

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlottesville
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING Minutes
February 23, 2022 6:30 pm-8:30 pm

Major focus for Board in 2021-22:

Mission: Healthy and thriving congregation that does justice work in the world.

Vision: To become a welcoming, inclusive congregation.

- 1. Foster a healthy, inclusive culture*
- 2. Build a growing, thriving congregation*
- 3. Listen and learn from all the voices of our congregation*
- 4. Nurture a culture of giving*
- 5. Learn about effective governance*

In attendance – Pam McIntire (President), Elizabeth Breeden (Vice President), Kay Frazier (Treasurer), Beth Jaeger-Landis (Secretary), At Large Members: Breck Gastinger, Kelsey Cowger, Jim Gorham, Hayley Owens, Staff members: Rev Linda Olson-Peebles, Rev Leia Durland-Jones, Sean Skaly

Absent – Steve Brecker,

Guests – Elaine Chapman, Ann Salamini, Beverly Ryan, Jude Bias, Kate Soderman, Achsah Carrier, Greg Townsend, Christine Gresser

I. Opening - (10 mins)

- Reporter: Jim
- Time Keeper: Kelsey
- Process Observer: Hayley
- 1. Opening Words - Elizabeth
- 2. Check-In: one to two minute check-in:
- 3. Community Time / Public Comment - Achsah is desiring suggestions and ideas for the UUC'ville website.
Policy review committee: Bev Ryan, Sandy Brooks, and Breck
- 4. Acceptance of Agenda

MOTION: Kelsey made the motion to Accept the agenda

Motion was seconded by Elizabeth Breeden

The Board unanimously accepted the agenda with changes.

5. **Written Correspondence** (from the Membership Committee at the end of the packet)
We have designated 15 minutes to discuss this topic after the Nominating Committee Discussion.

6. **“Deep Dive” with Nominating Committee:** Elaine Chapman (15 minutes)

From the Nominating Committee (Elaine):

1. The nominating committee has learned of many members who have leadership ability within our congregation! Our committee members have contacted many people through email and phone calls. We have been consistent in searching for membership on the Board and the two appointed committees (Personnel and Nominating) to seek a diversity of new and longer-term members representing different age ranges, those of different gender and culture, and members with families engaged in RE programs as well as those of single or other households. We have learned that each of us interacts with members perhaps not well known to others, and thus, we know the need for a collaborative and open-minded team to do this work. Traditionally, we have sought recommendations from our ministers and have received them from others, in addition to results from the congregation-wide solicitations (currently in progress). Our board representative, Breck Gastinger, has been a great source of knowledge, energy and guidance for us. Our mission is contagious, as we all share in the joy of a potential member eager to serve on the Board or a committee!

2. Our dreams of course include the hope to visually meet our congregational members, acknowledging the far more meaningful method of interaction for recruitment. Our two outdoor services have demonstrated that to be so. Another dream certainly would be a wider diversity of nominations with regard to culture and race. All of these dreams require support from the Board and other committees, in addition to congregation members. We need everyone's assistance in recommending potential candidates. Leadership development would be helpful in meeting our goals.

Board discussed former leadership events such as an annual fall retreat, 5th Sunday discussions, or activity fairs. Who calls this leadership occasion was left in question.

7. Building use discussion (Pam) 15 mins

Greg Townsend:

"I know that there are some here who are eager for the church to reopen, and that is absolutely understandable. I just wanted to take some time to tell you a little bit about the workings of the building use task force.

In thinking about reopening the church physically during the pandemic, there are several, to some extent competing, factors that the building use task force has taken into consideration:

- 1) The physical well-being of the congregation and visitors
- 2) The spiritual well-being of the congregation and visitors
- 3) The physical well-being of the community
- 4) The safety and physical and spiritual well-being of the staff

To try to meet these ends, we have endeavored to follow the data and the science regarding COVID, and use that information to guide our recommendations. And as the information about COVID has changed, so have our recommendations evolved. We started out with a pandemic characterized by a high level of uncertainty. Next, we had a virus with relatively high transmission and mortality rates, little or no immunity in the population, a shortage of appropriate protective equipment, and high anxiety. That evolved very briefly into a period with

increasing immunity and low transmission, only to be followed by a virus with an even higher transmission rate. And now we have a virus with the highest transmission rate yet, but tempered by higher immunity rates and relatively mild disease among those with immunity, with a precipitous downward trend in infection in our community. It's been enough to make our heads spin, and has required constant re-evaluation of our policies.

