

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

March 20, 2019

**MINUTES**

**In attendance** -Elizabeth Breeden, Erik Wikstrom - Ex Officio, Leia Durland-Jones - Ex Officio, Cindy Shepard, Donna Baker - Vice President, Christina Rivera - Ex Officio, Ann Salamini - Secretary, Adam Slate - President, Jeanine Braithwaite - Treasurer, Kelsey Cowger

**Absent** -

**Guests** - Marlene Jones, Stan Walker, Don Landis, Sally Walker, Dick Somer

**I. Opening--(30 minutes total) Opening/Closing Words (Elizabeth), Snacks (Elizabeth)**

Opening words - Elizabeth

Check-in

Community Time / Public Comment - none

1. Acceptance of Agenda

**MOTION:** Accept the Agenda

**Unanimously approved.**

2. Correspondence (see text at end of minutes) - None

**II. Consent Agenda**

1. Approve February 2018 Board Draft Minutes

**MOTION:** Approve the Consent Agenda.

**Unanimously approved.**

**III. Old Business**

1. Glenn Short Bequest - Adam (30 min)

Glenn Short left a very generous gift to the church for capital improvements. The trust agreement refers to “capital expenditures of the Church, such as,” then lists specific items primarily involving the sanctuary and main church building. Tonight we will decide whether to accept the gift and if so, to establish the committee to administer the funds.

- The committee understands the order of repairs to be Glenn’s intention, which they intend to follow except when the order is problematic (i.e. painting before gutters).
- The term “such as” legally seems to give considerable leeway for the committee to make decisions.
- It’s important to establish the process for the committee to work on behalf of the church. What is the approval process and reporting process for their work? - The committee assumes they will supply a monthly written report.
- We need to write policy around the bequest before we start using it. Clear policy on how we use the money, how we spend principal and interest, how to resolve differences of opinion, how do staff and the committee work together, how funds are held and drawn on, how many signatures are required. It’s important to have clear written policy which reflects the expectations of the committee, board and staff.
- The committee understands that there will be a separate bank account for the bequest, not the church. – The money has to be accepted by the congregation first, per the bequest. The board has fiduciary responsibility for how the money is spent. The bequest says the money is issued to the congregation, not the committee.
- The committee understands that Glenn’s intent was that the church accept the bequest, but that the committee would have full authority to make policy on how to administer and spend the funds, make contracts, handle the money, etc. The board can have an advisory role, but final authority rests with the committee.
- There has to be shared responsibility for these funds and the resulting work. The congregation owns the building. The owner has some say in how the work is done. As a committee of the church which owns the building, you must have a policy to work under, just as any other committee of the church.
- Would it be helpful to have another attorney look at this? There seems to be a different understanding between the committee and the board. – We will be able to work this out. We just need to make policy. We need to be careful that we not set up a situation where there will be misunderstanding later. This desire to make clear policy should not be construed as a “no” in any way.

- We need to think about liability for accidents. Who is responsible for a contractor who only does half the job? These things cannot be left in doubt until something goes wrong.
- We've all seen the list of items Glenn wanted covered by this bequest and we're all on board. Let's not turn this into an argument about who is in charge. Not a month goes by without complaints made about transparency. We are going through a discussion to make sure there is a clear process. We all understand that the committee will be administering the projects. As a committee you will be representing the entire church. We need to have some agreement about how it will work.
- Could Sally and Chris sit down and write some policy on this? – The trust document doesn't say how the policy is to be worked out.
- There is no distrust of the committee or its understanding of Glenn's wishes. But the board doesn't have the same clarity from the document itself. The board has the responsibility to the congregation to be clear about this. The language is ambiguous to people who haven't been in contact with Glenn. We need to clarify the legal ambiguities and think of unintended consequences.
- There have to be points in the decision making when the board and committee come together for agreement.
- The board should discuss this with David Toscano to get his understanding of what this relationship should be. – He did not write the bequest; he replaced the original lawyer because of proximity. He is not the church's lawyer.
- The 3 committee members have no ability to change anything in the trust document. The trustees of the trust have that authority and their lawyer is David Toscano. The trustees work will be done when the church accepts (or rejects) the money.
- This is an old building; things come up. What if some repair brings up additional problems which aren't on the list? – The committee will probably do one project at a time and hopefully not be in that situation. We want to get this work done as quickly as possible.
- Could the committee put together a timeline for the expected steps. The board doesn't understand the nuts and bolts of how the committee intends to proceed. We want to know the process that is in your heads so we can understand it. We can't just assume that everything will go fine.
- The next step is for Christina and Sally to meet and try to come up with a plan.
- Who signs the contracts? – The committee thinks the committee should, but if we're contracting to have work done on the building, it should be the church, not the committee. This is something that needs to be worked out.

