheets and answers to commonly asked questions, Sunday tabling, individual conversations, emails, and phone calls.

The plans for the October 2nd Congregational meeting are: Kate Fraleigh will do the presentation with assistance from Kate Bird and two other people. It will take about 20 minutes. The Public Witness Subgroup members and others will be prepared to speak at the pro microphone after the motion is presented.

The motion will be presented by a member of the board.

“I move that the TJMC-UU congregation adopt the public witness statement of a long term nature, “ Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church-Unitarian Universalist Congregational Public Witness in Support of the Black Lives Matter Movement and Racial Justice”.

We are hopeful that many people will attend and the vote will be positive.

**Summary of Results from 2016 cottage meetings:
March 26, March 30, April 7, April 10, July 9, July 24 Regarding
the Public Witness statement “TJMC-UU Congregational Public
Witness in Support of the Black Lives Matter Movement and
Racial Justice”**

58 individuals attended the cottage meetings

The cottage meeting questions were developed by the Public Witness Subgroup. Linda Dukes prepared instructions for hosts, facilitators, and recorders. Barely anyone signed up through the genius sign up site. Most signed up at the social hour. The biggest attendance was July 24th when there was no limit to attendees and 8 people came who

hadn't signed up. The cottage meetings held after church at church were the best attended.

The comments were overwhelmingly supportive, indicated the need for more information about the Black Lives Matter movement, and showed an interest in a wide variety of actions. See the full compilation (12 pages) at uucharlottesville.org for details.

Question 1 “Passing this Public Witness means the congregation wants racial justice to be an important focus for the church. What are your thoughts?”

Positive comments: 109

2 Should be an individual or small group matter instead

Concerns

8 Concern that statement will not lead to action

3 focus on “racial justice lowers our actions on other social justice problems

5 do we have enough volunteers?

Advice

12 use existing resources, -members who have been active in racial justice work already, insight from minority churches, uu churches, organizations

Our racial mix

7 – As with the Welcoming Congregation, need lots of people in church involved. (This is more difficult because we had more LGBT members to get to know than we have people of color now.)

7-Diversity in our congregation is a good goal need to work on this-investigate/learn

Statement

7 Because there are no specific actions in the statement, we have concerns about what actions this implies

9 edit Public Witness statement (out of date, “fighting” expand +3)

Question 2 “What are your thoughts about associating TJMC-UU

with the Black Lives Matter movement?

Positive responses 50

2 yes This is personal

Concerns

5 This should be authentic, not “lip service”

10 all lives, BLM too, not just BLM

30 Confusion is BLM smaller or larger than racial justice? includes more than police injustice also systemic issues (prison, education, poverty economic, etc.)

15 “Associating” is ambiguous. Sometimes we would lead, sometimes support. It will be our decision on what particular actions to take.

11 Concerned about publicly endorsing a moving target that we don't have control over. It's not our movement.

33 Need to be sensitive and not take on leadership, be soldiers. Be strong allies

Questions

(7) Would this involve consulting with local BLM to see what would be helpful?

Education

13 More education about black lives matter movement is needed

Question 3 What might our congregation do to promote racial justice and respond to racial injustice in our community?

2 Not just respond to crisis.

Local

8 focus on local

9 Advocate for change that prevents crisis

5 Work on social structures -housing, transportation, daycare, jobs.

4 Avoid duplicating effort but we could be the bolus of effort to grow it

23 Develop relationships with groups and people not like us. To understand and learn.

- (3) Write letters to the editor.
- 15 Support NAACPs by becoming a member, attending meetings.
- (28) Show up
- (12) Make more public statements; reach out to the community with our stand.
- 40 Engage and network in projects with diverse congregations/communities.
- 2 Connect with Believers and Achievers and other groups
- 5 Learn about possible partners
- 3 – Support SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice), which is just being organized in Charlottesville.
- 3 affiliate with non black groups
- 5 - participate at Jefferson School African American Heritage Center
- (4) TJMC could be a leavening force (for instance in the confederate statue debate)

Criminal Justice

- 3 Adopt an existing justice organization, e.g. courts/sentencing
- 11 Meet with local police. How are they training for anti-racism?
- (4) Implement BLM police framework [Campaign Zero: <http://www.joincampaignzero.org/#vision>].
- 4 - prison ministries

Our church

- 7 Increase support for IMPACT
- 5 - increase support for African American Teaching Fellows
- 5 - form an Ally Support Group, which could provide practice in ways to confront racism and white privilege
- (7) Follow Rev. Wik's efforts and support him in this work in the community
- 6. The "Neighboring Faiths" class plants seeds of interfaith and interracial partnership.
- (2) Social Action collection for BLM?
- 3 – Rigorously look at our church with racial justice in mind
- 3 – Sermon dealing with race, comfort zones
- (8) Share information internally about our efforts. On web site, in wiki links (thought for the day on Facebook)
- 4) Rename the church.

- 5 Help publicize things that are happening in the community
- 2 Active investigative groups.
- 2 Support legislation
- 2 - change the name of the church
- 3 – Bridge gaps within our own community
- 3 – Get a list of black businesses – and other minority businesses
- 4 This conversation needs to be widened within the congregation (through sermons, for example), to find ways to be effective.
- 4 host at joint service between TJMC and Ebenezer Baptist

Banner

- 26 Make a Black Lives Matter sign that we can carry.
- 39– Have a Black Lives Matter on the front of the church.

Education;

- 4 Explore own biases, maybe through special covenant groups
- 16 Educate our congregation on white privilege. Macroaggressions, etc.
- 19 classes within the church and for the community
- 3 Have education on our website, and educational opportunities for adults and children.
- 3 Encourage members to take the on-line Implicit Bias tests and connect that with discussion.
- 3 Literacy with media and race.
- 4 We’d like to hear about the “Beloved Conversations” now that that course is done
- 6 Involve youth, even the littlest children formally in local school system with our support and in RE Owl
- 3 – Get kids hooked into the new monthly racial justice classes.
- 3 – Have a summer “camp” – like other churches’ Vacation Bible School – but about racial justice.

Question 4 “Is there anything else you would like included in the report of this meeting about the proposed statement of public

witness?”

11 thanks to the committee and hosts, facilitators, recorders
Other answers included under other questions.

Kate Fraleigh

GSA Committee

During the months of August and September GSA and its members are participating in the art show. The art can be seen in the sanctuary and more pieces are to follow. Circe Strauss’s art will adorn the lighted areas because of its colors.

GSA plans on being at the pride festival in September.

Our meetings have been random and we plan to move the date from the first Wednesday of the month to avoid conflict with the Board meeting.

New members have joined from outside the church and I'm in correspondence with them. Our agenda has been focusing on the art show, however we continue to support the LGBT Community by being a presence.

George Maris, Chair