

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana

Seeking the Spirit, Building Community, Changing the World



Board Minutes

March 23, 2016

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Board members attending: Kathleen Sideli, Von Welch, Arzetta Hults-Losensky, Deb Hutton, Ann LeDuc, Pat Brantlinger

Not attending: Doug Cauble

Present by invitation of the Board: Shari Woodbury

Ministers attending: Reverend Mary Ann Macklin and Reverend Doug Wadkins

Submitted by Ann LeDuc, Secretary

I. Call to Order 7:02 PM

Call to order by Kathleen Sideli, President, at 7:02 PM

Changes to the agenda: None

II. Chalice Lighting and Reading

Chalice lighting and reading by Kathy.

III. Check-in

Attendance and check-in.

IV. Main Meeting

A. Approval of Previous Board Minutes

Motion by Deb: to approve the February 2016 Board of Directors Meeting minutes.

Seconded by Pat.

Vote: approved unanimously.

B. Staff Report Shari Woodbury

See attached "Report to Board from Connections Coordinator."

We are piloting a parish nurse program with the help of Ruth Ann Cooper, Melinda Swenson and others. There was a conversation regarding the church's liability in relation to the parish nurse program. Currently the nursing duties are limited to consultation with church staff.

Hospitality is one area that Shari would recommend making changes to in the future. Some UU churches use a concept called "Hospitality Teams" that address multiple areas of hospitality.

There was a discussion about how the angle of the camera for livestreaming often makes it look like there are not very many people attending service. This is due to not many people sitting in front of the Multimedia Specialist's podium.

Shari explained that if the Connections Coordinator position were to grow into a larger role in our congregation, it could become a Congregational Life Consultant position. This expanded position could spend additional time on areas such as new member involvement, creating hospitality teams, and expanding programming.

Von mentioned that in Dan Hotchkiss's new book, Hotchkiss calls congregations our size "multi-celled." In these congregations, attendees who join small sub-groups are more likely to stay in the congregation.

C. Minister's Report Reverend Mary Ann Macklin

Part of Reverend Macklin's vision for next year includes increased community involvement. This is already happening.

April 7 is the day the Ministerial Search Committee will make the initial offer to the top candidate for the Associate Minister position. Tentatively, April 17-24 will be candidating week. During candidating week the candidate will visit our church and meet many congregants.

There were a number of pastoral issues last week. Reverend Macklin is very thankful for those who went out of their way to create the memorial service for James Thompson Biggers III.

April 10 at 6:30 pm there is an open house at the Islamic Center. Board members were encouraged to attend the open house and identify themselves as Board members of UUCB.

The Board unanimously agreed to pledge to support the "Pledge to be Openhearted" campaign. <http://openheartedcampaign.org/pledge.html>

Staff evaluations will take place in May. They will include self-evaluations, and evaluations of Reverend Macklin. Some positions are more isolated in their work; those evaluations will be more challenging.

May 1, 7:00 PM there will be a Yom HaShoah Holocaust Remembrance Day at UUCB. An offering will be taken to benefit Exodus, a philanthropic organization that works on behalf of those who are oppressed in our country and in our day and age.

Alan Backler will be the Chalice Circle Chair for one more year. Next year, Anna Beauchamp will co-chair with Alan.

Reverend Macklin is a Board member for the Indiana Chapter of Compassion and Choices. This organization leads campaigns, and offers information and services for self-determined and peaceful dying.

October 6-8 there will be a conference on campus called "Critique-Resist-Transform: Feminist Scholar Activism and the New View Campaign." This conference takes a stand against the medicalization of sexuality. Reverend Macklin will provide the invocation and opening reflections.

D. Old Business

1. Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) Update Abby Gitlitz

Pre-candidating weekends have been completed. Reverend Macklin met with all the candidates. The MSC is now at the point of communicating to the UUA their top candidate and other possible candidates. If the top candidate choice is not plausible, Keith Kron may advise us to consider the other candidates. On April 7 at noon, a

search committee representative will phone the top candidate to see if they are interested in being the new UUCB Associate Minister.

As soon as the top candidate confirms that they are interested in the Associate Minister position, then the negotiating committee can move forward with negotiations.

During the initial consideration of what package to offer the candidate, the negotiating committee has chosen to have information regarding gender, race, sexual orientation, and age recused.

If April 17-23 is set as the candidating week, there will only be a very short period of time to get the congregation excited about the candidate. Many forms of communication will be used to let the congregation know about the candidate and the events surrounding candidating week.

April 17, the candidate will preach at UUCB.

