

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

Date/Time:	February 15, 2023
Meeting:	February Board Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, SaraRuth Davis, Andrew Hager, Ellie Hughes, Larry Magder, Michael Magrogen, Tracey Myers-Preston, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs, Samantha Saalfield
Absent:	
Guests:	John Barry, Kristel Donner
Location:	Zoom
Next meeting:	Wednesday, March 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	2/15
Read reports.	All	2/15

Scheduled Agenda:

Chalice Lighting	Tracey Myers-Preston
Process Observation	Ellie Hughes

Go-Around Question	Andrew Hager
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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
Accept President-Elect's Report (Appendix 3)	Ellie Hughes

Discussion Agenda	
<p>Endowment Committee Report</p> <p>John Barry reported that the investments are coming back out of the doldrums and that the portion invested in the socially responsible funds remained at about the same percentage. He reported that cash and cash investments will go lower due to scheduled draws.</p> <p>The Committee recommended transferring \$75,000 from the Vanguard 500 Index and moving \$25,000 to the Vanguard FTSE Social Fund to increase TUUC’s percentage in socially responsible investments. and the remaining \$50,000 moving to the existing Vanguard Cash Investment. The additional \$50,000 in short-term investments will assist with the remaining \$26,000 of 2022-23 distributions for church operations.</p> <p>The Board voted unanimously to follow those recommendations. Larry Magder will follow through with making the changes.</p>	<p>John Barry</p>
<p>Incoming Bequest</p> <p>A trust was set up by Al Bolz and Jenny Jung. Since Jenny passed away this year, TUUC will receive a substantial gift. The specific amount is not yet known, but it is estimated to be somewhere around \$125,000. Additionally, the date TUUC will receive money is also not yet set. The intention of the trust is that the money will not be added to the endowment but will be used more immediately.</p> <p>The Board discussed using the funds to improve accessibility issues, including creating an accessible upstairs bathroom or adding an elevator, and/or making the outside more easily accessible by re-grading the ramp outside that is currently too steep</p> <p>The A-team is working on identifying architects/contractors that might be consulted, in order to determine the feasibility and cost of these projects.</p>	<p>Andrew Hager</p>

Discussion Agenda	
<p>Stewardship Update</p> <p>Tracey Myers-Preston expressed gratitude to the Board for their pledging leadership.</p> <p>On the website, there is a new landing page, with graphics, impact statements, videos, and a link to pledge forms. Impact statements will also be in The Threshold. Letters and emails are scheduled to be sent</p> <p>There was a discussion about setting a financial goal as a board (\$352,000), but also opinions that having 100% of members pledge should be the focus. The Board agreed to have a dual goal, aiming to achieve both of these benchmarks.</p> <p>A visual representation of our progress towards meeting these goals--a dashboard or thermometer that reflects the status of pledges--may be added to the website.</p> <p>Board members agreed to spearhead the effort to write thank you notes and to take shifts at a table after service each week to answer any questions.</p> <p>A new aspect of the stewardship campaign this year is the creation of a community-produced artwork. A mosaic will be made by inviting the entire community to contribute (drawings, words, photos, etc.) The Brooks poem serves as inspiration for this.</p> <p>SarahRuth Davis and the hospitality team are working on organizing a potluck to be held on March 19th after worship. In order to be inclusive of those with food sensitivities, folks will be asked to include a card listing the ingredients of their potluck offering as well as a recipe card for others to photograph. There may be some music at the potluck, and SarahRuth will offer a blessing. TUUC will then celebrate the unveiling of the community artwork.</p>	<p>Tracey Myers-Preston</p>
<p>Joint Ministry Evaluation (Continued)</p>	<p>Rev. Clare Petersberger</p>

Discussion Agenda	
Tabled until next month	
Religious Education Volunteers Kara Tyler has asked for a person to volunteer from each group/committee once a month. This will both give the teachers a break and encourage intergenerational outreach. Please consider being a volunteer for RE. Let Kara or Andrew know.	Andrew Hager
General Assembly Discussion The Board will need to appoint delegates to represent TUUC. The idea of offering a scholarship to a youth member or young adult was discussed. No one had asked for a scholarship by the Board meeting time. Some money for this is in the budget, especially enough if someone were interested in virtual attendance. The need for more publicity was mentioned.	Andrew Hager

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 9:05.

Appendix 1: Minister's Report
REPORT TO BOARD FROM REV. CLARE
February 11, 2023

Since my last report....

