

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

Date/Time:	March 15, 2023
Meeting:	March Board Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, SaraRuth Davis, Andrew Hager, Tracey Myers-Preston, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs, Samantha Saalfield
Absent:	Larry Magder, Ellie Hughes, Michael Magrogen,
Guests:	George Harrison
Location:	Zoom
Next meeting:	Wednesday, March 29 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	3/15
Read reports.	All	3/15

**Scheduled Agenda:**

<b>Chalice Lighting</b>	Patty Barry
<b>Process Observation</b>	Sam Saalfield

<b>Go-Around Question</b>	Andrew Hager
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<b>Consent Agenda</b>	Owner
Approve minutes from February 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
Accept Treasurer's Report (Appendix 4)	Larry Magder

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	
<p><b>Banking Representatives</b></p> <p>Larry Magder, Eleanor Hughes, and Andrew Hager are the officers of the organization who have the ability to bind the organization. The Board confirmed unanimously that Larry Magder, Eleanor Hughes, and Andrew Hager have this authority.</p> <p>The Board discussed that this designation does not mean that these three will be making decisions without the Board, but that they are on record for the purpose of the trust distribution.</p> <p>John Barry will be consulted about which non-endowment account the money will be kept in once distributed.</p> <p>We as a Board are so thankful for this gift.</p>	<p>Andrew Hager</p>
<p><b>Church as Employer</b></p> <p>TUUC has been trying to do right by employees, including extended sick leave as needed. Reviews are coming up and vacations are being scheduled.</p> <p>Dan Alper is asking for recommendations for salary for budgeting reasons.</p>	<p>Rev. Clare Petersberger</p>
<p><b>A-Team Update</b></p> <p>The A-Team expressed excitement about being in the Green Zone of Covid levels and being able to have folks unmasked.</p> <p>The new downstairs door was installed on February 15th, without additional masonry work, which had been a possible concern.</p> <p>A work party using TUUC's new chainsaw removed a tree from a neighbor's property.</p> <p>A positive interview with a new security company was held. The hope is that they will be more responsive.</p> <p>Conversations have begun about the work group that will determine the next steps for the accessibility project. If you</p>	<p>Rev. Clare Petersberger</p>

<p><b>Discussion Agenda</b></p>	
<p>are interested or have a suggestion, please let Andrew Hager know.</p>	
<p><b>Membership Report</b></p> <p>New members to report: Shannon Svikart and Kris Faatz. Additionally, a couple of other newcomers are contemplating signing the book.</p> <p>The Committee has connected some newcomers to programs, including the movie group, choir, and Mentoring Male Teens</p> <p>There will be a question and answer session for newcomers to be held on a Sunday after service on a Sunday in April or May. The date is still TBD.</p> <p>The Committee is working on revising the current committee charge, to better reflect changes in the committee's purpose. For instance, the current charge was created before we had multiplatform worship services.</p> <p>Thanks to Rev. Clare Petersberger, Kai Aiyetoro, and Tracy Meyers-Preston for their work on updating the membership list in the database of Breeze.</p>	<p>Patty Barry</p>
<p><b>Stewardship Update</b></p> <p>Tracey Meyers-Preston has spent a lot of time cleaning up the database in Breeze and exporting data to excel for analysis. As we move forward, this will help the Board with decision-making.</p> <p>Tracey, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Kai Aiyetoro, and Patty Barry went over those listed as "Friends" in the database, trimming the list from over 400 to less than 150.</p> <p>So far, 107 members have pledged, and 65 have not. Around \$169,000 has been pledged. For those who haven't yet pledged, if they give the same amount this year as they did last year, the total would finish around \$266,000. A total 266,000 to 270,000 is a realistic projection at this point.</p>	<p>Tracey Myers-Preston</p>

<b>Discussion Agenda</b>	
<p>Expectations need to adjust to reflect the loss of those members who died in the past year. Those members gave around \$15,000 last year.</p> <p>On a positive note, a number of folks have increased their donations.</p> <p>The community is looking forward to the potluck on Sunday and the unveiling of the collective artwork.</p>	
<p><b>Joint Ministry Evaluation (Conclusion)</b></p> <p>Tabled for this evening</p>	<p>Rev. Clare Petersberger</p>
<p><b>General Assembly Discussion</b></p> <p>TUUC will send five delegates to General Assembly, in addition to Rev. Clare Petersberger: Ann Beasley, Nancy Casewell, Sue Royer, Rev. Karyn Marsh, and SarahRuth Davis</p> <p>The Board unanimously voted to accept these delegates. Some important issues will be voted upon at this year's gathering, so the Board is grateful to be sending this slate of representatives.</p>	<p>Andrew Hager</p>

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 8:18

**Appendix 1: Minister's Report**

**March 10, 2023**

**Since my last report....**

**WORSHIP**

Feb. 12 we continued our reflection on walking the path of love. The Choir sang. Kara led us in a mirroring exercise. Jane D'Ambrogi and Ellie Hughe spoke about how we are each other's harvest. Ellie introduced our mosaic project. And we commissioned our Visitors for the BRIDGE, MD Sacred Listening Campaign.

