

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes January 18, 2022

Attending:

BOD Attending by Zoom Meeting: President Linda Savard, 1st Vice President Hiroshi Yamaguchi, 2nd Vice President Barbara Storms, Secretary Rod Belshee, Director-at-Large Rob Duwors, and Minister Reverend Ian Riddell.

BOD Absent: Director-at-Large Bob Rancourt

Congregational Members by Zoom Meeting: Jerry L'Hommedieu, Jane Zaun

Meeting minutes:

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting: Linda called the regular Board Meeting to order at 5:03 pm PST by Zoom Meeting. Rev. Ian offered a reading on the meaning of the Chalice and being together in community.

2. Welcome and Check-in: Linda led a check-in of Board Members.

3. Approval of Board Minutes: The Board approved a motion to accept the minutes for the December 21, 2021 regular meeting of the Board.

4. Process Monitor and Timekeeper: Rod Duwors

5. Consent Agenda: Linda Savard

- On January 5th the Board met to discuss budget priorities and establish the Pledge Drive goal.
- On January 5, 2022, the Board agreed by unanimous email consent to limit Sunday Worship to online only while the Omicron peak passes through.
- On January 8, 2022, the Board agreed by unanimous email consent to grant Jerry L'Hommedieu check signing authority as the temporary volunteer bookkeeper, remove Fred

Bloss since he resigned as Treasurer and reflect the name change from Glen Yamaguchi to Hiroshi Yamaguchi.

- On January 11, 2022, the Board agreed by unanimous email consent to approve extending a job offer to a Choir Director candidate including a small increase in pay rate.

6. Voices of the Congregation:

<none>

7. Reports:

a. President Linda Savard: Linda submitted a written report. In the meeting she added that she discussed our volunteer situation with Rev Sarah Gibbs-Millsbaugh, as well as the concept of combining Assistant Minister and other positions such as RE. Rev. Sarah commented that volunteerism is always a challenge and especially now and advised that we limit efforts to the most important one, and she cautioned that combining multiple roles does not always work well.

b. 1st Vice President Hiroshi Yamaguchi: Hiroshi submitted a written report. There was no discussion. His report includes material for topics later in the agenda.

c. 2nd Vice President Barbara Storms: Barbara submitted a written report. In the meeting she highlighted the table of activities, which is in fact quite large. She also discussed the long-standing challenge of communication between committees.

d. Secretary Rod Belshee: Rod submitted a written report. There was no discussion.

e. Director-at-Large Bob Rancourt: *Bob was unable to attend this month.*

f. Director-at-Large Rob DuWors: Rob submitted a written report. In the meeting Rob highlighted discussions he will be having to coordinate our diversity efforts.

g. Minister Reverend Ian Riddell: Reverend Ian submitted a written report.

In the meeting he added emphasis that many of our volunteers are very over-stretched and that will be a focus going forward. He also summarized the hiring process for the Choir Director. We had six applicants, four interviews, two auditions. He was please to report that the candidates included a diversity of ages, gender and color.

h. Treasurer (vacant):

In lieu of a Treasurer, Jerry submitted a written report regarding our financial position and notable financial events.

Roger Beaman completed the release of funds from the McLeod charitable trust (a multi-year effort). The net proceeds of \$57,000 will go into the McLain endowment. \$45,000 has been transferred to the endowment, and the rest will be transferred once the final tax filings are complete.

8. Old Business:

a. Attitude of Gratitude, Rob

Cards for Gratitude have been sent from the entire Board:

- Ginger for the work on meminfo
- Roger for tireless years to resolve the McLeod Trust

Card of Gratitude will be sent from the entire Board:

- Barb and Katy for helping on the Choir Director search

b. Facilities and AV Update, Rod and Hiroshi

Trees

Hiroshi discussed the situation with the root borer beetle in the Palo Verde trees. Our trees are not in good health and require a serious intervention with a systemic insecticide. The root borer beetle damages Palo Verde slowly, killing the tree is about seven years. In early years the best strategy is proper feeding, watering and pruning and let the tree outgrow the beetle. Unfortunately the expert assessed that our trees are in about year five and require immediate treatment to save the trees. The good news it is not too late and we can likely save all but maybe one or two trees.