As most people now know, the omicron variant of the COVID virus is highly contagious, even for people who have been fully vaccinated against the virus. Most of us probably know, or know of, someone who was fully vaccinated and masked who contracted COVID nonetheless. However, compared to unvaccinated individuals, people who are fully vaccinated are still much less likely to become infected if exposed (about a 2/3 reduction). If infected, vaccinated people are several times less likely to become seriously ill, need hospitalization, need intensive care management, or die. It is not yet clear if people who are vaccinated are also less likely to transmit the omicron variant if infected, but that was true for earlier variants of the virus.

Here are some of the things that we have learned along the way: That the virus is spread by both large and small airborne droplets, and that small aerosol droplets may remain airborne for long periods. That the mRNA vaccines may be the safest vaccines ever developed. That given enough time and enough bodies to replicate in, the virus will mutate. That people like to sit or stand close to each other, even when it's a health risk, and often don't wear their masks properly (or at all). That N95 masks are much more effective at reducing transmission than any other readily available masks, and that cloth masks are only marginally better than no masks at all.

It is important to keep in mind that we want to live our faith as a compassionate multi-generational community, and so we feel it is important to be thoughtful of those who are not candidates for vaccination, such as young children, and others for whom vaccinations may not have optimal effectiveness. And we have been determined that services and events at our church and with our congregation will not be sources of transmission within our congregation and beyond of a virus that has the potential to have serious, potentially life-threatening, short- and long-term consequences. We recognize that other institutions, including other churches, have been less careful than we have been. But they are not responsible for our congregants, and we are not responsible for theirs.

All of which is to say that we have been intentional about keeping in mind our priorities, and about using the best available up-to-date accurate information to steer our discussions and recommendations. These are evolving and will continue to do so as situations change and information is clarified, amended and completed. We recognize that this has been a hardship for many, and your patience has been much appreciated."

Kate Soderman: extends appreciation for the work of the task force. Now that the cases are decreasing people are very comfortable going to work and kids are back in school, people are craving to get back to in-person services.

Achsah Carrier: Now involved with pledge drive, which she thinks will be much harder because people are drifting away during this time that the church has been closed. She is hoping to offer

in person services (with restrictions) so people who are craving in-person meetings are able to have their needs met within our congregation instead of going elsewhere.

Christine Gresser: The Membership Committee was in agreement at the Feb meeting that we needed to offer in-person services. Things are open now in Charlottesville and we are learning how to live with this virus. We are having to make decisions about what to do every day using our different comfort levels with being around others.

8. **Deep Dive with Membership Committee** (Christine Gresser) 15 minutes

**Describe what your committee does to engage members in belonging. (To engage our newcomers to become members and to help Friends and Members to become more engaged)?*

- a. Phone calls to members - just to check in
- b. "Connections Table" in social hall (when in person) staffed by Membership Committee members, to give folks in the Social Hall a 'destination' to talk with people and learn more about the church, takes the edge off the intimidation factor of having to walk up to a stranger and initiate small talk, when there's a dedicated "Connections Table".
- c. Sending handwritten notes to members through US Postal Mail - We have done this on birthdays for a time, and other times on the anniversary of the person's joining the church.
- d. Tuesday Topics (a lunchtime zoom gathering that met for well over a year, somewhat like a drop-in Covenant Group type format) facilitated by Membership Committee co-chair Christine G.
- e. Newcomer Orientations (101 and 102) - classes for newcomers to UUCville to learn more about UUism (UU 101, Rev. Linda is the presenter and facilitator, Membership Committee organizes it) and more about UUCville (UU 102, where we teach new folks specifically about "how it all works" at UUCville).
- f. New Member Recognition ceremony, with gifts - We had done this for years in person, then in pandemic we pivoted to doing this online. We gather photos and bios of new members; Sean and our video editor create a slideshow, and we virtually 'introduce' the new members to the congregation in a Zoom Sunday Service led by the minister.
- g. During the pandemic, Christine has been holding individual or small group Membership Book signing ceremonies outdoors with people who want to sign the book to become a member (she goes to their house, usually, or meets them on the front exterior steps of the UUCville sanctuary). Chalice lighting, a reading, a personal brief conversation about the "meaning of membership", a time for sharing about why they decided to join, and a warm conversation about the understanding that formally joining the church brings privileges of voting, etc., and the loving responsibility of supporting the church through time, talent, and treasure. Review of how to do all three of those things, including the understanding that all members will make an annual pledge of financial support to the church, no matter what size, and that this pledge should feel "meaningful

and generous," whatever that may mean for each of us in our different circumstances .

