

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

August 16, 2017

MINUTES

In attendance - Katherine Maus, Colleen Anderson - President Elect , Chris Rivera - Ex Officio, Annalee Durland-Jones, Leia Durland-Jones - Ex Officio, Adam Slate - President, Ann Salamini - Secretary, David Mick, Cindy Shepard, Ian Sole

Absent - Jeanine Braithwaite - Treasurer, Karen Ransom - Past President, Erik Wikstrom - Ex Officio

Guests - None

I. Opening--(25 minutes total) Opening/Closing Words (Katharine), Snacks (Katharine), Timekeeper (Adam will assign on the spot), and Process Review (All)

Opening words – Katharine

Check in -

1. Acceptance of Agenda

MOTION: Accept the Agenda.

Add a New Business item to send letters to First United Methodist Church, Congregation Beth Israel and Islamic center in thanks, appreciation and support.

Unanimously approved as amended.

2. Public Comment –

3. Correspondence -

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston County

August 7, 2017

Dear TJMC-UU,

I received your letter forwarded to me by the Southern Region Unitarian Universalists, and it moved me greatly. As a retired Army JAG officer, I attended classes in Charlottesville beginning in 1988, up until I left the service in 2011. I always loved visiting Charlottesville and had many great times there over the years. To think that your peaceful, quaint, historic community is being used as a rallying point by hate groups is

heartbreaking.

We are a small fellowship on Galveston Island, off the coast of Texas. A few months back, our own peaceful, historic community received a visit from members of the Westboro Baptist Church, a hate group infamous for protesting at military funerals. Luckily, they did not gain much traction, but I fear the current resurgence of these groups will only get worse before it gets better.

This past Sunday, I read your letter to our members. Although we are not able to come in person, we wanted you to know that we support you, are inspired by your courage and stand with you in spirit. We decided to write personal notes of encouragement, and even the children got involved.

In taking a physical stand against hatred, you stand with giants. Mr. Jefferson would be very proud, and so are we. We hope our words will shine small beacons of light to protect you against fear.

Thank you for setting the example for all Unitarian Universalists to follow. We will be thinking and praying for you on Saturday. Love conquers all.

Sincerely,
Lisa M. Windsor
Board President, UUFGC

II. Reports

1. President's Report (verbal) – Adam Slate
2. Vice President's Report (n/a) – vacant
3. Treasurer's Report (No Treasurer's Report this month because Jeanine Braithwaite is in Africa for work travel. A written report will be submitted for September with year-end financial reporting.) – Jeanine Braithwaite
4. Minister's Report (written) – Erik Wikstrom
5. Director of Faith Development Report (was on vacation) – Leia Durland-Jones

6. Director of Administration and Finance Report (verbal) – Christina Rivera
It looks like we will close the 2017 books with a \$5K deficit. I will discuss how to deal with that with the treasurer and Finance Committee and bring a recommendation to September Board meeting.

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor

8. Board Liaison Reports

There will be a lot of turnover on Committee on the Ministries this year. Some members have already exceeded their term. Erik will submit a list to board at the September meeting so they can select and approve new members.

III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions

1. Approve July 2017 Board Minutes

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda
Unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business

1. Next Steps Weekend - Colleen (5 min)
(update)

The Next Steps Weekend with Mark Ewert will take place August 25-27. On the 25th, the board, senior staff and consultant will meet from 6-9PM. On Saturday meetings will take place all day long with various committees. On Sunday Mark will be at morning service, followed by lunch and a wrap up session with the board and senior staff from noon to 2PM.

2. Bylaws Review for October 2017 Congregational Meeting - Adam (10 min)
Karen Ransom, Laura Wallace and Amy Wissekerke will look at the high level bullets on governance changes approved at the June congregational meeting and see what changes need to be made to our bylaws to enact them. A secondarily is to look at what should be transferred from the bylaws to the policy manual. A policy review is also needed. The executive committee and full board will see the proposed revisions at their September meetings, then arrange cottage conversations for feedback. A vote will take place at the October congregational meeting.

Discussion -

- These changes will encompass enacting the governance changes the congregation voted on in June and moving appropriate items to the Policy Manual. The latter have not been voted on. How can we best vote on both things at the congregational meeting? - Both batches of changes can be covered in the same bylaw change vote as there is nothing controversial in them and they will have been introduced and discussed in cottage conversations.
- Is there an urgency to having this bylaws review at the September board meeting? Could it come to the October meeting and put off the congregational meeting to November? - Chris can look at the calendar.
- There will be a Policy Review Committee at work as well. They may overlap with the bylaws group, but they should coordinate together.

