

**Towson Unitarian Universalist Church
Board of Trustees
April 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Date/Time:	7:30 pm
Meeting:	Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting
Participants:	Patty Barry, Angela Castillo-Epps, Wendell Finner, Andrew Hager, John Mattingly, Rev. Clare Petersberger, Susan Riggs, Sue Royer, Samantha Saalfeld
Absent:	
Guests:	Personnel Committee Members, Tracey Myers-Preston, Luke Williams
Location:	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/96450829649 Meeting ID: 964 5082 9649 Password: 141540
Next meeting:	May 19, 2021

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.		
Sign-ups for chalice lighting, process observation and writing an article for the Threshold (monthly) – to Susan Riggs	All	4/21
Read and provide revisions of minutes from previous Board meeting	All	4/21
Read reports	All	4/21

Scheduled Agenda:

The meeting convened at 7:35 pm

Chalice Lighting	Andrew Hager
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Go-Around Question	All
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Consent Agenda	Owner
Approve minutes from the March Board Meeting. Angela commented about our discussion questions. They should focus on outcomes, not comments on discussion items.	Susan Riggs
Accept Minister's Report (Appendix 1)	Rev. Clare Petersberger
Accept President's Report (Appendix 2)	Sue Royer

Accept President-Elect's Report (Appendix 3)	Andrew Hager
Accept Widening the Circle Action Items (Appendix 5)	Rev. Clare
Accept Stewardship Report (Appendix 6)	Sue Royer

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
Sue Royer asked the Board if any items need to be moved from the consent agenda to the discussion agenda.	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #1 - 30 minutes</i>	
Personnel Committee Report/Church As Employer Sue Royer began with the spreadsheets she put together. Health ins premiums for part time employees has risen quite a bit, in a way that appears unfair to part timers. The premiums tend to go up on Jan 1, part way through our fiscal year. Health ins. will go up 10% this year and maybe more in January. The spreadsheets show where our staff would be paid with the UUA recommended Cost of Living increases. Health benefits and Dental are recommended by the committee. Tracey summarized the work of the Personnel Committee on salary and benefits issues. The Board had a go-around comment for this work. Angela was concerned about moving forward with a dual model for church, requiring much prep for the DRE would need a lot of time to implement. Andrew said that the budget is a "moral document" and we should consider it as such when determining salary and benefits for staff. Rev. Clare said the staff appreciates having health ins. Would like to have salaries keep pace with rising health care costs. Wendell said that our pledging is down, and we need to keep that in mind and we don't know whether the second PPE loan will be forgiven. Hard to look at salaries without looking at the whole budget. Sue Royer would like us to add dental and the salary increases as proposed for health ins.	Tracey Myers-Preston Rev. Clare
<i>Agenda Item #2 – 30 minutes</i>	
Treasurer's Report (Appendix 4) Wendell brought up the quarterly draw from the endowment. We did not take the last one, now we need to look at the next one. He asked if we had a minimum of cash reserves allocated as a matter of practice. Sue thought we should take the next draw. Decision: Wendell moved that we take the quarterly draw from the Endowment as planned. Andrew seconded. All were in favor, except John abstained. (he was away from his computer when the vote was taken). The motion passes.	Wendell Finner