- h. Membership Committee Weekly Sunday Service Virtual Greeters Program. Separate from the Tech Team and the Virtual Ushers, the Membership Committee has provided a representative to nearly every Sunday Service on Zoom since Virtual Worship began. Virtual Ushers identify newcomers and visitors, returning congregants, and other congregants who may have drifted away and might be checking us out again. We send them a direct Chat message through the Zoom Chat box to say good morning, introduce ourselves, and ask if they've been attending UUCville for a long time. This gives returnees a chance to re-introduce themselves without feeling 'othered' or denied when they've had long previous histories. We provide contact information and offer an individual phone call follow up chat opportunity at their convenience.
 - i. Christine has attempted to help organize a Social Activities Committee as a subcommittee to the Membership Committee, but this has stalled with pandemic closures and not being able to meet at the church.
 - j. In previous years, the Membership Committee organized Circle Dinners (these are organized potluck dinners at Members' and Friends' homes) and we are eager to resume these as soon as possible.
9. What have we already learned in the work we have done?
- a. We have learned that being "all virtual" makes it really difficult to connect with the many working people who use Zoom all the time at work, and who don't want to Zoom for their spirituality or congregational fellowship connections.
 - b. In-person events are a much greater draw than Zoom events.
 - c. We need to do more connecting with new people, especially within/throughout their first year. We need more outreach/activity during people's first year in the community.
 - d. We need more formal membership programming (UU 201, 202, 301, 302, etc.) to help people become engaged. More small group gatherings for incoming "classes" of newcomers from that year, and new members from that year.
 - e. Our Membership Committee right now is all made up of white women over the age of 45... we would like to have our committee look more like what we would like our congregation to look like. We need to recruit more men of all ages to our Committee, and our congregation, as we attract more people of color, we would love to have great representation of people of all races, socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, in the Membership Committee, so that the committee looks and is comprised of the beautiful diversity that we wish to see in our congregation. ALL people may want to embrace a spiritual community like ours, and we are sending the wrong message when our whole committee is composed of white women over 45. This is an urgent priority of ours, and we need Board and NomCom help with this mission.
 - f. Pluses and minuses of Zoom: In addition to there being drawbacks of having ONLY Zoom opportunities, there are also some wonderful benefits to having

Zoom as an *option* - - and we will always use Zoom as an option even once we resume in-person services and events. With Zoom, people don't have to travel back to Cville if they live in a surrounding county, people can engage from anywhere, even if they are out of state visiting family or even after they have moved away permanently. No one has to drive at night or in poor weather...

- g. Our effective, healthy, loving, caring Membership Committee committee is devoted to the well-being of UUCville and we are also our own support for each other! Our committee work is a form of connection, and it's a fulfilling lay ministry for us committee members. We can feel supported even when we speak up about things that are uncomfortable about what's going well in our work together, and what we need to learn or improve.

10. What are your dreams?

- a. A more diverse Membership Committee.

Representatives from all church groups - Each group has someone they send to Membership committees, and let us know how they are thinking about supporting/increasing/engaging members.

- b. "The whole church IS a big membership committee!"

We want to help train all groups in the church to ask themselves: What is our group doing to engage newcomers? What is our group doing to help our members deepen their connection to church?

- i. Creating a Membership culture that involves the whole church
- c. We could have representatives from different church groups come to talk to newcomers in our formal Membership Classes (ideas for Newcomer 103, etc.)
- d. Retaining people! Creating a program to help those who have been super-involved in church to formally take a rest and receive, be ministered to, volunteer breather when they need to, rather than burn out and drift away.
- e. Work with the Board and the minister to develop a conflict resolution structure so that members who are hurt or in strong disagreement but who are constructive, church loving people, valuable, engaged members, can address issues rather than leave in disappointment.
- f. To establish a deeper learning culture... so many things we want to do to connect people to church; we want to not give up! Keep trying, even when things don't work.

11. What have been barriers?

- a. Closed church! Really need to start holding in person services again asap.
- b. Figuring out how to get people interested in things when they are shy, busy, etc.
- c. Lots of UUs are introverts - Make sure to factor this in to how we expect people to engage
- d. Making connections... There are people who want to be involved, and there are groups that need people. Connecting them can be tricky. Need an effective Volunteer Coordination Committee at UUCville, and an effective Time and Talent Survey process.

