

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church
Unitarian Universalist
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OCTOBER MEETING
October 21, 2015

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 2015-16

- Demonstrably improve the way the congregation experiences the ministry
- Build a plan to ensure TJMC's financial health
 - Establish working Stewardship Committee
- Re-address Triune model
- Create Campus Management Plan to identify and prioritize capital projects and prepare maintenance plan
- Keep commitments for the successful roll out of the Strategic Plan
- Embrace Beloved Conversations

Board Members Present: Karen Ransom – President Elect, Erik Wikstrom – Ex Officio, Breck Gastinger, Anita Holmes, Christina

Rivera – Ex Officio, Laura Horn – President, Ann Salamini - Secretary, Sally Taylor – Vice President, David Mick, Walt Megonigal, Leia Durland-Jones – Ex Officio, Amy Davis – Treasurer, Katharine Maus, Marlene Jones

Board Members Absent:

Guests In Attendance:

I. Opening--(20 minutes total) Opening/Closing Words (Walt), Snacks (Walt), Time Keeper (), and Process Review (All)

1. Opening words – Walt
2. Check-in
More than one person mentioned that the atmosphere in the church feels more positive, less stressful, more forward looking.
Our Director of Faith Development and Director of Administration and Finance will participate in the LREDA Conference this weekend. (Liberal Religious Educators Assn.)
3. Acceptance of Agenda

MOTION: Accept the Agenda.
Unanimously approved.

4. Public Comment –
5. Correspondence

II. Reports

1. President’s Report (written) – Laura Horn
Please mark your calendars for the following important Board commitments:
 - November 8, 2015 – Joint meeting on stewardship
 - November 13-14, 2015 – meeting with Kenn Hurto, UUA Consultant
 - May 15, 2016 – Congregational Meeting in place of second service
 - June 4, 2016 – Joint Board Retreat

Also keep alert for fellow congregants talented in the field of finance. Leadership Development and Finance have need of them.

2. Vice President's Report (written) – Sally Taylor

3. Treasurer's Report (written) – Amy Davis

4. Minister's Report (written) – Erik Wikstrom

Leia and Erik participated in their first training on facilitating Beloved Conversations. Please check out the links in his reports on this program. The initial weekend retreat (December 4-5) will be followed by eight sessions held every other week, so a minimum 16 week commitment. There will be two groups, including 25 TJMC participants. Key leaders are strongly encouraged to participate, both to highlight the importance of the work and to experience the transformative work themselves. The experience is the purpose of Beloved Conversations. Though focused on race, the effects will ripple out to any topic where difficult conversations are found. An effort is being made to communicate with the larger congregation on the program and what we hope to gain from it, so there is a sense of involvement. It seems clear this will be transformative for the entire congregation.

Discussion – What day of the week will the follow up sessions take place? – That will be decided by individuals in each of the two groups. Participation in the first weekend is required to continue. It is anticipated that the program will be repeated next year.

What is the concern over your report format? They seem excellent as currently written. Should this become an agenda item for the next board meeting? – Yes.

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

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

Update on the Lower Hall Renovation – the project is on schedule. \$1800 of the contingency fee has been used to remediate some asbestos found on piping. Challenges to the staff include being

without water for several days, moving things to accommodate requests from the construction crew, functioning in spite of the noise level and living in a construction zone.

Christina also passed out the monthly income and expense statement, which contains nothing that needs to be lifted up. This report was generated by the software currently being used and might be used to solve the duplication in work between the DAF and Treasurer. It does not include actual versus budgeted percentages for the month and total year, but she can include those figures in her monthly report. This report is more detailed than what we have received in the past and is intended for Board use. Finance Committee is comfortable with the idea of the Board working with the line item budget and the congregation focusing on the program budget. The line item budget will always be available to interested parties.

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor

8. Board Liaison Reports

Endowment (verbal) – Walt

Walt attended his first meeting of the TJMCUU Endowment Committee on 19 October 2015. Items to note are:

- The Committee needs at least two replacements for members who have left or will be leaving the Committee.
- The restricted funds are currently entirely composed of church bonds, the interest from which feeds into the music, RE and buildings budgets. The Board had previously voted to buy these bonds back at the rate of \$15,000 per year.
- With a major portion of the Endowment now under the management of the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund it is a good practice that we monitor the UUCEF's web site. Along with the Fund's performance numbers reflected on the site, it also provides general and specific commentary about the investment market's environment, conditions and performance. Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund web site URL is <http://uucef.org/>

Facilities (verbal) – Breck

The Lower Hall space is emerging with the wood framing and

rough ins for the electric and plumbing. The next big staff disruption will be the elevator. The Board should plan a walk through as part of the November meeting.