Feb. 19 we celebrated how the heart is always the place to go. Kara led us in an experience of the interdependent web with yarn; Darla Tewell spoke of her practice of noticing beauty; Eleanor Hughes shared her harvest and summer sauce; and Sanahara Ama Chandra graced us with her music.

Feb. 26 the Social Action Committee lifted up being out for justice! When the guest speaker showed up later than expected, Ann Beezley filled in. Many people spoke of the grace and impact of the service.

March 5 we began our exploration of walking the path of vulnerability by celebrating Purim. We had a multi-gen cast to retell the story with some appropriately dressed in drag. Marianne DeBowe reflected on how we are each other's business.

SarahRuth Davis set expectations for the March 19<sup>th</sup> potluck. And the Choir offered us the gift of their music including *Al Hanissim*.

March 12 we will continue our exploration of walking the path of vulnerability by considering our own vulnerability and how we care for each other at TUUC. Kara will introduce worry dolls. The meditation on aging and vulnerability is from Maurice Sendak. Nancy Caswell will speak on our Magnitude and Bond. And Warren Cherry, Donn Teubner, and Tracy will offer special music.

I wrote a column for The Threshold in March on walking the path of vulnerability in terms of marking the third anniversary of Covid and what we have learned from isolation and loss.

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

On Feb. 16, I met with Ellie and Lou to begin planning their June 18 wedding. On Feb. 22, I met with the couple who will be married at the BMA on Earth Day. I am conducting the celebration of life for Al Hybl on March 11 with SarahRuth's participation as our Ministerial Intern.

I met with Lay Worship Associates on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Our initial planning for the summer went well.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

I have made 11 pastoral visits. If the Board has not heard, former TUUC Board President Mimi Marks is in shock trauma at the U of Maryland. I met with Lay Pastoral on February 19. I met with Rev. Karyn Marsh about a class on depression she plans to offer at TUUC in May. We are still seeking a Chair for the Caring Committee.

### **PROGRAMMING**

I continue to host Soul Matters Sharing Circles sessions (Feb. 14 and Feb. 28). We began a new semester on Feb. 14 and three newcomers to TUUC enrolled. Writing As A Spiritual Practice met on February 24 to reflect on a reading about walking the path of love from the UUA Braver/Wiser series. The Reverend Jake Morrill wrote about walking his dog and fearing he had lost her. We had a new participant who expressed appreciation for the group. We met again on March 10

with a reading from Hal Borland about March. We had a different new participant join us who expressed appreciation for the group.

The Program Council met on March 1 and Dan gave an overview of the budget process as part of soliciting budget requests for the next fiscal year.

The TUUC staff met as a team on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

SarahRuth Davis will be presenting her leadership initiative for next year to the Internship Committee on March 19. It currently involves offering , with Dominique Hall, six sessions on worship and spirituality. The goal is for participants to deepen their own spirituality while also helping to rebuild the Lay Worship Associates.

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!

Andrew and I did send out a joint Stewardship letter. We have been working with Tracey on messaging for the subsequent weeks. Tracey has created beautiful weekly reminders, invitations, and encouragement for TUUC's Stewardship Campaign.

On March 5, Sarah Ruth and I co-facilitated the fifth session of SACReD (the curriculum from the Spiritual Alliance of Communities for Reproductive Dignity.) We explored messages of shame we receive around human sexuality and the theological messages we offer to counter such shaming.

Kai Aiyetoro has been covering for Phil Brown who was out on sick leave for three weeks and will hopefully be returning the week of March 13.

A reminder that 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.

## **A-TEAM**

(I am sending this report separately)

## **WIDER COMMUNITY**

For the BRIDGE, MD Sacred Listening Campaign

I met for a one-on-one with Hannah Freeman on February 13.

I met for a one-on-one with Anita Cox on February 22.

