

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church
Unitarian Universalist
BOARD OF TRUSTEES JULY MEETING
July 20, 2016

DRAFT MINUTES

TJMC Covenant Statement

In order to create the beloved community we all desire for ourselves, we, the Congregation of Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church Unitarian Universalist covenant to:

Communicate with compassion and respect, especially when we disagree

Celebrate diversity and nurture our inclusivity,

Promote social justice within our congregation and the larger community,

Generously support the ministries of the church with time, money and enthusiasm, and

Lovingly call each other back into covenant when we have fallen short.

Board Goals 2016-17

These will be determined over the next couple of months.

Board Members Present: Laura Horn – Past President, Breck Gastinger, Erik Wikstrom – Ex Officio, Karen Ransom - President, Jen Larimer – Vice President, Anita Holmes, Jeanine Braithwaite, Chris Rivera – Ex Officio, Ann Salamini - Treasurer, David Mick

Board Members Absent: George Maris, Leia Durland-Jones – Ex Officio

Guests In Attendance: Donna Baker, Sally Taylor, Bev Thierwechter

I. Opening--(25 minutes total) Opening/Closing Words (Laura), Snacks (Laura), Time Keeper (Anita), and Process Review (All)

1. Opening words –
2. Check-in – This month we are invited to check-in relative to new beginnings.
3. Acceptance of Agenda
As an element of our orientation, let's note that the Board uses a standard format for its agenda each month. A motion and vote are required to approve the agenda, per Robert's Rules of Order.
To accommodate our guest presenters, let's consider the Governance Task Force as the first item of business after the Consent Agenda.
MOTION: Accept the Agenda with this change.
Unanimously approved.

4. Public Comment – none
5. Correspondence – none

II. Reports

1. President's Report (written) – Karen Ransom
2. Vice President's Report (written) – Jen Larimer
I gave dates for social action collections this year. We may be changing the date for Barrett Center as it currently falls on Easter.
3. Treasurer's Report – Ann Salamini
I have made no narrative report of June finances because I was not Treasurer then, but that format will resume in August.
Chris and I have been meeting to clarify what the role of Treasurer should consist of going forward. The Bylaws reflect a much smaller church and one without the Director of Administration and Finance position. We're looking at what the Treasurer should do to support the DAF position and provide transparency and information to the congregation. We will meet next week to reconcile the bank statements from January through June so this church year will start even.
4. Minister's Report – Erik Wikstrom

There is no written report because of the lack of continuity in my schedule this past month. It is worth noting that the Racial Justice Steering Committee and the various initiatives under it are quite engaged because of current events. Worship Weavers is in a state of flux trying to figure out its role this year. There will be more on that next month.

5. Director of Faith Development Report – Leia Durland-Jones

6. Director of Administration and Finance Report (written) – Christina Rivera

Fiscal year 2015-16 will be closed out by the end of July. At this point we know that there will not be a deficit. I have kept tight control over expenses because we were not hitting revenue targets in rentals and scrip. Now that I can see that pledge income will come in slightly over budget, I am releasing some funds. There will be a full cleaning of the main church building in anticipation of hiring a sexton in August. That position will start as an independent contractor. When we are satisfied that the sexton role will fill the needs of the church, it will become an employee position.

Questions – Your report indicates 2406 emails received. Is that for the church? – That is for the DAF; it's been a light month.

Has there been any change in the pledge drive number? – It remains the same: \$396,000. There are about \$4000 in unmatched matching funds included in that number. Come September there will be an effort to raise the match.

Congratulations on what you are doing with the UUA. – I've been on the UUA Board. Now I'm part of the Executive Committee as Financial Secretary.

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor

8. Board Liaison Reports
Communications Task Force (written) – Achsah Carrier

III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions

1. Approve June 2016 Draft Board Minutes.

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda.
Unanimously approved.

(Approved agenda change:)

V. New Business

2. Governance Task Force – Karen (15 min)

This will be a first reading to judge the elements of this report and decide how much of it can be accomplished this year.

Sally Taylor, Bev Thierwechter and Donna Baker came to present the Governance Task Force recommendations.