3. August 12 White Supremacy Rally Debrief (10 min)
In addition to a lengthy check in period in which Chris detailed much of the work she did

to help prepare for the rally protest, Leia reported on what went on at TJMC on August 12th. Leia and Wik kept the church open (one door only for security). Patty Wallens, Michelle Benedict, Wendy Steeves and Chris Simms (UU poet from Rockford, IL) were on hand as well. People came in off the street; SURJ (Standing Up for Racial Justice) and BLM (Black Lives Matter) children were in daycare at the church. Pastoral care was available as needed. About 35 people used these services.

While holding the space, staff and members developed a plan to keep our building safe on Sunday. There were two congregants outside in cars that morning to monitor the streets for possible harm. The Rugby Road door was locked and other doors were monitored for safety. A security plan was actively in place.

Discussion - Plans evolved daily in service of community and church needs while keeping us safe. A tremendous amount of thought and energy went into these efforts.

BREAK AND GRATITUDE CARDS (10 min) - Please think of people the Board should recognize for their recent contributions to our church community.

V. New Business

1. 75th Anniversary plans - Adam (15 min)
(appoint a task force)

Sally Taylor sent a report detailing the ways the 10th, 11th, 42nd and 50th anniversaries were celebrated. Chris has reserved a couple of target dates in the spring. The Monday Presidents meeting will also discuss this issue and brainstorm names of people who might want to help with planning.

Discussion - We can't support festivities in the budget this year. Perhaps we could have a nice catered dinner with suggested contribution to cover the cost.

2. TJMC Board Retreat - Adam (10 min)

Erik and Adam are sketching out an agenda for the September 9th retreat.

- 8:30AM breakfast and coffee (optional)
- 9:00AM opening, check in, warm up activity
- We will agree on this year's mission statement and covenant, starting from those of last year.
- Kate Fraleigh and Racial Justice Committee may lead a session on racial justice.
- lunch
- A Strength Finders or Myers Briggs session will help us learn how to use our individual styles to work together effectively.
- We will set our goals for the year
- 4:00PM close

Discussion - Adam is building relationships through the Clergy Collective. He will see if another church would want to trade space so our retreat can take place off campus.

3. 2017 Final Quarterly Review of Staff Priorities - Adam (20 min)

This is still in process on both the staff and board sides. Staff priorities have been coming to the board for an update on a quarterly basis. For the first quarter, this amounts to the presentation of priorities, which follow board goals and the strategic plan. For the second and third quarters, staff rate their progress toward priorities with a green/yellow/red system. They let the board know how priorities are progressing or if they are changing due to unforeseen events. (The election last year and racial justice issues this year, for instance, impact staff time and priorities.) This year the board plans to roll the fourth quarter review into the assessment process between staff and the presidents. These will be available to board members who want to see them. Individual board members will have made their comments in the assessment process and then received a review of all comments at the July board meeting.

Discussion - Why are these done quarterly? No other employer does it that often. Biannual or yearly reviews are more common. - This was set up when Wik's performance was in question and Chris was a new employee; quarterly reviews seemed appropriate at that time.

4. Send letters of appreciation, thanks, support to congregations after Unite the Right rally.
This will be looked into at on the Monday Presidents meeting.

VI. Closing Activities (5 minutes)

1. Process Review (all):

2. Things to do / communicate –
September Board - approve new COM members
DAV and Treasurer will bring recommendations on closing the 2017 budget deficit.
Jeanine will send out current Next Steps schedule
Sept - preview Bylaws changes
2 at large members to coordinate bylaws cottage conversations
Capture the story of TJMC's participation in Aug 12th events
September - Wik will submit names for new Committee on the Ministries members

3. Closing words - Katharine

Dates to remember -

August Exec meeting - August 2, 2017
August Board meeting - August 16, 2017
Next Steps weekend - August 25-27, 2017
September 9, 2017 - Board Retreat
October 15, 2017 - congregational meeting after 2nd service
February 2018 - TJMC 75th Anniversary
June 3, 2018 Annual Business Meeting after 10AM service

Upcoming topics -
August - 75th anniversary

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

TREASURER'S REPORT

LEAD MINISTER'S REPORT

I'll start off my report this month by saying that my two-week road trip vacation left me both refreshed and utterly exhausted. We drove to the Poconos and spent a night with one of my wife's oldest friends. The next morning we drove up to Vermont and spent the night with one of my oldest friends. Then we drove to Ellsworth, Maine where we were able to stay in a timeshare for a few days and enjoy Acadia National Park. Then it was back in the car to drive to an Airbnb cabin on a lake, a little less than an hour from Yarmouth, Maine where I spent the first 11 years of my professional ministry. This meant we were able to go to the Yarmouth Clam Festival for the first time since we all left back in 2006! Then it was down to Boston for a quick visit with one of my brothers, and back to the Poconos for a stay in another time share for several days. Finally, two weeks after we left, we returned home. A really great time that left me refreshed and utterly exhausted.

