

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

Date/Time:	September 20, 2023
Meeting:	September Board Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, Andrew Hager, Ellie Hughes, Larry Magder, Tracey Myers-Preston, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs
Absent:	SarahRuth Davis, Tricia Lott, Michael Magrogen
Guests:	
Location:	Zoom
Next meeting:	Wednesday, October 18 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	9/20
Read reports.	All	9/20

**Scheduled Agenda:**

<b>Chalice Lighting</b>	
<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>	
<b>Board Approval for raising credit card limit</b> We have a 10,000 limit spread across several accounts and staff members. This became an issue when we went to pay	Andrew Hager/Rev. Clare Petersberger

<p><b>Discussion Agenda</b></p>	
<p>for the new flooring, combined with paying for windows and professional dues.  It was proposed to raise the limit to 15000. While not typically needed, the higher limit would be useful for circumstances like this. No cost associated with this change. Cards are always paid off at the end of the month.</p> <p>Passed unanimously. Larry Magder will contact the bank to set the increase in motion.</p>	
<p><b>Board Disclosures</b></p> <p>Board members need to complete and send annual Board disclosures to Patty Barry in person or by email within the next two weeks.</p> <p>Officers will meet on Zoom and report back at next month's Board meeting.</p>	<p>Patty Barry</p>
<p><b>Treasurer's Report</b></p> <p>At the end of August 2023, our endowment account had \$1,163,436.57. This is down \$40,930.69 (3.4%) from the end of July. Some of that deduction was due to the quarterly draw of \$13,843.07. The total cash in the endowment fund as of the end of August was \$ 44,953.40 (4%) in cash and \$ 78,880 (7%) in bonds.</p> <p>As of the end of August the money in our checking, PNC money market, and Schwab money market accounts totaled \$119,776.70. This includes the money in reserved accounts. This is down around \$12,000 from the amount at the end of July. This is down around \$15,300 from the end of August in 2022.</p> <p>As of the end of August we had \$19,612 in the building fund (which is included above in the \$119,776.70). However, since the end of August we have spent \$11,500 on carpet and \$1737 on windows, so we currently have \$6375 in the building fund.</p> <p>Not counting the endowment fund, our money resides in three places: Schwab money market, PNC money market, and the PNC checking account. These include the moneys in</p>	<p>Larry Magder</p>

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	
the reserve funds. Their total constitutes our current cash on hand.	
<p><b>Accessibility Team Update</b></p> <p>Since May, a team was convened to oversee and guide the initial phase of long-needed accessibility needs. In July, the team finalized a call for proposals for preliminary assessments from six architectural firms. Three firms expressed interest and walked through in August. They had until last Friday to ask questions. The Accessibility Team will reply within this week. The firms have until October 13 to get bids to the team.</p> <p>The Board appreciates the work of the Accessibility Team: Sean Mackey, Sue Royer, Todd Robertson, Clare Flynn-Avellone, Ellie Hughes, and Andrew Hager.</p>	Ellie Hughes
<p><b>Board Donation for Auction and Board Liaison to Auction</b></p> <p>The Board agreed to offer Board Games with the Board in-person in the spring.</p> <p>Larry Magder will serve as liaison to the Auction Committee</p>	Andrew Hager
<p><b>Membership Committee Report</b></p> <p>Tracey Myers-Preston talked to staff and former committee members this summer. She is finalizing organizing greeters through the end of the year and creating a digital welcome packet.</p> <p>There is work to be done on the website, to improve user experience, for both new visitors and members.</p> <p>Tracey is also taking a look at TUUC's branding and logo, with help from her son.</p> <p>TUUC is now active on Meet-up and is gearing up to have more of a YouTube presence. Currently, intros of the staff and UU essentials are being produced, with the addition of one full service and various sermons in the works.</p> <p>Tracey, with input from other members of leadership, drafted a connection and growth proposal, which will have an impact on the annual goals and vision of the Board.</p>	Tracey Myers-Preston

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	
<p><b>Discussion of Open Questions, Board Goals and Vision of Ministry</b></p> <p>The Board began work on these during the August retreat.</p> <p>The proposal is to take a new approach to goals that focuses on growth and connection. A copy of goals reflecting this new focus will be sent to Board members, and final approval will take place next month.</p>	<p>Andrew Hager</p>

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 8:51.

