

**Towson Unitarian Universalist Church
January 2023 Meeting**

Date/Time:	January 18, 2023
Meeting:	January Board Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, Andrew Hager, Ellie Hughes, Larry Magder, Michael Magrogen, Tracey Myers-Preston, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs, Samantha Saalfield
Absent:	SaraRuth Davis
Guests:	
Location:	Zoom
Next meeting:	Wednesday, February 15 at 7:30 pm

Pre-meeting Action Items:

Activity	Owner	Target Date
These action items are to be completed before the meeting. Often, they are related to consent agenda items, which are items for which there is no discussion unless a member has a question concerning them.		
Read and provide revisions of minutes from the previous Board meeting.	All	1/18
Read reports.	All	1/18

Scheduled Agenda:

Chalice Lighting	Larry Magder
Go-Around Question	Andrew Hager
Consent Agenda	Owner
Approve minutes from November Board Meeting	Patty Barry
Accept Minister's Report (Appendix 1)	Rev. Clare Petersberger
Accept President's Report (Appendix 2)	Andrew Hager

Discussion Agenda	
<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <p>The bottom line is that cash now is up about 412,000 from the end of November. This is due largely to auction funds (around \$20,000). We</p>	Larry Magder

<p>Discussion Agenda</p>	
<p>are due for another endowment draw this month for the 3rd quarter. The \$33,000 in the Building Fund reflects an up-to-date total.</p> <p>In terms of the budget, it seems that in general that we are on track this year.</p>	
<p>Stewardship plans</p> <p>Tracey Myers-Preston will be leading the effort this year, and she shared a guiding document and thoughts with the Board.</p> <p>She hopes to create a culture of stewardship, through numerous modes, that includes a vision of shared ownership of the community. A goal is to shift stewardship to a more year-round ongoing responsibility rather than a 6-week effort. Other goals include moving Friends to pledging units and making it a priority to collect 100 percent of pledges made. The Steering Committee will look at strategies from the past and also consider other ideas that might work.</p> <p>Tracey shared ideas, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using as a guiding principle a quote from the author Gwendolyn Books: "We are each other's harvest; we are each other's business; we are each other's magnitude and bond." This quote will be used in a sermon and reflections and then in an interactive email campaign. ● Recognition that cultural dynamics come into play (for instance, a hesitation to talk about money and past mistrust of leadership, which will not current still may have remaining remnants.) ● The cultivation process to move folks from Friends to Members is important. We need to consider how to track and data collection. ● Planning for the operational reserve is also key, a multiyear approach of building a little cushion gradually. ● The Steering Committee will be starting with listening sessions. ● Rev. Clare Petersberger and Tracey will hold a focus group with those newer to the community. 	<p>Tracey Myers-Preston</p>

Discussion Agenda

The Board discussed these ideas in a Go Around round, in which each member was encouraged to brainstorm. The Steering Committee will consider these ideas, which included:

- Much gratitude for Tracey's work.
- Share with members how much is required to run TUUC per member. Specify individuals vs. households for clarity.
- Will relying on the Brooks quote will cause some to react that it feels too much like branding?
- Have an outside speaker talking about community come as a motivator, not as a fundraiser. Would attendance be good unless it was mission-based or dealt with social justice?
- The word stewardship implies more than just writing a check (financial stewardship); it also means stewarding the church forward.
- Stress 100% of members giving as a goal.
- Recognize that some have more time to give than money, and that all ways of giving are vital. Time, talent, treasure: we want it all.
- Encourage everyone to increase their pledge by \$1 a day. This could be doable for many. Relevant as inflation is a reality.
- The great new energy in RE may have a bearing on stewardship efforts.
- Change the dynamic so that stewardship becomes fun and rewarding. We are in a new time post-Covid. How can joy play a part in the campaign?
- Grow the church instead of asking the same folks for more money. Find others who want to be part of the community.
- Reframe giving as a natural consequence of commitment

<p>Discussion Agenda</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See our giving as an investment. What we raise impacts what we can do in the church (deferred maintenance, carpet, etc.). 	
<p>Membership Committee Report</p> <p>Art Starr and Patty Barry finished up the four session Our Journeys group. The hope is to connect the participants with small group ministry and/or other parts of TUUC that they can become involved.</p> <p>Finding Greeters continues to be a challenge.</p> <p>A new hand-out for newcomers has been created, letting them know what programs are available at TUUC and who the contact person is for those programs.</p> <p>New Member Recognition (the first in-person since Covid began) will be held January 22 during the service. Members of the Committee will take on various roles, and Patty will share a reflection regarding how being a part of Membership centers her.</p>	<p>Patty Barry</p>
<p>Joint Ministry Evaluation (Partial)</p> <p>The Board began by revisiting its Annual Vision for Ministry and Board Goals.</p> <p>Annual Vision of Ministry 2022-2023:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grow and strengthen the present and future of the church by drawing in newcomers, cultivating new members, reconnecting with families, and creating connection and belonging through physical and virtual engagement. 2. Foster an intergenerational approach to faith formation, programming, and social, economic, racial, and environmental justice work. <p>Annual mutual <u>Performance Evaluation</u> of the Minister's and the Board's effectiveness in their respective roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire new DRE • Establish TUUC YouTube presence to further facilitate hybrid accessibility 	<p>Rev. Clare Petersberger</p>

