

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana

Seeking the Spirit, Building Community, Changing the World

Approved Board Minutes

September 18, 2019



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Board members attending: Stuart Yoak, Steven Gilbert, Sharon Wiseman, Julie Lawson, Abby Gitlitz, Jane McLeod, Rich Slabach

Ministers attending: Revs. Scott McNeill and Emily Leite

Submitted by: Steven Gilbert

Attached Documents:

- A. Social Justice Report
- B. Denominational Affairs Update

I. Call to Order

Stuart Yoak called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

II. Chalice Lighting and Reading

Stuart Yoak provided the reading.

III. Check-in (All)

IV. Approval of the Minutes

Stuart Yoak called for a motion to approve the August 21 board meeting minutes. Jane McLeod so moved with Rich Slabach seconding. The motion carried.

V. Old Business

A. Social Justice Update (Rev. McNeill)

Rev. McNeill presented the social justice update originally scheduled for August without significant discussion. See Attachment A.

VI. Monitoring (per Board Policies, Section IV)

A. Denominational Affairs Update (Rev. McNeill)

Rev. McNeill presented a denominational affairs update (Attachment B). Several board members sought clarification pertaining to the White Supremacy Working Group (Item 1, Attachment B). Rev. McNeill and Leite explained that this initiative began as part of a UUA pilot project to audit religious education for materials or processes that might foster white supremacist attitudes rather than the diversity UU seeks. The audit is ongoing at this time, although UUA instruments have proven less than helpful.

Rev. McNeill reported that the staff is coping well with the simultaneous absences of Rev. Macklin and Carol Marks.

VII. New Business

A. Appreciate Inquiry Update

Stuart Yoak distributed copies of a short book entitled *Appreciative Inquiry* by Cooperrider and Whitney in order to facilitate the AI project undertaken

by the board. The AI project steering committee headed by Sharon Wiseman and Abby Gitlitz will meet at least once before the end of the year.

B. Report from UUCB Staff Meeting (Stuart Yoak)

Stuart Yoak reported attending two morning staff meetings. These meetings involve senior staff in planning orders of service, Friday Updates and the Prologue; identification of congregants that may have special needs; review of the church calendar for the week; as well as individual goal setting and analysis. Stuart reported being highly impressed by the collegiality and enthusiasm he witnessed during the meetings. Steven Gilbert suggested that he convey his impressions to the congregation via the Prologue. He agreed this would be a good action to take. Julie Lawson suggested that such findings could also be the basis for dialogue with congregants at Coffee with the Board.

C. Board “Thank You” to Legacy Donors on 9/22 (Stuart Yoak)

Stuart Yoak asked the board for permission to speak on its behalf to Legacy Donors at the September 22 Legacy Donors Luncheon. Hearing no objections, Stuart also suggested that the Board might want to think of ways to honor Legacy Donors. After discussion, board members generally agreed that suggestions for other ways to honor donors should come from the legacy committee, with encouragement from board.

D. Active Aggressor Training (Stuart Yoak)

Stuart Yoak reminded board members of the upcoming training on how to deal with an active aggressor scheduled for September 29 from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Rich Slabach is checking into alternatives offered by IU for those who might not be able to attend this training.

E. October Announcements and Reading

Announcements and readings for the upcoming month were confirmed.

F. Finance Committee

Rich Slabach moved that the board approve the addition of Kitty McIntosh to the finance committee. Jane McLeod seconded the motion, which carried.

G. Chief Financial Officer Position Description

Stuart Yoak reported he is working on a position description for the Chief Financial Officer. He distributed a draft for review and discussion at the next meeting. Jane McLeod suggested linking this description to that for the Treasurer.

VIII. Executive Session

The Board entered executive session at 8:18 p.m.