Hiroshi's written report details the two treatments now, and then quarterly for a year, as well as tree trimming and changing the irrigation for the palo verde trees from a single bubbler near the trunk to four emitters out neat the drip line. Hiroshi cautioned that the trimming will be severe on some trees and they will not look good, but it is required for the health of the tree and safety in the parking lot. He also commented that we need a very skilled arborist not just gardener or unskilled tree trimmer.

Rod expressed agreement with Hiroshi's findings. Jerry suggested we get multiple bids and Hiroshi commented that the tree trimming does seem high but that getting more bids has been difficult.

Jerry highlighted that we have \$200K of trees as an asset. They are a huge part of our grounds. We have the money in a combination of reserves and operating budget.

The Board unanimously approved a motion that we authorize Hiroshi to negotiate not to exceed \$22K this year and authorize Linda to sign contracts for treatment, trimming, and irrigation modifications.

Facilities

Rod included a Facilities report within his written Secretary report. In the meeting he emphasized the need for a Chair for Facilities, and the need for more volunteers for the Facilities Committee.

AV

Rod included an AV report within his written Secretary report. It provides considerable detail of the AV volunteer needs, with seven different positions and skill levels. In the meeting he emphasized the need for more volunteers for AV.

Current AV volunteer training is going very well. The tiny group has great dynamics. We have checklists and Guides for Level one operators and programmers, debug guides for Level two operators, and detailed manuals and system diagrams for level three.

c. Website, Fran

Fran briefly walked through what the website will provide and what content she still needs for the website. She and Rev Ian are working on copyright issues for live streaming the services and on-demand videos. Depending on how long the migration process takes, the website may go live around Feb 2.

d. Covid Protocol Update, Rod and Hiroshi

Rod included a Covid update in his report. In the meeting he just added that California is projected to hit the Omicron peak this week and start a decline of about one month. There is hope!

e. Church Decor Group Update, Hiroshi

Hiroshi contacted people connected with décor items that are affected by the proposed changes and all are supportive. He has cleared much space already, particularly in the hallway, which Joni is designing. The foyer will include a new 8th principle display, which is temporarily placed in the sanctuary. Banners were moved outside, generating good feedback.

f. Treasurer Restructuring Update, Rob and Linda

Rob went through a diagram outlining a possible scheme for two co-Treasurers with overlapping terms. The model is great though the start up is complicated.

Rob secured agreement from the Board on the model, and reported the next step is to see if it is viable given our struggles with volunteerism. He emphasized this is a pilot and adjustments will be made as we progress and learn, and later we can address questions like governance.

g. Volunteers – What are we going to do?, Linda

Everyone is feeling the challenge of getting volunteers. Barb emphasized the importance of very specific tasks and clear communication that shares experience from prior volunteers. Rod emphasized that a response to the pandemic has been to isolate and get depressed and we need to flip the script to show that getting involved is a way out of the depression of isolation. We need to prioritize what we are working on and perhaps say no to some projects if we do not have volunteers to carry them out

Rob mentioned that the lack of a Volunteer Coordinator is unusual for volunteer organizations. Discussion included agreement that messages from the pulpit and newsletter are helpful but insufficient. People join winning and exciting teams, and when asked one-on-one. Rev Ian added that getting back into the building will help.

9. New Business

a. Pledge Drive, Linda and Jerry

Jerry encouraged all Board Members to submit a pledge before the kickoff so we can say we already have 100% Board participation. The \$175,000 goal is similar to last year's actual pledges, so we are paying off the mortgage enables us to fund a few additional things.

b. Conversations with the Board, Linda

Discussion included offering Conversations with the Board after Sunday Worship. Topics will be discussed in the Church Council. In April the topic will be the budget review, and perhaps we offer one other session in February and another in March.

c. Church Council, Hiroshi and Linda

Hiroshi has an agenda and zoom link to send out. The focus is the Nominating Committee / Leadership Development (Jane), Children's Religious Education update (Linda), Covenant and Right Relations (Rev Ian), then Conversations with the Board.