- e. Not yet having a culture of an effective time and talent survey or engagement process. Lack of knowledge and experience in this process, past failures of previous efforts at church a decade or two ago or more, when there was failure to follow up and people's surveys gathered dust, more or less.
12. What can the Board do to help us?
- a. Open the church to in-person meetings and services!
 - b. Hold outdoor events.
 - c. Focus on social engagement and fellowship. Put a premium on fellowship events, just to connect people! We need more church-wide social events. (Remember to appeal to different ideas of "fun." Not everyone responds to the same thing.)
 - d. Activities on our property - a diverse array of activities.
 - e. Culture-shift to more fellowship, more connection
 - f. A conscious effort to focus on love, positivity, appreciation, the spirituality of the work we are doing - The Board is already doing this; let's help them continue to keep doing it. How can we help them continue and increase this culture of positivity, inclusion, gratitude, for all ministers, staff, members, friends, volunteers? Wonderful work, loving, spiritual work!
13. Which things should the Membership Committee be doing or doing more of, or a better job of?
- a. We are concerned that we need to reach out to members more, especially given how hard it is for people to connect when church has been all virtual church. We discussed whether and when to make friendly "how are you doing" phone calls and/or send handwritten cards. Gayle volunteered to resume sending cards; she is on it!
 - b. Growing our committee so we can accomplish more
 - c. Using this fallow time to get our brochures up to date and prepare for tabling events
 - d. Recruit more Virtual Greeters
 - e. Meet with the Board regularly, have a stronger working relationship so we can do this Widening the Circle shared lay ministry work together in a strong, happy partnership
 - f. Young Adult membership - we really need a Young Adult ministry, outreach, covenant group, a Twentie-n-Thirties group
 - g. As we grow, how to help foster and support affinity groups? LGBTQ UUs, BIPOC UUCville.

**We need more virtual greeters and need in-person greeters. It makes sense to have greeters work together with the Membership Committee and not be a separate committee.

Board questioned who develops the affinity groups such as LBBT, BIPOC, Young Adults AND when we are live we might need a membership welcome training.

II. Reports (20 min) - written reports can be found at the end of the minutes.

1. **President's Report** (written)- Pam McIntire
2. **Vice President's Report** (written) - Elizabeth Breeden
3. **Treasurer's Report** (written) - Kay Frazier
4. **Lead Minister's Report** - (written)- Rev. Linda Olson Peebles
 - Busy getting ready for the pledge drive.
 - COM names need to be proposed by the Lead Minister but Rev Linda has not proposed any names and the Executive Board members have decided to wait until we have our new minister. .
5. **Minister of Faith Development's Report** (oral) - Leia Durland-Jones
6. **Director of Administration and Finance Report** (oral) - Sean Skally

** Communications committee: The committee is made up of Achsah right now. Liberty has recently left the committee and we need a lot of website help. The website is our main source of communication. We can find people who are Word Press proficient, go with another communications , or hire someone that can help with our communications.

7. **Membership Report** (written) - Achsah Carrier
Membership stands at: 299

8. **Board Liaison Reports**

- Personnel Committee (oral) - Elizabeth
Spending time over the next month talking to Leia about her job description.
- Building Reopening Task Force: discussed earlier

III. **Electronic Motions (1 minute)**

1. Approval of the Jan 26, 2022 minutes happened electronically.
2. Approval of the Personnel Policy Manual was done electronically.

BREAK AND GRATITUDE CARDS (5 min) - Please think of people the Board should recognize for their recent contributions to our church community.

IV. **Old Business (15mins)**

1. Pledge Drive Update: Ann Salamini (10 min)

Theme for our pledge drive is "Hope is Our Door". This year's pledge drive is made up of a team with no designated chair. Many experienced people are chipping in for this work. This year's pledge drive will run February 27 to March 27. Some important dates include

- "Soft opening" email from Rev. Linda on Feb. 25
- First weekly Pledge Newsletter to be sent Monday, Feb. 28 (There will be USPS mailings to those who don't use the internet.)
- Virtual Dessert Party on Sunday, March 6 organized by Linda Dukes. Postcards will go out to advertise this event. There will be musical offerings, including a new Hamilton remix by a youth performer and a Beatles tune as well.

- Calls will start on March 17 (St. Pat's Day) to those who have not yet pledged.
 - We have a pledge logo and postcard design, developed by Jude Bias. The theme is "Hope Is Our Door," inspired by Amanda Gorman's poem "New Day's Lyric." You've been hearing bits of this inspiring poem in our recent services.
 - The FY23 pledge page on the website is up and running.
<https://uucharlottesville.org/pledge/>
 - There will be a text component to spread information and encourage pledging that way.
 - We hope to grow pledge revenue by adding 10 new pledge units.
 - Rev. Linda and I have been contacting our top 20 most generous givers to ask them to pledge early and consider a matching fund gift to encourage new pledges. We are asking for at least 5% increase to cover COLA. We've had many really nice conversations, collecting pastoral notes, thoughts on UUCville and commitments to pledge. This is all in an effort to give the pledge drive momentum and positivity as we kick off for this year.
 - To that end we ask that all board members ponder and submit their FY23 pledge amount and consider a matching gift as well. It's easy to enter the information on the pledge page. The distinction between yearly pledge and one time matching gift is clearly marked.
 - The current total of pledges received is approximately _\$84,300 with \$2000_ in the matching fund. .
- 2. Congregation Meeting in June: Pam (5 min)
Will need to vote on our 501C3 status, the Remembrance Garden finances, voting on allowing absentee voting at our congregational meetings, election of officers, budget.