- 7 member Board consisting of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and 3 at large members. All the sources they studied recommend smaller boards: the larger the church, the smaller the board.
- Executive Committee would not be required to meet on a monthly basis to set the agenda. This work would be done after email consultation to save a face-to-face meeting.
- Reduce Board terms to two years so all members serve the same amount of time. Except for the President, all positions are renewable once. Transition between Board positions is encouraged to promote institutional memory, with a six year cap on consecutive Board service.
- Establish a Policy Group to shepherd policy changes to completion within 90 days instead of 2 years. The Vice President would be ex officio on the group. The Nominating Committee should recruit members of this group, which would function as needed (ie when a new or changed policy is suggested.) Keeping the congregation informed is part of the group's responsibility.
- Leadership Development Committee would become the Nominating Committee, dropping responsibility for leadership development. They will recruit Board, Nominating Committee and Personnel Committee in the spring and Policy Group and Board appointed committees in the fall, so they will be working year round.

Questions? Should we go ahead with educating the congregation on our recommendations?

- What is the current size of the Board? – It’s twelve, though we’re currently short one at large and the President Elect positions. The number of members present tonight is the size recommended by the task force.
- A two year term for the President seems a heavy burden. It may be hard to recruit. In another UU church I’m familiar with the Vice President position is a year in training for the Presidency, followed by one year as Past President.
- How would we transition to the smaller Board size? - Through attrition.
- Why is a smaller board considered more effective?
 - There can be a sense of getting bogged down.
 - Communication is more effective with a smaller number.
 - Also, since volunteerism is down, a smaller board would be easier to recruit for if board effectiveness is not impacted.
 - Smaller congregations need larger boards in order to hear more voices: board as council. Larger congregations with relatively larger boards get very unwieldy.
 - On smaller boards, members realize they have to step up.
- My experience has been that the President is just getting going after one year. I would feel better at having two years as president.
- We’re also looking for continuity from the Board. We want to encourage members to move up into leadership by capping service at 6 years.
- There is a need to educate potential board members. Expectations need to be realistic. We can help people understand what they will be doing in a given position.

MOTION: Extend discussion by ten minutes.

Unanimously approved.

- Face time is important for Exec to anticipate how the flow of an agenda will work. I would caution against eliminating meetings as a priority. – If the President feels there is a reason to meet face to face, that is the prerogative of the position.
- Shifting the minimal fund management aspect of Endowment to the Finance Committee is a good idea. However, growing the endowment is an aspect which has been neglected for years and needs to be remembered. – Changes are being discussed for the

Stewardship Committee. This function of Endowment may in fact pass to Stewardship.

- Could a President step in who has not been on the Board? –Yes. – It seems like a training period is really desirable.
- A President with vision really needs two years to be effective. A two year term shows a commitment to an individual president. If a president were not showing sufficient skill in the first year, could that person be replaced? – We shouldn't ask volunteers to quit. The Nominating Committee has a clear charge to nominate qualified people.
- Regarding streamlining, I like changes to bylaws and policy that eliminate the “how to.” Let those volunteering to fill roles decide how to do the job.
- What does the task force see as the next steps? – We should have a presentation at the October 2nd Congregational Meeting to let people know what we're proposing. This would be followed by congregational conversations, bulletin articles, etc. Then there would be a January 2017 congregational meeting to vote on bylaws changes, which would become effective in July 2017.
- I can't imagine being president without a year to prepare and be mentored. My personal experience is that the President Elect and President can have an incredible partnership. Could we partner somehow as co-presidents?
- I also feel we need to be more flexible in the bylaws and policies on how we do things. I want face time, but others might want emails. This is people driven, so we need to be flexible around who is doing the job. I'd like to get rid of half the policy manual and bylaws.
- Thank you again. – The strategic plan's focus on shoring up our foundations during the first 5 years is just what the congregation asked for: simplifying, clarifying, strengthening things. Thanks for these recommendations which we need and hoped for.

MOTION: Add 7 minutes to this discussion.

Unanimously approved.

MOTION: Ask the Governance Task Force to continue this work as

outlined.

Unanimously approved.

This is hard, unglamorous work which most people couldn't care less about. You have given us concrete ideas to talk about.

Are we agreed that we will be previewing these recommendations with the congregation in October and heading for a vote in January 2017? - We are agreeing to consider that. The Board shouldn't commit until we know how our work will flow this year. – The task force members were asked to serve through 2016. If we are to continue into Spring 2017, we need to know that.

The task force is not finished reimagining governance at TJMC, but we need to know if we should prepare for a congregational meeting presentation to extend the conversation beyond the Board.

IV. Old Business

1. Report on Staff Performance Evaluations – Laura (5 min)
This discussion requires executive session with doors closed.

MOTION: Go into closed session with senior staff present.

Unanimously approved.

MOTION: Leave closed session.

Unanimously approved.