WORSHIP

Jan. 15 we centered justice and our partnership with Mentoring Male Teens In The Hood. Mr. Cameron Miles joined us. Dominique Hall offered an exquisite testimonial on Lay Worship Associates. The Choir prepared rousing music! And we raised over \$1,300 for MMTH.

January 22 we honored what would have been the 50th anniversary of the Roe V. Wade decision. Several members shared they did not know that Southern Baptists had once been supportive of reproductive choice. Kara was out sick but had prepared wonderful UU 8 principles cootie catchers which Shannon and Simone lifted up. We also welcomed new members and Patty Barry offered a moving testimonial on Membership.

January 29 Rev. Karyn Marsh preached on finding our balance. Mel Ginsburg shared what the Grounds ministry means to him. Since I was on Zoom, I realized how much I missed seeing people drop stones. So we are trying a new way of doing our joys and sorrows ritual on Feb. 12.

Feb. 5 we launched our Stewardship Campaign by imagining the TUUC community of the future. Edith Roundy drew our responses. Henry Gieszl delivered the chalice lighting. Mia Hager and Henry delivered the prayer. Andrew gave a terrific testimonial and the Choir sang beautiful music. (Feb. 3-4 these Youth Group members had attended the first Youth Group overnight at TUUC since the pandemic.)

Feb. 12 we will walk the path of love with a mirroring exercise; Jane D'Ambrogi and Ellie Hughes will speak; and we will commission our Visitors for the BRIDGE, MD Sacred Listening Campaign.

I wrote a column for The Threshold in February on walking the path of love in terms of both Stewardship and our Sacred Listening Campaign.

I watched a recording of the Ministers' Brainstorming session for the March Soul Matters theme of walking the path of vulnerability.

I met with a couple who are planning to be married at the BMA on Earth Day. The groom was raised at UU in Minneapolis.

I've met twice with Demian Canosa (who was raised in TUUC) and his fiancée, Sarah, to plan their August wedding in New York.

I met with Lois Hybl to begin to plan the celebration of life for Al on March 11.

I communicated with Rob Lee regarding a ceremony to lay his father's ashes to rest at TUUC in April.

I spoke with Amy Koren and arranged for the church to be open to stream the celebration of life for Greg Koren from Concord, Massachusetts. Eight people attended in person.

PASTORAL CARE

I have made 11 pastoral visits and attended the Women's Lunch Bunch at Edenwald. I will be meeting with Lay Pastoral on February 19. We are still seeking a Chair for the Caring Committee.

PROGRAMMING

I enjoyed the Board games with the TUUC Board.

I attended the 1 p.m. Town Hall regarding our vision for the community.

I attended the Feb. 1 Program Council Meeting.

I continue to host Soul Matters Sharing Circles sessions (January 24.) We will be beginning a new semester on Feb. 14 and two new people have expressed an interest.

Writing As A Spiritual Practice met on January 20 with a reading from the Braver/Wiser series based on Zora Neal Hurston's Zora Neale Hurston: "*Love makes your soul crawl out from its hiding place.*" We met on Feb. 10th with a reading from Nina Totenberg's "*Dinners With Ruth.*" Len Proctor attended for the first time. So we have six to eight regular participants.

The TUUC staff met as a team on February 8th.

SarahRuth Davis and I meet weekly. And she is now meeting weekly with George Harrison, Chair of the Ministerial Internship Committee. George and I have connected about SarahRuth's leadership initiative at TUUC next year.

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!

I have met with Andrew and Tracey to brainstorm the stewardship campaign; with Patty and Tracey to cull our friends list; and talked with Andrew to craft our joint Stewardship letter which will be sent on Monday.

On February 5, Sarah Ruth and I co-facilitated the fourth session of SACReD (the curriculum from the Spiritual Alliance of Communities for Reproductive Dignity) with eight participants.

Phil Brown's medical leave has been pushed to two weeks later because of Covid. So he will probably be going out on Feb. 22 for four weeks. Kai Aiyetoro will cover for him.

Kai Aiyetoro will be taking vacation time AND attending a religious professional conference April 3-24. The conference is for UU religious professionals of color. TUUC is covering the cost of the conference, housing, and airfare.

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

A-TEAM

The A-Team met on February 10. Because Covid Act Now has returned to Green we will be lifting the mask requirement on February 19th. Hurray! I will send this update to the congregation on Monday.

Ms FeFe hopes to return to cleaning TUUC on March 1. She has requested a modified schedule of 2 days a week vs. three. She will watch the calendar for church events that might require a third cleaning. The A-Team voted to pay Ms. FeFe for February.

