

**Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church**  
**Unitarian Universalist**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES DECEMBER MEETING**  
December 16, 2015

DRAFT AGENDA

**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:** Breck Gasting, Leia Durland-Jones (Ex Officio), Christina Rivera (Ex Officio), Sally Taylor (Vice President),

Katharine Maus, Laura Horn (President), Ann Salamini (Secretary), Amy Davis (Treasurer), David Mick, Walt Megonigal, Marlene Jones, Erik Wikstrom (Ex Officio), Anita Holmes

**Board Members Absent:** Karen Ransom (President Elect)

**Guests In Attendance:** Dawn Dirks

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

1. Opening words – Breck
2. Check-in

Leia noted that her brother Carl was involved in a serious car accident today. No one was hurt, but please be aware of decreased vision at this time of year when the sun is low in the sky.

3. Acceptance of Agenda

**MOTION:** Accept the Agenda.

**Unanimously approved.**

4. Public Comment –
5. Correspondence

**II. Reports**

1. President’s Report (written) – Laura Horn

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

3. Treasurer’s Report ( ) – Amy Davis

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

There is an interfaith rally being planned for Wednesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30PM at the Free Speech Wall. It will be in support of religious freedom and especially in support of our Muslim brothers and sisters.

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

Durland-Jones

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

7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor

8. Board Liaison Reports

Communications (written) – Achsah Carrier and Holly Dilatush

Governance (verbal) – Sally

All Board members are requested to take the Governance Survey this week. The questions may seem directed to people other than Board members, but please answer to the best of your ability. A general response in essay form is acceptable if the survey seems awkward.

Facilities (verbal) – Breck

The Lower Hall renovation is nearing completion.

- Painting has started.
- The concrete base for the elevator has been installed. A somewhat less expensive solution was found but it still uses significant contingency funds.
- The renovation is still projected to be under budget, but there will be some things which can't be done in this round.
- The elevator may arrive Christmas week.
- Most of this work has been facilitated by Martin Horn with Christina's guidance. The Facilities Task Force has not needed to answer many questions.
- The completion of the project is expected in the first or second week of January.
- The Board should consider an appropriate celebration of the renovation once it is completed.

Discussion – Please refer any unfinished elements of the renovation to the Campus Management group for inclusion in their list.

There has been an interest expressed in organizing a celebration

in February or March. Ask Ian Sole from Facilities to make a connection with these volunteers.

### **III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions**

1. Approve November 2015 Draft Board Minutes.

**MOTION:** Approve the Consent Agenda.

**Unanimously approved.**

### **IV. Old Business**

1. Review of 2015-16 Staff and Board Goals – Laura (10 min)  
and Strategic Plan – Breck (15 min)

**Board Goals:**

- Demonstrably improve the way the congregation experiences the ministry  
In pursuit of this goal, the Board engaged a UUA congregational consultant and built an improvement plan based on a weekend retreat. The Board president wrote two Bulletin articles to explain our plans and progress. Our staff organized Beloved Conversations to strengthen the congregation's ability to engage in difficult conversations. The Committee on Ministry has been lifted up in its role of addressing the way the ministry is being experienced. Changes to Sunday worship have received strongly positive feedback. Our minister is leading Stewardship and Racial Justice and participating in the Pledge team.
- Build a plan to ensure TJMC's financial health
  - Establish working Stewardship Committee (team)  
Our minister led a joint Stewardship/Finance/Board/Pledge team meeting to establish roles, leadership and coordination. Leaders have been chosen early for the pledge effort, including Board participation. A budget calendar is being established to allow congregational conversations on the program budget in advance of the pledge effort. The renovation budget has been well stewarded.
  - We have ahead of us strengthening the Finance

Committee and adding members to Endowment, establishing new sources of revenue and making stewardship calls as part of the Board's pledge responsibilities.

Discussion – Do we have a Stewardship Committee with members? A small team has been formed. It is not intended as a year round fundraising group. It's mission is to change the culture of the congregation to be more aware of its own generosity and to see each of us as stewards.

- Re-address Triune model  
See discussion under item 2 of New Business.
- Create Campus Management Plan to identify and prioritize capital projects and prepare maintenance plan  
A Campus Management team has been established and has identified a lengthy list of long-neglected maintenance and repair items for the church and Summit House. Work parties are being held / scheduled, including one on January 9<sup>th</sup> to prep for painting and one on January 23<sup>rd</sup> to paint. A job jar is available in the office during the week and at the Membership table on Sundays for any person or group wishing to tackle a project. The Summit House porch has been stained. Funding and completing the Campus Management Plan is ongoing.
- Keep commitments for the successful roll out of the Strategic Plan  
Progress on the Strategic Plan will have its own discussion below.
- Embrace Beloved Conversations  
Staff did a great deal of work to set this up and bring in a facilitator for the initial workshop. Five Board members are among the 24 people participating in Beloved Conversations this winter.

