

**Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church - Unitarian Universalist
BOARD OF TRUSTEES SEPTEMBER MEETING**

September 20 , 2017

MINUTES

In attendance - Karen Ransom - Past President, Erik Wikstrom - Ex Officio, Leia Durland-Jones - Ex Officio, Katharine Maus, Colleen Anderson, Ann Salamini - Secretary, Adam Slate - President, Christina Rivera - Ex Officio, Annalee Durland-Jones, David Mick , Cindy Shepard

Absent - Jeanine Braithwaite - Treasurer, Ian Sole

Guests - Greta Dershimer, Dick Somer, Sally Kate Park, Julia Sakellarios, Bob Gross

I. Opening--(25 minutes total) Opening/Closing Words (Karen), Snacks (Karen), Timekeeper (none), and Process Review (All)

Opening words – Karen

Check in -

1. Acceptance of Agenda

MOTION: Change the Agenda to take Public Comment first.

Unanimously approved.

MOTION: Accept the amended agenda.

Unanimously approved.

2. Public Comment –

Greta Dershimer read the following statement:

Active Minds Statement to the TJMC Board

(September 20, 2017)

In late June we were encouraged by Adam to think that the Board would be willing to consider alternative possibilities for continuing TJMC's work with IMPACT. So several former TJMC IMPACT leaders began developing a possible plan for participation this year. In early July we were told that the Board had appointed Erik and/or Chris to meet with the Active Minds group to discuss your response to our letter of May 25. But no one came to any of our meetings during the summer, although we were discussing (and arguing about) alternative ideas for continuing TJMC's participation in IMPACT. By the end of August we were running out of time to be able to participate in the full process with IMPACT this year, and we are now already well behind other churches in holding House meetings to discuss problems we see that might become issues to be addressed, and to recruit additional volunteers to work as Network Members.

I gather that many of you were surprised to get our August 31st letter. Maybe you thought we had forgotten our concerns about IMPACT membership. It's true that, given our ages, many Active Minds members have memory problems. But we don't easily forget things that we really care about.

So why are we here tonight? Erik saw a copy of our August letter to you, and he came to our September 7th meeting to ask us to change our requests. We listened to what Erik had to say in response to our letter. And he listened to what members of our group had to say about our concerns. Toward the end of the meeting he told us four things: First, he said he supports the "leadership lite" plan developed by former TJMC IMPACT leaders – a plan to participate in IMPACT this year even without paying our membership fee;

Second, he said that a congregational vote on IMPACT membership this fall would be impossible, but promised that such a vote could be on the agenda of the Congregational Meeting in the spring of 2018;

Third, he said that he would support including the IMPACT membership fee as a line item in the 2018-19 proposed budget, if the congregation votes to approve TJMC's membership in IMPACT at the spring Congregational Meeting; and

Fourth, he explained that the Active Minds group could make a statement at this meeting, but warned that the only response we would get would be, "Thank you for your comments."

Well, we all know how eloquent and persuasive Erik can be. At our September 14th meeting, the Active Minds group decided to amend our requests to the Board along the lines of his comments. But we feel strongly that we need the Board's approval, as well as Erik's, to proceed with carrying out the "leadership lite" plan for participation in IMPACT this year. It was the Board's decision to drop our membership in IMPACT by deleting the membership fee from the proposed deficit budget. If we proceed with participation without the Board's approval, we fear it will be seen as some kind of rebellious action, in opposition to the Board, by a small group of IMPACT supporters. That would be detrimental to the church community and not helpful to IMPACT. So we are taking this opportunity to amend the requests we made in our letter to the Board.

We are amending the first request to ask the Board's approval of the "leadership lite" plan for participation in IMPACT this year. Both Erik and the IMPACT organizers approve of our participation even though we pay no membership fee. We had hoped to discuss this plan with you in more detail, but since we are not on the agenda, we can't. Instead we are submitting a brief written description for your consideration.

We are also amending our second request to ask the Board's approval of Erik's promise that a congregational vote on IMPACT membership can be on the agenda for the spring Congregational Meeting.

We would like to withhold any requests or decisions about the IMPACT membership fee for a later time.

Three Active Minds members who did not sign the August 31st letter because they were unable to attend that meeting, have asked to be noted as agreeing to these amended requests. They are Jan Bernhard, Joan Hunt, and Julia Sakellarios.