- There is only one sentence about this topic in the bequest: “This trust share is to be distributed outright and free of trust to the THMC-UU ... for the creation or continuation of an Endowment Fund named the “Glenn Short Sanctuary Capital Endowment Fund,” to be invested and administered by a Committee of the Church, composed of Sally Taylor, Don Landis and Richard Somers and their successors chosen the them.”– It is not intended to guide how we deal with it as a church. We won’t find answers in the document. We have to work it out ourselves. People often ask the board to do something so they can trust us. Once we are sure our legal responsibilities are satisfied, we will give our trust to the committee.
- Should we defer for a month? – Yes.
- There seems to be a convolution of two separate processes. Can you make a motion to accept the trust and establish the committee, then make a second motion to establish a group to work out policy to use the gift? Only a representative of the board can sign a contract, so there needs to be a process to bring contracts to the board. Don’t make this so complicated.
- If we accept the gift check, who holds the money until the parameters are set up? – There is a difference of opinion between the committee and the board. We need clarity and a good working relationship before we get the money. We need time to do this work.
- Suggestion: talk through a sample project to find the possible points of contention.

2. FY19 Budget Deficit - Chris and Adam (20 min)

**MOTION: Enter executive session with senior staff in attendance.**

**Unanimously approved.**

**MOTION: Leave executive session.**

**Unanimously approved.**

Summary – The board considered staff cuts to address the revenue shortfall that is creating a budget deficit and decided against them.

**IV. 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. FY20 Budget Development and Priorities (30 min)

Our goal is to provide a few bullet points of guidance for the Finance Committee to prepare a draft budget so they don't work to create something that the board would undo.

- Initial comment from Finance chair: We need to be conservative on projected pledge income, since we have come in considerably low the last year. Get rid of system of changing pledge online, which makes that too easy. We need an annual pledge drive. - It's too late for a pledge drive this year, but we can use the same process we just used to confirm pledges.
- Budget points for FinCom: (157:00 Adam's summary)
  - Balanced budget.
  - Model several revenue scenarios with input from treasurer and DAF. (For example, \$325K, \$340K, \$350K. Chris and Stan will work on this together before giving the scenarios to Personnel and Finance Committees.)
  - Staff and Personnel Committee will give input on staffing proportions for each ministry of the church. (i.e. what minimum percentage of our budget assets must be devoted to each ministry of the church.)
  - It's important to consider this practical point: in order to function on a bare bones budget, it might be better to cut a position than to lower everyone's salary by a certain percentage. We don't want to do it, but we need to consider the possibility.
- The Vice President should send out letters to committees for budget requests – have your priorities changed from last year? It's not likely that we can give you more money.

2. Letters of Agreement - Chris and Elizabeth (defer if copies aren't ready to be distributed in advance) – deferred until April meeting.

## **VI. Reports (30 min)**

1. President's Report (written) – Adam Slate
2. Vice President's Report (none) –
3. Treasurer's Report () – Jeanine Braithwaite She'll send one when Chris gets the numbers together.
4. Lead Minister's Report (written) – Erik Wikstrom  
Can you tell us what you are doing in your report?
5. Director of Faith Development Report (written) – Leia Durland-Jones  
Correction: The next multigenerational church will be March 31<sup>st</sup>.
6. Director of Administration and Finance Report () – Christina Rivera

The pledge lag is \$37K and we are \$25K short of the budget.

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor  
Membership stands at 415.

8. Board Liaison Reports

- Personnel Committee – Elizabeth

We've been working on Letters of Agreement and the staff evaluation format.