Leadership Development event (verbal) – Karen

The LD event **This Lively Community: Finding Your Kin!** was held October 10th with 55 in attendance. Planners and participants found it successful, with good energy. About fifty different groups and interests were represented, with tabling based on councils. Everyone learned something, no matter how longterm a member. People felt taken care of, nourished in body by the breakfast and lunch, and also by the sense of community. One activity asked people their level of involvement, then whether they wished to be more or less involved. It was noted that a desire to be less involved should also be honored.

Communications Task Force (written) – Achsah Carrier

III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions

1. Policy Manual Changes

The Vice President would like Board permission to routinely update the language in the Policy Manual to reflect current usage as long as it does not change intent. (for example: change Director of Religious Education-DRE to Director of Faith Development-DFD, Administrative Coordinator to Director of Administration and Finance –DAF, Friday emails to Weekly Updates, This Sunday to Order of Service)

2. Approve September 2016 Board Draft Minutes.

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda.

Unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business

1. Board Goals - Laura (10 min)

These are the board goals as wordsmithed by Exec.

MOTION: Adopt the board goals as written.

Discussion – These goals show that we’ve been listening and are

really trying to do our job.

Unanimously approved.

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2. Role of Treasurer - Laura and Amy (5 min)

The Treasurer position is always difficult to fill and fulfill. Changing how the reports are generated, as discussed above, is one way to make the job more doable by someone who doesn't have a financial degree. Additionally, we should:

- Consider hiring some services done, such as bank reconciliation.
- Work to identify the next generation of members with some financial expertise.

BREAK AND GRATITUDE CARDS - (20 min)

V. New Business

1. Staff goals - Triune (40 min)

Senior staff presented their proposed priorities for this year, based largely on the Strategic Plan (SP). Though not explicitly listed, it should be understood that staff will support the board goals as well. Staff priorities will be approved on the consent agenda in November and publicized.

The Board had a lengthy discussion around the issue of setting goals / priorities.

- This seems late in the year to be setting goals / priorities. We

have scheduled a joint retreat in June 2016 for incoming and outgoing board members as one way to speed up the process. What else can be done? How can we help incoming board members to fully take on new roles? The term priority, as opposed to goals, implies an ongoing emphasis or direction. Not have freshly stated goals does not mean the board is without direction.

- Having goals in place early might make it easier to recruit new board members. Goals are a major element which should be reflected in the budget.

- Using the Strategic Plan as a source for choosing goals helps to keep it a living document. The senior staff found the SP to be an effective focus for their thinking on how to prioritize their energies. Having their energies focused will help them in reacting to crises and maintaining boundaries.

- Should Staff goals be publicized? Making staff priorities public will underscore the SP as a living document and demonstrate responsiveness to the church community. Staff priorities should be reported in a bulletin article and posted on the Board bulletin board.

The following two staff goals are adopted directly from the Strategic Plan:

- One specific staff goal referred to moving toward full funding of the UUA GIFT Program, which would earmark 7% of TJMC's budget as our congregation's "fair share pledge" to the UUA . There is significant sentiment that this is too large a percentage and that an appropriate amount that represents the value of our association with the UUA would be lower. (Historically, TJMC had been a fair share supporter of the UUA for years but dropped its support to 2% during the recession. The current giving level is 2.5%.) We need a congregation wide discussion of our relationship to the UUA to develop an educated consensus of how we wish to support that relationship.

- Another specific goal referred to the FORTH Program, a multiyear UUA program designed to move a congregation toward a year round culture of spiritual generosity. The Board had investigated this program as a way to move toward an increased emphasis on stewardship and the Strategic Plan incorporated it by name in its suggested steps. Current thinking has moved beyond that particular program, while maintaining a commitment to stewardship. The Board

will investigate removing FORTH by name from the SP at the next quarterly review in December.

2. Tabling at Coffee Hour - Sally (10 min)

This recommendation updates the tabling policy to unlink it from the Sunday Potlucks, which no longer exist, and sets a clear policy on who can table, how to sign up, etc. The one controversial item occurs in the last line: “Tabling is not allowed in the foyer after Sunday services except where needed for all-church activities.” The categorization as an all-church activity should be made by staff rather than the committee requesting to table.