V. New Business – (40mins)

1. Budget Projections for the current Year: Sean and Kay (10 min)
 - We have a projected \$19,000 deficit gap by the end of this fiscal year.
 - Recommendations are:
 - Emphasize plate collections on Sunday services, especially when we are in person.
 - May-June: ask for one time unpledged donations
 - Organize group that will take on another fundraising activity this fiscal year in addition to our UUsed bazaar.
 - Looking at some rental income this spring/summer.
2. Budget Outlook for next Fiscal Year: (10 min)
 - Developing the budget with the help of finance, staff, board input. We won't be able to meet the need to replace the HVAC system in Summit House. We are on track for next year.
3. \$20K Donation to Welcome Refugee Project: Kay (10 min)
 - Donation made by someone not in our congregation but organized by a congregant. It will be used to help the refugees who are currently living in hotels. Funds need to be held in a designated line item in our budget. The Finance

Committee recommends that we have a member of the Refugee Welcoming Committee to work with the Finance

- Elizabeth made a motion to approve this designated donation to the Refugees.
- Jim seconded the motion
- The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

4. Committee on Ministry: (Rev Linda): 10 mins: It is in the bylaws, it is a responsibility of the board to appoint members after nominations from the lead minister. Right now the committee has one member. The Developmental Search Committee can ask the new minister what qualities in people they would want in their Committee on Ministry and what they see their COM doing. The Search Committee would bring names to the Board. Do we want to continue to have a COM?

VI. Closing Activities (5 min)

1. Process Review – Flexibility and agility transitioning and accommodating different people who needed to come in later and leave early. Timeliness. Big credit to Pam!

2. Things to do / communicate

** Remembrance Garden: Bylaws, policies

** “Deeper Dive” with which topic in March: Pain, struggle, loss of members since 2019.

Celebrate that we are moving past the pain, acknowledging that we are ready to experience joy. Manage this upcoming transition from Interim to Developmental minister.

** Facebook and UU C’ville: Haley

3. Closing Words : Elizabeth

Dates to remember

Next UU Charlottesville Executive Board Meeting: March 10, 2022 6:30

Next UU Charlottesville Board Meeting: March 23, 2022 6:30

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Jaeger-Landis

Secretary of the Board

REPORTS

President’s Report to the Board

February 2022

I greatly appreciate all the thought and care our congregation is putting into making sure we are not a vector for COVID infections while also caring for the spiritual needs of each other. Our

pastoral care team has been a mainstay in so many of our lives. Rev. Leia and Rev. Linda have worked hard and been so creative in finding ways for us to be together and keep each other safe. We have found many avenues to stay in contact and support each other and our community. And yet, fatigue has set in over the winter. For so many people I have talked with, the dark, the cold, and especially the isolation have worn down our reserves. The comfort and stimulation we get from being together has been hard to get with brief contact and online meetings.

Our evaluation of risk has changed over the last two years and now we are seeing the very real risk of emotional fatigue and aloneness as well as illness from COVID. The board and our Building Use/Reopening team are re-evaluating our building use while still prioritizing that no one gets severely ill or dies as a result of participating in congregation activities and that no church activities start a vector of infection. We know that being together in person is also critical to our health and functioning.

As we move toward Spring and a new phase in our church life, I want to acknowledge that we have been through some very rough times in the past many years. So many aspects of our lives together have been challenged, from our financial well-being to our solid connections and support of each other. And yet, amazingly, we have accomplished so many things, begun to heal, and continued our commitment to each other and our faith in new, creative ways. Over the next months, I hope we can look at our accomplishments and celebrate our persistence, while also looking forward to growing as a congregation and becoming more welcoming to the larger community.

Our board goals are inspiring and set the direction for our work together. I am looking forward to the conversation with our Membership and Nominating Committees in our February meeting. It will be good to hear about what they are doing to promote the growth of our congregation and becoming a more welcoming congregation as well as their ideas for the future. I look forward to finding more ways that the board can support this important work.

Many thanks to our Pledge Leadership Circle for all their work getting ready for the pledge drive. Our pledge drive will be from February 27 to March 27. I am looking forward to this time of coming together and recommitting to our vision of who we can be for each other and for the larger community. I encourage board members to pledge soon to launch this exciting movement.