- Nominating Committee – Donna

For anyone thinking of finding volunteers to fill in for decreased staffing, good luck. It is an uphill battle to find people. Please let Donna know if you have ideas.

**MOTION:** Accept verbal and written reports as submitted.

**Unanimously approved.**

## **VII. Closing Activities (5 minutes)**

1. Things to do / communicate –
  - Sally and Chris will talk process on the bequest and come back next month.
  - Erik will bring names for COM.
2. Process Review - one word check-out
  - Tired.
  - Ready to be done.
  - Grateful that there are no bodies.
  - Weary.
  - Mixed.
  - Thankful.
  - Glad it's over.
3. Closing words - Elizabeth

Dates to remember –

May 14, 2019 - Elder Dinner

Upcoming topics -

- Charge for Personnel Committee

## REPORTS

### President's Report

#### President's Report to Board March 18, 2019

Dear Trustees,

I am looking forward to our upcoming Board meeting, and want to give you some background about the agenda items to make sure we are prepared for the discussion.

**Glenn Short bequest:** Glenn Short, a long-time member, left a generous bequest to the church to cover capital expenditures primarily related to the sanctuary. As we discussed last month, we will vote on whether to accept the bequest and its terms, which include creating a fund and authorizing a church committee of trustees named by Glenn to administer the work. The trustees will be at the meeting to answer any questions we might have; I have spoken to several of them and believe they will provide thoughtful stewardship over the fund and associated projects. Thus far, I believe you have only seen correspondence from people giving their own interpretation of the terms of the gift; a copy of the original bequest accompanies this report. Please review it in advance of our meeting.

**FY19 budget deficit:** As we have been discussing since last month, although church expenses have been managed well and are under budget, a shortfall in pledge payments puts us at risk of a significant deficit for FY19. We will consider a proposal to cut staff effort and compensation for the remainder of the year to an extent that will make up the shortfall. As we have been working to confirm members' pledges and have received some additional pledges, we will receive a pledge report as part of our discussion giving an up-to-date estimate of the current shortfall. I know this is one of the more difficult responsibilities that this Board has faced this year, and I also know that we will face it with the gravity and consideration that such a decision deserves.

**FY20 budget priorities:** We want to give the Finance Committee some guidance for producing next year's budget, and will develop some guidelines for them as we did last year. To prepare for the conversation, I have created a document for you to add suggested guidelines in advance. The link accompanies this report.

**Senior staff letters of agreement:** I have not seen draft letters of agreement yet from the Personnel Committee. If I get them by noon Tuesday with markup showing changes from the previous versions of these letters, I will send them to you to review and we will keep them on the agenda.

Faithfully,  
Adam

---

## **Treasurer's Report**

### **Minister's Report**

#### **Lead Minister Report to the Board — March 20, 2019**

I was hiking with my older son in the woods near our house not that long ago, and we decided to check out what was at the top of a rise off to our right. The hill was pretty steep, so it took a lot out of us to get to the top, yet when we did we found ... more rise. What we'd thought was the top really wasn't, but since we'd already invested so much energy we figured we'd keep going to the top. When we got there, though, we found that it wasn't really the top either.

It has felt a bit like that here sometimes, and for the past several years, too. Things keep coming up, and when we get to the "end" of it, thinking that we can get back to the work we're all *really* trying to do, we find that there's something else we'll have to get over first. Most recently that "something else" has been the financial concerns raised by the projected extra deficit due to slow or non-payment of pledges. Thanks to the Herculean efforts of Adam and our Director of Administration and Finance, Christina Rivera, as well as the generous donation of time by Board members, we can say that we have now reached out to *every person or family* that has a pledge of record for this church year. At the time I write I don't know what we'll know at the time of our meeting – we left a *lot* of messages, so there are still unanswered questions.

Yet when I looked over people's notes from the conversations they'd had, by far the most common response was a re-commitment to fulfilling their pledge of support for the church. One of the people I spoke with said, "you can count on me to fulfill my pledge. I'll write a check tonight for the full amount ... and a good deal more." It's been my experience that when members of this congregation really understand that support is needed, support shows up. As Chris has reminded us many times over the years, the narrative of scarcity which we so often tell is belied by the reality of generosity that we so often see in action.