Finally, we understand that you are not prepared to respond to our statement other than to say "Thank you for your comments." However, if someone could propose a motion to approve the leadership lite plan tonight, then the volunteers who are prepared to carry out that plan could hold a House meeting, recruit additional volunteers, and be able to vote in October when IMPACT chooses the new issue for the coming year.

Your vote of confidence would mean a great deal to the Active Minds group and the volunteers listed in the leadership lite plan. Hopefully, our request for your approval of a congregational vote in the spring can be on your October agenda.

Thank you for allowing the Active Minds group to make this statement.

Questions:

- How does IMPACT feel about TJMC participating without being a dues paying member? - They are excited at the possibility. Erik added that IMPACT leadership is glad to have us participate in this way at this point, hoping that we will be coming back as full members in the future.
- When IMPACT started, TJMC was the only congregation to contribute dues of ½% of annual budget as a line item, and the congregation voted for it. They never had a chance to vote it out of the budget. Further, IMPACT needs our commitment of both financial and volunteer support to do its work. We have gained great prestige in the community for our commitment to IMPACT initiatives through the years.
- TJMC carries out its Social Action work mainly through PACEM and IMPACT. She attended 22 meetings when IMPACT was considering a residential drug treatment facility for women with children. TJMC needs to be out in the community pushing these ideas. The decision to take IMPACT dues out of the budget was an uninformed vote.
- Would we have a vote without paying dues? - Yes, IMPACT has said we can vote. This understanding was further refined: at the Team Assembly where the three potential issues for the year are chosen, a congregation has only as many votes as the number of house meetings they have held. Once the three issues have been researched and are presented at the larger Annual Assembly, each Network Member in attendance gets a vote to choose the one issue.
- UUs around the country participate in similar organisations. It is so compatible with UU values.
- What kind of response are you getting outside of Active Minds? - We've tried to keep this quiet so it wouldn't be seen as pushing something in opposition to the board. If the board approves, others will be asked. Some individuals who value IMPACT are aware of these plans, though leadership hasn't yet talked to groups.
- While TJMC hasn't had the largest number of people at the committee meetings

and Nehemiah Action, we have generally had the highest number of volunteers and attendees as percentage of our congregation. Perhaps the congregation has taken it for granted. We may have been more aggressive in recruiting volunteers than appropriate.

- ½% of this year's deficit budget would amount to \$2430
- Another reason to have IMPACT dues in the budget is to spare leadership from having to apply for a Social Action collection each year. There are always plenty of applicants for these collections; IMPACT should supercede other initiatives.

MOTION: The Board affirms the plan of this group to continue TJMC's participation in IMPACT under the Leadership Lite model.

Unanimously approved.

Thank you for your dedication and hard work on behalf of TJMC's participation in IMPACT.

3. Correspondence - Full text can be found at the end of written reports.

- Letter from the Active Minds group in support of participation in IMPACT and explaining the "Leadership Lite" plan.
- "Leadership Lite" plan.
- Letter from IMPACT denouncing the hatred shown this summer in Charlottesville.

II. Reports

1. President's Report (none) – Adam Slate

2. Vice President's Report (n/a) – vacant

3. Treasurer's Report (written) – Jeanine Braithwaite

4. Minister's Report (written) – Erik Wikstrom

5. Director of Faith Development Report (verbal) – Leia Durland-Jones

The letters to congregations impacted by the August 12th Unite the Right rally are in process.

We've had a great launch to the church school year. It's taken a lot of work and been a busy time.

There are a lot of new names in the class rosters. The response of students and volunteers is robust and heartening.

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

We have some exciting new rentals. Kaplan Testing Service is using TJMC almost exclusively for their training sessions. There are some wedding rentals.

Jeanine is working to arrange a Zoom meeting with Finance Committee to craft a recommendation to the board on how to resolve the 2017 budget deficit.

Personnel Committee is currently without a chair. Chris will chair their first meeting.

Whereas it is frustrating to feel we're having a slow start this year, there are some important reasons why church leadership is behind. The events of this summer were profound (July 8th KKK rally, August 12th Unite the Right rally, Rev. Jesse Jackson visiting TJMC twice, normal staff vacations). The reasons are good and related to our mission.