On June 5th after church, we will have a Congregational Meeting. The board will be setting the agenda for that meeting in the coming months.

We are grateful to the members of our Committee on Ministry (COM) for meeting and raising important questions through these uncertain times. In August, with our new Developmental Minister as our lead minister, we will consider the role of the COM in supporting our ministry and reform this committee.

The Developmental Minister Search committee will be receiving applications from the UUA Transitions office on March 11 and will complete their interviews with an offer by March 28. If this all goes well, the Developmental Minister would begin work with us on August 1, 2022.

The congregation has come together to welcome Afghan refugees into the Charlottesville Community. This work is an example of UUCville's inspiring commitment to making a difference in the world. You can follow their activities at <https://uucharlottesville.org/refugee-welcome/>

I love being together with people dedicated to making a difference in the world through love and kindness. Spring is coming and I look forward to celebrating coming back together in person.

Pamela McIntire, President

Vice President's report: February 23, 2022

The Garden and Grounds Committee is resting. More mulching in March. Our church is feeding the guests of PACEM in March for a week. Soup kitchen volunteers every Sunday to provide lunch to those who need it. Social Justice will begin the process to prepare next year's Social Action Collection. Active Minds is thinking about how to create connections among our Elder Members.

Welcome Refugees: The Mentors continue to travel the journey with the G's. Mentors learn the customs of our family and help them to learn to access transportation, language, job opportunities and services available in town. They have become true friends. The Hotel refugees need small things that are responded to by us and the larger community. Our outreach collecting sewing machines has made us be known in the larger community among a larger, middle-class community. This outreach may bring us a few new members who look like us, but does this engage us with diverse members of the community?

The Remembrance Garden Committee is working hard to revise the Charge for our Garden and our policies. We are considering the purpose of our Garden, how to clearly state our contractual obligations to those who are memorialized there, the financial reporting and contractual assurances we thus make and how to assure that the Garden is part of the Church's responsibility. We will have these documents for the Board at next month's meeting.

Elizabeth Breeden, Vice President

Treasurer's Report February 2022

Stewardship Ministry - Facility Rental Team

In a step to nature the stewardship ministry, a small team has formed to work with the DAF to review current rental policies, benchmark markets and rental rates, research best management practices, assess rental management systems, conduct a facility assessment for rental purposes, develop marketing strategies and materials, and make final recommends to the Finance Committee and Board. The overarching goal is to be in a sound position to increase rental revenues as we reopen our buildings and grounds into the next fiscal year. The team

members are Sean, myself, Jude Bias, Alexis Halley, David Shutt, and Kurt Wassenaar. The team has just formed and is excited to take on this work.

Budget Outlook FY22-23

Budget Development for FY22-23 is well underway. After review by the Finance Committee, Board and a work session with ministry and staff the budget priorities to date are:

- Supporting the Developmental Ministry Pay increases for staff
- Pay increases for staff
- Supporting the hybrid services through funding of a part-time Tech/Video Editing position. Video editing is currently funded through a contractual arrangement. The funding for that contracted service will be utilized to partially fund a new part-time position.
- Increasing our pledge to the UUA
- Making a payment on the unsecured loan
- Allocating funds to the Buildings and Grounds Reserve Funds
- Continuing support for our current ministries, programs and administrative operations

The budget projection to date informs the upcoming pledge drive, with an anticipated ask of an increase in pledges of 5%. Work is underway to hone the first draft of the budget.

Year-End Projections (FY21-22)

Because of concerns with lagging revenues in some areas, Sean and I conducted a year-end projection exercise for this fiscal year, using financial data through December 21. The projections included a detailed look at line items in both revenue streams and expenditures.

The year-end projection identified the following:

- Although revenues currently exceed expenditures, that trend is not expected to continue. Revenues are projected to be \$45,000 less than the adopted budget. On the upside, pledged donations are being honored and we are on target to meet the adopted budget in this significant area. Pledged donations are 80% of the projected revenues. All other revenues comprise 20% (\$109,510) of our total projected budgeted revenues and we have received only 24% (\$26,188) of that amount, as of the close of December 21. This loss in revenue is due to the impact of COVID on rentals, fundraising, and plate offerings. Non-pledged donations are also lagging.
- Potential expenditure line-item savings of \$26,000 were identified in the projection exercise. The majority of the savings are possible because of the lessened expenses due to the impact of COVID on the use of the buildings and on programs.
- **The current projection is a \$19,000 shortfall, placing us in the red at the end of the fiscal year.**

Recommendations: The budget will be closely monitored by the DAF and Treasurer, with a monthly update of year-end projections to the Finance Committee and Board. Suggestions for Board actions to close the anticipated shortfall are as follows:

1. During the months of April – June place emphasis on the importance of plate collections during Sunday services.
2. Prepare to lead a year-end campaign, asking for one-time unpledged donations during a short period of time during May or June.
3. Identify and support a group to organize an additional fundraiser for the Spring/early Summer of this FY. The Yard Sale team will be organizing another online UUsed Bazaar for April – May. The revenue from the Bazaar has already been factored into the year-end projections.

