

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH

Board of Trustees – Meeting Minutes

Date: September 12, 2018

Board Members Present: Sarah Estes (2019), Beth Whelan (2019), Gary Gebhart (2020), Patricia Rohrer (2020), Dan Schneider (2020), Ginny Casey-Leininger (2021), Dick Miltner (ex-officio), and Rev. Connie Simon (ex-officio).

Board Members Absent: Amy Hunt (2019), David Johnson (2021), Denys Steele (2021).

Staff Present: Carrie Spiess and Meredith Plummer

Staff Absent: None

Guests: None

Call to Order: Patricia called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Patricia thanked Beth for the opening reading and snacks. Patricia agreed to preside over the executive committee and board meeting since Dan has just returned from an extended trip.

Consent Agenda: Minutes of previous meeting, Agenda for current meeting, Staff and President's Reports: Gary moved and Beth seconded that the minutes and agenda be approved and the reports be accepted. Unanimous approval.

Treasurer's Report - Treasury and Capital Budget Close of FY18: Dick and Carrie reported that FY18 has been closed with a successful transition from Quick Books software to Xero software.

Dick was pleased to advise board members that FY18 ended with a surplus of \$6,711. Dick advised board members that on the revenue side of the budget, donations and building rentals were well above projections for the year, but plate collections were lower than the \$10,000 projection. Carrie suggested that the budgeted plate collection might have been on the high side. Dick reported that although the pledge collection showed a deficit, the collection rate of 95.6% was excellent. Dick also reported that expenses too were less than expected, which also contributed to this surplus. The most notable expenses that were under budget were in health insurance, gas and electric costs. Overall expenses were \$12,103 less than projected.

Action: After a discussion regarding the plate collection, Carrie agreed to research plate collections for the last several years to look at the budgeted level and the giving level.

Financial Report: Carrie reported that as of 8/31/18 the following revenue has been collected for FY19: plate collections \$1,599 (\$1,565 FY 18), donations \$14,145 (7,030 FY18), pledges \$112,720 (\$85,887 FY18) and these two months of revenue represents 29% of the projected revenue for FY19. Carrie advised the board members that historically 27% of revenue comes in the first quarter, 34% comes in the second quarter, 26% comes in the third quarter and 13% comes in the fourth quarter. Revenues to date are on target.

Carrie has also reported that for the past several months she has been researching insurance coverage for the church and has found a new carrier (Church Mutual) that will provide comparable coverage (Great American current carrier) for a substantial savings. She has advised the board that she

recommends the terms offered by the new carrier and has initiated the change to be effective October 1, 2018.

Action: Carrie will keep the board apprised of this transition to a new insurance carrier.

Minister's Report: Rev. Connie advised board members that several congregants were upset when Dr. Jared Leighton (guest speaker) used the n-word during his sermon on the life of Bayard Rustin (as part of the Bayard Rustin festivities happening in the area) and that one family left the September 9th worship service. When pressed on why he used such a term, Dr. Leighton told Rev. Connie that he was quoting Bayard Rustin text. Rev. Connie reached out to the members who left and has heard their concerns and believed that the issue was important enough to warrant a special email to the congregation explaining what had happened. Responses from the congregation have been positive and supportive and Rev. Connie feels satisfied that the matter has been addressed. Rev. Connie does not need the board to take any action at this time.

Rev. Connie reported that she spent the month of August building internal relationships, but did meet with Rev. Damon Lynch, of New Prospect Baptist Church, to look at opportunities where the two churches may work together.

Rev. Connie reported that she has attended committee meetings for Social Justice, Communications, Membership, Worship, Family Programming and MVP. Rev. Connie believes that worship services are going well, and she continues to work on her relationship with the Worship Committee. She will continue to review the overall worship program and has made some changes to the Order of Service. She has also developed a year-long worship calendar and would like to implement a worship associate program.