10. Process Monitor Report, Rob

Did we stay on topic? yes

Did we stay on time? 6 min early

Did everyone get to contribute, were all voices heard?

Did we follow our covenant?

11. Extinguish Chalice and Adjournment of Regular Board Meeting

Reverend Ian offered closing thoughts and extinguished a chalice. Linda adjourned the regular Board meeting at 6:57 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Belshee

February 15, 2022
Date Approved

Addendum to Board of Directors Meeting Written Reports of Board Members and Committee Chairs

Attachments

Written Reports of Board Members and Minister

- A) President Linda Savard's written report
- B) 1st Vice President Hiroshi Yamaguchi's written report
- C) 2nd Vice President Barbara Storm's written report
- D) Secretary Rod Belshee's written report
- E) Temporary Volunteer Bookkeeper Jerry L'Hommedieu written report
- F) Director at Large Bob Rancourt's written report
- G) Director at Large Rob DuWors written report
- H) Minister Reverend Ian W. Riddell's written report

a. President Linda Savard's written report:

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Ministry (DIBM)

This month at the DIBM meeting we reviewed and updated our goals. We discussed our budget and how to allocate our funds. We reviewed the goals being developed by those participating in Beloved Conversations, Among. Individuals sought feedback from DIBM members. A timeline for sharing the 8th Principle with the congregation was shared. Denise J.-E. joined us from the Social Justice Committee to brainstorm with us how our ministry and the social justice committee can support each other.

Beloved Conversations

Our current meetings with our coach are devoted to setting a foundation for moving forward with our work. In addition, we are working in two small groups on goals for Worship and Children's and Youth Religious Education. We are moving forward on developing and implementing the goals. As we move forward, we are seeking feedback from other committees and constituents.

Committee on Ministry

I will discontinue reporting on this committee and leave it to Rev. Ian.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is moving forward with gathering information from all committees on the roles and responsibilities of the chairs and co-chairs. This information will be shared at the next church council meeting.

The committee is moving forward with leading a group through "Claiming our Spiritual Leadership" which is part of the UUA leader lab. The class will participate in the training online together.

The committee is also actively thinking about possible future board members and committee chairs.

Personnel

Rev. Ian and the hiring committee interviewed and auditioned applicants for the choir director position. An offer has been made and accepted. We are in the process of completing a background check and all of the necessary paperwork.

Additional

I continue to meet monthly with Rev. Ian and with Hiroshi. I participate in a Chalice Circle and the stewardship committee. I'm working with small groups on the communication policy, restructuring the treasurer's position and developing suggestions for our financial priorities.

I met with our Pacific Western Regional liaison. I spoke with her about staffing and volunteer shortages. She shared with me that many churches are experiencing the same problems we are with having enough volunteers. Her suggestion was to focus on what is essential. Not a bad idea.

b. 1st Vice President Hiroshi Yamaguchi's written report:

Church Decor Group Update - moved banners in foyer to outside walls in patio adjacent to the front doors, sent courtesy notice to donors named on plaques in foyer informing them that plaques will be moved to the hallway, replaced Christmas Stars with 8th principle display in sanctuary, removed mirror and bulletin board in hall to make way for donor plaques and other history/archive displays and images.

DIBM - team with Sandy Sladen and formed an "8th Principle Ambassador Group" of four members to assist with the 8th principle process. Co-develop and facilitate meetings with this group.

Stewardship - in discussion and meeting with Suzanne and Jerry Hogsett on proposed travel presentation of Bhutan and Indian Kashmir sometime this spring.

Church Council - developing agenda for the upcoming meeting this Saturday that will include a presentation from the Nominating Committee ("Claiming Our Spiritual Leadership"); Religious Education Program for children and youth (work group in BC Among); Covenant and Right Relations; and Conversations With the Board.