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor

8. Board Liaison Reports

- Personnel Committee - David will continue to be liaison.
- Nominating Committee - Karen

They met for the first time this month with three ongoing members and Karen. They will be talking about the Nominating Committee section of the bylaws, which currently specifies the number of members, which has been difficult to maintain. This number should have more flexibility and be part of the policy manual.

III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions

1. Approve August 2017 Board Minutes

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda
Approved with one abstention.

IV. Old Business

1. Fiscal Year End 2017 - Chris and Jeanine (10 min)

The DAF report will have this month's numbers, year-to-date numbers and this year compared to last year. The end of year report will be presented to the board in October when the treasurer is here to participate.

This month's numbers depend on how the year end numbers will end up. This year to date looks good compared to last year. The plate collection covered our costs for Rev. Jackson's service. The tree trimming at the end of the summer was covered under the Buildings and Grounds line item. We broke even on our response to August 12th, including a donation of about \$500 from the UUA.

2. Update on Bylaws revision - Karen (10 min)

(Update and set congregational conversation dates)

Amy Wissekerke, Laura Wallace and Karen have met multiple times to review our bylaws in light of the Governance Task Force recommendations, as well as considering some shift of material to the policy manual. They are trying to make the bylaws more nimble and flexible, but there are decisions to be made. For instance, the Nominating

Committee should have a membership range to simplify the bylaws and make it easier to comply. Also some things like how overlapping terms are staggered should go into the policy manual rather than bylaws. The next congregational meeting has been moved to November 12th to allow time to do this work.

Congregational conversations on bylaws changes will be held on two weekends in mid October, between services. The changes can be visually compared on screen to aid the discussion. These conversations will take place before the October board meeting, so some online collaboration will be required to prepare for them. It would be good to have a parliamentarian look over the proposed bylaws, to highlight the implications which may not be obvious to an untrained user.

Chris recommended October 15th and 22nd at 10:30AM in Lower Hall 2. An invitation to the conversations will be mailed out by October 9th.

3. 75th Anniversary plans - Adam (15 min)

This should be a positive milestone, a really nice celebration that is within the means of our church at this time. What things should we consider doing?

- A few years back the canvass hosted a wonderful dinner, with guests assigned to hosted tables, and with some suggested talking points designed to energize dinner conversation. There was a very festive look and feel.
- We can use the 75th anniversary to launch some campaigns, but not much preparation will be done by the actual February date.
- Two members of the board should assemble a task force to organize this.
- The task force should organize the 75th celebration, but not try to tie in a possible capital campaign, etc. Chris has 3 dates reserved in March (to avoid the uncertain weather of February) and will work with the task force to create a budget.
- Try to have an age range involved in the task force. There are some youth who would like to be involved, especially if we're not just looking to the past, but also to the future. Virginia James, as the earliest remaining signer of our membership book, should be an honorary member of the task force.

4. Board Retreat Follow Up - Adam/Leia (15 min)

The Board Covenant will be finished up by Karen and Colleen.

Erik reviewed the Board Statement of Purpose which was edited according to comments at the board retreat:

The Board of the Unitarian Universalist congregation of Charlottesville exists to support and further the congregation's mission of nurturing and guiding generations of Unitarian Universalists so we may transform ourselves - as allies and advocates for justice - and thus transform the world.

MOTION: Approve the 2017-18 Board Statement of Purpose.

Unanimously approved.

This statement should go on the board page on the website and head the monthly

agenda.

The board goals suggested at the retreat made a very long list. Staff organised them roughly into three categories, membership, stewardship and racial justice, with a couple of overarching priorities as well. Prioritizing the list into measurable board goals for the year seemed daunting.

A discussion ensued about the nature of the church's needs and the ability of the board to "fix things."