Summary – This final staff review of the year was based on input from the Board, Committee on the Ministry, Worship Weavers, Facilities Task Force, Religious Education Committee, Finance Committee and Personnel Committee. Each staff member also submitted a personal review of goals and performance. Strengths, areas of improvement and areas needing improvement were noted for all staff.

Two clear messages came through:

- The Board has a critical role in determining what TJMC undertakes and how that is staffed. It's clear that we cannot do all the initiatives we have in the past without staff hours to support them.
- We are grateful to have this staff team.

There was a lot of heart and intentionality about making this a positive process for both the staff and the volunteers involved in it. After testing many methods to conduct evaluations in the past years, this process at last seemed, though time consuming, at least less onerous and produced useful information with indications of how to move forward.

BREAK AND GRATITUDE CARDS - (10 min)

Please think of people the Board should be recognizing for their recent contributions to our church community.

VI. New Business

1. Orientation – Karen (15 min)

Setting the stage for a successful year - Sign ups for Opening / Closing Words, Snacks, Board Liaisons

Please add any tips as returning board members.

- Chris passed out Board binders for new members plus updates for returning members.
- Opening and closing words can seem difficult to find. UUA.org has a “worship web” section which is searchable by subject (governance, for instance) and format (opening words, chalice lighting, etc.) Opening / Closing Words might also be interactive or include movement. It’s up to you.

We need some Board liaisons. Please talk to Karen about what is involved in a particular group. Some liaisons act as a two-way conduit between the Board and the committee, though others choose to be a working member of the group.

Leadership Development (which will function as Nominating Committee this year) – Traditionally the Past President acts as LD liaison. Laura feels called to a different role this year.

Personnel Committee - David

Finance – Jeanine

On gathering feedback – Last year we held monthly feedback sessions with the congregation as recommended by Kenn Hurto, our UUA regional consultant. These sessions have not been well attended;

we often heard from the same small handful of people. Is this the most effective way to relay and collect information? Board members are ambassadors: each of us should be a spokesperson within our own groups so we cover the widest sample of the congregation. Kenn Hurto educated the Board last year on the difference between being a congregant and being a Board member. We are no longer just another face in the pew; we have a role as an elected representative of the congregation which carries a different weight. Don't wait for someone to ask; initiate conversations. There is some power in the rainbow Board nametag which we should take advantage of.

As an example, during the budget conversations last Spring, the more often we laid out the situation and heard feedback, the clearer the concerns and priorities became. That is a good model for how we should function. As the church becomes larger, it is no longer possible to solicit everyone's view via surveys or multiple scheduled conversations. However, informal conversations within various groups can get at the same information. You have a role to solicit input. By sharing thoughts among your close circle, your service as a Board member will feel a more organic part of your life.

The Board Retreat is scheduled for September 3rd. We need a volunteer to coordinate the food. A sign up sheet on "sign up genius" should do the trick.

3. Revenue Task Force – David (15 min)

David, Breck, Chris and Karen are all on task force, along with Walt Megonigal and Tyler Rines. We promised the congregation we would undertake this work as part of the Board's fiduciary responsibility to the church. The Budget requires some new revenue.

The Revenue Task Force was charged at the February 2016 Board meeting to:

Create a plan to support TJMC-UU's Financial Health, enabling our church to be the beacon of Unitarian Universalism that we imagine, by establishing a family of revenue-generating activities.

Plan is to include roadmap for implementation. Actions include:

- Evaluate current revenue-generating programs and build plans to revive or sunset as appropriate
- Define and build plans to introduce new revenue-generating programs
- Prioritize opportunities based on profit potential, feasibility,

opportunity for ‘outside dollars’, support of UU values, extent to which programs build community

- Create plan to help leaders evaluate and communicate impact of each program
- Provide quarterly updates to board

The task force has met monthly since April, working to develop a matrix of revenue generating ideas as well as evaluation criteria. Our intent is to make a report to the Board in the Fall which recommends a short list of the first revenue ideas to implement.

The matrix on the handout represents an uncritical listing of all ideas from our brainstorming. Please take a look at this listing to familiarize yourselves with the range of ideas under consideration. Several of the more promising ideas will receive more attention to investigate their potential and to research necessary seed money and volunteer or staff time. We hope to keep the congregation informed by creating a narrative of what we have discovered and why or how we might choose one idea over another.

Ideas we choose can have positive benefits beyond generating revenue. They can

- Enhance the congregation’s self-image, pride in our grounds and programs
- Reinforce our story and get it out to the community
- Amplify the effectiveness of other initiatives

We have focused on outside money rather than “increasing auction receipts,” for example. There is an emphasis on long range and endowment giving and on grants.

