

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church
Unitarian Universalist
BOARD OF TRUSTEES JUNE MEETING
June 15, 2016

DRAFT MINUTES

TJMC Covenant Statement

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

Communicate with compassion and respect, especially when we disagree

Celebrate diversity and nurture our inclusivity,

Promote social justice within our congregation and the larger community,

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

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

Board Goals 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: Laura Horn - President, Karen Ransom – President Elect, David Mick, Sally Taylor – Vice President, Ann Salamini - Secretary, Christina Rivera – Ex Officio, Breck Gastinger,

Leia Durland-Jones – Ex Officio, Walt Megonigal, Erik Wikstrom – Ex Officio, Anita Holmes, Amy Davis - Treasurer, Catharine Maus

Board Members Absent: Marlene Jones

Guests In Attendance: Jen Larimer, Jeanine Braithwaite

I. Opening--(30 minutes total) Opening/Closing Words (David), Snacks (David), Time Keeper (Jeanine), and Process Review (All)

1. Opening words – David

2. Update on Alex McGee’s decision on entering a new ministry - Erik (10 min)

Alex has been discerning where her ministry is calling her. She loves what she’s been doing here, but has also felt some openness to a full time pastorate. She candidated in Charleston, WV for a week, but has realized that Charlottesville is her home and she wishes to remain here.

- I’m glad she went through this process; hopefully it helped clarify things. The process lifted her up for me and helped me learn more about the ministerial search. We need to look at her ministry again (as we would have had to do if we looked for a replacement.)
- I have been thinking about all the holes that would have to be filled if Alex left, so this is a happy resolution. Is this truly a recommitment to Charlottesville or just that the other town wasn’t right for her? – At this time, she wants to stay here. She may think about leaving again in a couple of years.

3. Check-in

We held silence for the loss of life and all who were touched by the events in Orlando.

4. Acceptance of Agenda

MOTION: Accept the Agenda.

Unanimously approved.

4. Public Comment –
5. Correspondence

II. Reports

1. President’s Report (written) – Laura Horn
Breck sent us a Strategic Plan questionnaire. Please fill that out before the July Board meeting. It should take about 5 minutes. He is looking for an “eye of the beholder” perspective.
Amazon Smile is now live. This is the first fruit of the Revenue Task Force.
Board notebooks, board retreat and board nametags are forthcoming.
2. Vice President’s Report (written) – Sally Taylor
Community Life Council met last night. All job descriptions were approved and need go no further.
3. Treasurer’s Report –
4. Minister’s Report (written) – Erik Wikstrom
5. Director of Faith Development Report (written) – Leia Durland-Jones
6. Director of Administration and Finance Report – Christina Rivera
I made no report this month because of time off for vacation. I will submit it electronically. I’m working on month end and year end financial reports. Some expenditures have been withheld until we know if there will be any surplus which will allow release of funds for additional spending. The next few weeks will be a deep balancing act. There are still a lot of outstanding pledges.
7. Membership Report (written) – Sally Taylor
8. Board Liaison Reports

III. Consent Agenda / Electronic Motions

1. Approve May 2016 Draft Board Minutes.

MOTION: Approve the Consent Agenda.

Unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business

1. Board reflection tool – Karen and Laura (25 min)
(Processing the Board reflection tool)

- I agree that the time commitment needs to be well advertised.
- The nuts and bolts questions (Board packet, are we doing the right stuff, etc) received high marks. The questions about how we feel about our service and preparedness, etc, score less highly.
- How has the year felt for the new people?
 - The church is a happier place due to the leadership of the board and staff. We should be pleased with ourselves. Now, if the money starts rolling in....
 - I feel more confident in the board's ability to do hard things. The board and staff worked hard, tried to tell the truth.
 - Fewer stomach aches. We can gratefully notice that. We have transformed the board work.
 - We did a good job of taking care of the emotional and spiritual side.
 - Yes, there is a gentleness with each other. We worked well together.
 - And we've gotten better since the interims and loss of David and Leslie. There was so much uncertainty and sense of limbo.
 - It's important to set some personal goals (speak up when people don't make sense, what you hope to accomplish, no stomach aches...)
- We stayed focused and got a lot done. Almost every action item we had on agendas related directly to Strategic Plan goals. We did some tough stuff.