Facilities and Grounds - consulting with a tree arborist and irrigation specialist to develop a plan for bringing our Desert Palo Verde Trees back to good health. Securing estimates and a schedule of treatment for the trees and repair/rework of our irrigation system. To minimize time spent in our meeting to discuss the situation with our trees, I summarize as follows:

We have 48 Desert Palo Verde trees on our grounds and due to a lack of care through improper irrigation, absence of nutrition and fertilization, and improper and infrequent pruning, the majority of our trees are in poor health and have become severely infested with Palo Verde Root Boring Beetles. This neglect has been going on for many years, likely since they were planted over 15 years ago. Care of our grounds simply has not been a very high priority. These beetles are opportunistic and have become established in the roots of our trees because they are stressed and in poor health.

These beetles and their larvae feed on the root system consuming significant amounts of root tissue, eventually killing the trees over a 7-10 year period. It is the damage to the root system that causes the symptoms up in the canopy of the tree of large branches dying back, oftentimes clearly back to the trunk.

The plan recommended by the licensed tree arborist that we have consulted with is to stimulate new growth in the root system through fertilization and nutrition, systemically treat the

root system with insecticides and/or with bark banding treatments, prune the diseased sections of affected trees, possibly removing a few trees that cannot be saved and importantly, repairing and reworking our irrigation system to properly irrigate the trees toward the circumference of their canopies while calibrating the controllers to the proper seasonal intervals. Given proper care, our trees have a lifespan of at least 100 years and once established and in good health, their watering needs are minimal, perhaps some deep watering every week or two, depending on the time of year. The estimates for treatment and pruning are as follows...

All Seasons Tree Specialist

Systemic deep root feeding and systemic treatment with insecticides for all Palo Verde trees (2 treatments, one week apart).....\$7,375

Pruning, shaping and cleaning of all Palo Verde Trees including possible removal of trees that cannot be saved, bracing and pruning of Mesquite tree on plaza.....\$9,840

Earthtones Landscape Company, Inc.

Relocating and adding irrigation outlets and replacing emitters with the proper outlets to provide for the correct watering for our mature trees.....\$3,250

Total\$20,465

Ongoing Maintenance Tasks and Cost Estimates Per

Year

All Seasons Tree Specialist

Suggested follow up treatments on a quarterly basis (cost per year)..... \$4,975
(as needed, likely for the first year or two, then less frequent)

Earthtones Landscape Company, Inc.

Annual pruning of trees, lacing and cleanup.....\$2,500

Maintenance and repair program for irrigation system - quarterly visits (4 X \$100)..... \$400

(plus any needed parts) estimated at.....\$50

Annual Maintenance Cost.....\$7,825

* (when our trees are healthy, possibly within a year or two, this cost will be significantly less)

**So, in essence the estimates for immediate work total \$20,465
and
the annual maintenance cost is \$7,825***

This is a shocking expense...but actually it is a deferred expense since we have not budgeted for proper gardening, have allowed our irrigation system to fall into disrepair and have not properly maintained the trees. A tough “pill to swallow”, but in essence...we have gotten what we have paid for.

I have reluctantly taken on the task of seeking experts to estimate the costs of trying to bring our trees back to good health. I am only a messenger of this information and know nothing about tree diseases. There is no “guarantee” that a few of our trees can be saved and unfortunately there is no sure or easy way to eradicate the root borers that our trees are infested with. Ideally, the best way to eradicate these pests is to somehow bring our trees back to better health so that they may have a chance to recover. Research on the internet focuses on keeping the trees healthy as the best and the only sure way of preventing infestation with this insect...but that is not where we are at.

I am told by the arborist and two different landscapers that have assessed our situation that if we don’t take action to bring our trees back to better health and try to eradicate the boring beetles, we will likely lose several trees over the next few years and if we choose to replace them, it will cost \$4-6K for each tree. I have been working on getting additional consultations and estimates, but that has not been so easy. Fortunately, most all of our trees can likely be brought back to good health if we act quickly. Perhaps there are others who are more knowledgeable about horticulture that can comment on our options.

c. 2nd Vice President Barbara Storm's written report:

Stewardship = strengthening our community by deepening our quality of belonging and connection within and between members of our community.