As important as this work has been, though – this work of reaching out, making connection, proving opportunities for people to reconfirm their commitment to this congregation and to this faith – none of that is, in and of itself, the work we are here to do. Carie Baker did not seek out other Unitarians to establish a congregation in Charlottesville so that we, 76 years later, could be spending time calling one another to confirm that our pledge data is accurate. We're here to act on our mission,



through our ministries in the world. We described our mission over a decade ago with these words:

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church – Unitarian Universalist is a church of the liberal tradition rooted in the heritage of Unitarian Universalism and dedicated to the belief that in every individual there are extraordinary possibilities.

**WE ARE** committed to the individual and collective pursuit of spiritual growth, social justice, and life-long religious education and understanding.

**WE FOSTER** an open and free community in which we share our gifts, care for one another, and honor our differences.

**WE SEEK** to have a lasting influence on local, national and global programs that promote equity and end oppression.

We would no doubt say it a little differently if we were to write that again today, yet *that* is the work we are here to do. It is my prayer that we will soon be able to return our energy to it.

Pax tecum – RevWik

---

## **Analysis of Attendance Figures for the Board of Trustees**

### ***February 2019***

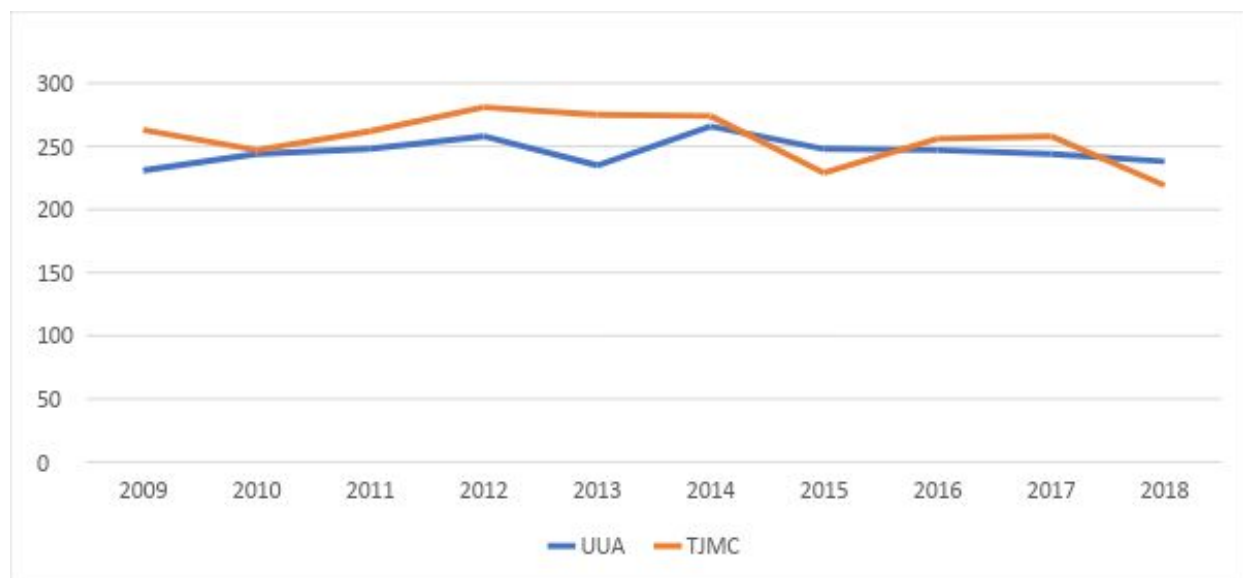
The following table is an analysis of attendance data from 2005 – 2017, showing the average attendance at the 9:15, 11:15, and single services. It also shows an average of total people in the sanctuary, as well as the average total attendance on the campus (sanctuary, re, etc.). Two notes: I excluded figures for Christmas Eve, assuming that the Board wanted to compare Sunday morning figures. I also excluded the Sunday that Rev. Jackson preached in 2017, since that was such an anomalous event.

