UUCSC Board of Directors Meeting
January 2, 2025
via Zoom

Present: President Nancy Richman, VP Russell Stokes, Treasurer Mary Alice Kimball, Clerk Mary Fulton, Directors Kelsey Briggs, Chris Johnson and Bethany Sorrentino and Rev. Denis Letourneau Paul
Call to Order: 10:32 am by Nancy Richman

MOTION: Nancy moves to ratify the December minutes approved via email. PASSED unanimously

Staff reports are appended.

Treasurer's report:
The Holiday Fair raised $3,569 of the $4000 goal.
Agape funds of $1262 were raised at the Christmas Eve Eve service.
The Chalice Days Collections totaled $2,260. A search committee has been organized to hire a Financial Administrator. 98.5% of the 20234/24 fiscal year have been collected. Unbudgeted expenses for Capital Improvement of the Building have been made.

Old Business

MOTION: Nancy Richman moves to use the revision of the Board covenant as submitted by Mary Fulton. PASSED unanimously.
The revised covenant:

Nurturing a culture of caring, fiscal oversight, and policy management is the task of the Board. Ideally, operational tasks should be undertaken by staff and committees.

With that in mind, we covenant to:

- Listen with kindness and respect
- Speak honestly, with sensitivity
- Act with compassion, acceptance, and consideration of each person's needs
- Trust that everyone has good intentions
- Embrace our joys and sorrows
- Share our gifts and strengths in service to the greater good

When we fall out of covenant, we recognize, reflect and re-engage. We forgive and begin again in love.

MOTION: Nancy Richman moves to give Russell Stokes permission to form an ad hoc committee to look at how to use and implement the revised Facilities Use Guidelines.
PASSED unanimously

MOTION: Nancy Richman moves to approve the rewording of #18 and attachment B of the Facilities Use Guidelines as proposed by Bethany.
PASSED unanimously
Revised sections:

18. Minors using the UUCSC playground and equipment must be supervised by an adult at all times. Individuals *attending UUCSC-sponsored events (e.g. RE, picnics, outside worship)* may use the equipment and playground under appropriate adult supervision. For events sponsored by individuals, groups, or organizations that are independent of UUCSC, individuals may use the playground and equipment ONLY if we have received a Certificate of Insurance naming UUCSC as an "additional insured" (see #21 below).

In Attachment B:
I specifically confirm that I understand and agree that individuals are prohibited from using the UUCSC playground or play equipment UNLESS I have provided a Certificate of Insurance listing UUCSC as an additional insured. I affirm that any damage or injury from using the play equipment is my liability as the party renting the building.

The revised version of the Facilities Use Guidelines is officially accepted as of 1/2/2025 and will be so noted on the document.

MOTION: Mary Fulton moves that the Board retain the practice of reporting voting results with numbers only, no names.
PASSED: 5 YES 2 NO

Music Director search: Chris Johnson reported that the search committee has met and has received one promising application. Various local avenues are being used to solicit more applications. There will be a congregational meeting on January 12 for congregants to share their wishes regarding the music director position.

Search for a nursery assistant: No update available.

Safety issues since the presidential election: The Coordinating Council will discuss the ramifications of the UUA email regarding this topic and make suggestions as to what appropriate actions might be taken to safe guard our congregation.

Masking due to winter escalation of covid, RSV, flu etc.: Reiterate that we care for each other so taking preventive actions such as wearing masks, staying home when ill, etc. are of vital importance.

Adjourned 12:30 pm

Submitted by Mary Fulton, clerk

The next Board meeting is Wednesday February 5 from 10:30 am - 12:30 pm in person in the Oneto Room.

The next Coordinating Council meeting is January 8 via Zoom from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm via Zoom.

STAFF REPORTS

Minister's Report to the Board of Directors
UU Congregation of South County
Rev. Denis Paul

January 3, 2025

Dear Members of the Board of Directors,

First, my apologies for not getting this report to you before the holiday break. The last 2-1/2 months have been very busy! The holiday week, which was actually a regularly furlough week for me, was much appreciated.

Since my last report to the board back in late November, I've been involved in the following worship services:
12/1 "No Brief Candle," with Lee Cowan
12/8 "In Praise of Eeyore," with Lee Cowan
12/15 "Pastor and Spy," with Linda Whyte Burrell
12/23 "Christmas Eve Eve," with Lee Cowan, Sky Kimball and Barbara Nowicki

It was a joy to work with Lee on so many worship services during December, making a lovely Chalice Days celebration for the whole congregation. The extra effort feels worthwhile, considering how many families (with and without young children) have adopted the "ancient rituals and time-honored traditions" of our new holiday.