Discussion Agenda	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Replenish and grow building fund through a targeted appeal (10K) ● Establish a task force to develop strategy in anticipation of future building and ground needs ● Serve as a teaching congregation for our ministerial intern <p>The Board and Minister will continue this examination next month.</p> <p>Progress noted included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hiring a new DRE 2. Serving as a teaching congregation for our ministerial intern 3. Supporting our mission: multiplatform worship, working with DRE to make Time for All Ages more interactive, 4. Youth taking part in church services. 5. SACRED (monthly curriculum regarding reproductive health justice 6. Rev. Clare serving on the Baltimore County Police Accountability Board 7. Bridge MD: training and listening campaign. <p>Areas for further attention include the many of Celebrations of Life that have been held, meaning that there have been losses for many; the need to grow TUUC; cultivating more Lay Pastoral Associates; our lack of YouTube presence, and the importance of not burning out volunteer leaders.</p>	
<p>Church as Employer</p> <p>UUA has informed TUUC that BlueCross Blue Shield will go up a minimum of 7%.</p> <p>Staff members continue collegiality, helping out when other staff members are ill.</p>	<p>Rev. Clare Petersberger</p>
<p>General Assembly Discussion</p> <p>Prices go up by March, so decisions shouldn't be put off too long.</p>	<p>Andrew Hager</p>

Discussion Agenda	
Would any youth be interested? Is there money in the budget for scholarships for registration fees? Perhaps paying a portion of the fees would be possible. This will be looked into and discussed next month.	
Board Games with the Board - Virtual	
Rev. Clare Petersberger will host on Zoom. Patty will drop off favor bags during the day. The event will be held 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Games include a scavenger Hunt, Pictionary, and Scattergories.	Andrew Hager
Process Observer	

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 9:15.

Appendix 1: Minister's Report

REPORT TO BOARD FROM REV. CLARE
January 13, 2023

Since my last report....

WORSHIP

November 27 SarahRuth Davis delivered her first sermon, ever, and her first worship service at TUUC! Her daughters helped with the Time For All Ages. It was beautiful!

December 4 we began our exploration of the theme of walking the path of wonder with the Magic Wand of Notice; G. K. Chesterton; and the TUUC Choir.

December 11 we reflected on "Hard Holy Grace" with a time for all ages on prayer; a reading by Brian Doyle; and the music of the TUUC Community Choir.

December 18, thanks to Kara Tyler, we celebrated the winter solstice with a dramatic presentation of Prometheus that had Zeus joining us from Mt. Olympus in white on Zoom. And thanks to Tracy Hall and the Choir for their music! It was joyful!

December 24 we celebrated a family Christmas Eve service "Each Night A Child Is Born Is A Holy Night," with photos of the holy babes among us from generation to generation. SarahRuth Davis wrote a beautiful chalice lighting for this service. And teenagers offered some of the music along with members of the Choir.

In the 7:30 Christmas Eve Candlelight service, the focus was the ancient magi and modern magi and earthrise (in a year when Russia is in an actual war with Ukraine and not a cold war.) The Choir's music was glorious!

Jan. 1 we celebrated the gifts of wonder by unwrapping the order of service. The closing words came before the chalice lighting. The offertory was the final element of the service. And a great time was had by all!

Jan. 8 we began to walk the path of finding our center by exploring the work of the Article II Commission of the Unitarian Universalist Association which is looking at our existing Principles and Purposes. Lou Gieszl offered a memorable testimonial on Youth Religious Education. It was exciting that our Youth Group members delivered elements of the service through the Time For All Ages and remained for the entire worship service. The plan is for them to join us in the entire worship service the first Sunday of the month. The music of the Choir was wonderful!

Jan. 15 we will center justice and our partnership with Mentoring Male Teens In The Hood. Mr. Cameron Miles will be joining us. Dominique Hall will be offering a testimonial on Lay Worship Associates. The Choir is preparing rousing music! I wrote a column for The Threshold in December on the path of wonder and in January on the upcoming Sacred Listening Campaign with BRIDGE, MD

I participated in a Ministers Brainstorming session for the Soul Matters theme of finding our center (January's theme), and love (February's theme.)