As part of Rev. Connie's professional transition, a Committee on Ministry has been formed and will include Fran Turner, Shelly Wallace, Phillip Schaefer and Alexis Liu. This group will assist and support Rev. Connie in her role as minister, especially during her first year. This group will help Rev. Connie assess performance at the end of her first year and work closely with Rev. Connie and the UUA regarding professional development plans. This group will be separate from the Board.

The committee developing plans for Rev. Connie's installation on October 28th has been established. All invited speakers are confirmed and a tentative order of service is complete. Invitations have been designed by Carla Shepherd and will be ready for mailing soon.

Rev. Connie reported that requests for pastoral care are regularly coming into the church, and has met with several people. Rev. Connie plans to work closely with Jane Kay to find out how she can be informed of pastoral needs before they are posted to the ListServ and to discuss the pastoral care program in general.

On-boarding Weekend: The On-boarding weekend (September 28th and 29th) is shaping up, and the content for both sections is still being developed by the co-facilitators. The event will be co-facilitated by Rev. Lisa Presley, MidAmerica Region of UUA and Rev. Darrick Jackson (serving as minister of color observer), Interim Associate Executive Director of the UU Ministers Association. The Friday evening session will be opened to all members of the congregation, including children 10 years and older. The Saturday all-day session will be for the minister and board members only.

Action: Rev. Connie and Dan will ensure that all members received an invitation (evite) for the Friday evening portion of the On-Boarding weekend, and Meredith will reach out to all families involved in the religious education program to make sure they are aware of the event.

Board Goals 2018-2019: The board goals that were developed by the board at their annual retreat were carefully reviewed and some minor changes were agreed upon. The following are the board goals for the coming church year:

1. Create a process to review and discern our congregational mission and vision
(Responsible: Dan Schneider, Rev. Connie)
2. Support Rev. Connie during her first year of ministry, including the following: providing logistical support, facilitating local connections, and providing support needed for preliminary fellowship requirement
(Responsible: Amy Hunt, Carrie Spiess)
3. Create a process to establish a Committee on Shared Ministry as an ad hoc committee of the board.
(Responsible: Beth Whelan, Denys Steele, and Rev. Connie)
4. Create a process to establish an Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, and Multiculturalism Team for the congregation. The team will: address ensuring that First Church is recognized as a Welcoming Congregation, address supremacy and other anti-oppression issues.
(Responsible: David Johnson, Patricia Rohrer, and Rev. Connie)
5. Continue Bylaws revisions.
(Responsible: Sarah Estes, David Johnson, and Dick Miltner)
6. Create a process to establish a Conflict Resolution Program to implement the Covenant of Right Relations.
(Responsible: Ginny Casey-Leininger, Rev. Connie)
7. Work with the Social Justice Committee to establish social justice priorities.
(Responsible: David Johnson, Gary Gebhart, and Rev. Connie)

Action: For Goal 5, Dick will continue to dissect the Bylaws and group Bylaws into three groups: things that affect the board, things that affect the minister, and things that affect the congregation in an effort to clarify the Bylaw revision process.

Sarah moved and Beth seconded that the Board accept these goals as written for the 2018/2019 church year. Unanimous approval.

Additional Board Meetings: Board members have expressed an interest in meeting with each other to get to know each other better and to have more in-depth discussions regarding board and church matters. Discussion include the following: quarterly meeting with a meal (mini retreat), good time frame might be Saturday mornings, and the goal would be to create a space to have more in-depth discussions around mission and vision, and other topics as identified. The board agreed to give this more thought in order to put some parameters around it.

Dr. Washington Property Task Force: Dick reported that Dave Wallace (Chair of this task force) and Rev. Connie have decided that they will contact Dr. Washington to set a date to meet with him to determine if he is still interested in selling his property to First Church.