Plan, offer and assist with social activities to encourage fellowship

- Stewardship is hosting the pledge drive Zoom Bingo on January 29.
- Stewardship is also planning a cookie delivery in February as well as a note writing effort in April or May for members and friends who seem to be connecting less frequently with the congregation or who we believe would benefit from a personal contact.
- Stewardship collected information about the various activities planned for the Winter and Spring by various groups, looking for areas to facilitate communication between groups to avoid overlaps or confusion. (see list of Winter-Spring activities)

Provide volunteer opportunities and encourage volunteer participation in activities in order to build relationships with other congregants

- Stewardship assisted the Pledge group by contacting people to do testimonials
- Stewardship will be reaching out asking for help with cookie making or delivery in February.

Strengthen connections with the Care and Membership Committees to better define how each committee is connecting with and supporting members and friends.

- The representatives of the three committees met continue the work of each committee and the ways in which they can work together.
- Stewardship is collecting participation information from live and virtual activities in order to identify new friends and to identify people who are becoming less engaged with the congregation. This effort began in November and we will be reviewing the data we have so far at our February meeting.

Other

- Stewardship is mining the participation information collected so far (services since October plus other activities) to help Membership identify friends who may be interested in becoming members or dual members. If people are identified, new member classes would be in March or April.

Submitted by Barb Storms

Winter-Spring Activities

<p>Weekly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Worship (in person/on line) (SG)● Work Parties (F)	<p>Monthly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Men's Breakfast (in person) (F)● WNO (in person) (F)● Bookclub (in person) (F)● Chalice Circles (in person and/or on zoom) (SG)● Beloved Conversations: Among (DIB)
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January

- Stewardship (Jan 29) —Bingo (zoom) (F)
- Lifespan---3 session Planning Worship workshop (zoom) (SG)
- Nominating—Leadership as a spiritual activity (zoom)

February

- Stewardship—Cookie delivery
- Nominating—Leadership as a spiritual activity (2 sessions, zoom or live depending on Covid)
- DIBM--8th Principle presentation and discussion (1 session TBD)

January-February

- Lifespan--Handcrafting as a spiritual practice (1 live session, 1 on zoom) (A)

March

- Lifespan—Film and Discussion (in person) (DIB)
- Travel Presentation (in person or maybe on zoom)--Sheryl is contact (F)
- Nominating—Leadership as a spiritual activity (2 sessions, zoom or live depending on Covid)
- Stewardship—End of Pledge celebration?

April

- Nominating—Leadership as a spiritual activity (1 sessions, zoom or live depending on Covid)
- DIBM--8th Principle presentation and discussion
- Stewardship—Notes project-- Checking In on You

March-April

- Lifespan—Craft project (in person?) (A)
- Care—Wills and Trusts /Death and Dying (PG)

Spring (March-early June)

- Lifespan—Mural Creation (multi-session in person) (A)
- Lifespan--Mindful self-compassion (1 or 2 sessions, in person or on zoom) (SG)

Other

- Outdoor community activities sharing
- Monthly Committee Meetings
- February—New Member Classes
- Book discussion—book not yet chosen or discussion date identified

Winter-Spring Activities Planned

SG=Spiritual Growth	F=Fellowship	DIB=Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging	PG= Personal Growth/Information	A=Art
4	7	4	2	4
*Worship *Chalice Circles *Planning Worship *Meditation Self-Compassion	*Bingo *Travel Presentation *Cookie delivery *Notes Work Parties Men's Bkfst WNO Bookclub	*Beloved: Among *Film & Discussion *8th principle (2)	*Wills & Trusts or Death & Dying *Leadership as spiritual practice	*Handcrafting (2) *Craft Project *Mural Creation

d. Secretary Rod Belshee's written report:

SECRETARY

I will be decreasing my volunteer hours dramatically. I will finish out my Secretary term (including offloading the Treasurer role) but not take on additional Board tasks. I will cease my Facilities Liaison role and other roles. It is just too difficult to get other volunteers to step forward during this pandemic and the overload for the few still helping is too much.

We need a major effort to re-engage volunteerism, which I believe is a huge way to pull everyone out of the Covid funk. I will train and support the AV team if we get enough volunteers to step forward. Personally I'm cutting back, and then will shift my time to the Sacred Grounds Initiative, which is closer to my heart.