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
<i>Agenda Item #3 – 30 minutes</i>	
<p>Proposed Budget for FY21-22</p> <p>The proposed budget was shared on Zoom. Samantha suggested that we look into one-time expenses (in going to dual platform) vs. ongoing. The point is to be careful about increasing ongoing expenses beyond what we expect to support in future years. Andrew thought the budget might be a hard sell to the congregation. Rev Clare gave thanks for all the work done. Also, she said the UUA has warned that health care may go up in January. Wendell thinks the one-time expenses are in the \$40K - \$50K range. Sue Royer appreciates that info from Wendell. She thinks it is imperative that our congregation grow, to sustain our projects. Budget must be voted on at the May Board meeting, so that it can be distributed to the congregation with the call to the congregational meeting in June.</p>	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #4 – 15 minutes</i>	
<p>Annual Report Input</p> <p>We discussed. Samantha and Susan Riggs offered to draft the Board input. Wendell offered to draft the Endowment input. Sue asked Rev. Clare to cover the Widening the Circle discussions in her report (and not have it duplicated by the Program Council or Board). Andrew agreed to organize the Program Council inputs. Sue is gathering photos. All inputs are due to Kai on May 1. Sue will send a follow-up email and attach last year's report.</p>	Sue Royer
<i>Agenda Item #5 – 15 minutes</i>	
<p>Miscellaneous</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Karyn Marsh – has been cleared by the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee for preliminary fellowship. Discussion about TUUC potentially ordaining Karyn in the fall of 2021. This must be voted on by the congregation in June. The planning needs to be started soon. Hopefully it will be in person at church. Karyn suggested a list of people who might be included in the planning of the service. Rev Clare stressed that having this service for Karyn is very important. Decision: moved, Angela seconded that we move forward and approve TUUC ordaining Karyn Marsh – and put the question to a congregational vote at the June annual meeting. The congregation must vote on this in June. Vote was unanimous. 2. Nominating Committee Update They have someone to recommend for the open position on the Board. 3. General Assembly – promoting attendance, scholarships, deciding upon delegates at our May meeting 	Rev. Clare Sue Royer

Discussion Agenda	Presenter
4. Hybrid Ministries – need to start forming team. Angela may have a resource of a company who helps organizations get to dual platform. 5. Article for the Threshold Could be an article in May to announce that the Board has agreed to approve the 8 th principle and for our congregation to begin the learning and discerning process prior to a congregational vote in 2022.	
<i>Agenda Item #6 – 10 minutes</i>	
Agenda items for the next Board meeting: Endowment Committee, Nominating Committee, Planning for Annual Congregational Meeting, Approval of Budget for FY21-22, Approval of delegates for General Assembly Wendell suggested the Endowment report be on the Consent agenda because much time has been spent on Endowment and there have been no new issues since that time.	Susan Riggs
Process Observation Report	Patty Barry

Having no further business before it, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

Angela will do chalice lighting and Wendell will do process observer

Key Dates:

Sunday June 13, 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting

June 23 – 27, 2021 UUA General Assembly (all virtual)

Appendix 1:
Minister's Report
April 14, 2021

Since my last report....

WORSHIP

On March 14 we celebrated the start of Daylight Savings Time by reflecting on our commitment to change. This Sunday marked one year since we went into virtual space. Nancy Caswell offered her stewardship testimonial. Luke and Dominique offered special music.

On March 21 I attended the moving worship service offered by our Social Action Committee and featuring guests from Mentoring Male Teens In The Hood.

On March 28 we reflected on our commitment to allyship---and specifically addressed racially motivated violence against Asian Americans. Tracy selected music from The Sanctuaries in DC, the UUA's "Loved Into Being service, and Lea Morris.

On April 4, we celebrated Easter! Joyce shared the story of "Chicken Sunday" and many people wore Easter bonnets and shared decorated eggs. Tracy included recordings TUUC Choir members sent her and she mixed so that the Choir sounded like they were singing in our Meeting Room! Robin Sinn played the harp. And our reading was from the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Been To The Mountaintop" speech in honor of the anniversary of his assassination.

On April 11th, we reflected on Magic 8 balls and living into the unknown. We are currently facing a gateway as more people get vaccinated. But we have not yet passed through the gate. So this was an opportunity to begin talking about our vision for when we are able to re-open our building.

I met with Phil and Carel to review slides for this Sunday's powerful Earth Day service sponsored by the Green Sanctuary Committee.

I met with Lay Worship Associates on March 29th. I continue to host virtual vespers services. I conducted a vespers service on March 22nd on the spring equinox.

I attended a Soul Matters collegial virtual meeting to brainstorm ideas for worship on the theme of story for May.

I wrote a newsletter column on resurrection and becoming for April.

PASTORAL CARE

I have had 12 pastoral conversations. I will meet with Lay Pastoral Associates this coming Sunday.

ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAMS

I continue to meet weekly, virtually, with staff. Kai is on vacation April 12-April 30th. Phil is putting in additional hours to help with the PowerPoint. Joyce is on vacation April 13-15. The staff met on March 24 and April 7.

The Personnel Committee (John Mattingly, Luke Williams, and Tracey Myers Preston) met to review the benefits tune up workbook from the UUA. We met Wednesday evening with Sue Royer to discuss a recommendation to the Board on staff salaries. Tracey Myers Preston will be presenting the recommendation of the Personnel Committee at our Board meeting.

PROGRAMMING

Writing As A Spiritual Practice met March 19 and April 2. We average 9 participants.

Weekly Coffee With the Minister draws 3-6 people. It did not meet on March 9 and 30th so that Don and I could get vaccinated at Six Flags.

I met with the Membership Committee on March 8.

Soul Matters Sharing Circle met on March 9, 23, and April 13. Art Starr and I facilitate one break out room. Patty Barry and Anita Cox facilitate the other. We have about 8 participants in each circle.

Widening The Circle Of Concern met to discuss Restoration and Reparations and Accountability and Resources. At our final session on April 14, we discussed, "Where Do We Go From Here?" I am indebted to Sue Royer for taking notes for 6 out of the 8

meetings. Gratitude to Mike Robinson and Patty Barry for each taking notes for one of the meetings. Agreed upon action steps are in the Widening The Circle Report. I participated in the March Program Council Meeting and attended the fun Variety Show on April 10th.

I met with Sue Royer, Andrew Hager, and Angela Castillo-Epps on March 20th to discuss the Minister's Letter of Agreement.

On March 23, I was part of a mock interview for the Ministerial Fellowship Committee for Karyn Marsh. Karyn has been approved for ordination!

I met with the Committee on Ministries and Sunday Morning Structure Task Force on March 24. We have decided that too much is in flux to make a survey (which captures a moment in time) worth the investment of time. Instead, we agreed that it would be helpful if we had conversations with members and friends on these questions:

What are the good things from being in virtual space that we want to carry forward when it comes to planning programs for the year to come?

*What are we looking forward to going back to when we re-open the building?
How do we further deepen engagement in terms of our mission to deepen our ethical and spiritual lives together as we work for racial, social and environmental justice?*

Who might we have forgotten to include in our programming?

The A-Team met on March 16 and April 1.

Todd Robertson met with Bayview Restoration and received a quote to clean the offices and remove carpeting. As part of due diligence, Todd will seek a second quote from Service Master.

Sue Royer will be meeting with Air Duct Cleaning of Baltimore on Tuesday to get an estimate for cleaning the ducts.

Sebastian Gordillo will be conducting an Eagle Scout project at TUUC this coming weekend to spruce up our Memorial Garden and Thoreau Meadow.

The A-Team thanked Sue for signing a new contract with Quality Business System and getting the new Kyocera duplicator installed.

We approved outdoor gathering of OWL and a Youth Group Bonfire. Todd is working on a procedure for OWL to use the bathroom when they meet over the next 10 Sundays. Sue Royer kindly put up signs on the doors of TUUC reminding people to wear masks as well as signs on the bathroom doors that only one person should be in a bathroom at any given time.

COMMUNITY

On March 22nd, I participated in the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation's virtual 60th anniversary interfaith program on "Lens or Blindfold" when it comes to truth claims in other faith traditions.

On April 5, I participated in a virtual meeting of the Anam Cara Clergy group for spiritual deepening.

DENOMINATIONAL

I met with the Chesapeake Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, GWAREC, and MUUSICA on March 31. Tracy provided music for this collegial gathering to explore where we are in terms of thinking about multi-platform church.

I met with Baltimore area colleagues on March 10 and April 14th.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Clare

Appendix 2: President's Report Programs & Ministry

Organized technical ushers and assisted with ushering for Sunday services. Promoted and attended a discussion on Widening the Circle of Concern, which is the report from the UUA Commission on Institutional Change. Attended the 8th Principle Learning Community call on March 24. Participated in monthly meeting of the Social Action Committee and attended the Common Read discussion on Punching the Air. Attended a Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood Zoom session with the Kings on April 3. Hosted the March 21 lay-led worship service on my Zoom account, to provide time-off to Rev. Clare (also hosted the Thursday rehearsal). Hosted the April 10 Variety Show on my Zoom account.