### Strategic Plan:

The Staff goals are strongly related to the Strategic Plan (SP) and staff work is moving the SP forward. There are actions which are not currently tracked, as in the Adult Faith Development sphere. Please feel free to pass along actions that should be noted in the tracking record. Tonight we will also be making some

changes in the way of additions and edits. Three specific items are up for discussion:

- Goal 3-B2 – Replace and upgrade the HVAC systems in the building.

The Facilities group looked into this goal. The HVAC system downstairs is relatively new. The boiler is a problem; it could go any time or continue for many years. Thus this goal could be removed or amended.

Discussion – We should prepare a plan to replace the boiler when necessary, either by creating a fund for any major repairs (roof, boiler, etc) or specifically for the boiler, which is guesstimated to cost approximately \$50,000 to replace. Also, we need a comprehensive schedule of all elements of the HVAC system, which have a range of age limits.

**MOTION:** Amend the Strategic Plan goal 3-B2 to prepare a plan to deal with the maintenance and financial implications of an aging HVAC system, including identification of costs and budget schedule.

**Unanimously approved.**

- Goal 3-B1 – Establish implementation steps for the UUA FORTH Plan.

The larger goal remains though the FORTH Plan is no longer being considered for the related initiative.

**MOTION:** Eliminate reference to the FORTH Program in goal 3-B1.

**Unanimously approved.**

- Goal 1-A4 – Continue annual pulse survey to assess and evaluate trends in the quality of spiritual and community connection.

Best practices suggest that yearly surveys are too frequent and thus participation drops; every two years is a more effective interval. Two years will also give more time to implement actions suggested by the survey. Putting on and evaluating the survey takes a lot of volunteer time and response to additional surveys for other purposes (eg.

Governance) may suffer from survey fatigue. The next Pulse Survey team should be appointed in Fall 2016 to hold the survey in Spring 2017. Consideration should be given to some additional data points to lift up demographic information, for example.

**MOTION:** Amend SP goal 1-A4 initiative to hold the Pulse Survey “every other year.”

**Approved with one abstention.**

At some point in the review process, the Board should step back from looking at specific initiatives and look at progress toward the larger objectives. Reviews are scheduled in March and June 2016 (as part of the Board retreat.)

### Staff Goals

Review of staff goals should not be confused with performance evaluation. These goals are designed (and approved by the Board) to be responsive to the Strategic Plan (SP) and are sometimes over and above job descriptions.

Discussion –

- All staff are carrying a heavy load to pursue these goals; personal care seems to be deferred in favor of other goals.
- Clearly expressed goals help get more done.
- Goals suggest a calendar that reflects how they can be accomplished; time and resources have to be allotted.
- Is there anything that should be removed from these goals? The SP doesn't say everything should be done in one year.
- The Lower Hall renovation has had to take precedence.

Thanks to staff for all they do. Memorial services, Beloved Conversations, Lower Hall renovation: all are on top of ordinary tasks.

Staff is working really hard in support of the programs of the church. Whenever money is tight, churches look at staff compensation before programs. Hopefully this discussion has made it clearer that staff compensation is about programs.

2. Pledge Drive Calendar and Responsibilities – Erik (5 min)  
Coming out of the umbrella meeting of Board, Stewardship, Finance and Pledge team, the following calendar was developed.
  - January 2016 – “Talking about talking about money,” the first phase of the pledge process, will roll out in January: why it’s hard, how it’s hard, what we really mean when we’re talking about money related matters.
  - February 2016 – The informational phase: what pledging means, what good pledging looks like, how pledges and our budget tie into each other.
  - March – March 20<sup>th</sup> will be the Sunday when all are encouraged to make their pledge. Think of it as “election day.” There will be events to canvass various groups beforehand. Lead donors will be personally contacted.

Elements of the work:

- Chris (DAF) is working with Kenn Hurto to transform our line item budget into a program budget. An extra board meeting will likely be required to hammer it out.
  - The Pledge team is acting on the idea that people don’t contribute to an operating budget, but to the impact of the church’s programs on lives and community. They are not concerned with having a draft budget for people to react to initially; they will focus on talking about stewardship.
  - People will be asked how they want to be contacted for pledging.
  - A “draft of a draft” budget will go to Finance Committee in January, return to the Board in time for our January meeting, then consecutively back to Finance and Board for February meetings. This process should be cleaner and clearer for all.
  - The Pledge team is not waiting for a goal from the Board. Once pledge totals come in, there will be work to reconcile.
  - Board members should plan to pledge early.
  - Many major donors will want some personal contact for the ask. This is largely a Board responsibility.
3. Update on actions and next steps on improvement plan - Laura

(10 min)

These are the actions taken from the workshop with Kenn Hurto, UUA Congregational Consultant:

- Compiled a list of next steps for board consideration.
- Talked with Leadership Development about supplying board meeting process observers. This could be used as an introduction to board service.
- Talked to Membership about how they orient new members, who should know they will be asked to share time, talent and treasure.
- Organized congregational conversations about each board meeting on the following Sunday.
- Conduct quarterly reviews of progress toward board goals.