Discussion – How should this policy be altered to express this point? “Tabling is not allowed in the foyer after Sunday services except where needed for all-church activities as approved by the DAF.” This policy change does not affect the current practice of sign up lists for tabling in the Social Hall.

MOTION: Approve the tabling policy as amended.

Unanimously approved.

Recommendations from the Community Life Council, March 2015

The council members agreed that tabling is an important vehicle for communication between committees and groups and the congregation and should continue. However we also agree that the following guidelines for space sharing in the social hall after Sunday services would be useful.

- Tables should be booked in advance using the signup sheet in the foyer/bulletin board nearest the office door. Tabling rules will be posted on the sheet. Unbooked tables are available first come, first serve.
- Tabling is primarily for church committees and groups. RE, Scrip, and Membership have a table every Sunday. Other groups and committees may book tables to share information or for social events such as RE lunches. Those who want to use many tables should do so well in advance and to negotiate with those who have already booked if more space is needed.
- Individual congregants may table to inform the community about specific, timely outside events or issues consistent with

our principles.

- Fundraising in the social hall must follow Finance Committee policy. Prior approval by the committee is required and rarely given.
- Tables should be at the edges of the hall, as they are usually arranged, not in the middle. Tables cannot block the doors.

Tabling is not allowed in the foyer after Sunday services except where needed for all-church activities.

VI. Closing Activities (10 minutes)

1. Process Review (all):

- It was an efficient, productive meeting.
- We worked hard to get here and we're in a good place.
- We didn't have a timer and didn't seem to need one.
- There wasn't much controversial business.
- Digesting material in advance helps.

2. Things to communicate / do –

Exec – Add lead minister report structure to the November Board agenda.

All – Review staff goals and submit comments to Laura.

Breck and Karen – write Bulletin article on board and staff goals.

Chris – Post board and staff goals on the bulletin board.

All – Test the SP in the December quarterly review to see if anything needs adjustment, particularly inclusion of FORTH Program

All – Tour of Lower Hall at November Board meeting.

3. Closing words – Walt

Parking Lot -

Upcoming Dates

---October 23, 2015 – Fall auction

---November 4, 2015 – Exec Board Meeting

- November 8, 2015 - Joint meeting of pledge, stewardship, board, finance, and other interested parties to create pledge calendar
- Nov 13 (6-9PM) and Nov. 14 (9AM-3PM) meeting with UUA consultant
- November 18, 2015 – Full Board Meeting
- December 4-5, 2015 – Beloved Conversations
- May 15, 2016 in place of 2nd service – Congregational Meeting
- June 4, 2016 - Transitional Board Retreat (8:30AM - 3PM)

Previous Agenda Items Awaiting Feedback (Requested date if known)

Future Topics for Board Meetings

- Staff goals – October
- Budget and pledge drive – November
- Triune – December
- Beloved Conversations – January
- Stewardship – February
- Refreshing and expanding the strategic plan – March
- Rehearsal for the Congregational Meeting - April
- Board’s vision for 2016 budget priority conversation - November
- Staff goals - August
- Policy changes in Safe Congregations Policy
- Priorities for 2015-16 budget abundance – new Board retreat
- Consider how to pay for the boiler
- Emergency preparedness plan –
- Proposed changes to Short Term Public Witness process – Social Justice
- Stewardship report – The shape of Endowment / Stewardship after funds are sent to UUA for management. – April
- Campus Maintenance Plan
- Capital Expenditures Budget
- Budget calendar
- Discussion of 501c3 designation for church
- Disposition of church property should TJMC cease to exist

President’s Report

October Presidents Report to the Board

My activity on behalf of our church:

- Communicated Kathy's resignation from and Sally's appointment to Vice President via Facebook, Friday email, Order of Service
- Worked with Amy D., Christina, and many others to try to understand and help streamline the work of being Treasurer. (Thank you to past Treasurers, past Finance Committee members, and other wise ones who offered counsel.)
 - What continues to be true is that we ask a lot of our Treasurers. We have been very lucky, as we are now, to have people of great talent who are willing to serve. Still, it has remained difficult to attract and retain Treasurers, and to ensure that the job is rewarding and satisfying, and not unreasonably demanding.
 - I will recommend to the board that we eliminate the "TJMC-UU Revenue and Expense Statement – 2014-2015" that has been provided by the Treasurer in the past. (It is nice to have but involves our Treasurer re-keying data and is time consuming.) If the board wants to continue to receive that report, we will have to find a volunteer willing to create it. In the meantime we will rely on the Income Statement that our DAF produces.
 - We have planned to build and communicate our 2016-17 budget priorities and a program budget before the pledge drive begins this year. That reflects our wish to be clear with the congregation about what is needed by this beloved community, and what we will fund given various levels of income. We have an immediate need for someone to help create that budget. Christina is willing to do it but it will not be done without impact to her other work.
 - I will recommend that, in the upcoming budget cycle, we budget for some professional time to do things like the reconciliation that are pivotal to our checks and balances.

- We should continue to strengthen our Finance Committee with the next generation of leaders. We should continue to think about how we can make the Treasurer’s job more doable for a volunteer who is not a financial professional.
- Checked in with pledge committee—Adam and Kim, and others, to communicate board’s support and talk about new budget process. Attended their first of two strategy and listening sessions.
- Talked to Jean Newland about her clever plans to make the sash on our marriage banner ‘disappear’ after its 30 days of public witness.
- Filled these positions:
 - VP
 - Board Liaison to Leadership Development Committee
 - Board Representative to personnel Committee
 - Board Liaison to Facilities Task Force
- Helped plan and facilitate board retreat, with Karen Ransom, Sally Taylor, Erik, Leia, Christina, Jamie McReynolds and so many others.
- Worked with Personnel Committee Chair to plan Christina’s six-month review; provided my own input.
- Tried to connect youth groups with Communications Task Force. This is important to me but I have yet to get the right structure in place to do it.
- Ordered background checks per policy manual, for those who handle our money, including myself.

It can be awkward to ask a dedicated volunteer to fill out an application for a criminal background check. It can make a volunteer feel as if we don’t respect their contribution or trust them. So I hope our good intent shines brightly. Best practices (and our Policy Manual) require it and I ask your help in letting people know that we expect to do these checks as new volunteers join us.

- Attended Leadership Development’s Saturday “Lively Community” Event, reminding myself of the breadth, depth and commitment of volunteers, and also how much fun it is to gather together. Thanks to Bob Brett, Tess Hainer, Carole Black, Lynn Heath, Tyler Rines, Donna Redmond, Sally Taylor and Karen Ransom.
- I will propose these topics for discussion at board meetings:
 - October: Staff Goals
 - November: Board Vision for 2016-17 Budget Priorities
 - December: Triune
 - January: Beloved Conversations
 - February: Stewardship
 - March: Refreshing and expanding the Strategic Plan
 - April: Rehearsal for the Congregational Meeting
 - May:
 - June:

Put these things on your calendars, please

- Friday evening and Saturday, November 13 and 14th for work with Kenn Hurto to improve the way the Ministry is experienced
- May 15 Congregational Meeting in place of second services (Yes, let’s hope it is sacred and spiritual.)
- Saturday June 4 Retreat for outgoing and incoming Board

“Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.”

— *A.A. Milne, Winnie-the-Pooh*

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Horn

Vice President’s Report

Vice President’s Report

October, 2015

Two new committees have been approved this fall. The

Considering our Name Committee has asked to be part of the Administration Council and has begun discussions both in meetings and in a Wiki discussion group to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of “Thomas Jefferson”, “Memorial”, and “Church” being part of the name of our organization. They are discussing the most effective methods of involving the entire church community in this discussion with tabling and writing a bulletin article as first steps in the process.

The Campus Management Committee, also part of the Administrative Council, has begun its work to identify the projects that need to be undertaken in both our buildings and grounds. When the identification process is complete, they will determine the cost of the projects and prioritize them and make recommendations for capital improvement funding during the budgeting process. They will also be working on updating a long term maintenance schedule for the campus.

During the Community Life Council on September 8, 2015 Alex McGee led an exercise identifying how the committee chairs learned how to get things done at TJMC and then led another exercise about how church leadership has accomplished the goals of allowing generosity, cultivating hospitality, growing new leaders, integrating awareness of Justice issues, and deepening spirituality. The groups also shared information about their activities. Council members are in the process of finding a date in November for their next meeting. At that time the council will discuss the present governance system and make recommendations about possible changes. They will also be introduced to the Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan.