Discussion - Whatever choices we make, the reason for the choice will be related to mission rather than dollars.

There is competition for the Board’s energy this year: capital campaign versus governance task force recommendations, for instance. We need to take those competing factors into consideration.

Volunteer or staff time costs are an important factor. The matrix sometimes recommends additional staff hours or staff positions to offset these time costs.

Is the task force open to additional members? – Yes. We need to get the word out about this work. We’re looking for people who are

inclined to say yes to exploring these ideas.

Any activity which gets someone through the door, be it a concert or a wedding or a poetry reading, will help grow the congregation. We attract people who've left other churches and never thought they would go into another one.

VII. Closing Activities (10 minutes)

1. Process Review (all):

- I went back to last year's notebook and found this quote: "How a board does its work is more important than what we do."
From Kenn Hurto.
- I enjoyed reading about the basic responsibilities of board members. Fiduciary responsibility is concrete, but putting together goals or a strategic plan is less concrete. I'm looking forward to looking into those things.
- I feel at ease about this. I miss Leia's presence tonight.
- I'm glad you mentioned that the proposed new size for the Board is the number in attendance tonight. It does feel effective.
- There is a lot of optimism tonight. I've been wary about Governance Task Force recommendations, but it streamlines work and makes it more effective. Likewise, the Revenue Task Force is lifting up the powerful things that churches do to be strong. I feel optimistic about being clear and narrow about our mission.
- Very good meeting - direct and to the point. Grateful for the reminder of the possibilities in new beginnings. I feel like I'm seeing new faces in the sanctuary. The times and current events are bringing people here. It's an opportunity to give the community what it needs.
- This was a strong, positive meeting. Our feet were on the ground. We weren't pushing against each other. I also missed Leia and noticed some missing voices from last year.
- Very good meeting. Thanks to Karen for doing a great job.
- I'm excited for the new Board members. You hit the ground running and had good questions and suggestions. It seems ironic to start the Board year at this slow time of year, but it may be appropriate.
- We listened to each other. That's the most important thing to

do. I'm looking forward to the year.

- Thanks to Ann for being secretary for another month. I look forward to George's voice as he joins us next month.

2. Things to do / communicate –

--- Karen – send out email on moving forward with Governance Task Force report, possibly creating a subgroup to bring recommendations to the August Board meeting

3. Closing words – Laura

Parking Lot -

Upcoming Dates

- August 3, 2016 – Exec Board Meeting
- August 17, 2016 – Regular Board Meeting
- September 3, 2016 – Board Retreat (9AM– 3PM) chez Jeanine

Future Topics:

- Strategic Plan Survey – Fall 2016
- Developing 2016-17 Board Goals – August
- Board Liaison positions - August

President's Report

July 2016 President's Report to the Board

Since our last board meeting, I have been wrapping up the fiscal year, working on the presidential transition with Laura and staff, and focusing on the narrative and priorities for this new year.

At the end of June, the senior staff and presidents (Wik, Leia, Chris, Laura, and I) met for a retreat of sorts to take time from the busyness of our positions to gain greater clarity and unity on the issues and

opportunities we face together. We started with looking at our [church size](#) and the implications of functioning like a much smaller church (pastoral) than we actually are (programmatic). This gave us a better understanding of some of the frustrations we often encounter in the work of the church.

We then asked ourselves several questions including “What is working and what isn’t? Are the things that are working sustainable?” to get a sense of all the things currently going on at church.

But what really got us excited was our discussion of “What is this church’s mission/calling/reason to exist? What is it that we uniquely do?” This is deeply exciting mission work and I believe our greatest charge this year and in the future. As we continue to function with our limited resources yet greater activity in too many directions, all of us - staff, volunteers, and congregants - feel the strain. As many of us know, it is unsustainable, much less good spiritual work.

I don't believe any of us come to church just to “work”, and in unfavorable conditions at that (too much to do, too little resources to do it with). Our calling here is to feed our souls; to feel fulfilled in our ministries whatever they may be. With a focused mission (the purpose are we called to serve in community with one another), we can allow ourselves to make decisions about the direction of our ministries clearly and uncompromisingly as we consolidate efforts, energy, and resources while rejecting activity which distracts us from our goals. Quite simply, we cannot do all that we are doing and we shouldn't. But we need a guiding light to follow.