| Year | 9:15 | 11:15 | Single | Sanctuary | On Campus |
|------|------|-------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| 2005 | 85   | 139   | 116    | 180       | 223       |
| 2006 | 91   | 140   | 138    | 191       | 243       |
| 2007 | 89   | 144   | 143    | 199       | 281       |

|             |    |     |     |     |     |
|-------------|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| <b>2008</b> | 85 | 139 | 140 | 196 | 175 |
| <b>2009</b> | 81 | 140 | 126 | 188 | 263 |
| <b>2010</b> | 68 | 134 | 123 | 160 | 247 |
| <b>2011</b> | 80 | 133 | 151 | 192 | 262 |
| <b>2012</b> | 85 | 142 | 155 | 199 | 281 |
| <b>2013</b> | 82 | 132 | 155 | 193 | 275 |
| <b>2014</b> | 84 | 138 | 151 | 198 | 274 |
| <b>2015</b> | 65 | 113 | 130 | 160 | 229 |
| <b>2016</b> | 65 | 123 | 131 | 166 | 256 |
| <b>2017</b> | 60 | 124 | 133 | 165 | 258 |
| <b>2018</b> | 54 | 100 | 113 | 138 | 219 |

In order to provide some context, I looked at congregations with a membership between 410-450. The average total attendance on campus – which is the number most generally reported -- for 2018 was 238. (Out of curiosity I also took the average of their budgets, which was 696K.)

The following graph compares the UUA's numbers with our average total attendance on campus from 2009 – 2018:



Another way of looking at attendance trends: between 2008 and 2017 church attendance around the country, in all denominations, dropped by 12%. In that same time period, our figures for total participation on campus actually went up by 15%.

One of the reasons to look at this attendance data is to assess the question of whether we should remain at two services or return to a single service each Sunday. The generally accepted advice to congregations – across denominations -- is that you should have two services when the sanctuary is full to 75% - 80% of its capacity. Our sanctuary has a capacity of approximately 220. Based on the average of the attendance at both the 9:15 and 11:15 services for the past 3 years, we would be at 89% of capacity if we were to offer only one service.

Beyond the sanctuary, though, there is also the issue of parking. We have 55 spaces (45 in the Edgewood Lane lot and 10 in Summit). It is recommended that you have one space for every 2.0 to 2.5 people. That would mean we have parking for 110 – 137 people.

We also need to look at the impact on our Sunday morning religious education programming if we were to move from 2 services back to 1. Based on our current numbers, this change would require our children's and youth's religious education program to reclaim some rooms. This is especially true with regard to our youngest children, who need the kind of environment that is not easy to set up, take down, pack away, and then set up again from week to week. This could render some of these spaces less useable for rentals as well as for internal congregational use, particularly in the Lower Hall.

---

## **Director of Faith Development Report**

### **Report to the Board**

**March 2019**

Leia Durland-Jones, Director of Faith Development

### ***Children's Programming (Nursery through 5<sup>th</sup> grade)***

- The **Spring session** of our children's religious education program continues with fun, faith-filled weekly activities nurturing UU identity and emphasizing our shared values and justice work.
- The children made **100 meal packets** on February 24 for distribution through the Interfaith Humanitarian Sanctum. Thanks so much to Margaret Gorman for all her leadership with this initiative.

- The **RE Committee** is at work planning next year's programming for children and youth. Registration for the 2019-2020 church school year begins next month.
- I am thrilled that our **anti-racist parenting Covenant Group** for families has been meeting since November. Many thanks to Camille Thompson and Stephanie Davis for their leadership.
- As part of their unit on preventing cruelty to animals, our **Harry and UU** RE classes enjoyed a visit on March 3 from some educational animals that live at the Rockfish Wildlife Center. A super fun time was had by all! Thanks to Patty Wallens for coordinating.