Designated Donation

The congregation has received a generous donation of \$20,000 from the Henner Family Designated Advised Fund through the National Philanthropic Trust, to benefit our Refugee Welcome program. The donation was facilitated by a congregational member who wishes to remain anonymous. The designated donation is restricted to support the refugee families currently housed in local hotels.

If accepted, the Treasurer and DAF will provide oversight of the funds through our Refugee Welcome designated account. The decisions on allocation and use of the funds will be made by the Refugee Welcome Committee, in consultation with the International Refugee Committee and/or with International Neighbors who work directly with the refugees.

The Finance Committee voted unanimously to recommend acceptance of the donation by the Board of Trustees. The Finance Committee strongly recommends that a single member of the Refugee Welcome Committee be selected by the committee to work with the Treasurer and DAF to coordinate oversight of this funding with the committee.

Recommended Board motion: The Board of Trustees accepts a donation of \$20,000 from the Henner Family Designated Advised Fund through the National Philanthropic Trust, to benefit the refugees housed in local area hotels.

Kay Frazier, Treasurer

Report of Interim Lead Minister UUCville Board of Trustees February 2022

Worship and Faith Development

- Our on-line services are maintaining a steady level of attendance. We look forward to warmer weather allowing us to hold outdoor services in-person, and soon inviting limited numbers to be in the sanctuary (with doors and windows open for good circulation).

- Dual Platform worship plans are underway, with the Re-Opening Team coming up with recommendations, and with the search for a paid AV assistant for Sean.
- Worship Weavers have welcomed a new member onto the team – Clarisse RePass.
- Scott continues to offer live keyboard pieces, looking forward to reviving an in person choir soon.

Faith in Action

- The service Feb 6 brought the Afghan Welcome ministry into the spotlight.
- Rev. Leia's 9:30am Sunday group has added park clean-up to their nature walks, and on Feb 6 went to a PHAR residence to assist in cleaning up the grounds and parking area for this February SAC recipient.
- The Food ministry continues its good work, and IMPACT leaders are planning for their annual membership Rally March 15 and the large annual Nehemiah Action happening March 29.

Stewardship

- This year's Pledge Drive ***Hope Is Our Door*** is being carried out by a Leadership Circle (we have no chairperson). Soon, you will see weekly Monday communications rolling out. All Board members are urged to pledge early, and to attend the Dessert Party (online) on Sunday, March 6, at 6:30. Last year's was a blast, and we expect this year's to be just as much fun!
- Many thanks to Kay Frazier for her work helping to predict our budget needs going forward.

Preparing for the Future

- I am taking calls from interested applicants for the Developmental Minister position, and I am also available to the Search Committee to offer any assistance they may need.
- I am happy that we are beginning to see our ways opening up for in-person gatherings. I also know this can include stress as we deal with uncertainty, re-staffing hospitality teams, and supporting dual-platform programming.
- I encourage the Board to develop a schedule for upcoming conversations with the congregation – March, around connecting and stewardship; April about the new minister; May around budgeting priorities.
- Reminder – the Annual meeting will be June 5, and my final Sunday is June 12.

***When we tire of Covid restrictions and cold weather, I encourage you to keep the faith!
Here are some lines from the longer poem by Amanda Gorman "New Day's Lyric" -
May this be the day we come together.***

Mourning, we come to mend, withered, we come to weather;

Torn, we come to tend, battered, we come to better.

Tethered by this year of yearning, we are learning

that though we weren't ready for this,

we have been readied by it.

Our hearts, once altogether beaten, Now all together beat.

Come! join this day just begun. This hope is our door, our portal.

Gratefully, Rev. Linda Olson Peebles

Report to the Board February 2022
Rev. Leia Durland-Jones, Minister of Faith Development

With covid safety utmost in our minds, our all-ages **Faith Development** shifted this winter to outdoor gatherings at local parks. It has been a joy to gather with all ages for connection, fellowship and to put our faith in action with weekly trash clean ups in community spaces. We have met at different locations including Pen Park, Riverview Park, IX Art Park, The Botanical Garden of the Piedmont, McIntire Park and this week, Azalea Park. Participants include newcomers, families with young children, middle school youth, senior high youth and adults of all ages including our elders. We've had warming fires in picnic shelter fireplaces, enjoyed hot cider, hot tea, cocoa with marshmallows, and baked goods. It has been good to be together. Last week we saw crocus!

