UCM Board Meeting
January 5, 2025

Attendance: Jeremy Beaudry (president), Ansel Ploog (vice president), Brenda Bean (Financial Officer), Jen Matthews via Zoom (secretary), at large members: Steve Gold, Emily Seiffert, Steve Grunewald; ex-officio, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval.
Church Members: Steve Finner, Dell Waterhouse, Judith Hinds, Barbara Thompson

Welcome and check-in's
Chalice lighting and reading

- Jen read Edgar Allen Guest's poem It Couldn't Be Done.

Approve Minutes

- November 3, 2024 - Steve Gold offered a motion to approve November Board minutes with updated accurate charge for the Climate Resiliency Study Group, Ansel Ploog seconded the motion. All members in favor.
    - Brenda sent an updated charge to Jen. Charge updated in minutes.
- December 8, 2024 - Ansel made a motion to approve December Board minutes with updated finances for the Kitchen Recovery; Emily seconded the motion. All members in favor.
    - Brenda sent updated financial information.

12:15 UU General Assembly delegate selection and support

- Steve Finner reminded the board that recruitment and selection should be diverse - i.e: gender, age, economic diversity. Steve also reminded the group to think about those who would be going to the General Assembly versus those who would attend online, which will impact financial considerations. Steve wondered what the board's role will be in selection of delegates and bringing them to the congregation.
- Last year the Board recruited delegates, then approved the delegates, who were presented at the annual meeting, where the congregation reminded them to honor UCM's mission during their service at GA.
- Joan let the board know that there is $2,000 budgeted for FY25 for GA. The Board wondered if more could be spent, perhaps donated.
- Steve Finner also suggested having GA feedback sooner in the church year so the information still remains fresh In the minds of the delegates.
- Steve Grunewald volunteered to be the board contact for recruitment.

- Suggestion from the board about making sure people were aware of time commitment required to attend the GA business sessions.
- Jeremy agreed to recruit via the e-news.

Racial Justice Group

- RJG is requesting the board use the word "anti-racist" on UCM stationary, orders of service, the sign out front of the church, and be considered as part of any visioning going forward. They are also requesting to continue partnerships and to assist with raising the collective consciousness of the congregation.
- RJG feels this is unfinished business and would like the board to look at our practices with hiring and how we invest our money.
- The Board questioned how this fits in with our other anti-harm practices - e.g. Intersectionality including BIPOC, poverty, etc.?
- Someone suggested that our website should be updated to include the language of the UUA's new Article 2- dedicated to Love and related values of Plurality, Transformation, etc.
- A board member condensed the conversation into 3 areas:
  - Antiracist language
  - Antiracist actions
  - Antiracist policies
- We wondered how to start to shift towards antiracist practices, and thought of: Review policy/bylaws with an antiracist lens, remind the congregation of the Eighth Principle, arrange presentations/conversations with the larger community.
- Joan asked us to consider - what would our BIPOC neighbors think if we said we were already antiracist and not just aspiring to be?
- Next Racial Justice Group meeting 1/15/25

Minister's report

- Joan would like to add to the report - When UCM hosted an overnight shelter, an incident prompted the need to look at and change policy.
- UCM also had an interaction with the Fire Marshall in reference to overnight guests. UCM has been granted a variance for overnight guests. Joan reminded us that overnight guests have been a tradition in the church (OWL, COA)
- There was a question about insurance for overnight guests, specifically if UCM is liable for any physical harm. Joan will bring this question to the ET.
- Joan had to make some adjustments to her schedule to accommodate travel back to the Philippines with the UUA Office of Global Connections and Emerging Communities.

Policy monitoring

- Policies to monitor:
    - GP-5.1: Board Roles and Responsibilities – President
    - GP-5.2: Board Roles and Responsibilities – Vice-President
- The board was all in agreement that the president and vice president are both doing a great job

By-Laws revision

- Review and discuss “Group B”
- II 2.3 Financial Contribution
    - Lots of discussion about Active Membership, with its requirement for both participation and an identifiable financial contribution every year. To help those who struggle to meet the financial obligation but would like to remain an Active Member, we debated changing the length of time to make a contribution to possibly 24 months, or having a membership sponsor or “buddy” donate a small amount of cash to meet the requirement in order to help those who struggle to meet the financial obligation but would like to remain an active member
    - After much discussion, the board consensus was to leave the Active Membership requirement the way it is currently written in the By-laws, and create a system to support those who may not be able to meet their financial obligation in any given year and move on in the agenda

Letter of support to local organizations

- Each letter will be personalized to each organization receiving the letter
- Jeremy will sign on behalf of the board; all other names will be listed; contact information will be for the church
- Letters will be sent via email and USPS
- Additional suggestions for recipients: Rainbow Bridge, Barre, VT, BIPOC UU Professionals, Vermont Professionals of Color, Vermont Racial Justice alliance, Standing Up for Racial Justice

Fundraising and stewardship

- UUA fundraising workshop series participation
    - Ansel will attend.
- “State of UCM” Board communication to congregation about our current state (as discussed on December 13 budget meeting):
    - Information can be shared in a variety of ways: e-news series, at the

        Committee of Chairs meetings.
    - The ET will work on financial information to provide to the board, and the financial information can be shared prior to stewardship kickoff,
- Art auction update (Brenda)
    - Art Auction is looking for donations of artwork.
- Stewardship update
    - Stewardship team would like the board to help make direct calls for the most impact
    - Stewardship team will share an info sheet about pledge statistics

Strategic planning process

- Jeremy requested board spend some time with the UCM Strategic Planning Process Document and return to next meeting with some feedback

Next Agenda -

- Climate Resiliency requests to consider decision making process