### ***Youth Programming (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades)***

- The **Our Whole Lives** (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades) comprehensive sexuality education class had a lock-in at church March 2. This group, with sixteen participants, has been meeting weekly since September. They will wrap up their class next month with a celebratory potluck and closing ceremony for all participants and their families.
- **YRUU** led an awesome worship service on January 27 focusing on last summer's Appalachia Service Project trip. This group continues to engage in important topics during youth group on Sunday mornings. They had a lock-in on March 9 that included all kinds of fun including Salsa dancing! Julia Landis participated in the recent UUA Youth Revival conference in Bethesda, Maryland. Ask her about it when you see her. The group will have a camping weekend at Lake Sherando this spring.
- Preparations for **ASP (Appalachia Service Project)** continue. We will participate in ASP this June 30-July 6. Adult advisors for this year's trip include: Beth Jaeger-Landis, Kim Grover, Amy Wissekerke, Larry Moulis, and myself with several other pending invitations.

### ***Adult Programming***

Winter/Spring Adult Faith Development classes:

- Our **Women's Dream Quest** was a great success—one of our largest ever. Many thanks to the Dream Quest Planning Circle for all their hard work to make it such a great event (Patty Wallens, Anita Holmes, Caitlin Levine, Bonnie Hansen, Lauren Doran, Callie Smith, Cindy Mick, Wendy Steeves and me.) Members of the DQPC very much enjoyed co-weaving worship with guest preacher Judith Tripp on Sunday February 24. Also many thanks to Caroline Heins for all her behind the scenes assistance.
- **Adult Faith Development offerings** this semester include: Short Story Reading Group, Tai Chi, Wednesday Wonderings (led by Lou Centore), Building Your Own Theology (led by Alex McGee,) Faithful Practices (led by RevWik) and Understanding White Privilege (Led by Donna Baker and Ann Forno.)

### ***Multigenerational Programming***

- Saturday January 26 the social hall was full of fun for our Chili Cook-Off & Bingo night. Thanks to Nancy Hurrelbrinck and Lorie Craddock for their support of this fun event!

- Fun was had by all on Sunday February 9 as we had our second Sunday morning experience of **PJs and Pancakes**. Thanks to everyone who helped and participated by enjoying breakfast and wearing their jammies to church!
- Sunday March 24 we will learn about and **celebrate the Jewish holiday Purim** in the social hall after both services with the help of the Gill family. You are invited to wear a costume to church that morning! Hamantaschen cookies will be served during social hour as part of our celebration.

## **Worship**

### *Children's Worship*

- I am very appreciative of the volunteers who led Children's Worship while I was away on Emergency Leave—Margaret Gorman, Cindy Shepard, and Jeanine Braithwaite.
- We are focusing on the Rainbow Chalice (the pneumatic device for memorizing the UU principles) for the remaining Sundays of the church year. The children always love how we work our way through the rainbow together.

### *Contemplative Worship*

- Contemplative Worship enjoys a steady attendance each Wednesday of 8-10 people and is a lovely mid-week pause. The Contemplative Worship Team is made up of Cindy Mick, Maggie Ober, Wendy Steeves and myself. Cindy and Maggie also continue to create the altar decorations monthly. If ever you are free on Wednesdays between 11:30-12:30, please join us for Contemplative Worship.

### *Multigenerational Worship*

- RevWik and Lorie crafted and led the multigenerational service on February 10.
- Our next multigenerational worship service is Easter (April 21.)

## **Pastoral**

- Since my return from Emergency Leave, I have resumed pastoral care responsibilities.

## **Other**

- I have been spending more time than usual on Stewardship effort this month-- supporting our recent pledge confirmation efforts. I imagine Stewardship efforts will be a continuing priority as we move into creating our 2019-2020 budget.
- I am very grateful for the congregation's support, particularly the Board's support, during my recent Emergency Leave due to my father's sudden illness and death. I continue to grieve his passing and absence. Thank you for your kindness and understanding.
- Thank you also, belatedly due to my leave, for your generous and thoughtful Christmas gift. Your generosity means a great deal to me and my family.

## **Director of Administration and Finance Report**

### **Membership Report**

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of January 31, 2019: 416

#### **Add:**

#### **Drop:**

Dilatush, Holly, moving, email to Membership Tracker, Feb. 27, 2019, archive

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of February 28, 2019: 415 members

Sally Taylor  
Membership Tracker for Membership Committee

---

**CORRESPONDENCE - none**