

**Towson Unitarian Universalist Church  
Board of Trustees  
October 2023 Meeting**

Date/Time:	October 18, 2023
Meeting:	October Board Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, Andrew Hager, Ellie Hughes, Tricia Lott, Larry Magder, Michael Magrogen, Tracey Myers-Preston, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs
Absent:	
Guests:	Robert Canosa
Location:	Zoom
Next meeting:	Wednesday, November 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	10/18
Read reports.	All	10/18

**Scheduled Agenda:**

<b>Chalice Lighting</b>	Rev. Clare Petersberger
<b>Go-Around Question</b>	Andrew Hager
<b>Consent Agenda</b>	Owner
Approve minutes from May Board Meeting	Patty Barry
Accept Minister's Report (Appendix 1)	Rev. Clare Petersberger
Accept President's Report (Appendix 2)	Andrew Hager
Accept President-Elect's Report (Appendix 3)	Ellie Hughes

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	
<p><b>Board Disclosure Results</b></p> <p>All disclosures were found to be non-problematic.</p>	Andrew Hager
<p><b>Church as Employer</b></p> <p>Robert Canosa, chair of Personnel Committee joined the meeting.</p> <p>The Personnel Committee meets as an ad hoc committee, only meeting as needed Since July, there has been no turnover. Updated salary and benefit letters were sent to staff members.</p> <p>TUUC needs to choose a new payroll system, as the old company is being bought out. Kai and Rev. Clare have vetted OnPay, which seems to be fine. This will cost slightly less than the current plan and will also take care of the cleaning person's pay. Other UU churches use it.</p> <p>Board approved making this transition, beginning January 1</p> <p>New insurance premiums will be issued by the end of November.</p>	<p>Ellie Hughes  Rev. Clare Petersberger  Robert Canosa</p>
<p><b>Auction Report</b></p> <p>Larry Mgder reported that the auction committee has held two meetings and is well-organized. The link for donations is already active. The committee is tweaking last year's procedures.</p> <p>Andrew Hager will write a blurb for Board Games with the Board.</p>	Larry Magder
<p><b>Accessibility Team Update</b></p> <p>The team met to look at the bid submitted by an architectural firm for doing an assessment, making recommendations, surveying, and developing timelines. The team will be interviewing the firm.</p>	Ellie Hughes

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	
<p>The accessibility team is grateful to Kai for helping with scheduling.</p> <p>Sue Royer is working to gather a focus group to function as a sounding board for the committee.</p>	
<p><b>A-team Update</b></p> <p>Please refer to Rev. Clare Petersberger’s attached report for details. Some highlights:</p> <p>We are grateful for the volunteers who helped with flooring and Art Starr who reviewed the TUUC’s insurance policy.</p> <p>Some decisions to be made by the A-team need to wait for input from accessibility plans, for example, the front door replacement.</p> <p>Jim Spath has been creating signs for Ancestors’ Trail, so we are encouraged to talk a walk to appreciate them.</p> <p>The Board began a discussion as to whether to set aside money for Eagle Scout projects in future budgets. Trish Lott offered to act as a liaison to the Scout troop moving forward. More discussion will take place around this issue, including input from House and Grounds.</p>	Rev. Clare Petersberger
<p><b>Scott Shane Book Event</b></p> <p>Scott has a new book, <i>Flee North</i> about Thomas Smallwood and the Underground Railroad. Scott is hosting a book event on 11/3 at 4 p.m. as a TUUC fundraiser and is donating books to do so.</p> <p>The event page is on the website. Andrew Hager and Ellie Hughes are coordinating this event.</p>	Andrew Hager
<p><b>Finalize Open Questions, Board Goals and Vision of Ministry</b></p> <p>The Board accepted these unanimously.</p>	Andrew Hager
<p><b>Privacy Statement for Website</b></p>	Tracey Myers-Preston

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	
Tracey Myers-Preston proposed that we add a privacy statement to the website. Any visit to the website will prompt a privacy statement to pop-up.	
The Board approved this motion unanimously.	

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 8:37.