So as a board we must lead our congregation forward with clarity. As we hear from the Governance Task Force, the Revenue Task Force, consider our next Strategic Plan, and review the staff appraisals at this upcoming meeting, as well as all the other work we do in the coming weeks, we need to ask ourselves “Is this work we MUST do? Is this work we CAN do? Is this work we SHOULD do and why?”

Our upcoming board retreat on September 3rd will be our chance to really dive deep into this mission work together as we set our board goals for the year. We will start exploring this at our July meeting. It's

good stuff. I look forward to the journey together.

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To help facilitate our work at the July board meeting, I would like you all to consider a few things.

Board Liaisons:

There are several committees and task forces that require, or would greatly benefit from, direct board participation. As part of our board work, it is expected that each of us will serve additional roles within the congregation. The following is a list of those groups and we have several openings. Please consider joining one as you feel called (or at least willing). I am happy to talk with any of you about more specifics and expectations.

Endowment Committee (board appointed)

This is markedly understaffed relative to bylaws. Bylaws do not require board liaison but it is recommended we select one. This group administers our endowment funds.

Finance Committee (board appointed)

Board liaison is not required and has recently, apparently, been the prerogative of the Treasurer to request or accommodate a board liaison. It would be great to have another board member in addition to the Treasurer on this group.

Personnel Committee (elected by congregation)

David Mick is currently a member of this committee.

Leadership Development (elected by congregation)

Past President is specified as a member in the Bylaws, however, our current Past President is not feeling called to do this work. We would like another board member to join this group.

Task Forces & Teams;

We have board members on the Revenue Task Force and the Stewardship Team.

We should get an idea at the upcoming board meeting where the Governance Task Force is headed and therefore if we need a board liaison.

The Pledge Drive and Auction teams could use some direct board involvement as well.

We can ensure board connection to any new task forces or teams we launch.

Housekeeping:

It is our tradition to share the role of providing **snacks and opening/closing words** at each board meeting. Ann will circulate a sign up sheet for these. Often people sign up for both in one month but this is not necessary. Please bring your calendars and be prepared to volunteer in this capacity.

For our **board retreat** on September 3rd, Jeanine has graciously offered her home for our gathering. We will potluck refreshments and lunch for this event. I need a volunteer to coordinate this.

We will continue our practice of writing **gratitude cards** during the break of the meeting. Please think of people in our community who you would like to recognize and fill out a card for them. We ask that all board members sign each card as well. Cards will be provided.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Ransom

Vice President's Report

Vice President's Report
July, 2016

The Community Life Council met on June 14, 2016. The council reviewed and approved several Job Descriptions that Sally Taylor had been working on collecting. They reviewed a new poster for the kitchen created by Donna Redmond and provided updates on what each of the groups has been doing over the past quarter.

The Social Justice Council met on May 2, 2016 and held their

annual voting process to elect the twelve Social Action Collection recipients for the upcoming year. The month assignments were announced on June 3, 2016. Additionally, Social Justice Council is working to help the ushers by encouraging SAC sponsors in the church to assist with ushering on the day of their scheduled collection.

Play Partners	July 17, 2016
PHAR	August 21, 2016
PACEM	September 18, 2016
Food Pantry	October 16, 2016
BRAAF	November 20, 2016
I.H.S. Meal Packets	December 18, 2016
AATF	January 15, 2017
UACC	February 19, 2017
On Our Own	March 19, 2017
Barrett Center	April 16, 2017
Virginia Organizing	May 21, 2017
Women's Initiative	June 18, 2017

As I step into my new position on the Board I will continue to work on the work Sally Taylor started with collecting updated Job Descriptions for the positions throughout the church. Additionally, my goal is to familiarize myself with the current work the board has been and will be focusing on for the upcoming year.

Jen Larimer, Vice President

Treasurer's Report

Lead Minister's Report

Director of Faith Development Report

Director of Administration and Finance Report

**Director of Administration and Finance – Christina Rivera
Board Report – July 20, 2016 mtg**

June 2016

- Number of emails received: 2406
- Completed May 2016 month end financials

- Facilitated 2 rental tours, 2 of which produced contracts
- Prep and attended following meetings:
 - Board
 - Personnel
- Completed year-end senior staff assessments

Cleaning Service:

Conducted two interviews for sexton with two more to be completed. Anticipated start date is August 2016.

FY 16 Financial Report Notes:

- Scrip and Rentals continue to underperform our budgeted forecast.
- All other revenue continues to be on forecast.
- Expenses continue to be adjusted to keep pace with the lowered revenue forecast.
- At present, I expect a modest surplus for FY 16.
- Currently working on June and fiscal 2016 year-end reports.