On February 6, we **partnered with PHAR** (Public Housing Association of Residents), our congregation's social action collection recipient, for a trash pick up at a public housing complex at their invitation. It was wonderful to connect with others in our community and with PHAR leadership. We are hoping to find additional ways to connect and partner in the future.

We had a **festive drive-by event February 13** to collect Valentines and welcome notes for those who recently moved to Charlottesville from Afghanistan. Many thanks to our own Maggie Record for delivering these offerings (along with Girl Scout cookies!) to families currently housed in hotels. Another one of our families connected with Maggie about donating some children's books.

The Winter/Spring Semester of **Adult Faith Development** is underway. We have nine offerings so far this semester with several others pending including: Into the Looking Glass (exploring racism), The Great Questions of UU History, Tai Chi for Health, Exploring UU Spirituality, Exploring our Relationship with Jesus and/or Christ, Creating Your Own Scriptures, Active Hope, Women's Dream Quest, Exploring and Reimagining UUism at its Core, and Grief 101. Because life during the pandemic continues to be such a challenge for many, I offered to the UU congregations in our region the opportunity to have any of their friends/members join in our AFD offerings. Cross-congregation collaboration!

Our thirteenth annual **Women's Dream Quest** takes place this weekend. This retreat is virtual for a second year due to covid and has local participants as well as registrants from Arkansas, California, Massachusetts, Vermont, and North Carolina!

Involvement in **pastoral care matters** and meeting with individual congregants continues to be a significant aspect of my work. I am planning with several couples for upcoming **weddings** and helping families with several upcoming **memorial services**.

I continue to meet regularly with the other members of the **Building Use & Re-opening Task Force** and look forward to spring and warmer weather that will allow us to begin meeting in person with greater comfort and ease.

It is wonderful to **welcome Leigha Rae** into our staff group as the Office Assistant. **RE Assistant Caroline Heins** has moved her workspace to the second floor of the main church building. She and Scott will share this office. As Caroline continues to set up the new space, we are optimistic that it will

make some aspects of her work easier. She will now be working 20 hours a week with lifespan faith development support as her only responsibility.

2022-02 DAF Board Report

Membership Report for February 2022 Submitted by Achsah Carrier

- TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of February 2022: 299 members

Add:

- None

Drops:

- None
-

Communication to the Board

From: UUC'ville Membership Committee

Date: February 16, 2022

Dear Board Members and Task Force,

The Membership Committee is writing to you because we are concerned that the continued long-term closure of our building is causing us to not care for our members in the way that they need us to. We fully support that safety measures have been needed in this global pandemic, and do not dispute that closure of the church was necessary in the past. However, we would like to share some of our concerns and make some requests from this point forward.

We feel that our current reopening requirement, based on cases per 100,000 in BRHD, is much stricter than criteria used by many organizations elsewhere in Charlottesville. Most of our neighboring liberal congregations are offering in-person as well as online services and activities and our members deeply miss these. Online services will always be wanted and needed by some of us. But in-person services, with appropriate precautions, feel reasonably safe to many who are already out in the community working, studying, and exploring other congregations.

We would like to see and hear more discussion about building use and our COVID safety policy among church members and groups, and perhaps the creation of some focus groups within the church as well as some nation-wide UU congregation “best practices” research. While we sincerely appreciate how hard the Board and the Re-Opening Task Force have worked on this issue throughout the pandemic, we believe that now it's time for the discussion and

decision-making to become wider and more inclusive of other factors beyond just the current set of COVID case numbers.

As a Membership Committee, we are concerned that the current building use policy is detrimental to our church community and our membership. We believe that we may lose more members if the church continues only to provide online services and activities. We are also concerned about the impact this will have on the pledge drive.

We would be more than happy to meet with any or all of the Board and Task Force to discuss this issue. We can't stress enough that this is a very time-sensitive issue; our sense from many members we have talked to is that they need to see a re-opening plan now, and that it be one which is not going to be automatically reversed if numbers go up again, but one in which multiple factors - including numbers - are considered by our congregation's decision-making group.

We know that we all love UUC'ville and our members and friends, and that everyone is doing their best to do what they think is right and best for all. It is in a spirit of respect, appreciation, and significant concern that we write to you to ask for our decision-makers in our church building use policies to make every effort to support an immediate reopening of our church and a resuming of in-person, hybrid Sunday services.

With love and in faith,

The Membership Committee

Achsah Carrier

Kelly Dryden

Gayle Floyd

Christine Gresser

Kristen McCleary

Donna Redmond

Kate Soderman