- Stewardship has to be the first priority
- Clear articulation of membership expectations is part of that
- The board can't "fix" stewardship levels. The congregation has to fix it. We need energy to move forward, but we need money to do more than tread water.
- Would money solve our problems? If someone gave us a million dollars, we could relieve some immediate stresses, but it wouldn't change who we are.
- Leadership affects culture, making people want to participate and be engaged. The people at the top need to inspire, articulate and ask for participation.
- Trust needs to be a goal.
- Each member of the board needs to have a way to lead in the church, whether in justice work, stewardship or whatever.
- We have to acknowledge that we are approaching being a church in crisis. - We are at the very least under a lot of stress.
- We know changing the culture of the church is a slow process. Develop a twenty year plan to do that. As part of the board's report on the Next Steps weekend, we need to make the long term nature of this transformation clear to the congregation.
- The twenty year plan to change the church is accomplished by doing the things the congregation is saying we should be doing, such as justice work.
- We can talk directly about the expectations of membership, what a reasonable pledge is, etc. We used to do this more. The other half is vision. The money may follow if people are excited by the vision and are asked to give.
- Collective efficacy. By developing a shared vision and embodying it ourselves, we can lead the congregation to embody the vision as well.

5. Next Steps Report - Adam (30 min)

Adam read the comments board members had submitted on Mark Ewert's report of the Next Steps Weekend. There was a sense of great challenge in implementing his recommendations. A report to the congregation must be made on his report to the board. How we frame the information and recommendations is important; daunting challenges versus exciting opportunities. In any case, a timely and transparent reporting to the congregation is called for.

V. New Business

1. Committee on the Ministries - Wik and Adam (10 min)

Defer to the October board meeting.

VI. Closing Activities (5 minutes)

1. Process Review (all):
2. Things to do / communicate –
 - Staff will give a google tutorial ½ hour before the October board meeting
 - David and Karen will serve with Chris on the board committee to organize the 75th anniversary task - ask if Ian is willing to help
 - Karen and Colleen will finish the board covenant
3. Closing words - Karen

Dates to remember -

October 8, 2017 - New Member Recognition; receptions after each service.

October 15 and 22, 2017 - Congregational Conversations at 10:30AM.

November 12, 2017 -congregational meeting after 2nd service (replaces original date of October 15, 2017)

February 2018 - TJMC 75th Anniversary

June 3, 2018 Annual Business Meeting after 10AM service

Upcoming topics -

October - select new CoM members

October - Next Steps Recommendations / Stewardship

October - last year's staff priorities / assessments

Policy Review panel - (Empower group to undertake policy review process and bring policy manual up to date)

Charge for Personnel Committee

IMPACT vote on Congregational meeting in spring - October?

REPORTS

President's Report

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report for September 2017 Board Meeting

We have ended the church year 2016-2017 with a deficit of \$7 K. Expenditures were controlled and kept to 94% of budgeted totals. Revenues underperformed. Current year pledges came in at \$371 K against a budgeted \$396 K. Prior year pledges came in at nearly \$22 K, thanks to efforts to collect outstanding balances. Fundraising income was \$35 K against a budgeted goal of \$33 K.

TJMCUU lacks a cash reserve fund, in which we could roll small cash surpluses and draw from for small deficits. Without such, we have three main options for dealing with the \$7 K deficit. (1) We can carry the deficit on our balance sheet (our statement of financial position comparison) as a negative asset, and gradually pay it off over the year; (2) we can show it as an operating deficit at the beginning of church year 2017-2018 and roll it into our budget and plans for running a deficit this year; or (3) we can use the Wells Fargo credit line to pay it off.

Since \$7 K is a relatively low amount, I recommend the second option. We already know that we will be running a deficit in church year 2017-2018, so it makes sense to consolidate these two, and only draw on the Wells Fargo credit line at the end of church year 2017-2018 when we will have a more significant deficit to cover.

Our UU Stewardship consultant, Mark Ewert, visited TJMCUU August 25-27th, the same weekend that Jesse Jackson was in the pulpit. Church staff put in a tremendous effort to pull off both events, thank you. His findings were presented to the Board on Sunday 27th and in a detailed written report for the Board. His findings will be communicated to the congregation in a variety of ways, including in the October Board minutes and November bulletin.

Minister's Report

What a year it's already been!

Since our new congregational year officially began on July 1st, we've had the Klu Klux Klan come to town (with all of the preparation and aftermath that went with that), we've had a rally to "unite the right" (with all of the preparation, trauma, and aftermath that went with, and is still going on), we welcomed the Rev. Jesse Jackson to preach at our Sunday sanctuary worship with less than 48 hours notice (thanks to the amazing Chris Rivera and a hoard of volunteers), and we welcomed Rev. Jackson back for a "leadership meeting" on the morning he announced the start of his Virginia voter registration bus tour (and this with no clear sense of what he was planning until, well, less than 48 hour in advance). There was the Next Steps weekend (with all of the attending planning and aftermath!), and a Board retreat.