Board & Governance

Spoke several times with a member of the Nominating Committee regarding potential candidates for lay leadership positions. Also spoke with one of the candidates. Covered for our Church Administrator Kai Aiyetoro during her vacation with regards to mail, checks and invoices. I picked up the mail, scanned the checks and invoices and sent them to our bookkeeper, and made the bank deposit for April 12.

Acted as a stand-in at the Administrative Team virtual meetings, in place of the Finance Head. Reviewed the proposed FY21-22 budget with the A-Team. Some adjustments were made. Signed various documents for Quality Business Systems when we took delivery of our new copier/printer on March 30.

Gathered data to analyze health insurance premiums for staff relative to salary over time. Discussed the data and possible options with Rev. Clare and the Personnel Committee on April 14.

Stewardship

Wrote weekly articles for the Threshold and prepared script for follow-up calls. Sent a customized follow-up email to those who had not yet pledged. Calls were made to 53 households by a team of five people. At this time, 147 households have pledged \$287,500. See separate analysis of the Stewardship campaign results.

Respectfully submitted, Sue Royer, President, 4/16/2021

Appendix 3: President-Elect's Report

April 16, 2021

I hosted and moderated our second (of three) Common Read book discussions on March 22. We discussed *Punching the Air*, a YA novel in verse about a wrongfully-incarcerated Black teenager. The final book in the series will be discussed on Monday, April 19.

Joyce Duncan and I worked on narrowing and organizing suggested action items from the minutes of the Widening the Circle discussions. The resulting list was discussed on April 11 at the final (for now) Widening the Circle session.

In partnership with Tracy Hall, I produced the TUUC Variety Show, presented on April 10. The evening raised money for the general operating fund and fostered a sense of community among members and friends of the church. It also showcased the varied, exceptional talents of our congregation. Over 60 people attended this event.

The Program Council did not meet this month, but members were asked to discuss questions related to our Sunday structure with their groups/committees. I will gather responses for the Sunday structure team.

Cabin Fever has recently watched *Compliance*, *Chi-Raq*, and *Bob Roberts*. The group continues to average 7-10 attendees weekly.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Hager

Appendix 4: Treasurer's Report for March 2021

Revenues:

Pledge receipts continue to be weak, such that YTD pledge receipts are down to 85% of budget. Plates remain strong enough that overall revenue is over budget if the 3rd quarter endowment draw had been taken. April deposits after the variety show are quite strong, and I anticipate better outreach to pledgors about their current giving status.

Expenses:

Non-payroll expenses were quite low for March. Where total expenses were 6% over budget for the year through February, they are now only 3% over for the YTD period.

Balance Sheet:

The endowment value at month end was \$1,220,473.09. Unrestricted bank balances totaled \$ \$ 180,496.07

- Wendell Finner, Treasurer, April 15, 2021

Appendix 5:

Widening The Circle Report – Rev. Clare

ACTION STEPS FROM WIDENING THE CIRCLE

Action steps that came out of eight discussions of the Widening The Circle Of Concern report by the UUA'S Commission on Institutional Change.

It's incumbent on us as a predominately white church to take the steps to dismantle white supremacy.

The action items highlighted in yellow were agreed upon by participants as priorities. Many have individuals and groups willing to follow-up. The ones not highlighted in yellow were ideas that emerged from the discussion that may be followed up on at a later date.

Internal

Edit and refocus website: To meet needs of newcomers and be welcoming to younger people, LGBTQ and BIPOC, state mission more clearly

Research and provide opportunities for anti-oppression anti-racism (AOAR) training for greeters, ushers, hospitality, pastoral care providers, teachers, and others Kathy Ramirez suggested a resource: Office of Equity and Civil Rights and Chief Equity Officer Dana Moore – Baltimore City. Steve Finner suggested UUA has people trained to do this as well, including training aligned with UU. Patty Barry offered that the Membership committee is planning a workshop in the early fall to help greeters, hospitality, ushers and membership committee - how to avoid microaggressions and how to be more multi-cultural.