Social Justice Share the Plate Proposals: Patricia reported that the Social Justice Committee has identified three organizations that they would like to dedicate the plate collection to: IHN for September 23, 2018, Shiloh Pantry for October 28, 2018, and UUSC for November 4, 2018. Patricia advised the board that there is a Plate Policy that includes the completion of information by a church member to identify the recipient, what the funds will support, and who the check will be written to. Information needs to be completed in advance of the designated date and returned to the Operations Manager. Church Administrator will also need this information in advance in order to put it in the newsletter.

Gary moved and Sarah seconded to approve the request for IHN for September 23rd as the form has been completed. Unanimous approval.

Action: The Shiloh Pantry and UUSC requests will be voted on after the paperwork has been completed.

Church Council Meeting September 15, 2018: Patricia reported that the Church Council meeting is scheduled for the following Saturday. The agenda will include discussions about the minister's, Board of Trustees, and committee goals for the coming church year. Committees will be asked to create descriptions of typical committee projects/tasks to improve transition of committee members. Committees will also be informed about an opportunity to collaborate: Family Programming's **Trunk or Treat** event, scheduled for October 20th from 3pm to 6pm. The goal of the event is to have a fun opportunity for First Church and Avondale families to get to know each other. Students from the South Avondale Elementary School and other Avondale residents will be invited to participate.

Congregational Meeting, Sunday, September 23, 2018: Dan reported that the agenda for the meeting has been finalized, the Board President's Report is prepared, the Minister's report is ready, the financial documents are being readied, the all-church annual report is being compiled, and the agenda and May 20, 2018 Congregation Meeting minutes have been sent to all members of the church in preparation of this meeting.

Alice the Chalice Presentation: As the most recent recipient of Alice the Chalice award, Beth decided to give the award to Gary for opening his home to host the annual board retreat.

Adjournment: At 8:32pm, Patricia adjourned the September 12, 2018 Board Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Casey-Leininger, Board Secretary

President's Report to the Board for Meeting of September 12, 2018

Froehlich Estate Update

Attorney David Blessing recently informed our attorney Steve Olden and me that the insurance attorney for defendant Randy Siciliano will take the church's depositions October 4 in Mr. Blessing's office. Steve Olden will answer questions on our behalf.

On-boarding Workshops

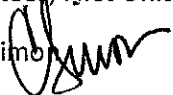
All board members are encouraged to participate in both workshops, the evening of Friday, September 28, and Saturday, September 29. Rev. Lisa Presley from the MidAmerica Region will lead the workshops. Rev. Darrick Jackson, Interim Associate Director of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, will also participate.

September 23 Congregational Meeting

In order to emphasize the unity and collaboration of the lay and clergy leadership of our congregation, I will serve as worship associate at the September 23 morning worship service preceding the meeting. All of the committee reports were submitted in time for publication to the members. Secretary Ginny Casey-Leininger will not be able to attend, and Sarah Estes has agreed to take minutes in Ginny's absence.

Dan Schneider
Board President

To: Board of Trustees, First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati

From: Rev. Connie Simon 

Date: September 5, 2018

Re: Minister's Report – August 2018

As you can imagine, much of this month was filled with getting settled both at home and in the church.

Building Relationships – Internal

Our biggest task this year will be learning how to work together as a new team. There are unique challenges and opportunities in any new ministry – especially one with a new minister who is also a person of color. This month I began regular meetings with Board President Dan Schneider, met with Shelly Wallace regarding the status of the Committee on Shared Ministry and attended the Board retreat.

I've also spent time with each of the staff. By necessity, much of our time together was spent on work that needed to be done immediately. We have identified areas that we will revisit over the coming weeks when we have opportunity to do more in-depth discussion and planning.

I attended Social Justice, Communications, Membership, Worship, Family Programming and MVP meetings.

Building Relationships – External

I decided it would be best to devote the month to getting to know the people of this congregation first before filling my schedule with outside obligations. The only exception was a visit to a Shiloh Food Pantry volunteer who is in hospice care.