And all of this was *before* what feels like the "real" start of the year with our Water Communion! It's no wonder that Leia, Chris, and I have looked at each other and noted that this has been a hard start-up to this new year. Ducks we'd intended to have lined up by now are still scattered around the yard. And all of those unexpected things that took place this summer have launched new efforts and initiatives that we feel called to engage with, yet there's also a new crew of Worship Weavers to meet with, and AFD

programming to finalize, and the regular tasks, demands, and opportunities that come each fall as the congregation gears up again to strive to be the kind of community we dream of being, so that we can work together toward fulfilling the vision we share of what the world can be.

And, then, there are Board reports to write.

I've shared some of these thoughts with others, yet think it might be worth sharing them with the Board. We all recently experienced two very different events on the same Sunday – Jesse Jackson preaching during the worship, and the meeting to receive the final report from the Next Steps weekend immediately afterward. The juxtaposition between these two could be seen as emblematic of the fundamental problem we're facing as a community.

During the morning we had a glimpse, a taste, of who and how we say we want to be in the world. We've said that we want to be "a beacon of liberal religion" – nearly 500 people followed that beacon's light to our sanctuary (and social hall, seats on the grass, and online presence). For those hours we *were* a diverse community in which people with all sorts of identities found sustenance and strength. And before the service began our building was buzzing with the electrified energy of actively engaged congregants who all wanted to *do* something to help make this occasion a reality. (And we should pause to remember just how much of a challenge it was to pull off something on the scale we did with as little notice as we had, as little practice as we had, and the relatively low level of resources we had – yet "loaves and fishes" like, we had more than enough!) Rev. Jackson's request to preach from our pulpit was an affirmation of the identity we have been striving to live into – a progressive congregation that is committed to the work of racial justice. Goals such as this are never fully attainable, of course, yet for those hours on Sunday morning that's exactly what we were – we were able to get a taste of the fruit we have been tending. And it tasted good; and it tasted exciting; and it tasted hopeful; and it tasted ... right. We saw a glimpse of the future we dream of made momentarily real.

And then the leadership of the congregation went downstairs and spent several hours looking backward, at the same seemingly intractable problems we have been wrestling with for years. We have people who know what to do to run a successful pledge drive, and yet we can't seem to get the results we are looking for. We feel hampered by a lack of volunteers, a lack of staff, a lack of financial resources, a lack of clearly articulated vision. There are people in the congregation who continue to express dissatisfaction with the performance of the called Lead Minister and the Director of Administration and Finance. (They weren't named so specifically, yet honestly we all know that "dissatisfaction with senior staff" is primarily directed toward one or both of those particular senior staff people.) There are people who aren't happy with the direction the church has been going – whether that's about size, or the increased focus on racial

justice and how that is going to change people's experiences. For roughly 2 ½ hours we listened to someone tell us basically what we already knew – we're stuck.

We do not say any of this as criticism of what Mark did with and for us. He was able to look at our congregation with the eyes of an outsider, and brought together data sets that none of us had looked at in such a holistic way. For some of us in the room he did have things to say that we hadn't heard, or thought, or realized before; for others he gave a feeling of confirmation about things that we'd been thinking might be true but about which we weren't entirely sure. Our comments here are not so much about any specifics of that after-church meeting per se. Rather, we want to highlight the different orientations of the two parts of the day – the one was hopeful, exciting, forward-looking, and inspiring; the other was more of a backward-looking experience that left many feeling a little ... hopeless.

When Leia, Chris, and I were discussing all of this at one of our weekly meetings, one of us made an intriguing connection. There is a therapeutic model known as "systems theory." It grew out of family therapy, and is predicated on the idea that every family unit is a *system* – an interconnected, interdependent, dynamic system – with each member playing a particular part. This model encourages the therapist to look at the system as a whole, rather than focusing on the behavior of any particular member. Since its development, the insights of systems theory have been applied to all kinds of systems – including faith communities. One of the powerful, and perhaps counter-intuitive insights from this model is that to bring about change in a system it is not always necessary – or even wise – to try to foster change in the piece that needs it the most. Instead, therapists will often focus on the healthiest member of the family, the person who is most likely to be *able* to change. Since all of the elements of the system are interrelated, as soon as any one family member begins to change, all of the other members *have to* change.