These other actions are in planning or just starting:

- Talk to the congregation about the 2015 Pulse Survey results. We have already changed a lot in response to the survey. Perhaps a more appropriate action at this time would be to talk to the committees and councils about how responsive and trustworthy the board is.
- Additional contact with the UUA consultant. Chris is working with Kenn Hurto on creating a program budget. Laura has talked to him on issues of governance. The Governance Task Force is also in consultation with him. (His consultations by conference call, skype or email are free to us as a member congregation of the UUA. If he comes to Charlottesville, we pay travel expenses only.)

## **V. New Business**

### **1. Review of Proposed Web Privacy Policy – Sally (5 min)**

The TJMC website has never had a privacy policy on how we use people's information. The Communications Task Force insists that this is now necessary. Please review the proposed document and make any comments to Achsah Carrier or Sally Taylor. The policy will be on the January 2016 Consent Agenda. The website can only launch once the policy is approved.

### **2. Readdressing the Triune Plan / Goal - Laura (5 min)**

Senior staff is preparing to engage with the board to readdress the triune model. Only after the board understands and trusts this model will the conversation be widened to the congregation. No bylaws changes will be attempted until the Governance Task Force has made its recommendations.

The senior staff believe the basic ideas in the triune model are strong but there is room for collaboration with the board. Their goal is to do a better job of explaining the fundamental underpinnings of the model and then to entertain feedback and collaboration. Together staff and board members will create and own a model to take to the congregation.

Discussion – Staff did not engage the congregation last time; consequently there is a lot of confusion around the triune model. The board did vote on the triune last year but with doubts and reservations. This year we will work for a shared understanding before going to the congregation later this year. This plan should be communicated to the congregation.

### **BREAK AND GRATITUDE CARDS - (20 min)**

**MOTION:** Extend the meeting by 15 minutes.

**Unanimously approved.**

#### 3. Staff health insurance - Christina (15min)

Last year the Board took the decision, based on Personnel Committee recommendations, to change staff health insurance coverage from 100% of the cost of any plan (for full time employees) to 80% of the cost of the silver plan. (Part time employees are eligible for prorated coverage based on their percentage of employment.) The recommendation was made because the UUA actually recommended compensation at 80% of the silver plan level. It looked like we were overpaying on health insurance. However, the UUA also recommended covering dependents at 50%, which TJMC was not doing and which was not brought up at the time of the vote for change. The practical upshot of this decision is that most staff are experiencing a decrease in net compensation after paying for health insurance.

Discussion –

- The memo accompanying the recommendations last January still stands: If we don't make a change to health insurance coverage now, more drastic changes may be necessary later.
- Personnel and Finance have both been asked to weigh in on this issue. They have no consensus and have no recommendation to make at this time.
- TJMC has never offered family plans to staff other than the lead minister. Some of the rationale behind the change was about fairness to all staff. How the triune model might affect this issue was unclear at the time.
- This is not just a change at TJMC. Reassigning responsibility for health insurance is taking place across the nation, causing much the same squeeze on many Americans.
- The Board has to manage the budget and take care of our staff, morale, etc.
- If the concern is that there is a net decrease in compensation, it could be addressed through salary adjustments. We need to set a standard for health insurance and stick to it.

**MOTION:** Add 5 minutes to the discussion.

**Unanimously approved.**

- We've made it more difficult for staff. If more funds go toward health insurance, what else would be cut? Staff and programs are completely overlapped.
- We usually cut building maintenance.
- We hired the lead minister with the understanding that his family would be covered. Is that for the duration of a ministry or can it be renegotiated yearly? – The implication in a contract is that compensation will increase rather than decrease over time, though sometimes it may be necessary to cut compensation.
- What do the staff hope for / think is fair? – That compensation stay level rather than decrease.
- We depended on Personnel for recommendations last year. The group was very sensitive to budget.
- We need volunteers for a group to consider a range of options with cost estimates. Walt, Laura and Sally (Board), Dawn Dirks (Personnel), Amy (Finance) and Chris (staff) volunteered.

4. Executive session with staff to review DAF performance appraisal – Laura (5 min)

**MOTION:** Go into executive session with staff present.

**Unanimously approved.**

**MOTION:** Leave executive session.

**Unanimously approved.**

Summary – The Board reviewed and approved the DAF performance appraisal and thanked Chris for her work on behalf of TJMC.