IX. Adjournment

Stuart Yoak called for a motion to adjourn. Julie Lawson so moved and Sharon Wiseman seconded. The motion carried. Stuart adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

ATTACHMENT A

Social Justice Report to the Board – September 2019

1. International Outreach – fundraising and procuring items to take on their next trip to Africa (delayed following an injury to one of the co-chairs)
2. HOPE for Prisoners – at the moment, not a lot going on in this task force – although it has had a subgroup (KAP – Kids with Absent Parents) that has been very successful. KAP originally was intended for kids whose parents/caregivers were incarcerated and now is/will soon be expanding to include kids whose parents are absent for any reason.
3. Help Feed Our Hungry Neighbors – continuing their annual traditions of supporting Monroe County United Ministries. Our Walnut Grove Food Pantry has seen some changes due to new ownership of their space, and I've met with the leaders of this task force to explore new ideas. We'll encourage people to volunteer, on the last Sunday of September.
4. Green Sanctuary – continues to work on many fronts. One of their most effective and engaging projects right now (in my opinion) is connecting people to one task they can do to make a difference. This is great work specifically, and a good model others are contemplating.
5. Homelessness – Changes in the systems at Shalom Center and Wheeler Mission have shifted how our volunteers work/how often they're needed.
6. Racial Justice – The task force is continuing to partner with NAACP (including offering tickets to youth/young adults for an upcoming event), and work on projects like Resilience. Additionally, they have participated in conversations about the White Supremacy Audit Working Group (in RE) and related to the farmer's market.
7. Habitat for Humanity (will offer update at next quarterly report)
8. Reproductive Justice (will offer update at next quarterly report)
9. End of Life (will offer update at next quarterly report)
10. Rainbow Rights (will offer update at next quarterly report)
11. RISE (will offer update at next quarterly report)
12. Just Peace (will offer update at next quarterly report)

ATTACHMENT B

Denominational Affairs Report – September 2019

Congregational connections:

- Our religious education program participated in a pilot program last year, regarding an audit of the RE program and White Supremacy. The working group that formed for that project creates a link to the larger UUA and our congregation.
- Staff continue to connect with counterparts, in various ways (below are just a few – there may be more updates to offer at a later time):
 - Ann LeDuc recently attended a membership professionals' meeting.
 - In November, both Rev. Emily Manvel Leite and Adrienne Summerlot will attend the Fall Conference of the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA).
 - Carol Marks is on the board of the Administrators association.
 - In addition to connecting via General Assembly, conferences, and retreats, I (Scott) has traveled to Muncie to preach to that congregation and offer collegial support. I'll also lead worship in Columbus (IN) in October. And I continue to serve as the Chair of the UUA's Elections and Campaign Practices Committee.

Within the MidAmerica Region (clustering congregations from Minnesota to Kansas to Indiana):

- Recently, the MidAmerica Region hired a new "Regional Lead", the Rev. David Pyle. David has held this position in the Joseph Priestly District and consulting for the Central East Region (in addition to many other positions that are relevant).
- There is a regional conference for staff of large churches, to be held in Milwaukee, WI (Nov 2019). 3 years ago, many of our staff attended; last year, I attended. This year, I was on the planning committee for the workshop but a recent change in dates has made it less likely that I could be there. It was at this conference last year where both regional staff and UUA staff offered our congregation high praise for showing up and participating in these types of events and for being a strong supporter of the UUA with time, energy, and giving.
- Of note, General Assembly (the annual conference of UUs, held in June) will be in the MidAmerica Region in 2021 (Milwaukee).

Within Unitarian Universalism (broadly/generally) and the Unitarian Universalist Association:

- The UUA is looking for candidates who have a breadth of knowledge and experience with policy-based governance (among other things) for an upcoming election (held in 2020) for the position of Moderator (chief governance officer, leading the Board of Trustees – and the person who convenes General Assembly). If you're interested or know of someone who might be a good fit, please speak with me.
- There has been a lot of discussion since June (at the last General Assembly, in Spokane) about a book that was published, entitled The Gadfly Papers. Written by a Unitarian Universalist minister (in Spokane), it launched intentionally to coincide with the conference and to use that to get a lot of engagement, press, etc. And, it succeeded. The Gadfly Papers takes a strong stance on issues of anti-racism work within the UU world (and its effectiveness, or not). This has provoked significant controversy and continues to do so.