April 18-22 the candidate will meet with the Board, the Ministers, staff, and as many congregation sub-groups as possible. It will be a very busy week for the candidate. One search committee member will be present at each meeting the candidate attends during candidating week.

The congregation's vote to "call" the new Associate Minister will occur on April 24, if all goes as planned.

170 voting members need to attend the congregational meeting on April 24 to "call" the Associate Minister. Additionally, usually at least 95 percent of the attendees need to agree to "call" the minister for the minister to agree to the "call."

[NOTE: Bylaw 3.6 states "Quorum. Ten percent (10%) of the membership of the Church shall constitute a quorum, except that one third of the total membership shall always be necessary to constitute a quorum at a meeting at which the appointment or dismissal of a Minister(s) is to be determined." Since we currently have 468 members, one third of all members would equal 156, instead of 170.]

At the congregational meeting to "call" the Associate Minister, the Board will establish the ground rules of the meeting. It is common to allow only a few minutes of open conversation before the vote to "call." The search committee will present an overview of the search process, provide information regarding why this person is a great candidate, and what will happen if we do not have enough "yes" votes to "call" the Associate Minister.

Search committee updates will be given from the pulpit every Sunday until candidating week. These updates will stress that 156 members need to attend the congregational "call" meeting and 95% need to vote yes.

2. Planning for Special April Events

In April there will be many activities around the Associate Minister search. Also, Shari Woodbury's ordination will also be held at the church on April 3. On April 2, a

wine and cheese social event will be held at Andrea Murray's home in honor of Shari's Ordination. Several Board members will attend.

3. Update on Stewardship Campaign Kathy

The stewardship campaign letter from Drew Schrader, Stewardship Chair, was distributed via email today.

Recent statistics show that the size of our budget, and hence our stewardship, has increased in recent years from a budget in the top 10% to the top 7%.

Per Lisa Presley of the MidAmerica region:

Bloomington certified in 2016 with 464 members. That makes you the 47th largest congregation. For RE enrollment, you reported 160 kids; that makes you 49th largest. Your average attendance is 329, which makes you 33rd largest in attendance. You have 296 pledging units, which makes you 53rd largest (which could mean you have more coupled people); in budget you reported \$642,977, which makes you 73rd in budget.

Kathy compared the data from Mid America with previous data and came up with the following overview:

2016: 984 congregations responding

464 members – 47th largest – top 5%

329 attendance – 33rd – top 3%

296 pledge units – 53rd largest – top 5%

\$643K budget – 73rd largest – top 7%

2012: c.1,000 congregations responding

470 members – top 5%

24th in attendance – top 3%

107% for budget – top 10%

800 families attend our church, even though we have 468 members.

On April 3 the stewardship activities will peak.

The Ministers' stewardship letter will be distributed next week.

E. New Business

1. Monitoring

I. All Ends Statement Policies

Direct Inspection by the Board

Required Exhibits: Exec Minister Report and Membership Coordinator Report

This is on hold until the April Board meeting.

2. Letter of Agreement for Reverend Macklin

A few changes to the Letter of Agreement (LOA) were given to Von. The LOA will be approved at the April Board meeting.

V. Executive Session

The board met in executive session at 9:13 PM.

VI. Adjournment 9:28 PM

Motion by Pat: to adjourn.

Seconded by Deb.

Vote: approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 PM.

REPORT TO BOARD FROM CONNECTIONS COORDINATOR

March 16, 2016

Membership 12/31/2013	492 (peak)
Membership Jan. 2015	468
Membership March 2016	468

Membership has held steady as we have added new members: 24 in 2015 and 5 this February. At the same time, we have lost people due to death (11 members and friends total since last January), resignation of membership, and through the roll review process. (In the recent roll review, 4 indicated they no longer wished to be members because they have moved or found another faith community, and 14 inactive people were removed due to lack of response.) Our new members include a mix of folks new to Unitarian Universalism; UUs transplanted here from other parts of the country; and youth and young adults raised in our congregation who have decided to join.

Here's a look at worship by the numbers:

- Average attendance for calendar 2015 was 323, compared with 368 in 2014 and 386 in 2013. This includes adults and children present on Sunday morning.
- Visitors for 2015 totaled 144, compared to 163 in 2014.
- People joining us via Live streaming each service vary from 2 to in the upper 20s, with numbers in the teens typical. Archived services are watched from a few times to 30-some times. Weather, the buzz of must-see services, and personal factors may all affect this.
- **A request:** Speaking of Livestreaming, if you don't need to sit in a particular place during services (e.g., choir, scent-free area), please make a habit of sitting in the section of chairs that is in front of the sound booth – center-left of the pulpit from a member point-of-view, anywhere from the front to back of that section. This will help Livestream viewers see that they are joining a vibrant community. This is the section that is mostly caught on camera, so if it is thin, the whole service seems sparse to the Livestream viewer, even when it is not.