Phil Browne's scheduled time away has been pushed out two weeks. We hope Kai will be able to cover for his sick leave.

Our new downstairs door installation is scheduled for Monday, February 13. Clare F-A will be at church at 9 a.m.

The fountain in Memorial Garden is working--YAY! Clare F-A would like to keep it running during really cold weather.

Clare F-A will get a quote for three windows that are fogged and then share the estimate for the Meeting Room window with Kim Peabody who would specifically like to see the window in the Meeting Room replaced.

The two quotes for accessible stairs to the grove came in at \$50,00-\$100,000. We don't currently have the funds to move forward with this project.

The next Blood Drive is scheduled for Wednesday, March 8, 12-6---7:30 or 8 p.m.

2023-2024 Budget

Dan will be on the agenda for the Program Council March 1 meeting. Dan reminded us that for this year's budget, we moved anything that was Capital Expense to the Building Fund which had PPP money that was forgiven. Last year's budget is not indicative of this coming year's budget...unless we have a way to offload all capital expenditures.

There is unanimous agreement that we need to take steps for an accessible restroom.

At the request of Kara Tyler, we are changing the name of the lower level lobby to Community space/lower level.

Tracy Hall requested that a drum teacher be invited to offer a workshop. The instructor wanted to charge each participant \$20 and give 15% of the proceeds to the church. The A-Team countered that we could give a 50% discount---\$175---for what is essentially a rental of the upstairs for 2 hours. I have subsequently communicated with Tracy that if she wants to pay this drum teacher out of the Kate Venables Fund and NOT charge participants---we could consider this a church-sponsored event.

Next meeting date and time for A-Team: March 2, noon

WIDER COMMUNITY

On January 28, I attended the BRIDGE, MD Sacred Listening Campaign training from 9-2 with 8 other members of TUUC. It was an excellent training and I'm excited about the outreach underway.

I met with the new liaison for the Police Accountability Board on January 18th. I was planning to go on an all-day ride-along on February 13th. But then I learned that the Police Academy Training (which is required of Board members) would meet on Wednesday evenings beginning the first Wednesday in April. This would require me to miss two Program Council meetings and the April Board meeting. I was told that I could miss ½ of the Police Academy Training. This did not sit well with my conscience since a) this is a paid Board position and b) I was given an eight-month term. I discerned it was not worth my time or the County's money since I would not be able to make a meaningful difference. So, with regret, I resigned from the Police Accountability Board.

I attended a virtual spiritual retreat of local clergy on February 6.

I participated in the BRIDGE, MD Religious Leaders Caucus on February 9. I will be doing the process observation and offering closing words at the March meeting.

DENOMINATION

I attended a meeting of the Chesapeake UU Ministers Association on January 25 to talk about the Article II Revision.

I met with the CUUMA Leadership Team on Feb. 8.

I spoke with Megan Foley, the CER Lead, about a TUUC matter.

I attended a meeting of UUMA Good Offices representatives.

I registered to attend GA virtually in June.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Clare

Appendix 2: President's Report

February 12, 2023

The biggest single issue for me this month was stewardship. I participated in multiple Zoom calls, exchanged numerous emails, and chatted with various TUUC members informally about the topic. I also spoke on the topic at the February 5 service.

Two listening sessions were held on January 22, one in person after the service and one on Zoom in the evening. The primary reason for these sessions was to understand the various ways congregants envision the future of the church. These dreams and visions are the foundation for all stewardship, financial and otherwise.

I attended the A-Team meeting on February 10.

On February 12, I volunteered to help Kara Tyler with RE. How great to see the kids learning together!

Cabin Fever has recently partnered with the Green Sanctuary Committee to discuss *My Octopus Teacher*. We have also discussed *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, and *Stutz*.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Hager

Appendix 3: President-Elect's Report

Activities since last report:

As President-elect, discussed church matters with Andrew and Rev Clare via zoom meetings and emails. Convened the Program Council on January 4 and February 1.

As a member of the Board, attended Board meeting on January 18, delegated Edith and Louie to participate in Board Games with the Board on January 21.

As a member of the RE Committee, I attended the REC meeting on February 2.

As an RE teacher, I taught middle-school on January 8, 22, 29, and February 5.

Participated in BRIDGE training as part of the Sacred Listening Campaign on January 28 and had my one on one with Hannah Freeman on February 1.

Attended Stewardship Steering Committee meeting on January 30 and agreed to lead the creation of a community art project in support of the stewardship campaign.