Taking our lived experience of moving from having a glimpse of the future we dream of into focusing on the problems from the past that continue to plague us, and adding the insights of systems theory, a question naturally arises. What if the reason we haven't been able to figure out our stewardship problem, despite all of the time, effort, energy, and expertise we've thrown at it, is because it's the part of our system that is *least* likely to change? In other words, what if we've been focusing our therapeutic efforts in the wrong place?

That Sunday morning gave us a taste of who and how we say we want to be in the world. It showed us that we *can* do it. And there were excited and engaged congregants who felt it. Perhaps, rather than putting so much energy into trying to do better the things we aren't able to do well, we ought to try putting our energy into what

we are already doing well and try to do them even better? Thanks to Adam's introduction of Strengths Theory, we now have shared language about playing to our strengths rather than trying, almost desperately, to overcome our weaknesses. In other words, what if we decided to strengthen our congregation's understanding of, and engagement with, stewardship by putting our energy into living ever more fully into our vision of ourselves as "a powerhouse for racial justice"? What if we were to look at stewardship from the holistic perspective that Chris espouses in which it is about stewarding our resources to achieve our mission and vision in the world?

If all the "experts" are correct – both the experts in the field of stewardship and systems theory – if we live more fully into that compelling vision, the stewardship problem will be considerably easier to address ... because people do not give to support budgets; people give to support visions.

Pax tecum,

RevWik

Director of Faith Development Report

Director of Administration and Finance Report

Membership Report

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of July 31, 2017: 432

Add:

Elizabeth Ide, August 27, 2017

Drop:

Anne Hunter, died Nov. 24, 2014 (just found the obituary)

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of August 31, 2017: 432 members

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Members of the TJMC Board of Trustees,

We write as a follow-up to our letter of May 25, in which we asked you to "keep the IMPACT dues in your proposed budget" or "bring this matter up for a vote at the Congregational Meeting." Unfortunately, due to some miscommunication, you did not receive our letter until after the June 4 Congregational Meeting. While we have had no formal response from you about that letter, we have not forgotten the issue we

addressed at that time. Nor have we been idle. In the interim we have learned a number of pertinent facts. We are now asking you to take three important actions to enable TJMC to continue our 10-year involvement in IMPACT.

First, we ask you to approve a plan for TJMC's continued participation in IMPACT, a plan which could work effectively whether or not we hold official membership in IMPACT. A small group of former IMPACT leaders met in mid-June and developed this "leadership lite" plan. As a result, six TJMC members have now agreed to work in leadership and/or Network Member roles. They are prepared to recruit additional Network Members. IMPACT leaders have indicated that they would welcome our participation regardless of our membership status. Rev. Wik has indicated his enthusiastic interest in this proposed plan and offered to hold an IMPACT service in the spring to promote TJMC attendance at the annual IMPACT Action. We are very supportive of this plan and pleased that these leaders have stepped up. We ask that you let us meet with you in September to provide additional details, and that you officially approve this plan.

Second, we ask that you call a Congregational Meeting as soon as possible in September, so that the congregation can vote on whether or not to continue our long-time participation and membership in IMPACT. A search of the Board meeting and Congregational meeting minutes of 2006-2007 has been made by Ann Salamini, Greta Dershimer, and Sally Taylor to determine how the original decision was made to join IMPACT and pay the membership dues out of the annual budget. Sally Taylor has reported the following item from the minutes of the Congregational Meeting of January 28, 2007:

"Consideration of the proposal by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees to approve TJMC-UU participation in IMPACT - Trish Foley and Dorothy Schaefer made a motion to approve participation of this congregation in IMPACT, including support of and participation in all aspects of the process. Discussion followed on the financial obligation this includes (.5% of the church budget). The motion passed with two abstentions." (Email copy of this report is attached.)

The Board minutes of January 11, 2007 related to plans for the 2007-8 budget and the Congregational Meeting indicate that a Committee on Ministry survey of the congregation had identified social action as an important priority and that the Board members considered this specifically in determining whether to propose funding IMPACT as a line item in the budget. (Relevant minutes from that Board meeting are attached.)