The Social Justice Council will meet again on November 2. They too will be sharing their opinions and recommendations about the governance system and discussing the Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan. Members of the Social Justice council have indicated a desire to make recommendations about changing the Community Security (aka Safety) policy but thus far I have not received these recommendations.

The Governance Task Force has begun to gather information about governance in other successful UU churches of a size similar to our own and recommended for study by Kenn Hurto. We have agreed on questions to ask committees, groups and councils to assess our

present system and assigned task force members to survey those entities.

Sally Taylor, Vice President

Treasurer's Report

Lead Minister's Report

Report to the Board – October, 2015

Lead Minister

Before getting to my usual form for Board reports I want to write a bit about that form itself.

Throughout my career the type of report Board's have wanted from their Lead Minister has been something of a reflection on the state of the congregation – What is the mood? What are the issues I see us needing to look at? What's exciting or troubling? What could we be doing more (or less) of?

The Board here, however, a few years back asked for a more structured and consistent structure for my reports. Looking at something I'd written earlier about my "ministry priorities" I was asked to focus on six areas: Worship, Faith Development, Community Building, Public Ministry, Updates on Initiatives, and Reports on Experimentation. To the best of my ability I have written reports within this framework more months than not. I will say, though, that it has not been easy. I will confess to having at times stretched in order to say *something* about each of the areas or, at least, to say something *new*. I will say up front that I do not find these reports helpful to write in this manner, and I honestly wonder whether or not it generates the most useful reports for you.

There are, of course, other categorizing schema. The joint UUA/UUMA report *Fulfilling the Call* identifies nine essential duties of ordained clergy: Worship, Rites of Passage, Pastoral Care and Presence, Encouraging Spiritual Development, Witnessing to Social Justice in the Public Square, Leading Administration, Personal Renewal and Professional Development, Serving the Larger Unitarian Universalist Faith, and Leading the Faith into the Future. This, too, feels to me to be a somewhat artificial structure, an exoskeleton, if you will, rather than getting to the bones. Another approach could be to take the staff goals, once adopted, and report each month on

progress.

If you *do* want me to continue to report on the six areas I am currently (or *Fullfilling the Call's* nine), I would propose that I focus on *one* each month so as to be able to offer a more comprehensive and complete reflection. (You may have noticed that my reports tend to be a bit on the *long* side!) I would, of course, also lift up anything else, from any of the areas, that I thought needed our attention. So ... my question to you is: What would be most helpful to you? What is the information/perspective you most want from the vantage point of your Lead Minister? What do you *need* to know that only I can say? Your answer(s) would be very helpful to me.

In the meantime ...

Worship: I continue to receive positive feedback on the visit of Rev. Erika Orban. And while the observance of communion in the sanctuary on a Sunday morning is, shall we say, unusual, I have heard only positives about that, as well. (One, ex-Catholic, noted the coincidence of the timing with the visit of Pope Francis in the background. Another said, “this is the first time ever that communion was meaningful.”) I am sure that there were those who were put off by her unabashed theism, yet I have not heard from any of them.

People continue to express appreciation for the change to my being the primary preacher. Many have also taken note of the Worship Weavers' presence *within* those sermons, and are glad of it. So far my decision to return to wearing a robe has generated no negative feedback that I am aware of. I will say that, while I do recognize such liturgical garb as a kind of *costuming*, it feels good to once again claim something that was once important to me.

Faith Development: It has been heartening to hear the positive responses to the Soul Matters material. In the recent meeting of Covenant Group facilitators there was excitement about bringing pieces of it to their groups, and I have had individuals approach me about using it at home, as well. (While on the subject of Covenant Groups, this month's facilitators meeting was well attended and, for the first time in a couple of years, facilitators expressed a desire for

more frequent meetings which had been stopped in favor of one-to-one support from mentors because few facilitators were willing to meet in a group. I think that this is an extremely exciting (re)development!)

Leia and I continue to try to discern a new direction for Adult Faith Development. A great deal of our time and energy, as well as that of volunteers, has been going into developing programs that were then attended by only a small handful of people. The “cost/benefit ratio,” if you will, has not been good, yet there continues to be the expressed desire for Adult Faith Development opportunities. (It should be noted, too, that during the Lower Hall renovation, when space is extraordinarily tight, there just isn’t *room* for the number of programs we’ve generally offered!) Our current thought is to offer few traditional “classes” and, instead, to put more energy into supporting those areas in which faith development is already a major component. (Covenant Groups being one example.) After Church on Sunday, November 1st, and in the evening on Wednesday the 28th, we’ll be holding brainstorming sessions to bring more people into the exploration of new approaches to AFD – including, perhaps, making better use of Sunday morning time once the renovations are completed.