- We need to teach background and history as we tackle new elements with a new board.
- I will miss the role Marlene played on the board. It was sometimes frustrating, but it was a good check for us. We need to be cautious of group think and be open to other voices in the congregation. – Good boards should look for contrarian voices. Ask “whose voice are we not hearing?”
- The UUA Board has an open chair to represent those voices not at the table.

BREAK AND GRATITUDE CARDS - (20 min)

MOTION: The Board declares its gratitude and joy at Rev. Alex McGee’s recommitment to our beloved community.

Unanimously approved.

V. New Business

1. Reflection and guidance from those Board members leaving – Laura (15 min)

Consider these questions:

- What do I wish I had known as a new Board member. (How can we help new Board members to engage more quickly?)
- What have we not quite finished? (Who will take it up when I leave?)
- What advice / gift would you give to the next Board?

What do I wish I’d known?

- What did the board do in the previous year?
- Wish I’d understood the full commitment – being a liaison, etc.
- Ask questions when you don’t understand something.
- Wished the newcomers could have met outside the meetings to catch up on church history.
- I didn’t understand if I was supposed to read materials and solicit opinions outside the board and come with formed thoughts. This board is pretty business-like.
- It’s good to get opinions from dissenters so those thoughts will be in the mix.

What have we not quite finished?

- Emergency plan – staff prepared and presented it to the congregation last year, but we haven't gone forward with it. It is a policy on how to respond to emergency. – Christina does have it in her red folder to direct her actions when anything happens. – The Board needs to vote on it. – Part of the slow down has to do with input from the Fire Marshall. The Lower Hall construction slowed that down. – RE Committee came up with a page of actions. So things have been happening behind the scene.
- Governance Task Force will present next month – we will need action on that
- Communications Task Force has things to be approved.
- We need to think about a new Strategic Plan group as we end four years on the current plan.
- We need to continue the byline on agenda items which indicates what is expected.
- We need to make it easier for people to contribute directly toward what they love – a way to maneuver around the targeted giving ban.
- Continue effort to increase connection between the Board and the congregation. The conversations, though sparsely attended, are good to do.
- Deepen the Board's understanding of what the board of a church this size should be doing, which we started with Kenn Hurto. (Kenn Hurto is our district rep. He met with us 9 months ago to teach us how to be a board. For instance:
 - being on the board puts you a step away from being an ordinary congregant.
 - additional board responsibilities, such as the pledge drive. –
 - board members can argue against something in a meeting, but not speak against a Board approved position at a congregational meeting.
 - a board member really needs to find out what the congregation thinks, be proactive.
 - it's good to hear a ministerial voice lift up board work (the professional minister or any of us) beyond the task

orientation of everyday board work.

- The relationship with Kenn Hurto needs closure, whether at the board retreat or as a summary of how the board has addressed the things it was left to do. – Laura continues to talk with him about how to approach specific things.
- The triune model is a can that we kicked down the road. Now it seems like a nonentity. There is no official position the Board has taken on it. – We officially took a break. The Board voted to approve the triune model, not giving it a great deal of thought until the congregational meeting a year ago when the bylaw change came up. We thought it would be pretty simple to do – mostly a language change. In fact, the congregation really objected, felt it all happened too fast.

What advice for the new board?

- Read the entire packet thoroughly.
- Show up a few minutes early.
- Don't be afraid to speak up.
- If you don't feel ready to vote, ask if the vote can be postponed.
- This board is a very collaborative effort. It's about how we do things, not just what we do.
- Time came up a lot in the responses. Being on the board is demanding. Be sure to take the time to make it joyful, less stressful. Each person is responsible to get here prepared.
- If you need to say no to keep balance in your life, do it.

2. Appreciation and Closure – Wik (30 min)

(Appreciation of those leaving and hopes / wishes for new Board members)

There is a sheet of paper for each person here tonight. Go to each sheet and add a word, a sentence or a drawing representing your thoughts on that person's contribution to the Board. Let's focus on each other. You can sign it or not.