While this time of change in the life of the congregation has predictably led to a plateau in visitors, attendance and members, we are continuing to offer support and connections for new people, and to enrich our programming with offerings that can help us attract and retain members, as well as support the continued faith development of all those engaged with us.

Participation in pathway-to-membership activities remains steady. First Steps continues to function as a good way for newcomers to dip their toes into UU waters in an unpressured setting. We have made a few changes to the Exploring UU curriculum, integrating a tour of the church's web site into the "getting involved" piece, which went over quite well; 10-12 people complete the course sequence each quarter. We continue to hold bi-monthly new member ceremonies that honor the significant decision to join. And as Connections Coordinator, I meet with each new member who is interested in getting further acquainted and help them make connections.

What's new? Our Exploring UU facilitators had a wonderful potluck this fall – a new tradition, at a member's home – and building on their enthusiasm, we are trying some new things to continue to build connections with Exploring UU alums. John Woodcock hosted a lunch at a restaurant a few weeks ago. This didn't generate much interest but we may try again with a focus, perhaps hosting a conversation on the worship theme of the month. Another program tied into the membership journey is the Owing Your Religious Past retreat that Rev. Macklin, Jan Armstrong (who is on the Membership Com.) and Clark Miller will offer this spring. And I re-tooled the Getting

Involved event this winter, with select tabling, plus a ritual during worship that lifted up the Power of Community and celebrated the work that all our congregational groups do. It was well-received.

Here are some additional ways I have been helping to build connections, improve our welcome, and support the growth of our members through the Connections position:

- Initiating and coordinating use of the Connections booth, for church groups wanting to connect with people during Sunday morning coffee hour.
- Co-facilitating the first round of Beloved Conversations and nurturing future leadership; we have a reunion coming up and are excited that several alums may facilitate in future.
- Helping get a pilot Parish Nurse program going, in conversation with Rev. Macklin, Ruth Ann Cooper, Melinda Swenson and others. I also serve as staff liaison to the Caring Com.
- Rebuilding our young adult group through the email list, Facebook group, and organizing monthly lunches, as well as my personal caring contacts with young adults.
- Recruiting a planning team to bring the Wellspring program of UU spiritual formation to our congregation. (www.uuwellspring.org) MAM and I are planning a mini-retreat for April 16, to get started with a dream team of Anne Haynes, GK Rowe, Patty Callison and Christy True.
- Supporting the Leadership Cultivation Com. with the goal of developing processes to identify potential leaders much farther out, and create a leadership pipeline for UUCB. I also recruited a new Auction chair (Deb Fish) and am staff liaison for the organizing group.
- The interim work of helping leadership sort through what ought to go in the Connections portfolio in future, and the optimal design of the position, including a revised job description. I'm also working to write up procedures for posterity. (Judy started this process, and I continually find more that she just knew to do, plus evolving new duties.)

There are a few other projects I have laid groundwork for, that may unfold in my remaining time in the position. One is a Loving Day Party on June 12 (in the afternoon, prior to the congregational meeting). Loving Day marks the day that the Supreme Court made interracial marriage legal throughout the U.S., in the case of Loving vs. Virginia. It has become a time to celebrate multiracial families and multiracial people. This party will be for any church member or member of the wider community who wants to share in this celebration. RE staff will be working with me on this, along with some volunteers from our parents and Racial Justice TF.

Two other projects I see as important are just waiting for me to have time for them. One is an appreciation event for our Sunday morning hospitality volunteers (greeters, newcomer welcomers, java crew, fellowship hour hosts). Hospitality is a vital ministry of our congregation that could use more support and celebration. Lastly, if time permits I would like to rebuild the Membership Com. and get that group engaged in keeping in touch with our members and planning community-building events.

Meanwhile, as you know, I have been in search for a congregation to serve as a minister. And with a fabulous committee, I have been working personally on plans for my ordination – the last step in a long journey of preparation for this new vocation. I am grateful that my home congregation, through all of you, has chosen to ordain me. Thank you! I believe the April 3 event will be a joyful occasion that will serve this congregation as well as our wider movement. **Please remember to RSVP** for both the ordination (ordainshari@gmail.com) and the April 2 wine and cheese party with Denny Davidoff at the home of Andrea Murray (ieditcopy@hotmail.com).

In service,
Shari Woodbury