Given this hitherto unrecognized or unrecalled historical evidence about the original congregational vote to join IMPACT and fund the membership fee as a line item in the annual budget, we submit that the congregation should now have an opportunity to vote specifically on whether or not to continue participating in IMPACT. The form of the motion and format of the budget presented at the Congregational Meeting of June 4 clearly did not allow them that opportunity. We believe that it is important for the congregation's voice to be heard.

Third, we ask that the Board and the Social Justice Council consider approving a special Social Action Collection to be held for IMPACT sometime during the current budget year. This approach could raise an amount that could provide a membership fee for IMPACT without cutting into the approved TCMC 2017-18 budget. Special Social Action Collections held in the past for UUA and UUSC have been very successful. While it is possible for TJMC to participate in IMPACT as a non-member this year, if the proposed plan mentioned earlier is approved by the Board and the congregation, it would be much better for our reputation in the community if we could maintain continuous membership. We are quite proud of being a founding member of IMPACT, and of the contributions TJMC members have made to the successes achieved by the organization over the past ten years. We believe that many of you, and many other TJMC members have similar feelings.

We hope to be given an opportunity to meet with you in September as you consider these requests. It is important that some decisions be made soon, as the IMPACT process of identifying an issue for the coming year has already begun with House Meetings. The Annual Assembly to select a specific issue will be held October 24th. If we are to participate in any meaningful way in IMPACT this year, we must begin the process in September. There is no time to waste.

Sincerely,
The Active Minds Group

The Proposed "Leadership Lite" Plan for Participation in IMPACT in the 2017-18 Program Year

Leadership Team: No single Team Leader; Minimal number of Team members, each playing particular limited roles.

Greta Dershimer – attending IMPACT Team meetings; recruiting TJMC Network Members and coordinating communication with them; preparing announcements for TJMC Bulletins and Friday emails

Debby Norton – interacting primarily with Ruth Berta and Sallie Kate Park to keep up to date on IMPACT activities, and with Erik to keep him informed; managing an IMPACT table in the Social Hall one Sunday a month to inform church members about IMPACT's past achievements and current activities

Sallie Kate Park – serving on a research group

Network Members: 10 or more people who will each commit to bring three other people to the IMPACT Action in the spring, and attend four special IMPACT meetings during the year [the Assembly (October 24), the Rally (March 20), the Action (April 17), and the Celebration (May 15)]. "Super" Network Members (indicated by an asterisk) are each committing to bring 10 other people to the Action in the spring

*Burnie Davis
*Greta Dersheimer
*Bob Gross
Julia Sakellarios
*Dick Somer
(others to be recruited)

Erik has agreed to lead an IMPACT service in the spring, several weeks before the IMPACT Action. Tickets to the Action will be passed out to the congregation at that service, in addition to the work of the Network Members who will contact selected church members personally well in advance to inform them about the issues being addressed and invite them to attend the Action.

IMPACT
August 19, 2017

Members, Fellow Citizens of Charlottesville and Supporters,

The mission of the Interfaith Movement Promoting Action by Congregation Together or IMPACT, is to empower the faith community of greater Charlottesville to create significant social change through unified direct action. We are made up of 27 congregations, including Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Unitarian Universalists and numerous Protestant denominations. We are ethnically, socio-economically and politically diverse. Our many differences could divide us, but our congregations have chosen to work together for fairness and justice for all in our region. We do this to live out the central value of loving our neighbor as ourselves, as our sacred texts teach us:

- The Jewish Perspective in Leviticus 19:17-18: "You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord."
- The Christian perspective in Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus says: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind, This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."
- The Islamic perspective taken from the Qu'ran, Sahih al-Bukhari 13, Sahih Muslim 45, the prophet Mohammed says: "None of you has faith until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

Because of this call, we denounce all forms of hatred and bigotry, especially those that targeted the Charlottesville community this summer: the Ku Klux Klan Rally on July 8, 2017 and the Unite the Right Rally on August 12, 2017. These groups and rallies are perpetuated by fear, despair and scarcity which run counter to the narratives of

community, love and abundance described in our sacred texts. We will continue to do our part in fighting these false narratives through building power and unified direct action, to ensure our community reflects one that our creator intended. Further, because we are in this fight for the long haul, we will continue to have hope for a fair and just community. In the words of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.”

In Love and Power,
IMPACT Board of Directors