Parking Lot -

Upcoming Dates

- July 6, 2016 – Executive Board meeting 6:30PM
- July 20, 2016 – Board meeting 6:45PM
- June 22-26 – General Assembly

Future Topics:

- July 2016 – Revenue Task Force Report
- July 2016 – Governance Task Force Report

President's Report

Presidents June report to the board

This is my last report to you as President. Part of my work this month has been wrapping things up, recording things for posterity and helping make sure our new board and new year get off to a good start.

I am looking forward to a special board meeting in June—one cleared of all but mandated or urgent business; one devoted to reflection and consolidation in this time of board transition; one devoted to welcoming our soon-to-be members, and appreciating our departing members.

I'll hold my end-of-term thoughts until then, too. But I cannot write this without expressing my gratitude to each who reads this. I was proud to say *yes* when my church asked me to serve. I loved working with you. I was graced by your support, your tolerance, your good humor, your hard work, your forgiveness, your dedication, your laughter. I was lucky and blessed to have Amy and Sally to guide me. Karen will be so good for us in so many ways. Let's find a fabulous President-Elect, so Karen has the kind of partner I had in her.

I ask only two things from the board in preparation for this meeting, a third that can be done between now and our July meeting:

- Review the results of the Board Reflections Tool; we'll look at it together in the meeting and draw guidance from it. Karen nicely consolidated all the input.

- Think about what you have appreciated in others; we'll have an opportunity to express that.
- Part of this package includes Breck's short questionnaire about our progress on the Strategic Plan. Complete it (all board members, please, those "new" and those departing) and return it to Breck. It will help us build our plans for the coming year and we will process it together early in the new church year.

Other Updates:

We now have input from many people for **performance appraisals**; the chair of the Personnel Committee has wrapped up the input; she, Karen and I expect to conduct the appraisals of the people who report to the board in late June. Thank you to board members who provided input. All your comments will be part of the record and are appreciated.

I had hoped to include a summary on the **solar panels** in this report but it will come to you later in June. John Semmelhack is doing the research and work to give us a good understanding of how that investment is paying off for us.

Thanks to this board for doing big and little parts to make the **Annual Congregational Meeting** work. Thanks especially to Karen and Chris for representing us so strongly. I created and filed How to Hold a Congregational Meeting along with collected templates, samples, etc. Thanks to Sally for creating or archiving those good resources.

By the time the board meets, we expect to have made our second announcement about **Reverend Alex's** plans and those of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charleston, WVa. We will be beginning to work, with Senior Staff and with Alex, to make our plans at TJMC.

Two priority items for the board:

- Actively helping Leadership Development find a President Elect
- Recruiting leadership for the fall auction, and securing the date

Respectfully submitted

Laura Horn

Vice President's Report

Vice President's Report
June, 2016

Neither of our two councils have met in the month since my last report.

I have received 12 updated job descriptions from TJMC groups and committees. A total of 30 groups/committees were contacted. I will turn over the updated job descriptions to the office and to the new Vice President along with the annual reports for 2015-2016 and all of my records from this year.

Once again the work party on May 14 concentrated on outdoor projects: removing the dead and dying bushes from the Edgewood Lane entrance, painting the railing there, repairing the playground gates, stabilizing the playground fence, powerwashing the stone and cinderblock walls in the stairwell to the Lower Hall, and washing one of the pergolas in preparation for painting. In addition the office hallway was given two coats of new paint! The next work party is scheduled for July 23.

Sally Taylor, Vice President

Treasurer's Report

Lead Minister's Report

Report to the Board – June, 2016

Lead Minister

Given that in this meeting we are intending to welcome new Board members and glean from departing Board members their input and insights to help guide our ongoing work for the 2016-2017 church year, I would like to tailor this report to those intentions.