Community Building: The Leadership Development’s program on Saturday the 10th was in many respects a great success. The attendance was greater than many had assumed (feared?), and while it was made up largely of people who are already involved the energy was fantastic. Several “old timers” noted that they learned things they’d never known before. Senior Staff has also encouraged Leadership Development to suggest to the four Councils that they could use the materials that were developed to each have an effective table during the Fellowship Hour over several months. This could build on the success of the event as well as bring it out to more people.

Raising the visibility of the Committee on the Ministry continues to be a priority. By the time of our Board meeting the CoM poster (created for the Leadership Development event) should be

prominently posted in the hall outside of the church office, and an insert will be included in the Order of Service one Sunday. (And will be again periodically.)

I continue to make myself more available and present to groups and committees, most of whom have expressed gratitude (and relief!) for having me more actively involved. I would especially note my work with our Communications Task Force as they prepare to roll out our new website (which I have to say is pretty awesome). I have been helping to create, update and refresh content as well as offering other support.

Another effort I'm (once again) making to increase our communication among ourselves – as well as offering a window to who we are for the outer world to see – is a renewed commitment to our congregation's blog, *The Talk of TJMC*. (<http://thetalkoftjmc.blogspot.com/>) I am soliciting original writing from congregants – personally at the moment but in a wider way in the near future – and see the blog becoming more of an opportunity for members of our community to express themselves in creative and involving ways.

Public Ministry: I was pleased to be asked to offer the opening reflection at IMPACT's Team Assembly on Monday, October 11th. I wrote about it – including the text of my reflection – on the congregation's blog, "Making an IMPACT in the Name of Justice." This is the first of a series of pieces I intend to write in collaboration with our IMPACT team as a way of keeping before the congregation the *issues* IMPACT is working on (rather than focusing on IMPACT as a cause in-and-of-itself as it has sometimes seemed to some that we do). I have once again connected with IMPACT's Clergy Caucus, although their meetings tend to fall on days and times when I have prior commitments (my twice-monthly meeting with the Presidents, for instance). I have asked for more advanced notice – the last announcement came out in the week prior to the meeting – so that I can make arrangements to either change the date and time of my TJMC meeting or to absent myself from it.

It is my strongly held opinion that the Black Lives Matter sign in the front of the sanctuary is, although situated *within* our building, an act of public ministry. The original murmur of negative – and positive – reaction seems to have died down, although I imagine the disagreements over its appropriateness have not. Again, by the time of our Board meeting, I will have created an FAQ that addresses the rationale for hanging the sign where it is (including a link to my sermon that referenced doing so), as well as more information about the Black Lives Matter movement (which is quite a lot more than the “bumper sticker slogan” some see it as). I will invite people to engage with me in dialog so that we might better understand one another, as some already have.

I was glad to be able to attend the gala celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Jefferson School, and I am committed to actively participating in the Thanksgiving Basket initiative of Ebenezer Baptist Church and an ever-growing collection of collaborators. (Barring some unforeseen calamity I hope to be there when the baskets are assembled, and intend to be there on the day of distribution.)

Updates on Initiatives: The various pieces of our (re)new(ed) undoing racism efforts is the most exciting thing to report on in this area. There is a group focusing on creating a way for the congregation to consider our name – not just the “Thomas Jefferson” part, but the “Memorial” and “Church” parts as well. They went through the process to become an official group, and decided to align themselves with the Admin. Council as they see their mission as encouraging the congregation to engage with more than the racial implications of our name but, rather, with the larger question of how we present ourselves to, and are seen by, the wider community.