## **VI. Closing Activities (10 minutes)**

### **1. Process Review (all):**

- We did a nice job with some difficult topics and sharing air space.
- There was an open atmosphere; no one was afraid to speak.
- I'm grateful for this group; it's good to be part of it.
- I liked the visual voting process.
- I'm still worried about how we're readdressing the triune; I'm not comfortable with the process.
- This meeting took less of a physical toll than expected. There were fewer voices of concern than expected.
- I wish we had more time on some issues.
- The President was skillful at running the meeting with grace.
- I appreciate the board's willingness to engage with these topics.
- I was nervous at bringing up a topic; I'm glad it got a good hearing.
- Good meeting.
- I'm anxious about the health care topic. Getting a good answer is important. I'm optimistic about revenue.
- It's good to have another go on health care.

### **2. Things to communicate / do –**

--Ask Ian to help make a celebration to mark the end of the Lower Hall renovations.

--Schedule longer term financial visioning discussion for January

2016.

- Laura will send Sally a list of folks from the membership event who requested tasks.
- Schedule the next Pulse Survey for early Spring 2017. Appoint team in Fall 2016.
- Breck will send an email to track progress toward the larger objectives of the Strategic Plan.
- Quarterly review of Board/Staff goals and Strategic Plan in March and at June Board Retreat. Try to organize a comprehensive review containing all elements. Breck will help craft these reviews.
- Laura and Ann will meet with congregants after the second service on December 20 to discuss the Board meeting.
- Ann will make a sign up sheet for subsequent conversations.
- Staff to present triune plan in January.
- Walt, Laura, Dawn, Amy, Chris and Sally will bring health insurance options to the January meeting.

### 3. Closing words – Breck

Parking Lot -

### **Upcoming Dates**

- December 20, 2015 – Board discussion with congregation after 2<sup>nd</sup> service
- January 6, 2015 - Exec
- January 20, 2015 – Board Meeting
- May 15, 2016 in place of 2<sup>nd</sup> 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**

- Budget and pledge drive – November
- Triune – January
- Quarterly review of board and staff goals and Strategic Plan – March and June (Board Retreat)

- Longer term financial visioning discussion – January
- Review of health insurance options - January
- Beloved Conversations – January
- Send cards to donors - 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
- Appoint Pulse Survey team – Fall 2016
- 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**

### **President’s Report December 2015**

Activity:

Made 2<sup>nd</sup> round of membership calls; referred pastoral issues

Consulted with Alex re the Temporary Team for Credentialing Paperwork for the Assistant Minister.

With Dawn Dirks, chair of the Personnel Committee, Leia, and Christina, conducted Christina Rivera’s six month appraisal (as promised in her offer letter.) Thank you to the Personnel committee

and Dawn for doing the work of collecting the information; thank you to those of you who provided input; thank you to Christina for her reflection and the many ways she has graced our church. I will bring copies of our summary and Christina's self appraisal to the December board meeting.

I discovered that, given our current board schedule and the Finance Committee's scheduled meeting time, it is nearly impossible for our DAF to get a board report with current financials to us on time. One possibility is that we could have an on-time report with a careful look at the previous month's finances as well as her other activity; Chris could update the financials verbally at our meeting. To be discussed. Let me know if you have concerns about this approach.

Continued close consultation with Pledge team.

Corresponded with congregants who replied to my Bulletin article.

With Executive Committee, drafted board agenda and discussed our approach to revisiting the Triune. Our thoughts: Senior staff will begin engagement with the board, reestablishing understanding of the model and trust. We can then take our shared understanding to the congregation. A bylaw change won't be considered until the Governance Task Force creates recommendations.

Joined year-round Stewardship team and attended joint meeting with Stewardship, Pledge, Finance, Board.

Attended Beloved Conversations weekend training.

Drafted end-of-year letter to church.

Actions growing out of consultation with Kenn Hurto:

- Published list of possible next steps for board consideration

- Made a coveted guest appearance at a Leadership Development meeting to get their thoughts and advice for sponsoring board process observers. We explored the possibility of using this as an introduction for those who might aspire to board service.

Drafted board meeting ‘rules of the road’

Spoke to representatives of Membership Committee about changing the way we orient people to membership, so that they know they are agreeing to be stewards—to share (and sometimes to protect) their time, talent and treasure. We want them to know we will ask these things of them.

Secured space and announcements for after-board-meeting conversation with congregation, beginning after 2nd service, 12/20.

Drafted update of progress on board 2015-2016 goals, for the quarterly review. We plan to repeat the review in March and June.

Did the usual stuff of checking in the state of the church with our senior staff, reviewing expenditures, signing a check, writing the bulletin article, preparing for the board meeting, etc.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Horn

## **Vice President’s Report**

Vice President’s Report  
December, 2015

The Revised Policy Manual has been sent to the office and the Communications Task Force. A hard copy of it and the Bylaws will be available in the office as required by our Policy Manual and both will be posted on the new website as soon as it is up and running. The Board must approve the proposed Website Privacy Policy before the Communications Task Force is willing to begin using the new website.