I. Worship –

The shift from the experiment in radically shared and collaborative worship planning and facilitation between ordained and lay worship leaders (up to and including what have come to be called “split sermons) to a more traditionally clergy-led model has put the role of the Worship Weavers Guild into some confusion. This shift has generally been received positively – even gratefully – and I have not had any feedback on the recent string of Sunday sanctuary services in which I facilitated worship on my own. No one has commented on the absence of a lay worship leader ... to me directly, at least. (I cannot imagine that no one has been talking about it at all.) Both this lack of clarity about the Worship Weavers’ role ongoing, and the lack of response to their recent absence on Sunday mornings, leads me to wonder if it is time to sunset the Guild and try a new approach. One possibility that is exciting to me is to explore ways of working much more collaboratively with Scott on each week’s service, going beyond merely choosing hymns and the placement of the choir’s offerings to create together a cohesive “tonal” plan so that we more effectively intertwine music, spoken words, silence, and action into a cohesive whole.

In the coming year I, and we, will need to look into the question of diminishing attendance. We have numbers, yet we do not yet know what those numbers mean. Anecdotally, liberal congregations of various types are reporting that active participation – usually measured through attendance in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings – is down. The “nones” – those who choose “none” when asked in surveys for their religious preference – is the second largest category (following only Catholics), they are growing faster than any other group, and they are very clear that they are not

interested in participating in organized religion of any kind (even one as open-minded as ours). Is our lower attendance a reflection of this more widespread trend? It is impossible to say. Some interpret it as a sign of continuing discontent, yet the response of people who are actually in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings is that they are now experiencing the kind of services they had been hoping for all along, and that they are leaving feeling well “fed.” Even some of those who *did* leave because of dissatisfaction have returned, and quite enthusiastically. So what does this mean? It is certainly a goal for me, and should be for us, in the coming year to do what we can to understand this numerical reality so that we can respond to what is actually going on and not simply to what some of us *think* might be going on.

II. Faith Development –

I am excited with the development of a strategic plan for Racial Justice Education programming that recognizes that we simply cannot act on every good idea and desire being expressed – too many programs will burn out our volunteer leaders, and overwhelm congregants. Part of the excitement for this is the likelihood that this will increase the effectiveness of those programs we do offer, and part is in seeing this as a model not only for other AFD programs but for other areas of the congregation’s life. “I cannot do everything, but still I can do something ...” We will be exceedingly better served the more practiced we get at discerning the something that we can do from within the fog of all the things we might want to do. Less can be more, as it were.

III. Community Building –

I believe that one of the challenges here is that of determining

just who we are as a congregation. Are we a church that has grown beyond its ability to be self-sufficient and, so, which now needs to intentionally shrink? (And if so, is this because of a lack of ability, a lack of desire, a lack of will?) Are we, on the other hand, a church which has not, for a variety of reasons, kept up with its growth and, so, which now needs to put energy into breaking through the “hump” so that we can follow our vision of growth? (And, if so, is this a misguided or mistaken understanding of things?) Both of these identities are currently claimed by different groups in the church, and this lack of basic agreement on who and where we are makes it extremely difficult to chart a course into our future. Over and over again problems we encounter can be seen to track back to questions of our size – are we understaffed for a church of our size, for instance, or are we overstaffed for the size church we should be? Do we not yet have the needed infrastructure to support our growth, or are we spending resources on unneeded systems better suited to a larger congregation. During the last period of growth, the congregation did some intentional exploration of the ramifications of church size. I truly believe it is time to do so again.

IV. Public Ministry –

As a congregation we have been making some great strides in this area, especially in the realm of Racial Justice efforts. The biggest challenge before us right now, as I see it, will be tempering our desire to do everything all the time – to say “yes” to every possibility and to encourage the congregation to engage in all of the efforts and activities that are available. This is a sure plan for failure, frustration, and burnout. It is not a habit to say “no,” yet it is one we will need to develop,

so that our “yes” can be powerful and effective.