**Appendix 1: Minister’s Report**

**REPORT TO BOARD FROM REV. CLARE**

**September 17, 2023**

Since my last report....

**WORSHIP**

On June 18, we celebrated the wedding of Lou Gieszl and Eleanor Hughes in worship! Right after the service, in the foyer, Michael Magrogan asked Nancy Caswell to marry him and she said “Yes!” So, on August 8<sup>th</sup>, I had the honor of uniting Nancy and Michael in marriage. The weekend before, I had the honor of co-officiating at the wedding of Demian Canosa and Melissa Hirsh in Cortland, NY!

On September 3, we celebrated water calling our hearts home and water communion. Kara Tyler shared the story of *Mní Wičóni!* Kara Tyler, Patty Barry, Susan Riggs, and Tracy Hall shared the story of the Vessel of Compassion. The Choir sang. And water communion did not go how I had envisioned (waters for joy and happiness, followed by waters for change and transition, followed by waters for loss and grief, and ending with waters for renewal and nourishment.) But it went just the way life goes and the way it needed to go!

On September 10<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated the launch of YRE. Kara Tyler introduced us to “Making Faith.” Judi Clague, Tracy Hall, Kris Faatz, and the TUUC Choir offered a powerful version of the Langston Hughes poem “Lonely People.” The homily was on “the nones” and how they long for certain aspects of religious community that TUUC offers.

September 17<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating our annual Blessing of the Animals. Great gratitude to Andrew and Mia Hager for the blessings they are and the blessings they

offer. And kudos to Patty Barry for her leadership of the song about foxes and  
"Place In The Choir!"

I officiated at a celebration of life for Carol Mason's husband, Jay Lyston, on  
September 7<sup>th</sup> with great support from Carel Hedlund.

I officiated at the celebration of life for Beryl Sass on September 16<sup>th</sup>. I'm grateful  
to Rev. Karyn Marsh for participating in the service. I had officiated at a graveside  
service for Dick and Beryl Sass on September 15<sup>th</sup>.

I wrote an August column for The Threshold about arson of the doors of the UU  
congregation in Plano, TX and how a Methodist neighbor stood up for LGBTQ+  
rights. I wrote a September column for The Threshold on the gift of welcome.  
I am excited by the Leadership Project SarahRuth Davis has created on Worship as  
a Spiritual Practice at TUUC!

### **PASTORAL CARE**

I have made 25 pastoral visits in August and September. Lay Pastoral Associates  
met on August 27<sup>th</sup>. I am grateful for the support they offered while I was on  
vacation in July.

### **PROGRAMMING**

I have organized Soul Matters Sharing Circles which will begin meeting on  
September 26<sup>th</sup>. The two circles will meet once a month (instead of twice a month.)  
Art Starr, Marianne Debow, Jane Selewach, and SarahRuth Davis have volunteered  
to serve as co-facilitators.

Writing As A Spiritual Practice resumed on September 8 with a poem by David  
Romtvedt and prompt on welcoming silence.

The staff met for a lunch at Orchard Market on August 18<sup>th</sup>. It was the first  
opportunity we'd had to meet Arkady in person. The staff also met on September  
18<sup>th</sup> with Tracey Myers Preston as a guest to help us with visitor to member  
procedures and to share staff ideas for the website and YouTube channels.

Don and I attended a wonderful auction crab dinner hosted by the Avallones.  
I attended a meeting with Kai, Arkady, Dan Alper, and Larry to review the budget  
and the different classes.

I enjoyed the Board retreat in August.