On December 6, I officiated at the celebration of 24-year-old Henri Jones, grandson of former TUUC member Ann Jones, who was shot to death on Thanksgiving Day just outside of Patterson Park. There were over 300 people in attendance.

I attended a virtual program on Divine Metaphors by the One Spirit Learning Alliance.

PASTORAL CARE

I have made 14 pastoral visits. I met with the Lay Pastoral Associates on December 2. We are still seeking a Chair for the Caring Committee.

PROGRAMMING

I attended the December 7 and January 4 Program Council Meetings.

I continue to host Soul Matters Sharing Circles sessions (Nov. 22, Dec. 13, January 10)

I spoke with the TUUC Youth Group on December 11th.

Writing As A Spiritual Practice met on December 9 with prompts based on a Quinn Caldwell reading with regard to the gifts the wisemen brought the baby Jesus and what gifts we might bring. We met on January 6 with prompts based on a Cole Arthur Riley reading on human dignity.

The TUUC staff met as a team on December 14th and January 11th.

SarahRuth Davis and I have met weekly. And she is now meeting weekly with George Harrison, Chair of the Ministerial Internship Committee.

Kara Tyler and I meet weekly on Fridays to discuss the religious education ministry and upcoming worship.

Tracy Hall and I continue to meet weekly on Tuesdays to plan worship.

Kai Aiyetoro and I speak several times a week!

On January 8, Sarah Ruth and I co-facilitated the third session of SACReD (the curriculum from the Spiritual Alliance of Communities for Reproductive Dignity) with eight participants.

Phil Brown will be going on medical leave on Feb. 8 for 4-6 weeks. Kai Aiyetoro will cover for him.

I enjoyed a session of "Our Journeys" with Patty Barry and prospective new members on December 11 and met with the Membership Committee to plan New Member Recognition on January 22nd.

I set up a Zoom meeting for Todd Robertson for our Roots and Wings chapter of the Covenant of UU Pagans.

A-TEAM

Because Covid Act Now has gone back into the yellow zone, we are requiring masking for programs (i.e., worship and YRE.) But we are permitting unmasking for hospitality in the foyer (as people feel comfortable.) Rev. Clare wrote to members and friends in December and included this update in The Threshold.

BGE did repair the street light in front of our church. Rev. Clare thanked Councilman Kach for his intervention.

Clare F-A and Todd have agreed that reflectors may be installed to provide further guidance to the driveway during the winter. (Mowing will not allow for it in the summer...but it will be lighter longer.

We agreed to continue to allow the MD Assoc Parkinson Support Group to meet under the auspices of TUUC on Fridays with Jane D'Ambrogi as the liaison.

Ms. FeFe is out on sick leave beginning next week. We have signed a short-term agreement with Anago Cleaning Services to clean once a week for \$240 a week while Ms. FeFe is recovering. (Ms. FeFe was coming three times a week for less money.)

We approved an updated weather policy (at the end of this report.) We are going to ask people to share their cell phone numbers since the easiest way to communicate any closure would be text.

The installation of the new door is still in progress. First, the truck was broken into and the installer didn't have tools. Then, the finish was scratched and it needs to be redone. The fountain in the Memorial Garden also needs further attention and we are following up.

We renewed our energy contract with WGL for one year.

Dan has agreed to be on the March 1 agenda for the Program Council to discuss budget requests for 2023-2024.

Dan, Andrew, Ellie, Rev. Clare, Kai, and Stewardship Chair will meet before January 23 to map out vision for next fiscal year.

Next American Red Cross Blood Drive will be March 8.

Next meeting date and time
Feb. 10. 2023 at 10 a.m.

WIDER COMMUNITY

I attended the BRIDGE, MD Race and Power Summit from Dec. 1-3. Speakers included Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers, Rev. Adam Taylor, president of Sojourners, Jeanne Lewis, Interim CEO of Faith in Public Life and Jim Wallis, Inaugural Chair in Faith and Justice at Georgetown University. The workshops on community organizing were excellent. I was particularly drawn

to the workshops on criminal justice reform. Ann Beezley also attended from TUUC. We debriefed with other BRIDGE MD members who attended the conference at a meeting on January 11.

I met with the Police Accountability Board on December 12.

I fulfilled an on-line ethics training for the Police Accountability Board.

I will be meeting with the new liaison next week and am scheduling a ride-along which is an eight hour day with an officer.

I attended a virtual program sponsored by the Institute for Islamic, Jewish, and Christian studies on January 6th about the close relationship between White Christian Nationalists and the insurrectionists.

I attended a virtual spiritual retreat of local clergy on January 9.

I participated in the BRIDGE, MD Religious Leaders Caucus on January 12.

DENOMINATION

I attended a meeting of the Chesapeake UU Ministers Association's Leadership Team.