Next month: Ellie Hughes, Chalice Lighting  
 Process Observation: Tracey Myers-Preston

### **Appendix 1: Minister’s Report**

REPORT TO BOARD FROM REV. CLARE  
 October 13, 2023

Since my last report...

#### WORSHIP

I attended, virtually, the worship service conducted by Ann Beezley and Dominique Hall on September 24<sup>th</sup> lifting-up our partnership with BRIDGE, MD.

On October 1 we began our exploration of the gift of heritage in terms of what experiences of trauma and resilience may have been passed through generations in our families. Kara Tyler engaged us in thinking about the roots of carrots.

SarahRuth Davis delivered our meditation. Tracy Hall and Kris Faatz shared their gifts of music.

October 8 we celebrated “For All Who Have Breath” with the gifts of the Choir and the support of members of the Green Sanctuary Committee: Marianne DeBow, Marilyn Carlisle, Carel Hedlund, Rev. Karyn Marsh, and Bobbie Miyasaki. Interfaith Power and Light had asked that congregations in DC, MD, and VA lift up what we can do as individuals and in terms of state and federal legislation to continue to steward the planet.

October 15 we are celebrating the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee’s Guest At Your Table program. We have not had a worship service on the good work of the UUSC since 2021. The TUUC Puppet Thing will return with a skit about fitting guests around a table written by Corrine Hauf with puppets created by Making Faith students. Our Youth Group members will offer the meditation on heaven. And Lorraine Sorbello will address the work of the UUSC. Both the TUUC Choir and the TUUC Community Choir will sing.

In consultation with Jay Hauf, Kai and I are placing advertisements to seek a third AV tech. Neither Dre nor Andre are available this Sunday. We are facing several weeks when only one will be available. We budgeted enough for two paid techs for

most Sundays this year. I want the Board to be aware of this need and steps we are taking to meet it.

I wrote an October column for The Threshold about our heritage in terms of the how our reason for being as a Unitarian Universalist Association has been defined over the past 62 years in Article Two of the UUA's Bylaws. This was a way to introduce revisions delegates made through amendments to the proposed Article II at the UUA's General Assembly.

And, after the attack on Israel, I submitted a reflection to this week's Threshold to mourn all innocents caught up in violence in Israel and Palestine.

I offered an opening prayer at the meeting of the Religious Leaders Caucus of BRIDGE, MD on October 12 addressing the violence and humanitarian crisis in Israel and Palestine.

#### PASTORAL CARE

I have made 16 pastoral visits. Lay Pastoral Associates met on October 8.

#### PROGRAMMING

The first session of Soul Matters Sharing Circles got off to a great start on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

Writing As A Spiritual Practice met on September 22<sup>nd</sup> with a reading on rescuing baby puffins and on October 6 with a reading on where we are from (i.e., our heritage.)

I attended the Program Council Meeting.

It has been a joy to work with Tracey Myers Preston on updating our website.

Please take a look at how much easier our website is to navigate. Also, kudos for our new logo...inspired by our new sign...which DJ Preston designed!

I am looking forward to co-facilitating the first of four sessions of "Our Journeys" with Tracey on Sunday.

#### A-TEAM

We thank Dan Alper, Lou and Louie Gieszl, Ellie Hughes, Clare and Whitman Flynn-Avellone, Kai Aiyetoro, and Kara and Fynn Tyler for all they did to get the new flooring installed in rooms 1-5. It is BEAUTIFUL!

Art Starr reviewed our Church Mutual policy and found that exclusions have increased...including claims for computers, sexual abuse, fungus and bacterial/mold, terrorism outside US, punitive damages for terrorism, communicable diseases, release of private information through breach, and claims for asbestos and lead.

If we anticipate over 5 million dollars worth of damage through terrorism---it would add \$454 to the premium. We are going to exclude terrorism above \$5 million dollars because we would be bankrupt before then

We unanimously approved Ms. FeFe's new contract with a \$50 a month increase. She is paying for her own insurance and we are her only client.

We received the Bolz bequest for over \$150,000.

The Board needs to know we committed \$4,825 to this year's Operating Budget.