### **A-TEAM**

The A-Team thanks the Board for approving the cost of replacing the glass in the  
seven fogged windows as well as for new flooring in rooms 1-5 downstairs.  
The glass has been replaced. Kim Peabody made a donation to the TUUC Building  
Fund for one of the windows in the Meeting Room in memory of Al.

The vinyl flooring did not come in, as expected, on Friday, so we are waiting to  
learn, on Monday, if our installation schedule needs to be changed.

In addition to flooring, the A-Team has addressed another carpenter ant infestation  
and approved contracting with Home Paramount to address it; submitted a claim to  
Church Mutual for the sinkholes in the parking lot (and then withdrew it when  
Church Mutual advised they wouldn't cover it and that it was better to withdraw it  
than to have it denied); and received an excellent report for the TUUC Access Team  
with a timeline for their good work.

The A-Team is asking Stanley Steamer for a bid to clean the remaining carpets downstairs as well as the area rugs after the new flooring is installed; approved Tracy Hall's request for an unused file cabinet to be donated for her personal use; and will thank Art Starr for reviewing our new Church Mutual policy (Art did so the last time we had a renewal with Church Mutual.)

The one request we have of the Board is that the credit limit on TUUC's PNC card be raised from \$10,000 for all the cards (Church Office, Minister, DRE, and Music Director) to \$15,000. We had an issue paying a 50% deposit for the flooring (\$5,700) because we already had \$8,200 of approved charges on the TUUC PNC card.

### **WIDER COMMUNITY**

I attended a meeting of women clergy at the Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies.

I had a conflict with the first meeting of Religious Leaders for BRIDGE, MD but look forward to the next one!

Thanks to Sheila Malenski and Ann Beezley, we have identified the Sundays when we will focus on our community partners.

Thanks to Lorraine Sorbello, on October 15<sup>th</sup>, we will be focusing on the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee for the first time in a few years.

### **DENOMINATION**

I attended, virtually, the UUMA Ministry days (June 19-21) and UU GA (June 21-25.)

I am grateful for the synchronicity that our Soul Matters theme will help us to probe, more deeply, the proposed revisions to Article II in the UUA Bylaws. Delegates voted in favor of moving forward with the second year of reflection before a final vote is taken at the next UUA GA in June.

I had a meeting with a colleague in my role as a Good Officer.

I have attended two meetings of the Leadership Team of the Chesapeake Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Clare

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

September 17, 2023

Report of the Board President

It was a wonderful summer at TUUC, and the beginning of the unofficial church year, which began when Rev. Clare returned to the pulpit, is off to a great start. Since my last report, I have had numerous meetings and discussions regarding a number of church issues.

- Kara Tyler and I discussed the Making Faith program.

- Ellie Hughes and I met to work on a draft of the Board's goals and visions.
- Sue Royer and I discussed the Nominating Committee.
- Rev. Clare and I discussed a variety of topics.
- Tracey Myers-Preston and I talked about her vision for a new view of membership and stewardship in our congregation.

I led three worship services during the summer months, and I blessed animals at the 9/17 service.

Ellie, Kai, and I attended a walkthrough of the building for prospective architectural firms that will handle our Accessibility Upgrade project.

Cabin Fever has seen and discussed a number of interesting movies, from *Barbie* and *Oppenheimer* to *Saturday Night Fever* to *Tickled*.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrew Hager

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

As President-Elect, I was in touch with the Program Council by email during the summer and convened our first meeting of the fall on September 6. 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 meetings on June 5, July 27, and August 25, and helped to organize the September 10 RE hospitality and informational gathering.

As convener of the team coordinating the initial phases of the accessibility project, I held meetings on June 8 and July 20, finalized the RFP and schedule, and attended a walkthrough with potential firms on August 22. I also attended the A-Team meeting on August 11 to respond to questions about the RFP.

On October 3, Dan Alper, Lou and Louie Gieszl, Clare and Whitman Flynn-Avellone, and I helped pack up and remove the contents of the classrooms before the reflooring began.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellie Hughes