Worship and Music to include more voices of marginalized identities and greater embodiment Budget for next year includes money for this in terms of music and a guest speaker. Encourage people to attend worship!

Continue Common Reads Joyce Duncan is willing to help with Common Reads, Caren Samuels has an extensive book list from her UU church on the Eastern Shore; also did undoing racism workshop which they opened to the community. She has shared this list with Joyce.

Offer Lifespan Religious Exploration on our theology and the contributions of people of color Michael Magrogan will follow-up. Karyn Marsh also interested in assisting.

Offer field trips with learning focus to Hampton Mansion and/or East Towson

Michelle List has an education module on the Hampton Mansion Plantation and suggested that we go as a group, including youth, and tour the working area where the enslaved people lived. This was done once as a family outing. Could be opened to entire congregation when safe.

Conduct a multiculturalism audit Each committee/group will be asked to analyze their alignment to mission/vision Andrew Hager – offered to be involved with this as the convener of the Program Council

Workshop for Congregation (like Jubilee or with a BIPOC trainer)

Partnerships In The Community

Join Black Lives Matter Interfaith Coalition Patty Barry will look into this and report to the Board

Go to diverse communities at Goucher/TU, asking what they might need Kathy Ramirez will ask her daughter, who is a teaching at Towson U. Jay Herzog, Donna Fox, Department of Theater Arts. International Peach Studies. Equivalent of BIPOC.

Join group opposing incinerators in Baltimore racial and environmental justice issues.
<https://ilsr.org/baltimore-neighbors-band-together-to-battle-incinerator/>

Nancy Caswell is interested in helping with this – talk with Spice Kleinmann or Janet Schollenberger

Unitarian Universalist Association

Adopt 8th Principle The Board has adopted the 8th principal as a Board. Now we need to begin as a congregation a plan to widen the discussions. Who is interested in serving: Nancy Caswell, Joyce Duncan, Ann Beezley, Kathy Ramirez, Andrew Hager, Karyn Marsh, cottage meetings, discussions, take some time before a congregational meeting.

TUUC sponsor scholarships to attend GA – we are doing this

Do orientation for GA and also take positions regarding voting as a church. Start the planning for this now and not two weeks before registrations for GA

Other possible internal action steps

Reconsider names and descriptions of committees and groups: e.g., Social Action committee and Green Sanctuaries renamed as Social Justice committee; find new name for Ethnic Lunch social group

Support system for Nominating Committee to act as an agent of change

Install a plaque acknowledging the history of the land our building is on...as unceded land of the Piscataway Conoy Nation and as home to enslaved people by Hampton Mansion.

Add a module to YRE about TUUC location and the implied systemic racism.

Possible books to explore for our own education

- *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City* by Antero Pietila
- *The Lines Between Us: Two Families and a Quest to Cross Baltimore's Racial Divide* by Lawrence Lanahan
- SURJ. Reading *The Black Butterfly* about housing segregation in Baltimore.

- Mark Morrison Reed, *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*
- Louis Diggs has authored eight books about historic African American communities in Baltimore County, with funding support from grants and he interviewed/took oral histories.

Other possible external action

Join Maryland Lynching Memorial Project

Explore ways for youth to join with those from other diverse communities or places of faith for community service and/or for justice work (when safe)

Reparations discussion. Steve reported on the UUA's Allies for Racial Equality. There is a Maryland organization now, established by law, focused on truth and reconciliation. They will be holding community input meetings. This was delayed by the pandemic.
<https://msa.maryland.gov/lynching-truth-reconciliation>

Other possible UUA action steps

Encourage people to go on Living Legacy pilgrimage

Appendix 6: Stewardship Report – Sue Royer

Stewardship Report FY 21-22

190 pledging households in FY 19-20; 145 pledging households in FY 20-21;

+ 7 new (3 new in 20-21, 4 additional new in 21-22) = 197

[6 households paid as if they had pledged in FY 20-21]