V. Initiatives and Experimentation—

I have not reported on these areas in a while, yet in this report in our transition position from one Board to the next, it seems worth bringing this up again. Throughout our organization we are seeing a desire and a willingness to try to simplify how we do the things we do, as well as what it is that we do. The Governance Task Force is recommending that we streamline our Board and our policy making procedures, while at the same time *not* trying to revive structures that have clearly outlived their usefulness. Our Leadership Development Committee has begun to explore how to sharpen its focus so that it can be more effective in its work, essentially separating the development and identification (i.e., nominating) tasks which they have been – unsuccessfully, unfortunately – trying to do simultaneously. Meanwhile the Year ‘Round Stewardship Team has been working to prioritize all of the things that could be put on its plate so that it can actually make real progress on some things rather than trying to do everything and not quite making headway on any of them. This is all of a piece with the goal/priority setting the Board and Senior Staff engaged in at the beginning of this year, an effort which is undoubtedly a big part of why we can look back over the year and see so many of our strategic plan’s goals having been met. All through our congregation we are looking at simplifying, clarifying, and focusing all of which can be understood to be in line with our Strategic Plan’s focus on rebuilding our foundations. These efforts to clarify what we *can* do will naturally lead to, and spring from, clarifying what it is that we *should* be doing if we are to be true to our mission. This, of course, will help us to become, and require us to be, more clear about just who we are as a faith

community. Can you see the interconnectedness of all of these different things? Like a fractal, it seems that the same kinds of work are going on at various levels of our congregation. Some of this has been intentional, and some has been coincidental. It will behoove us in the coming year, I believe, to make this as conscious as we can so that we can help these different efforts catalyze one another.

I believe that we are a congregation that is poised for growth, just as you all identified yourselves to be during your search process. This congregation has meant, and does mean, so much to so many. The testimonials generated during our Pledge Drive make clear that TJMC really makes a difference – a real and important difference – in the lives of our members. And from my deepening relationships in the wider Charlottesville community it is clear that we have had, and continue to have, an impact there as well. Whether acting as individuals, or as a larger community, TJMC has a presence at social, artistic, political, and justice-oriented activities and events. We are known to be a people who show up. We are known – internally and externally – as a community that makes a difference. I believe that what we have to offer is needed today, and will be increasingly needed in the years to come. I believe that we can grow – and yes, including numerical growth – and, perhaps more importantly, that we should grow. This has been a year of resetting the clock, in a sense, of starting over, of rebirth and resurrection. We can, and I believe we must, build on what we have so that we might go where we are most needed.

I would be remiss not to include in this report some thoughts about Rev. Alex's decision to candidate for the position of solo Minister at the Charleston, WV congregation. This is, as has been noted, a natural part of the "life cycle" of religious professionals, yet it is in no

way a pre-determined path. Yes, some people feel it necessary to “climb the ladder,” yet for those of us who truly listen to our hearts, minds, and spirits, this can often be less of a straight path and more of a meandering one. A famous Christian prayer, written by the Trappist monk Thomas Merton, begins, “My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I can not know for certain where it will end.” By the time we meet we should know the decision Alex has made. As I write, we do not. And we really and truly *can* not yet. I know that Alex is actively listening so as to discern just where her heart is calling her ministry to continue – whether in a new position in a new congregation or in a new form here with us. Either of these paths will represent a change, a movement, and growth for her. And either of these outcomes offers us opportunities to reassess how we understand and offer our professional ministries. There is loss involved in either path, and both are filled with challenges, will require courage and faith.

May our thoughts and prayers be with Alex as she strives to listen to that “still small voice” the Hebrew Scriptures talks about.

Pax tecum,

RevWik

Director of Faith Development Report

Report to the Board

June 2016

Leia Durland-Jones, Director of Faith Development

The Children & Youth Religious Education Committee

The RE Committee had their final meeting of this church year on June 1 and spent time reflecting on our committee process as well as preparing for the 2016-2017 church school year. We reviewed projected class rosters and the draft of the RE calendar. Next year’s curricula choices have been made and we are actively registering children and youth for the 2016-2017 church school year. We have exciting plans in the works for the coming year to better integrate our

children's programming with the monthly ministry themes as well as increase our intentional focus on anti-racism teachings and learnings. We celebrated all of this year's successes and the efforts of our RE volunteers on Sunday May 22 with a Sundae Sunday following both services and distributed volunteer appreciation gifts—which were appreciated by the volunteers!