I attended a virtual listening session of the UUMA Board to talk about trends in Unitarian Universalism.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Clare

Inclement Weather and Emergency Closure Procedure

A. Determination of Closure

a. Rationale

- i. It is the responsibility of the A-Team to maintain facilities that provide a reasonable level of safety, sanitation, comfort, access, welcome and functionality to our members, friends, visitors and renters.
- ii. A situation that prevents our ability to provide for a reasonable level of safety in the use of the facility or property requires that the facility be closed until safety concerns are mitigated or resolved.
- iii. If the Church building is officially closed (as opposed to specific events being cancelled) no activity may take place in or around

the building other than those necessary to mitigate or resolve the cause of the closure.

a. Determination

- i. In all cases where a closure or cancellation of activities is being considered it is expected that the input of all relevant parties be sought including but not limited to the Minister, Director of Religious Education, Music Director, etc.

- i. Weekday Office/daytime hours (8:00 AM – 6:00 PM):
 1. TUUC will follow the schedule of Baltimore County Public Schools for the determination of weekday building closures.
 2. The Church Administrator may also choose to close the facility if they determine that a situation that prevents our ability to provide for a reasonable level of safety in the use of the facility or property.
 3. Notification will be made by 7:00 AM in the case of a BCPS closure or as soon as is practical in the case of a closure during the day.

- i. Weekday Evening hours (6:00 PM-8:00 AM):
 1. The Church Administrator, Minister, Head of House & Grounds, or the Head of Grounds Committee may choose to close the facility if they determine that a situation that prevents our ability to provide for a reasonable level of safety in the use of the facility or property.
 2. Decision and notification will be made no later than 3:00 PM.

- i. Saturday Weather/Emergency Closures:
 1. The Minister, Head of House & Grounds, Head of Grounds Committee may choose to close the facility if they determine that a situation that prevents our ability to provide for a reasonable level of safety in the use of the facility or property.
 2. Notification will be made no later than 7:00 AM.

- i. Sunday Services Moved to Virtual Space
 1. The Minister, Lay Worship Associate, or Service Leader, Head of House & Grounds, or the Head of Grounds Committee, may choose to close the facility while moving to a remote format entirely if they determine that a situation that prevents our ability to provide for a reasonable level of safety in the use of the facility or property.

1. Sunday Closure of building – Decision and notification of closure should be made no later than 8:30 AM

A. Notification of Congregation and Public

- a. The individuals responsible for authorizing the closure will ensure
 - i. The WBAL weather closure system is notified
 - ii. The church office voicemail is updated to reflect the closure.
 - iii. A closure notification is posted to the TUUC Website.
 - iv. A closure notification is posted on the TUUC private Facebook group page.
 - v. A closure notification is posted on the TUUC public Facebook page.
 - vi. A closure notification is emailed through Breeze
 - vii. If people are registering for in-person worship, they will be notified.

- a. The Communications/Outreach staff person will ensure that the following notice is available on the TUUC website, and is posted regularly throughout winter on the TUUC public & private Facebook Pages, the TUUC Newsletter, email bulletin board, and via at least one church-wide email in the fall.

“Inclement Weather and Emergency Closure Information

In the event that severe weather or other emergencies compromise the safe use of TUUC facilities or property the church may cancel events or close to all activities. If the condition of the roads cause you to wonder whether we are proceeding with our

programming as scheduled, please check for cancellations before you head out. Closure or cancelation information can be found in the following places:

- The Church Office and facilities are closed if Baltimore County Public Schools are closed.
- Outgoing Church Office Voicemail: (410) 825-6045
- <http://www.wbaltv.com/weather/closings>
- <http://Towsonuuc.org>
- Church Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/51782871068/>
- TUUC Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/TowsonUnitarianUniversalistChurch>
- TUUC Bulletin board/listserv: Register at <http://www.towsonuuc.org/index.php/ct-menu-item-33/ct-menu-item-45>

Appendix 2: President's Report

January 16, 2023

Since our last Board meeting, I have attended several Sunday services. I particularly enjoyed the service highlighting our connection to Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood. I was also excited to see our congregation's teens take an active role in the January 8 service. What a great way to build bridges between generations!

Members of the Board attended the December Program Council meeting to learn more about the upcoming Bridge Maryland one-on-one conversation training. I also attended the January meeting as a representative of Cabin Fever.

I have participated in a number of phone and Zoom calls to discuss church business with Rev. Clare, Ellie Hughes, Patty Barry, and Kai Aiyetoro.

I am very thankful that Tracey Myers-Preston agreed to take on stewardship this year! Her enthusiasm and fresh perspective fill me with certainty that we will have a successful campaign!

I attended A-Team meetings in December and January.

Samantha Saalfield and Michael Magrogan joined me to plan our Virtual Party Games event.

Cabin Fever recently watched *We Need to Talk About Kevin* and *Glass Onion*.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Hager