Despite some anxiety from all corners of the congregation about crowd management on Christmas Eve Eve, everything went according to plan. Because we didn't advertise outside the congregation and the weather was brutally cold, turnout was a bit below full capacity, as predicted. I want to thank Elise Bender, Linda Whyte Burrell, Jeanne Arthur, Nick Smith and all the others — especially ushers — who put so much of their experience and time into making everyone comfortable. In reflecting on the evening, folks have universally used the word "concert" instead of "worship," which feels appropriate given it was Mike's last event with us. It was a perfect send off in every way: intimate, joyful, impressive and music-filled. And, I am already looking

forward to having a *totally* UU Christmas Eve Eve service next year, reflecting our unique take on the holiday that isn't exactly "ours" anymore.

In Congregational Life

There has been a lot of illness in the congregation, resulting in a lot of pastoral care calls. I've also given a lot of time to the Music Director search, not just in meetings but in responding to the anxiety, which has felt elevated in the aftermath of the election. Because I've devoted so much time to everything else that has popped up, I still haven't had the opportunity to meet with anyone about raising their pledges, a disappointment given the fact that the annual pledge drive begins again in just a few weeks. Hopefully I can focus on this important task before then.

Community Life

On the afternoon of Tuesday, January 7, I plan on attending the annual Interfaith Poverty Vigil at the RI State House as the legislative session gets underway. I;'m also hearing grumblings about other demonstrations that will take place that day.

Later that evening the Social/Racial Justice group at UUCSC will be meeting on Zoom with RI chapter of AMOR, Alliance to Mobilize Our Resistance, to learn what we can do to protect the rights of those who will be targeted by the incoming administration. our committee is also working on connecting with other congregations in the UUA to be part of a nationwide "Beyond the Binary" series of events — and possibly produce an even here at UUCSC — educating folks on how to be better allies to trans and non-binary friends, family and neighbors. Immigrants and Trans* folk are being especially maligned right now, so our hope is to make a difference when and where we can.

Housekeeping

My next furlough week is January 21-26.

Since my last report, I have made one disbursal from the Agape Fund: $150 to Mike Galib for providing music at a September memorial for a congregant with no family present.

The Christmas Eve Eve collection brought in $1,262 to help people in need during the coming year.

In Peace,
Rev. Denis Paul
January 2025

DRE Board Report

Dear Board,

The month of December was a whirlwind of activity and I'm only today landing in a semblance of calm. We celebrated Chalice Days, Winter Solstice and Christmas Eve Eve. Chalice Days this year was super sweet with our Time for All Ages to begin the first two services of December and our congregational dinner on Dec. 4th. We made origami star points together on Dec. 1st and then Saylor Skidds and Nick Smith glued them all into stars to put in our windows. I love this tradition! We had a beautiful child dedication for Danielle and Andrew's new baby Linden and his big brother Bobby. The Chalice Days dinner was maybe my favorite congregational dinner we've had. I loved that many people made many delicious dishes so no one did too much but it also wasn't a potluck, so people only brought food if they wanted to. I thought clean-up went smoothly. We might need to have people agree to be on the kitchen crew ahead of time, instead of in the moment, since it requires staying so much later.The Holiday Fair seemed like a great success. The kids made little crafts the two Sundays before the fair and our RE table made more money than we have in the past. Next year, I'd like to craft for the whole month of November and have kids sign up to sit at the table for short shifts to sell their goodies. The Solstice spiral labyrinth walk was so beautiful in the cold, clear snow! So many people came, I wish I had counted. I was guessing at least 25, with at least 13 kids, which we've never had before. We did hot drinks and treats, which made it festive and warmer, but also a little distracting. And we had people go into the spiral together, instead of one at a time, which made it go a lot faster, but also less contemplative. I'd love to hear feedback about how it went for any who came, so we can continue to create this beautiful tradition together. The Solstice service on Dec. 22nd was many things! The kids helped me write the story the two weeks before and the middle schoolers met on the Wednesday before to do a run-through. The wolves/fox wrote their own lines, which were so funny and creative. I'd really love to do a full play with them sometime, they were so into it. We had a sound bath from Sarah and Kevin Bell and a beautiful chalice lighting/calling in directions from Linda. Elizabeth Spring read the perfect poem for seeing the glimmer of light in the dark. It was a beautiful service, even though it was a little full. I'm working on simplifying :)

Looking ahead, we have exciting things for the middle school group. We are starting Dungeons and Dragons again! They are meeting on Wednesdays, beginning Jan. 8th from 4-6pm with Andrew White again as Dungeon Master. Danielle will be in the nursery with her boys and would love company! Please let me know if you'd like to sit in on any of the DnD campaign or spend time in the nursery with little ones. We will also be using a UU curriculum for middle schoolers on some Sundays, so they have something that's specifically geared towards their age group.

Office Administrator Board Report, January 2025

Christmas Eve Eve

I helped with the preparations for Mike's final Christmas Eve Eve service.

Membership

Val and I met regarding updating the yellow cards before more are printed. Mary Finnegan and I have come up with a new procedure for processing yellow cards.

Ongoing

I continue to work with Etta on the newsletter and website, and to take care of the mail, email and phone messages. I continue to produce the weekly order of service and the monthly announcements insert, and to deliver the food donations to the Johnnycake Center.

Best,
Sara Kaplow
Office Administrator