Work continues to prepare for the launch of the Beloved Conversations program. On October 6th I participated in a conference call with a number of other congregations that are using the curricula, or are about to. It was exciting not only for the information shared, but for the sense of networked community within the wider UU movement. On the 18th Leia, Chris, and I will participate in our congregation’s first coaching session in which we will learn a great

deal more about rolling out the program – hurdles to avoid, best practices to use. In order to keep this project on track, we are going to begin to ask for commitments from possible participants. As noted in an early conversation, I hope to directly and actively involve as much of the congregation’s leadership as is possible. At our meeting I will be asking each of you whether or not you are able (and, I suppose, willing) to commit to participating. With the introductory workshop being scheduled for the weekend of December 4-5, the Beloved Conversations staff recommends something like the following for the 8 sessions that constitute the heart of the program (note that each of the two continuing groups will choose together the specific dates and times for their meetings):

- Session 1 - week of Dec 6
- Session 2 - week of Dec 13
- Session 3 - week of Jan 10
- Session 4 - week of Jan 17
- Session 5 - week of Jan 31
- Session 6 - week of Feb 7
- Session 7 - week of Feb 21
- Session 8 - week of Feb 28

It will be necessary to commit for the entirety of the program as it is a cohesive and comprehensive whole – the on-going engagement with one another is much the purpose of the program as any content. It is a time commitment, yes, but the personal and congregational benefits will be tremendous.

Experimentation: The majority of my attention and energy these days is going toward continuing to do the things that have been working over the past four years while also restarting my ministry here in the areas that haven’t. Admittedly, this isn’t leaving a lot of room for experimentation. I will acknowledge, however, that it is in the context of my understanding of Unitarian Universalism itself – and its particular incarnation here in C’ville – as what I’ve called a “Grand Experiment” that I do all that I do.

One last thing. In a continuing effort to be as honest and open with you all as is possible I want to add one more dimension to the personal and internal changes I wrote about in my October column. As I have been unhesitatingly open about, my daily living has been colored by, and affected by, the mental illnesses of depression and anxiety. I have been receiving treatment for both, yet they are stubbornly intransigent diseases, and my performance here has most certainly been affected. This summer I began taking a new medication which among its other uses is as a treatment for ADHD. The results have been nothing short of miraculous. I say this not as an excuse but by way of explanation – many of the performance issues that have plagued my time here turn out to be extraordinarily common deficiencies in people with ADHD, and I can report that many of the issues I’ve wrestled with seem to have “taken care of themselves” as I am now addressing what was certainly a contributing factor, if not an underlying cause, of my inability to perform many tasks which, to others, would seem easy. This shift in my physiological and neurologic condition, combined with the rebirth of my spirit I’ve previously lifted up, give me great hope for our future together.

Pax tecum, friends ...

Wik

Director of Faith Development’s Report

Report to the Board

October 2015

Leia Durland-Jones, Director of Faith Development

Adult Programming

Dates have been set for two separate brainstorming sessions (Wednesday October 28, 6-7 pm and Sunday November 1, 12:45 pm) to talk (and dream) about the future of AFD at TJMC UU. The hope is that by offering both a daytime and an evening gathering we will make the conversation accessible to all who are interested in participating. Over the past month, many people have expressed their devotion to our AFD program and have shared that they are eagerly anticipating our fall prospectus. The number of actual participants in AFD programs the last

few years has, in many cases, been disappointing. I am excited about the possibilities inherent in a Sunday morning AFD program housed in the lower hall. This fall's AFD offerings (dates being pinned down even as I type) include: Soul Matters (led by Wik), a meditation class (led by Wik,) pre-holiday retreat (led by Alex,) Beloved Conversations, Wednesday Worship and Wednesday Wonderings. Construction in the lower hall has significantly impacted building use this fall. Between outside groups, renters and church group meetings, there is not space in the building this fall to accommodate a large number of AFD classes.

Children's Programming

Our children's program is off to a great start with full teaching team for every class! At the 11:15 service, rooms are uncomfortably overcrowded due to the loss of the lower hall spaces. It is wonderful to see the walls in the classrooms coming to life with images and words that reflect the important learning and activities occurring on Sundays. Although we turned Summit Room 2 into a sweet "chapel" space, Children's Worship is also overcrowded at the 11:15 service and I look forward to returning to the parlor for our worship in January. It has taken a lot of work to get here and many hands lifting, hauling, packing and toting as well as prepping and preparing—and teaching! I am so grateful for everyone who has stepped up to help. There is much to be proud of and thankful for...

Youth Programming (11:15 service only)

This year's programming for youth programming is thriving. Our 6th & 7th grade Neighboring Faiths class had their first class fieldtrip—to All Souls Unitarian Church in DC. The trip went wonderfully and has set the stage for a great year of connection and exploration. The group starts their unit on Christianity next and will be visiting City Church, Westminster Presbyterian, Church of the Incarnation and Ebenezer Baptist Church. Our Coming of Age youth, Challenge, will be paired with their mentors soon. The group had a work day at church on October 11 and did some much needed clean-up on the playground. Our senior high youth group, YRUU, went to UVa's Poplar Ridge Ropes course on October 11 and had a fine time learning new skills, trying new things and building connections with each other. Both Challenge and YRUU will go apple picking at Carter's Mountain on Sunday October 25.