Mortgage Retirement

We need to record a reconveyance to legally complete retiring the mortgage. After I failed with many attempts with other entities, Stewart Title has agreed to work with the UUA to complete that process. I'll monitor it to ensure completion. There is a \$145 fee that Stewart Title will bill to the UUA, but worst case we might need to pay.

Business Filings

I filed the Religious Exemption statement for county property tax exemption. Our petition to increase our religious exemption was approved but since most of the tax bill is assessments (which unlike property taxes is not exempt) our cost only dropped from \$7,000 to \$6,500.

UUCOD Board Meeting Documents

Last month we started sharing Board documents using Google Drive. It is still a work in progress but most Board Members are able to use it now.

FACILITIES

The Facilities Committee lacks a Chair and there is no effort to recruit a new one. Membership has declined with another member resigning this month.

Work parties continue on Mondays, largely outdoors, with 3-5 regular volunteers, a small decline.

The irrigation leaks on the patio were fixed by Jerry rather than the paid service. The leaky valve remains.

Hiroshi has met with a number of contractors regarding our trees. They are in bad shape, infested with a root borer, which is the worst news for a Palo Verde. He has an estimate for immediate intervention for disease, for trimming, and for correcting the irrigation. This is a discussion topic for the Board Meeting.

AV

Our system is now quite stable with high quality streaming services. We hear reports of audio and video sync issues but believe those are due to Zoom and the internet since we were able to instrument a test and see great sync as the signal left the building.

Overflow Room

- We offered the service by Zoom in the overflow room for four weeks but had no takers. We will not restart it unless there are overflow crowds after we resume in-person services.

Streaming

- We remain on pause regarding direction for live streaming and video on demand, particularly around the question of copyrights.
- We have manually posted the full service to Facebook each week, which places huge limits on music due to copyrights.
- Our new website will leverage YouTube (or Vimeo). We have now streamed eleven services to YouTube but they remain unlisted until we set direction around copyrights; posting on-demand services within the new website is stalled.

Volunteers

- We have started training nine people (12 including ICD, DOS, S2S). Of that four are continuing forward while the others have stepped back due to the pandemic or with concerns of over-committing. We critically need to expand the AV volunteer team to around twelve people.
- AV volunteerism is an issue. Rod will be away May-June and at the current trajectory we may not have sufficient volunteers to support services every week.
- Rev Ian spoke to the opportunity from the pulpit on January 16, the Care Team will emphasize the personal benefit of volunteerism in the January 21 newsletter, as will Rev Ian in the Sunday Service on Generosity.
- Regardless, recruiting volunteers is most successful as a one-on-one conversation. We need to identify congregants *who are currently not highly involved*, approach them one-on-one and get them to volunteer.

Training Materials

- We have training set up for a progression of skill, from level one through level three. Most anyone should be able to serve in a level one role and we hope to have many train to level two. Level three is more of a professional role.
- Guides, checklists and diagrams are now ready for all level one and level two training. Level three documents are also assembled and include the technical manuals for the various gear.

AV Volunteer Roles

- There are three distinct volunteer roles: programming, video operator and audio operator. Some people are more comfortable behind the scenes, others prefer to join for the live event, and there is a place for many different skill sets.
- Each role has a level one and a level two skill level. E.g. audio level one is just the sound board while level two includes the full audio path through the entire AV System, and video level one is sufficient for operating a Sunday Worship Service but level two adds to ability to reposition a camera.
- The programming role is active on Monday and Wednesday, the operator roles are active on Sunday.

- When we start posting videos there will be another role to edit for copyright, and title and comment the videos.

Volunteer Training

- Programming (need 3 people trained to level 2): Mel is trained to level one, Evelyn is approaching level one, and three other people have started training. No one is trained to level two yet.
- Audio operator (need 3 people trained to level 2): Michael is trained to level one. The three people who ran the old sound board can easily get to level one. No one is trained to level two yet.
- Video operator (need 3 people trained to level 2): Mel is trained to level two and Evelyn to level one. Four others have observed.
- S2S, DOS and ICD are self-sufficient.

Gear

- We were finally able to buy and install a graphics card (we were using a borrowed one).
- We still have one failed headset and the replacement part is not yet available.