The Community Life Council meeting has been postponed until Jan. 8. No action on any of the pending policy changes has been taken yet. The Social Justice Council will meet on Sunday, Dec. 13 to consider these suggested changes.

Five people attended the Congregational Conversation after the first service on Dec. 6 and about 12 attended after the second service. Much of the discussion emphasized the need for education of the congregation and training of the ushers. In particular concern was expressed about desensitizing ushers so that they will not freeze during an emergency. It was suggested that the RE Committee discuss how to educate the RE attendees without scaring them. Practice drills

and visits from emergency personnel and firemen to children's worship were suggested. Another suggestion was that a communication system between the two buildings needs to be put in place so that an emergency in one location can be communicated to the other location quickly. Walkies or alarms or a bell system were suggested. It was pointed out that any emergency plan must include the back-up of the church computer system to an off-site location in case of fire. We will need an evacuation plan and signs. Ushers will need posted instructions. It was pointed out that if the elevator is not working, there is no handicapped egress from the Lower Hall and we need to consider an addendum to the plan to consider how that would be handled. Another Congregational Conversation on the Emergency Plan will be held on Jan. 10 to gather comments and answer questions. It was suggested that the plan include the offer of active listening by the Pastoral Visitors for those traumatized by any disaster or emergency event at TJMC.

The Campus Management Committee has identified repairs and improvements that need to be done professionally and those that can be done by volunteers either in a work party or by individuals. Work parties are scheduled for January 9 and 23 and there will be an article in the January bulletin urging congregants to volunteer to clean, paint or make repairs as they are able either during the work party or at their convenience. At least we now know what needs to be done.

Publicity about the Connie Cheetham Award was in the November bulletin and is in the weekly updates. An email to former recipients soliciting nominations resulted in several responses. We now have 9 nominees.

Sally Taylor, Vice President

### **Treasurer's Report**

### **Lead Minister's Report**

#### **Report to the Board – December, 2015**

#### **Lead Minister**

Uppermost on my mind – three memorial services in four weeks. Any one of these deaths – Bill Spurgin on October 15<sup>th</sup>, Deborah Rose on

November 1<sup>st</sup>, and Katie Courish on the day after Thanksgiving – would, by itself, be enough to bring a congregation into mourning. Three so close together could break a congregation’s heart. As, indeed, it has for some of us. That’s a lot of loss in a little time. To paraphrase the Longfellow poem I read at Bill’s memorial service, “Death this year has taken [them], whose kind we shall not see again.”

Alex McGee remarked to me that when a person, an individual, is grieving a loss we tell them to be gentle with themselves, to take time, to allow themselves to shut down a little bit, as all of these are natural parts of a grieving process. And individual members of the congregation, for whom one or more of these deaths have been particularly hard, have been similarly advised. But how, she asked, do you say that to a *congregation*? It’s not just the individual members who have suffered loss, it’s our institution, our systems, our organization. As we move into this holiday time I encourage each of us, as leaders in the congregation, to be aware of the ways both people and systems will be hurting. This may come out in odd-seeming ways. It’ll be good for us to keep an especially open heart. (As well as to remember to be gentle with ourselves and with each other)

*Worship:* I believe that I have received more positive feedback about our annual Multi-Bread Communion service than any other this year. Partly this is due, I think, to Leia and my work crafting a service that truly aims to touch people of all ages. (And as I mentioned in my last report, we’ve taken to keeping notes from year to year so that we can build on past successes, make informed decisions about what to drop, and be intentional in our choices about what to add. This makes a real difference.) I think, too, that we have been doing it for enough years now that it has taken on the kind of comforting power that only repeated rituals can. • I’d also note that the more informal service that followed Thanksgiving was also appreciated. After the hoopla of the holiday people seemed to be glad for something simple and gentle. • Since my last report the pulpit exchange between Pastor Bates and myself took place. I hope to soon have the audio of the sermon I delivered at Ebenezer up on line along with the sermon Pastor Bates delivered here. Once I do I think people will find interesting the

way(s) each of us approached the same text from different perspectives and in different settings. I can say that Pastor Bates gave our congregation high marks for our warm welcome, and I could not have been more hospitably invited “into the family” there.