Professional Development

I will use my professional expenses funds to attend the Liberal Religious Educators' annual Fall Conference October 22-25 held in Morristown, NJ. This year's program is: "RE Without Walls: Technology, Theme-Based Ministry, and Full Week Faith." I look forward to learning all I can and to sharing materials, resources and ideas when I return.

Director of Administration and Finance's Report

Director of Administration and Finance – Christina Rivera

Board Report – October 21, 2015 mtg

September 2015

- Number of emails received: 2462
- Completed August 2015 month end financials
- Prep and attended following meetings:
 - Presidents
 - Finance committee
 - Board
 - Exec. Comm.
 - Personnel
 - Various Lay Leaders meetings (getting to know long-time TJMC members who hold institutional knowledge)

Lower Hall Renovations:

Verbal update:

Schedule

Budget

Challenges

FY 16 Financial Report Notes:

- New Format
- Ministerial Associate Salary: Variance from last year was due to a re-issued check last year, the reissue happened in September while the void happened in October thus the appearance of a variance. This will occur in reverse next month and then revert to normal in the month-end November report.

- I continue to struggle with the procedure for reconciling scrip purchases and sales. I will be meeting with Jaime McReynolds for support in learning the process. Jaime assures me it really is complicated and the extra support is warranted.

Finance Committee Report:

Finance Committee is in support of new report format and Program budget format for congregation. Looks forward to meeting on November 8th with Stewardship, Pledge and Board.

Membership Report

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of August 30, 2015: 436 including 14 youth members

Add:

None

Drop:

Ba'th Bates, Michelle, inquiry letter returned, no forwarding address, archive

Cain, Marcia, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Collier, Thomas R., no response to inquiry letter, archive

Cvetanovich, Michael, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Dill, Scott, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Eichenberger, Amy, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Ferreira, Deborah, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Ferreira, Emma (Y), no response to inquiry letter, archive

Koch, Emily, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Koch, L. Paul, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Landsberg, Lawrence, email request to archive in response to inquiry letter

Moore, Tyler, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Norton, Will (Y), no response to inquiry letter, archive

Ransom, Jane, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Riddle, Brad, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Lord-Riddle, Tanya, no response to inquiry letter, archive

Voss, John, no response to inquiry letter, archive

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of September 30, 2015: 419 members including 12 youth members

Sally Taylor
Membership Tracker for Membership Committee

Board Liaison Reports

• Communications Task Force

Draft Report for Board, by Achsah Carrier, chair, Communications Task Force October 13, 2015

The Communications Task Force is still working primarily on planning the revised website. However, we are make plans to consider the issues of bulletin boards and sound/communication technology within the church building, which we will turn to next. Fortunately, Rob Craighurst, who has been working on sanctuary sound at church for years, has agreed to work with us—perhaps without fully knowing what he is getting in to. We are very grateful. We also made some other contacts at the recent Leadership Development event and hope to build these into new task force or communications committee members.

We have decided to use the Native Church Wordpress template and Jennifer Springer has begun to build the site. You can see the first tentative steps at dev.uucharlotteville.org. We're not ready for comments yet, so hold your fire—this is just the first step of learning to implement this template's capacities.

We have begun to prepare text for the various sections of the site. Erik is working on text for the Worship section and has been very helpful about keeping in touch. Leia is drafting the Religious Education section, and we have preliminary drafts for many other sections as well. As I said before, we are going to open the site with minimal content, and gradually add more as we learn more. We will devote a page to informing the congregation about our progress—a link to this will be on the home page.

We have continued to meet with groups at church to get their input. We met with Social Justice and have a draft of their text for the opening. We also met with Sally Taylor and have a preliminary plan to serve Board needs, though much more needs to be done here since there is so much Board/Governance material to add to the site. Finally, we met with the DAF to discuss the calendaring on the site, and think we have a plan for that as well.

We had hoped to have the site open in “late October”. We may not meet that date, but should not be far behind.

Sincerely

Achsah Carrier, Communications Task Force Chair