Assistive Listening

- We completed installation of the Listen Everywhere hearing assist which will allow congregants to listen to the service on an app on their phone. This should be very popular.
- There is still a latency issue to resolve through network configuration.
- There is a poster with a QR code we will post in the foyer. Congregants can scan the QR code, install the app, and begin listening on their own hearing aids or ear buds.
- We should train a couple of volunteers to provide initial assistance.

Covid

The Covid Response Team is not bringing anything forward to the Board this month. There are potential topics to tighten safety (require proof of vaccine within six months, require N95 masks) and there is planning to rejuvenate the congregation once covid passes. Those are ongoing topics in the Covid Response Team.

Current projections are that omicron will peak this week in California and start a month-long decline. The open question is declining to what level, but we can be hopeful.

SACRED GROUNDS

I will be re-starting the Sacred Grounds Initiative this winter and have begun checking in with people to find co-leaders. While enthusiasm was extremely high in March 2020, we will need to communicate and re-energize the congregation since it has been nearly two years since our last major event. One of the first projects will be to act on the patio expansion that the Board approved last summer – that will give more space for coffee hour on the patio.

e Temporary Volunteer Bookkeeper Jerry L'Hommedieu's written report:

As of December 31, UUCOD held deposits of \$241,249 of which \$209,320 were either dedicated or restricted funds, leaving a balance of \$31,929 in unrestricted funds. The unrestricted balance does not include \$100,000 in restricted but undesignated funds.

All transactions for the current fiscal year were audited in December and adjustments made as appropriate. UUCOD paid for some expenses in December which were incurred in previous months. This resulted in an operating loss of \$1,421 for the month. Donations were reviewed and some contributions were reallocated from contributions of record to pledge payments or, in some instances, to other revenue accounts. In addition, some mis-posted expenses were reposted to appropriate accounts. The audit should conclude in January with a few smaller adjustments. Revised financials for previous months will be posted to the share drive.

4900 Miscellaneous Operational Revenue is currently at \$48,377 for the year, due to pay down the mortgage payments and transfers from the Audio-Visual Fund but most of these funds have been expended to pay off the mortgage or reimbursements for Audio-Visual expenses. While the \$48,377 is included in the fiscal year to date net revenues of \$103,829, UUCOD is left with an impressive \$55,452 in net revenues for the year to date.

We learned UUCOD was a named beneficiary in the estate of one of our deceased members. The trustee stated UUCOD will receive 10% of the final proceeds but said it would take several months before the estate was settled. No indication of the size of the estate was given. Concurrently, a settlement was reached between the trustee and the IRS on the MacLean Charitable Trust. UUCOD should receive the remainder of funds in that trust in January.

Efforts to develop the FY 22-23 Budget have begun and work on the FY 22-23 Pledge Drive are nearly finalized. The Board continues its efforts to identify a new treasurer.

e. Director at Large Bob Rancourt's written report:

Bob was unable to attend this month, and did not submit a report.>

f. Director at Large Rod DuWor's written report:

Diversity Ministry

The work of this ministry continues. With the leadership of Hiroshi and Sandy, we are primarily focused on adopting the Eighth Principle into the UUCOD.

Beloved Conversations-Among

I continue to participate in the work of this program. I am working with a subset of participants on creating a new religious education program for children and youth. We are also working to get all the participants together for a joint meeting in early February. I think it would be helpful for there to be some coordination (?) with the Diversity Ministry and the diversity strategic goal established by the board.

Liaison with Social Justice Committee

Linda and I will be meeting with Denise next week to discuss a new idea that the committee has developed.

Attitude of Gratitude Notes

All the notes outlined in last month's meeting minutes were written and sent.

Other

- I have been working with a small group to help rationalize the UUCOD Treasurer position. This will be discussed in more detail at the BOD Meeting. A summary of our work is posted to Google Drive for you to review before our meeting.
- I am also attending the Covid Response Team Meetings largely as an observer.
- I participated in the budget development meeting.
- I presented an update on restructuring the treasurer position to the Finance Committee and will attend next month's meeting for further discussion.
- I am participating in training on the audiovisual system to determine if I can do it well.
- I continue to provide limited support to a few UUCOD congregation.

g. Minister Reverend Ian Riddell's written report:

Happy New Year! It feels like the end of 2021 was something to celebrate for many of us.