Children's Religious Education and Worship

Just as in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, our Children's Worship services focused on the ministry theme of "Blessings" during the month of May. Children's Worship wrapped up for the year on May 15 as our young children attended the first 20 minutes of the Coming of Age worship service on May 22 (the last day of RE this year.) This was our first year to use the UUA's Tapestry of Faith curricula in totality for our elementary RE classes. The ease of access to these materials is a plus and yet we learned through using the materials that many of the lessons themselves need extensive tweaking. We will be using different Tapestry of Faith curricula for K-6th grade next year. But for now, it is summer and Summer Sunday Kids Fun for nursery through rising 6th graders began Sunday May 29 under the excellent leadership of Caroline Heins, RE Assistant.

Youth Programming (11:15 service only)

- Our **6th & 7th Neighboring Faiths class** was a great success thanks in large part to the amazing teaching team! The group had their final field trip and visited Yogaville on May 15. The class attended the Coming of Age worship service together on May 22 and met for a pizza party and farewell gathering following.
- Our **Coming of Age class (8th, 9th & 10th grade)** had a tremendous end to their year! We celebrated both the youth and their mentors and parents at our Recognition Dinner and Ceremony on Saturday May 21. This event is very special as the youth, parents and mentors each have a chance to speak aloud their experiences and the special connections they have with one another. We also had seven youth sign the membership book that night (5 who just completed Coming of Age and two older siblings of COA participants.) The youth led worship for the congregation at both the 9:15 and 11:15 services on Sunday May 22 and did a great job.

The following weekend, the group had their retreat which included a day of high ropes course fun at UVa's Poplar Ridge and then dinner, a campfire (complete with s'mores) and a special rite of passage ritual in the sanctuary led by Dawn Dirks and me. Dawn and I were then the overnight chaperones.

- **YRUU (10th-12th grade)** May 15, a panel of YRUU graduates came to visit and share with the youth advice and ideas about transition from high school to college and then on May 22, YRUU attended the Coming of Age worship service. On Sunday May 29, we celebrated our graduating high school seniors: Seth Brett, Clara Chase, Alex Gardner, Megan Kimpel and Ian Ransom. Megan and Ian both chose to Bridge and we welcomed them into young adulthood through a living bridge made up of the hands of their parents, advisors and lifelong UUs in the sanctuary. It was a lovely service.

Adult Faith Development

- I am excited that Sunday morning AFD programming was so well received. We will continue offering Sunday morning AFD programming next year and I hope Achsah Carrier will continue to be a class leader in our "Understanding UUism" series.
- The monthly gathering for parents of teens/pre-teens continues to provide an important place for parents in our congregation to share, listen and learn. The group meets on the first Sunday of the month immediately following the worship service.
- Wednesday Worship continues to be an important mid-week pause for those who participate and I am grateful to Cindy Mick and Maggie Ober for sharing the leadership of these services with me. This too is faith development for those who participate.
- AFD next year will have antiracism opportunities as its major focus. The education subcommittee of the Racial Justice Steering Committee has met and is putting together

a variety of offerings. Other AFD courses are also in the works and your thoughts and suggestions of programs or leaders are welcome.

Summer Schedule

I will attend LREDA Professional Days prior to General Assembly and General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio June 20-27.

The month of July and first week of August, I will be away from church and on vacation and therefore there will not be a July report to the Board from me.

I am happy to share that I will serve as faculty at The Mountain Retreat and Conference Center in Highland, NC July 10-15 for Religious Education week where I will co-facilitate the Philosophy of UU Religious Education Renaissance Module.

Happy Summer everyone!

Director of Administration and Finance Report

Membership Report

To: Board members

Re: May 30, 2016 Membership report

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of April 30, 2016: 415 including 11 youth members

Add:

Kelsey Cowger, May 15, 2016

Ethan Hartung, May 21, 2016 Youth Member

Julia Landis, May 21, 2016, Youth Member

Peter Manto, May 21, 2016, Youth Member

Logan Milburn, May 21, 2016, Youth Member

Morgan Milburn, May 21, 2016, Youth Member

Lucia Pugh-Sellers, May 21, 2016, Youth Member

Hallie Pugh-Sellers, May 21, 2016, Youth Member
Ellie Ransom, May 21, 2016, Youth Member

Drop:

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

Sally Taylor
Membership Tracker for Membership Committee