New Revenue Generation Staff Support:

One area the program budget highlights is the need for new streams of revenue. The Revenue Task Force is one arm of producing new income and another arm will be staff support. I cannot stress enough that if we are to take on a managed budget gap, as currently proposed in the Program Budget, that the management of that gap will require extra administration time and effort. We will need to examine what is currently on my plate as DAF (and that of the Office Assistant) and re-prioritize. For additional revenue generation to work, we will need additional staff support to make it happen. One suggestion is to increase the DAF from 30 to 40 hours per week in order to realize this support. At the request of several board members I completed the financial analysis as to what that increase entails, the salary and benefits increase (at currently negotiated rates) would be \$21,640.

General Assembly:

The TJMC contingent to GA was grateful to represent our congregation. For more info on my experiences at GA, please see my contributions to the weekly update's "GA Update".

UUA Board of Trustees:

I'm pleased to report the UUA Board of Trustees appointed me to the position of Financial Secretary to the Board. My responsibilities include reviewing the Board's budgeted expense line items (including Board committees) and keeping track of the UUA staff team's budgeting process. This position also sees me join the Executive Committee of the UUA Board of Trustees. Much like our own TJMC Board Exec. Committee, this group is tasked with setting the agenda for the Board's meetings and being a resource to the UUA Moderator Jim Key.

Membership Report

To: Board members

Re: June 30, 2016 Membership report

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of April 30, 2016: 424 including 19 youth members

Add:

Karen Crum, June 12, 2016

Hale N. Ozbeck, June 26, 2016

Drop:

Eleanor May, died May 8, 2016

Horwitz, Lynn, change to Supporter, conversation with Lead Minister, June 2, 2016

Centore, Janice, resigned Membership to office, June 8, 2016, archive

Centore, Lou, resigned Membership to office, June 8, 2016, archive

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of June 30, 2016: 422 members including 19 youth members

Sally Taylor

Membership Tracker for Membership Committee

Board Liaison Reports

Communications Task Force

Report to the Board from the Communications Task Force

The Task Force currently includes Achsah Carrier, Chair; Holly Dilatush; and Kim Knotts. George Maris has joined us. We are looking for other members.

Website.

The Task Force has spun off the website management to the newly reformulated Communications Committee and Website subcommittee. That is going well, and all of the same people are still working on it.

Bulletin, Weekly Outlook, and other church email communications.

Achsah is still working with Wendy on redesigning the Bulletin to make it mobile friendly and better coordinated with the website. Pressure of other tasks has delayed this, but we hope to do more work on this in the next month.

Audio-Visual Improvements

This has been the major project this month. The church Sound Committee has been revised and renamed (though not yet officially) the Audio-Visual subcommittee of the Communications Committee. It consists of Rob Craighurst, David Heins, Scott DeVeaux, and Mike Ludwick.

This group had several meetings to prepare for a visit from sound engineer Alex Righter on July 2nd. This went very successfully and the group learned a lot from him. We plan to meet soon and create a plan and prospective budget for sound and audio which we hope to present to the Board next month. In the meantime, here is a rough summary of a few things we learned.

Wiring. It will be relatively simple to improve our sanctuary wiring so that trailing wires are not such a problem, management of sound from

the pulpit is easier, the service can be heard in the social hall, and the sound quality in the comfort room is improved. Alex plans to make a return visit in August to help the committee with this work.

Sound Board. We need to buy a new digital sound board. This will improve sound management in the sanctuary, improve recording of services, allow us to record music that is sufficiently high quality to broadcast, and facilitate use of projector and video in the sanctuary if we eventually get to that point. The committee will be investigating options and costs based on Alex's recommendations.

Mics. We can get much better use out of the mics that we already have. We will work on this. We will look at the possibility of future purchases after seeing how far we can go with what we already own.

Assisted listening. There are several options for offering assisted listening and we will investigate these once we have made improvements to the current sound system. We plan to survey the congregation to learn more about listening needs before making any further plans. There will be significant costs to any assisted listening system.

Video & projectors. This is important, but we will investigate these needs and options once we have worked on sound. The current thought is that improving sound will be much easier and cheaper than improving and adding new video options.

That's it for this month. We continue to work, slowly but steadily to make improvements. We urge the Board, church leaders, and the congregation as a whole to contact us with any concerns. Our email is communications@uucharlotteville.org. This is also the best address to use to reach the web team.

Respectful submitted

Achsah Carrier, Task force chair