During these two weeks I tried my best to truly unplug from anything even vaguely work related, but there were a *lot* of things going on. Congregational life is pretty quiet in the summer, but life in the city was anything but. The efforts to develop appropriate responses to the Unite the Right rally on the 12th have been a great deal of work that no one could have anticipated when 2017 began. Adam Slate has been a regular and valued presence at the Charlottesville Clergy Collective's (many!) meetings, and has both kept our congregation in the loop with regard to the Collective's planning, and keeping the Collective aware of what we can offer. (So a huge thank you, Adam.) Kate Fraleigh has been doing an incredible job of making connections, keeping track of details, and getting the word out as much as is possible in this quickly and ever changing environment. Once I returned – refreshed and exhausted – I have been increasingly impressed (and grateful) as I've read her summaries of conversations and meetings. Simply put, Kate is a treasure.

But I especially want to lift up our Director of Administration and Finance, Chris Rivera. One of the ways the culture of white supremacy perpetuates and empowers itself is through the process of "assimilation." In order to "fit in" to the dominant culture, in ways both subtle and overt people with other cultural backgrounds are encouraged (forced) to give up their practices, customs, language. And language, especially, is so much more than simply a tool for communication. Language shapes the way we see the world and process what we see; it shapes the way we think and feel. The loss of your language is

profound.

So Chris spent four weeks in Puerto Rico with her children taking part in an immersive language program to help ensure that they remain rooted in their culture and do not become victims of white supremacy's determination to eradicate anything that challenges its dominance. Our support of her taking this time is a reflection of our commitment to racial justice and to our opposition to the systems and structures of white supremacy. Yet not only was this time fairly due to her, she also did a tremendous job of making sure that the essential elements of her job were well covered and cared for during her absence.

The reason I lift all of this up here is that I want to make sure the Board (and congregation) knows that during this time away, while engaged in this very important work, Chris also did a tremendous amount of work to help support and coordinate the planning of various groups and organizations developing their response(s) to the alt-right's arrival in our city. She was in communication with the UUA's national and regional staff, the local Black Lives Matter chapter, and the national teams that were invited to come and help prepare and train folks here for what to encounter on the ground. (She was, in fact, integral to seeing that these teams were here.) While I (and Leia) worked to keep ourselves *disconnected* from our work so as to take the break we needed, Chris worked hard to *remain* connected to see that what needed to be done was being done. Prior to the three of us coming together for the first time on Monday the 7th, Leia and I had a conference call with Chris to name some of the questions and concerns we had about the logistics of how this congregation, specifically, was going to engage, only to discover that Chris had already dealt with about 90% of them! And she did all of this from Puerto Rico, during her time "off." [I am hoping that we can find a way to compensate her for all of the vitally important work she did during this time, perhaps by at least counting some of this time off as work time so that she can later take the kind of real rejuvenating break we all need from time to time.]

As to what we're going to do on the 12th, our congregation is involved in a number of ways. (Some, for reasons of safety I do not want to put into open communication that could be shared prior to the 12th.) What I *can* say is that we've been sharing and amplifying the plans of the Charlottesville Clergy Collective – with Adam and myself being involved in some of that planning – as well as the newer group, Congregate Charlottesville. We will be hosting the People's Voice gathering on Tuesday the 8th (which Chris worked with Black Lives Matter to arrange), and on Wednesday the 9th we will be hosting a community-wide worship service. In response to Congregate Charlottesville's national call for 1,000 clergy to come to Charlottesville to oppose the white nationalists who are coming, Chris, Leia, and I have added our own, more personal, invitation to Unitarian Universalist clergy and faith leaders (and Chris has been working with Congregate C'ville – and Kate Fraleigh – to attend to the myriad details such a call entails). And I have offered what I can through the written word to offer both comfort and challenge to our congregation as we – individually and collectively – discern the way(s) we can most authentically respond.

And the church year really kicks off next month! So there's worship and AFD planning; committees beginning to meet in earnest; staff who've been scattered during the summer needing to reconnect and refocus; pastoral care to attend to (as always); discernment of more long term focus for our racial justice efforts; our 75th anniversary to

prepare for; the Next Steps Weekend; the Board retreat; advanced planning for my upcoming sabbatical (which I'm tentatively thinking as being April – June of this church year, with the other three months at some point during the following church year); and all the other details (small and large) that go into the year-to-come.

Refreshed and exhausted. And excited.

Pax tecum,

RevWik

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of June 30, 2017: 429

Add:

James Findley, July 9, 2017

Sandra Findley, July 9, 2017

Logan Blanco, July 9, 2017

Drop:

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of July 31, 2017: 432 members