*Faith Development:* During the first half of this year Leia offered opportunities for people to come and speak about their experiences and hopes for our AFD program, and she and I have looked over those notes and found several common themes. There seems to be a hunger for the kinds of programming that will better situate people in their identity as Unitarian Universalists – UU history and theology were frequent requests, for instance. This is not entirely new information, but it is good confirmation of things we’d been thinking. The next step will be to assess new approaches to offering our AFD programming, since the current come-out-to-a-class-at-night approach has been less successful than we would want. While we will continue to consider through the rest of this year best practices from elsewhere and our own knowledge of this congregation, we’ll begin to experiment with one-shot offerings in the new Lower Hall space once a month following the second service. (On the Sundays that Alex is in the pulpit I’ll offer programs to see how this new time and place is received.) • The *most* exciting thing to report on regarding AFD is the Beloved Conversations program which began at the beginning of the month. I will, however, save this for the next section of this report, as it is not only an AFD program, but a community building experience as well.

*Community Building:* On Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 25 members of our congregation met in the Sanctuary with Rev. Ashley Horan, facilitator for the kick-off retreat of Beloved Conversations. We have nearly 40% of the Board involved, the entire senior staff, Alex, and even three people who signed up after reading the broadcast invitation even though they are *extremely* new attendees. (The opening workshop was, for one of these, the first thing she’d done in the church!) Between now and early March there are two groups that will be meeting every week or two for a total of eight more sessions. (We are thinking about having a follow-up all-group pot-luck to bring us all back together.) As noted in earlier Board reports, Beloved

Conversations is not a typical “anti-racism training.” Instead, it is really what it calls itself, “healing conversations about race.” In the process of looking at issues of systemic racism and white supremacy, we will also be looking at the values of our beloved *community*, and at our own deep principles and fears. Already this has been an impactful program, as those who have participated can attest.

*Public Ministry:* I attended this month’s first Friday Food Pantry both to work and to talk with some of the regular participants about the Confederate battle flags that fly from their pick-up truck and how that the public display of that symbol on our property is at odds with our value of inclusive welcome. Alas, the people did not come but I will return next month to assure them that we welcome them with open arms but ask that they remove the flags when on our property. • In recent days I have written publicly regarding both the need for sensible gun control measures (in light of the shootings in San Bernadino and Savannah), and in solidarity with our Muslim kin here and abroad (in light of the increasingly inflammatory rhetoric we are hearing.). I’ve also reached out to the Islamic Society of Central Virginia to see if there are ways that I – and we – can be of support to them in these troublesome times. (I hope to have heard back and, perhaps, put some steps into action by the time of our meeting.)

When reflecting at the beginning of this report on our having held three memorial services for beloved members of our congregation within a month of one another I had meant to lift up one other thing. The proximity of these events made more visible than usual the “behind the scenes” ministry of those who make the memorial receptions happen – those who set up the room, those who bring food (and keep the tables filled), and those who clean up. From Carol Saliba I received a list of those who are most often part of this crew, and the staff has sent each of them a “thank you” card to express our appreciation. I would also like to bring these ministers to your attention as well: Ann Salamini, Eleanor May, Gayle Floyd, Gloria Morgan, Jenny Gaden, Jill Payne, JJ Towler, Kasha Viets-Wood, Marian Wendelin, Natalie Somer, Patsy Swindler, Ruth Douglas, Susan Bremer, Achsah Carrier, Lynn Heath, Stephanie Lowenhaupt,

and Nora Rice. Elizabeth Breeden needs a special “shout out,” as does Carol Saliba, who marshall this team.

There are, of course, more things going on than can comfortably fit in a report, so feel free to ask about anything when we meet together.

Pax tecum, friends ...

Wik

## **Director of Faith Development's Report**

**Report to the Board**

**December 2015**

Leia Durland-Jones, Director of Faith Development

### ***Worship***

#### *Children's Worship*

Our monthly ministry themes are introduced and explored with our 4 year-olds through 5<sup>th</sup> graders in Children's Worship. On November 15, we explored the theme of ancestry with the story “For Heaven's Sake” by Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso. On Sunday December 6, Margo Gill co-led Children's Worship and shared stories of her family's observance of Hanukkah. At the 9:15 service, Margo's parents (and Ollie, Bryce and Parker's grandparents!) joined us as well. It was a very special time together and included lighting the menorah and playing dreidel.

#### *Wednesday Worship*

Our weekly Wednesday Worship services continue to attract a small but faithful group and builds on our monthly ministry theme. Many of the readings and handouts from Wednesday Worship are now available for anyone to pick up on the bulletin board outside the mailroom.

#### *Multigenerational Worship*

Our Multi-bread Communion Service on November 22 went well. By the time the Board has its December meeting, we will have celebrated our Giving Tree service and be moving towards our Christmas Eve celebrations. One again we will offer our multigenerational New Year's Eve labyrinth walk with our Chartres style canvas labyrinth in the social hall from 5-7 PM. I hope you will join us for this for this candlelight

labyrinth walk. It is truly a special way to honor the end of the year and welcome the new. There will be live music and an alcohol-free reception. All ages and all faiths are welcome—so invite your friends and neighbors to come too!