Repairing the parking lot sinkholes for \$3,600 is on the must do list.

So of that \$150,000---\$8,425 is needed for budget and parking lot.

(The Front door and side door won't be done until we hear from the Accessibility Team; Security---and a keyed entry--will be considered also down the road; Locust out front should go at the same time as any change to security---since cameras are on it. And upgrade of sound/projector awaits Accessibility plans.) We will create a new class for Bolz bequest in QuickBooks in order to track it.

For the Nov. 18th auction, the A-Team brainstormed the following "Fund A Need" projects:

Redo banner in the foyer to include the 8th principle

Music and living into 8th principle

Adopt a pothole?

Fund flooring improvements downstairs

(Kara is thinking of a possible Fund-A Need for YRE.)

We need a new payroll company (Deluxe is closing down its business.) Kai and Rev. Clare are working on this and will send a proposal to the Personnel Committee.

Stanley Steamer's quote for the other half of downstairs and area rugs was about \$300 more because their August/September special was over.

Next meeting date and time October 27, 2023, 11 a.m.

#### WIDER COMMUNITY

I attended the first meeting of the interfaith Anam Cara clergy group.

I attended the October meeting of the Religious Leaders Caucus for BRIDGE, MD on the theme of White Christian Nationalism (which will be the worship theme on Oct. 29 to honor the winning worship theme from last November's auction.)

I served on a panel of four at Oak Crest to share how our faith traditions welcome LGBTQIAplus people. A reconstructionist rabbi, a (liberal) Catholic priest, a United Church of Christ colleague and I participated. We were recorded in Oak Crest's recording studio! Our program will be shared with residents on the inside television network as well as with potential residents...because Erickson is intentionally reaching out to the LGBTQIAplus demographic. The gentleman who moderated the panel is a member of the First Unitarian Church of Chicago.

## DENOMINATION

I attended the September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Chesapeake Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association.

I attended a virtual program on AI & Unitarian Universalism.

I attended the Ministers Brainstorming Meeting for November's theme of the Gift of Gratitude.

I attended a coffee of the colleague responsible for Meadville Lombard's Ministerial Internship program and was able to share that Sarah Ruth Davis's Leadership project is off to a great start!

I have attended a meeting of the Leadership Team of the Chesapeake Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Clare

### **Appendix 2: President's Report**

October 15, 2023

In the last month, I have done the following:

I met with the accessibility team to discuss the ongoing efforts to make our church a more welcoming place for woolen of all abilities.

I attended the RE Committee meeting as an observer. I also attended the most recent A-Team meeting in the same capacity.

Ellie Hughes, Kai Aiyetoro, and I have been working with Scott Shane to create a fundraising event around his book *Flee North*. The event is November 4.

Reverend Clare and I discussed the need to find additional paid AV assistance to fill in when our regular technicians are unavailable.

Cabin Fever watched *Bug* and *Gaslight* this month.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrew Hager

### **Appendix 3: President-Elect's Report**

As President-Elect, I convened a meeting of the Program Council on October 4, where we discussed goals for the coming year in alignment with the draft Board vision and goals. Andrew and I had a series of conversations with Scott Shane about his proposed fundraiser, which we are co-sponsoring; we drafted an announcement for the Threshold and met with Kai to work out details for the hybrid event on November 4. I discussed church matters with Rev Clare and Andrew via email, phone, and in-person meetings.

As a member of the RE Committee, I attended a meeting on September 21. Lou and I are leading the teen RE group this year; we met with them on October 8 and worked with them on the Allegory of the Spoons for the October 15 service. Kara and I co-convened the Makers' Meetup on October 10, at which I helped Edith with her cupboard-painting project and taught Lou and Henry how to finger-knit in preparation for assisting me as I lead RE on October 22!

As convener of the team coordinating the initial phases of the accessibility project, I held a meeting on September 21 at which we formulated responses to questions from firms and discussed the formation of a focus group to bring other members up to speed on the project. Sue Royer has agreed to take the lead on this aspect of the project. I also photographed the existing architectural plans and sent them out to the firms who attended the walkthrough.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellie Hughes