I met for a one-on-one with Kristy Hager on February 23.

I am meeting for a one-on-one with Tracey Myers Preston on March 15.

And I am hoping to set-up a one-on-one with Neil Porter.

I wrote a prayer on Justice for the Baltimore County wide Sacred Listening Campaign.

On Feb. 18, I spoke with members of SURJ about my experience on the Police Accountability Board.

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

## **DENOMINATION**

I met with the CUUMA Leadership Team on March 8.  
I followed up with Megan Foley, the CER Lead, about a TUUC matter. Happily, it is resolved.

I registered to attend the UU Ministers Association, virtually, preceding the UUA General Assembly in June.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Clare

## **A-TEAM REPORT**

The big news since the previous formal A-Team report is that TUUC lifted our mask requirement as of February 19<sup>th</sup> because we returned to the Green zone in the Covid Act Now matrix. Covid Act Now does not know if they will be continuing with their website after May. It remains to be seen if enough states will continue to gather data once Covid is declared over by the US government.

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

Our new downstairs door was installed with week of February 13. Heartfelt thanks to Clare F-A for managing this project! No additional masonry work needed to be done.

Our Church Administrator confirmed that TUUC is in good standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments.

A tree fell on the property of our neighbor, Mr. Rodgers. Because the February work party had more people attend than had done so in a long time, and because TUUC purchased a new chain saw, we were able to clear it even though it was not technically TUUC's responsibility. In the future, if a tree falls in a neighbor's property, we will ask for cost sharing.

We are exploring more responsive security companies.

Accessible plan

To move forward with our commitment to make our building more accessible, Rev. Clare will schedule a meeting with Clare Flynn-Avallone, Sue Royer, SarahRuth Davis, Andrew Hager, Ellie Hughes, and Dan Alper to brainstorm the scope of work before contacting an architect.

We are still working on getting bids for the fogged windows that need to be replaced.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Clare

## **CHURCH AS EMPLOYER**

Phil Brown needed an extra week of sick leave. The A-Team unanimously authorized one more week of paid leave.

Annual performance reviews/previews are being scheduled for this month into early April.

Vacations have been scheduled for  
Bookkeeper March 17-27.

Church Administrator April 5-24

Dan Alper has requested recommendations from the Personnel Committee on staff compensation by the end of this month. Rev. Clare needs to schedule this meeting of the Personnel Committee. We already know that health insurance has increased 7% plus for the staff.

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

March 12, 2023

Since our last Board meeting, I have had multiple conversations with Rev. Clare about church matters.

Tracey Myers-Preston continues to do an amazing job with stewardship, and we have been in regular communication about different aspects of the campaign.

Ellie Hughes and I have held multiple discussions about church business.

I chaired this month's Program Council meeting, which included discussions of stewardship and the budget.

I attended the A-Team meeting on March 2 as an observer.

On March 10, Kara Tyler and I met to discuss RE, including proposed curricula for the 2023-24 church year.

Cabin Fever recently attended a screening of *Casablanca* at the Towson Cinemark, and it was a delight to chat over dinner and dessert afterwards.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrew Hager

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

As President-elect, discussed church matters with Andrew and Rev Clare via zoom meetings and emails. Convened the Program Council on March 1 (Andrew chaired the meeting in my absence).

As a member of the Board, attended the Board meeting on February 15.

As an RE teacher, taught middle-school RE on February 19, 26, March 5, 12.



Conducted six one-on-ones as part of the Sacred Listening Campaign and submitted reports to Ann Beasley.

Led the creation of a community art project in support of the stewardship campaign with a testimonial in service on February 19 and an art table during hospitality on February 19, 26, and March 5, 12.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellie Hughes

#### **Appendix 4: Treasurer's Report**

March 13, 2023

At the end of February, our endowment account had \$1,083,243.79. This is down approximately \$40,000 (3.6%) from the value at the end of January. Some of this decline was due to a quarterly draw of \$13,112 to the operating fund. As approved by the board, \$25,000 was transferred from the general index mutual fund to the socially responsible mutual fund. Also as approved by the board, \$50,000 was moved from the general index fund to cash. As a result, of the total in the endowment fund, as of the end of February, there was \$ 71,777 (7%) in cash and \$77,081 (7%) in bonds.

As of the end of January, the money in our bank and money-market accounts totaled \$162,996.86. This is up around \$10,000 from the amount at the end of January, largely due to the draw from the endowment fund.

Respectfully submitted,  
Larry Magder