### ***Adult Programming***

Our Beloved Conversations retreat was powerful and our two small groups are underway. I am honored to be co-facilitating one of the small groups with Frank Dukes and feel grateful that 25 of us are engaging with this experience at TJMC.

The Women's Dream Quest Planning Circle continues to meet regularly as we prepare for our seventh annual Women's Dream Quest to be held at TJMC on February 26 and 27. The "Return to the Land of Soul" workshop, open to everyone, will occur on Sunday February 28. Plans for other the winter/spring AFD experiences are in process.

### ***Children's Programming***

Our children's programming continues to thrive. In January, the RE Committee will conduct a mid-year assessment of the Tapestry of Faith curricula that are new to our congregation. December has been busy with planning and hosting the All Church Holiday Party as well as managing the church' Giving Tree initiative.

### ***Youth Programming (11:15 service only)***

Our 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Neighboring Faiths class visited Ebenezer Baptist Church on Sunday December 6. It was a wonderful experience.

Our Coming of Age class (8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> grade) will have their first lock-in of the year on December 12.

YRUU did a session, led by Amy Wissekerke and Griff Giffis, on respect and will explore this week, with Pam McIntire and Greg Townsend, "The Nature of Love." We have a wonderful group of youth who are truly an inspiration and offer hope for the future.

## **Director of Administration and Finance's Report**

**Director of Administration and Finance – Christina Rivera  
Board Report – December 16, 2015 mtg  
November 2015**

- Number of emails received: 2536
- Completed October 2015 month end financials
- Took 16 hours of comp time week of Thanksgiving
- Provided support for 3 memorial services
- Assisted with organization, provided support and attended Board retreat with UUA Consultant
- Prep and attended following meetings:
  - Finance committee
  - Board
  - Exec. Comm. (did not attend)
  - Personnel
  - Board/Finance/Stewardship/Pledge meeting
  - Various Lay Leaders meetings

**Lower Hall Renovations:**

Renovations continue with significant use of our contingency budget due to complications of the excavation of the elevator shaft. This will impact the use of those funds for prioritized areas such as purchase of second partition, Audio/Visual equipment, interior painting of Summit, etc. Schedule remains fairly intact with a slight delay of completion date the first or second week of January.

**FY 16 Financial Report Notes:**

- New Timeline: In order to provide a more timely Board report, I am suggesting reviewing not the prior month's financials but the previous month. For example under this suggestion, this month (Dec) we would review the October Financials. With the switch this year to 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. Board meetings and how that then effects the Finance committee meeting date, I am struggling to submit a Financial Report to you by the Wed. prior deadline. If the Board approved this new schedule, I would have sufficient time to produce an accurate and helpful financial report. Of course, any urgent financial health issues I would raise during the current month.
- Staff Benefit Line items: I am working to standardize how benefit line items are reported. Currently for some staff,

health/dental/life are allocated to a single line and for some staff they are given individual line items. All payments and reporting continue to be made according to previous practice however it is my intention to revise for the January Financial Statement.

- Jaime McReynolds and I met on 11/20 for a script reconciliation tutorial and I am grateful to him for his help. With his guidance we were able to figure out where it was in the very complex scrip reporting/reconciling process that I was in error. I will complete the corrections this month and review with him one more time before the next Board report. Jaime continues to assure me it really is complicated and the extra support is warranted!

### **Staff Health Benefit Analysis:**

During the month of November staff were faced with the decision on what health benefit plan to choose based on the new Health Benefits Policy passed by the Board in January 2015. As a refresher, the Board voted to reduce staff compensation by reducing the amount of health benefit from 100% of the employee only premium of any UUA Health Plan to 80% of the employee only premium of the Silver (High Deductible) UUA Health plan.

In preparing the figures to talk with staff about what they could expect in change to their premium contribution I was surprised to find the large decrease in staff compensation. It caused me to research the January 2015 decision, how it was made, what information was available, etc. Attached are the January 2015 Board minutes related to this decision and the Memo submitted by the Treasurer, Personnel Committee Chair, DAF and Vice-President. Several issues about these memos were apparent to me:

- The statement that "...TJMC has been more generous in its employer contribution for health care premiums than most other UU churches..." is not factually correct. I believe this assumption was made based on the fact that Fair Compensation Guidelines (FCG) call for UU churches to compensate staff at 80% of the employee only premium of the Silver Level (High Deductible) UUA Health Plan and

TJMC was compensating at 100% of any plan...however FCG go on to state that in addition to the employee only premium, staff should be compensated at 50% of the dependent premium as well. The staff (with the exception of the minister, due to language of his letter of agreement) do not and did not receive any compensation for dependent premium. Thus the conclusion that TJMC was being more generous was based on only partial information or consideration of Fair Compensation Guidelines.