As part of learning the city of Cincinnati, I attended several events this month and made many incidental connections with people in the business, educational and religious community.

Worship

We had two successful Sunday services (Water Communion on August 19 and "Who is We?" on August 26). Both services are part of a series designed to introduce me to the congregation and lay the foundation for the work we will do the rest of the year and into the future. We also had a well-attended vespers service on August 22.

I am continuing to review our overall worship program and have made some changes to the Order of Service, added a year-long worship calendar and am implementing a worship associate program.

On-Boarding

I had several conversations with UUA national and regional staff, other religious professionals and with Dan regarding the on-boarding weekend scheduled for Friday and Saturday, September 28-29. Rev. Darrick Jackson, Interim Associate Executive Director of the UU Ministers Association, has agreed to serve as the minister of color co-facilitator.

Installation

A committee has been assembled to plan the installation service to be held October 28, 2018. All invited speakers are confirmed and a tentative order of service complete.

UU Regional and Denominational Activities

I attended the Association of UU Music Ministries (formerly UU Musicians Network) annual conference with Jera. We learned a lot and returned with several new pieces of music that we hope to use this year. I also attended the Professional Development Day program for ministers, religious educators and musicians.

I connected with Revs. Jafarzadeh, Slagle and Gupton this month. We agreed on the need to have regular Cincinnati-Dayton ministerial cluster meetings.

I continue to serve on the worship team of Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism.

Pastoral Care

I conducted three pastoral care visits with members and officiated one funeral in August.

Areas of focus for September:

- Begin Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multiculturalism (ARAOMC) planning
- Continue long-range worship planning
- Meet with Cincinnati area clergy
- Successful onboarding
- Establish Preliminary Fellowship/Ministerial Relations Committee
- Host September UU Cincinnati-Columbus cluster meeting

August 2018 Music Director board report for September 12, 2018

Accomplishments:

- attended UUMN conference in Portland OR
- attended 2 worship committee meetings
- met with Rev. Connie to collaborate on upcoming services and her installation
- rehearsed Singers 3 times
- played 2 services and directed the choir for both
- ordered new repertoire for ringers and singers
- played for vespers service
- contacted 2 musicians for the installation

Goals:

- finalize choir calendar
- determine December Music Sunday repertoire
- record songs for review by Rozy to be used for youth performances

Help needed:

- continued support

Submitted by

Jera Cox

Music director/keyboardist

Top accomplishments this month:

- Vacation (August 2nd – August 12th).
- Completed Fall Volunteer Recruitment (see 'Other').
- Updated FP Program Booklet.
- Updated FP Volunteer Training Module.
- Assembled and sent 2018 – 2019 mailers to all First Church families.
- Modified and assembled 2018 – 2019 Curriculum for 1st – 3rd and 4th – 5th grade classrooms.
- EqUUal Access work.
- Jr. High OWL Administration (see 'Other')
- Follow-Up interviews with Sr. High Youth Advisor Candidates.
- Water Communion.
- Kindergarten Recognition.
- Trunk or Treat Prep.
- Put away all Summer Camp materials.
- Delivered one Time for All Ages.

Priorities for the months ahead

- Continue EqUUal Access work.
- Administrative Tasks (Registration, Attendance, Budget, etc.).
- Continue Jr. High OWL Administration.
- Trunk or Treat Prep.
- Church Council.
- FP. Open House.
- Congregational Meeting.