148 pledges received to-date for FY 21-22, of which:

58 pledging households increased their pledge compared to FY 20-21
 69 pledging households kept their pledge the same compared to FY 20-21
 17 pledging households decreased their pledge compared to FY 20-21
 4 pledging households are new compared to FY 20-21

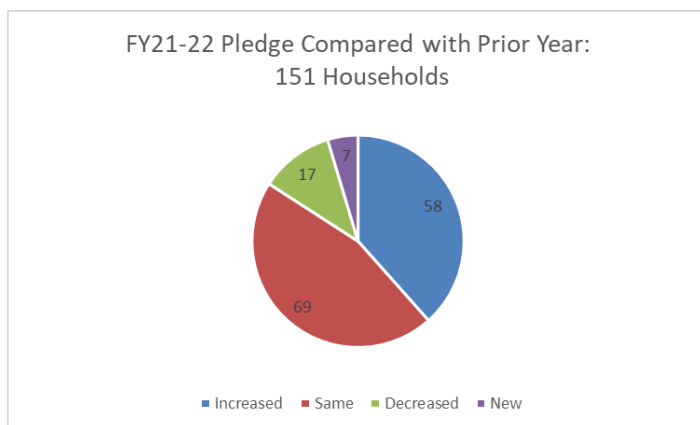
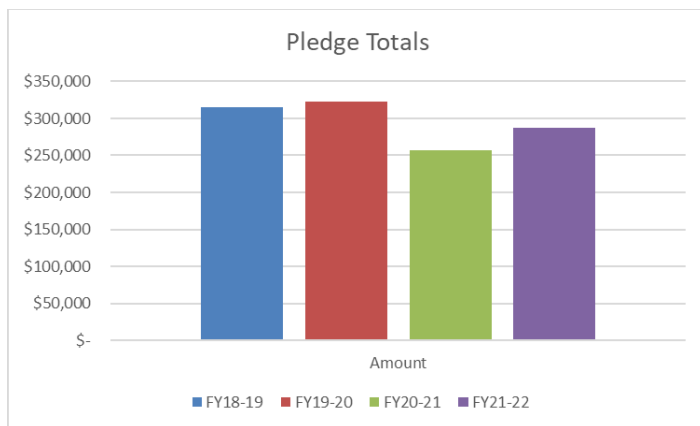
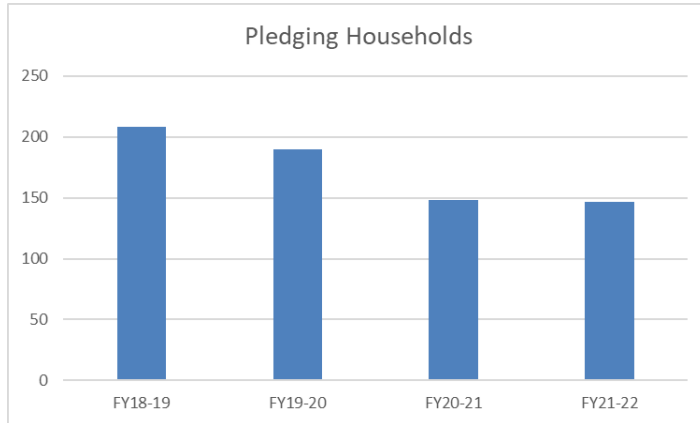
No pledges will be forthcoming from:

7 households moved/are moving
 4 households resigned
 1 household who merged with another
 5 households with health challenges
 1 household member died
 1 household member spouse died
 3 households paused pledging and will see when we can return in person
 1 household with financial challenges
 13 households stopped attending

Total of 36

12 pledges not yet received, 5 of whom may still pledge

We are looking for 160 pledges if everyone who is still on the list pledges



Average Pledge	\$1,943
Mean Pledge	\$1,112
Median Pledge	\$1,200

With 4 Outlier data points removed:

Average Pledge	\$1,660
Mean Pledge	\$1,142
Median Pledge	\$1,200

Sue Royer, 4/16/2021