- No figures were presented to the Board as to exactly what these cost savings would be to TJMC.
- No figures were presented to the Board as to what exactly the reduction in compensation would be to staff.

While I commend the Board on taking seriously its responsibility to the fiscal health of the congregation by looking at issues such as staff compensation, I am not certain that the Board had all the information that would have been helpful in making their decision. I have prepared, and included here in my report, the exact cost savings and staff compensation reductions for this benefit year.

You will note that the report covers only the Lead Minister, DFD, RE Assistant and Assistant Minister as those are the only staff currently on the health benefits plan. Our Director of Music receives his health benefits from another employer. The DAF and Office Assistant cannot utilize the medical benefit in its current structure as it is too expensive at our part-time status. You'll also note that for one staff member, Assistant Minister, this policy change resulted in a slight increase in compensation. However, it is also important to note that this staff member chooses the Bronze plan, a plan that is widely regarded as catastrophic health insurance as it provides very low benefits for anything outside of routine preventative care (well visits.)

I welcome your questions and thoughts on this information between now and the Board meeting so I might both answer your question and bring a summary of those questions to the meeting. I have attempted to make the information easy to understand but I also recognize that not everyone is as in love with the ministry of finance like I am!!! Please let me know how I can be of service to you in understanding

this info or if you have aspects of this issue that you believe I've overlooked. I look at this as a continuing conversation that the Board has in its role of fiscal responsibility.

### **Membership Report**

To: Board members

Re: November 31, 2015 Membership report

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of Oct. 31, 2015: 415 including 12 youth members

#### **Add:**

Peter Walpole, Nov. 1, 2015

#### **Drop:**

Rose, Deborah, died Nov. 1, 2015

Corish, Katie, died Nov. 5, 2015

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of November 31, 2015: 414 members including 12 youth members

Sally Taylor

Membership Tracker for Membership Committee

### **Board Liaison Reports**

#### **Communications Task Force**

**Report for Board, by Achsah Carrier, chair, and Holly Dilatush, task force member, Communications Task Force November 30, 2015**

The Communications Task Force is still hard at work: writing privacy policy, posting content, tweaking our style guide recommendations, writing/soliciting needed information (text and photos, primarily).

We are excited to be nearing the 'launch line', and have drafted our must-be-done-before-'go' task list and divvied up those tasks.

However, our little group continues to deal with ‘life’ interferences (travel, both expected and unexpected, new jobs, holidays, more) that have delayed us once again.

As we get closer and closer to feeling ready to ‘launch’ the new site, we realize that last-minute necessary steps requiring reporting to the Board and Ministerial Committee for a sit-down review and approval may delay us until January.

Jennifer Springer has put in an immense effort and I believe you have all seen the [dev.uucharlottesville.org](http://dev.uucharlottesville.org) site (still being modified). We’re still not ready for comments yet, but will be soon!

Still needed (and important) are assurances that the email aliases (if we use them) are tested and are being monitored – or at the very least that we (Communications Task Force/Communications Committee) have access to the emails received by any aliases that are not frequently, successfully monitored – so that we may follow-up until the process is functioning well.

Finally, and most importantly, we want to say how much we miss Deborah Rose’s invaluable wisdom and dedication to this process. We notice her absence every day.

With determined joyful progress,  
Achsah Carrier, Communications Task Force Chair  
Holly Dilatush, Communications Task Force member

### **Endowment Committee**

Endowment Update  
December 2015

The Endowment Committee held its 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup> at 3PM. Kevin Schuyler (Chair), Dar Magonigal (Secretary) and Walter Magonigal (Board Representative) attended.

Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund balance is divided between two accounts: Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF) and Fidelity. The current balances are as follows:

UUCEF as of October 31, 2015: \$193,983.22

Fidelity as of December 9, 2015: \$121,349.44 (\$124,368.675 as of October 31, 2015)

In sum, as of October 31, 2015 the combined UUCEF and Fidelity balance was \$318,351.97

On November 24<sup>th</sup>, UUCEF held a conference call for participants in the UUCEF. I participated and took the opportunity to ask a few questions. My initial impression is that the staff is very capable and professional and that the Endowment Committee managing the UUCEF is experienced. I do believe there may be opportunities to improve the risk/return profile of the Fund and I shared those afterwards via email with the team at UUCEF. They seemed open to my feedback.

#### Restricted Fund Balances

Consistent with the Investment Policy Statement, the committee oversees only the investment of the Restricted Funds. The purpose and magnitude of distributions is the purview of the Board and the Fund Trustees.

Currently, the entirety of the Restricted Fund balances are invested in TJMC Member Bonds which pay an annual rate of interest of 5.25%. As of September 31, 2015, the Restricted Fund balances are as follows:

Abrahamse Fund (Music) \$11,857

Bristol Fund (Buildings & Grounds) \$46,950

Cheetham Fund (Religious Education) \$12,194