Other

- **Fall Volunteer Recruitment:** The board may or may not be aware of this, but FP did volunteer recruitment a bit differently this year, than in previous years. Instead of everyone splitting off and doing volunteer recruitment on their own time, I joined three members of the FPC the night of Monday, August 20th. We enjoyed a potluck, and then did a call-a-thon. Having notified families that we would be calling them, everyone who picked up knew why we were calling, and they were ready with their calendars in hand. Everyone we did not reach was encouraged to visit the SingUp Genius website to set their schedule (and many did). By the end of the night, we had most of our volunteer assistant positions filled through January. That, alone, would have been worth celebrating. But, the following Sunday, I was able to successfully reach out to a number of other members, and recruit all the volunteer teachers we need for the year! By far, this has been the best volunteer recruitment season I have ever experienced in my 9 years at First Church. And, I thought the Board should know.
- **Jr. High OWL:** The OWL coordinator from St. John's (their DRE) was fired last month. What was once a 5 person job, is now left to two people (one of them a volunteer). St. John's has agreed to hire someone to fill the position of OWL coordinator. But, until that person is hired, I am currently performing the duties of 3 coordinators.
- **Numbers:** The start of the church year has left me with little time to do my basic administrative tasks. Therefore, I do not have any numbers to provide the board at this time.

Operations Manager Report to the Board
September 12, 2018 Board Meeting

A. Top Accomplishments August

a. Facilities

- i. Submit schedule through June 2019 for Hamilton County Sheriff Office
- ii. Secure Lawn Life for maintenance of exterior drains – ongoing project
- iii. Finalize Linton Chamber Music logistics for upcoming season
- iv. Arrange overflow parking for Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra during Aug rehearsals

b. Finance

- i. Provide support for closing the books for FY18
- ii. Prepare for financial systems transition
- iii. Explore members' online pledge accounts for real-time access
- iv. Begin transition with PNC Bank to new credit card payment option

c. HR

- i. Member of search team for hiring of a new Sr. High Youth Advisor
- ii. Aid in onboarding of Rev. Connie
- iii. Work with UUA and Rev. Connie to ensure accurate compensation for payroll

d. Other

- i. Continue to receive updates for Emergency Action Plan

B. Priorities for Months ahead

- a. Financial systems transitions
- b. Closing the books for FY18
- c. Provide support for onboarding Rev. Connie

Office Administrator's Report for 9/12/18 Board Meeting

A. Top Accomplishments from the Month:

Rev. Connie arrived and settled in. Our corner of the church (the office spaces) is busier than it's been for a while as we get to know each other and I look forward to a whole different level of activity at First Church. Bring it on!

The Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra held rehearsals here for the month of August. Because of the presence of volunteer hosts, I didn't have to pay too much attention to the front door. But when guests are in the building, there are always questions about resources – this time fans and such – on a daily basis.

I was on vacation the last week of August – and extend a huge thank-you to the volunteers (Barb Rider, Linda Miltner and Carol Lloyd who were able to fill in as well as to Cynthia Heinrich who volunteered but couldn't serve because of a family emergency.

B. Priority for Months Ahead:

If we are into September, the holidays are coming up fast. Please remind the committees to make sure that all events have space reserved on the calendar and write-ups for the newsletters and OOS are done in a timely manner. Thanks!

C. Help Needed

I have all the Annual Reports at this time, with the exception of the Treasurer's Report and the Finance Committee Report. They are always late, and that is how it must be! That and the Directory will all need to be put together before the Annual Meeting on Sept. 23. The Annual Report is easy enough – but it would be a great help if I could recruit some volunteers to bind the Directory. I can have it all ready – and the 18th or 19th (Tuesday or Wednesday) would be perfect days to do this.

Susan West, Office Administrator

Memorandum from Registrar

August 31, 2018

To: First Church Board of Trustees: Dan Schneider, President
From: Linda Miltner, Registrar

CC: Finance Chair: Dennis Finney
Treasurer: Dick Miltner
Canvass Co-Chairs: Tim Christy and Alice Schneider
Extended Ministry Chair: Jane Kay
Membership Committee Chair: Carol Lloyd
Office Administrator: Susan West
Operations Manager: Carrie Spiess
Minister: Rev. Connie Simon

Since the July 2018 report, no one has joined the church. Also, we have not lost any members.

Our official active membership remains at 290.

Linda Miltner
Registrar