And many of us are still struggling. Despite our efforts to stay connected, many of us are feeling lonely, cut off from friends and family, and feeling unable or unwilling to get involved with activities outside our home.

We are seeing this in our congregation with a lack of volunteer participation in some areas of our congregation's activities. This is paired with a sense that there is much to do for our congregation—some of it chosen work and other of it work to maintain and support our physical and spiritual lives. And returning to virtual-only worship, while necessary and responsible, is having an impact as well.

I'll encourage us all to find ways to reach out to your support systems, plan activities that are safe but also get you out of your comfort zone. I know that we will be talking about many of the needs of the congregation at this month's meeting and I hope we can imagine ways of inviting involvement, even in this time of isolation.

in peace and love

Rev. Ian

Summary Outline of the work I've been involved with for the past month. This is not an exhaustive list, but is meant to give you a general idea of what I've been up to as your minister.

1. Counseling and Pastoral Care

- The Care Team held our regular meeting this month and welcomed a new member. I have reached out to a potential new member for the team.
- We continue to check in and share our contacts with congregants and offer each other guidance and support in our support of congregants' needs.
- The Care Team will launch the new "Emergency Contact" forms in February with announcements in newsletter and from the pulpit and information tables outside after Sunday services. This has been postponed, partially due to moving back to all-virtual services in January.
- We compiled a new list of congregants willing to offer rides (to appointments, etc.) to congregants in need.
- I continue to meet with congregants in need of connection and conversation by phone and Zoom.

2. Administration, Governance, and Staff

- I continue to meet as needed with our Covid Response team and monthly with the DIB Ministry team.
- I meet weekly with Pam Bibo to check in on work expectations and how things are going. We continue to work well together.
- The Choir Director Hiring Team completed interviews for our Choir Director position and has offered the position to Vanessa Ament who comes to us with great energy, experience, and knowledge of UU theology and traditions. Among her other achievements, she received an MDiv degree from Starr King School for the Ministry (a UU Seminary). I am beginning the onboarding process with Vanessa this week and she will begin employment on February 1. At that point, I will work with the new Choir Director, our lead accompanist Kurt Jordan, the choir, and the COVID team to plan to start choir rehearsals as safely and carefully as we can. Our primary aim will be to bring the choir back together and we'll work toward getting the choir involved in worship more regularly.
- I met with a group beginning to plan our financial priorities for the coming year and setting a goal for our annual pledge drive.
- Our acting Committee on Ministry (Jane Zaun, Walter Gendell, and Joaquin Galleano) had its first meeting the first week of January and began creating our covenant and defining our work together. We will begin reaching out to the congregation to deepen all of our understanding and facility with Right Relations.
- As part of our congregation's "Beloved Conversations Among" team, I participated in our monthly large-group gathering and continue meeting with the worship sub-group to begin developing some goals for the congregation this year.

3. Membership and Committees

- I attended the Chalice Circle facilitators monthly meeting.
- I met with Fran to see progress on our new website design.

4. Lifespan Faith-Development

- I will begin teaching a three-session class on UU Worship in January and will offer a second Sacred Practices class (Handcrafting) in February.

5. **Worship**

- I continue to lead the Worship Team meetings and the weekly Production meetings. In our production meetings, we continue the practice of reflecting on the service the day before and noting any issues we need to address.
- We have addressed changing needs as we returned to virtual-only worship in January. On Sunday mornings the preacher, worship associate, our pianist, and AV volunteers are in the building. Everyone else is participating on Zoom
- I led worship several times this past month:
- December 24 - Christmas Eve (WA: Bryna Blum)
 - Our pianist, Kurt Jordan, had a family emergency, so I also provided some music for this service
- January 9 - We Are How We Treat Each Other and Nothing More (WA: Bob Rancourt)
- January 16 - In Ourselves and In Our Institutions (WA: Sarita Gonzales)

6. **Denominational Activities**

- I will be virtually attending the UUMA Institute for Excellence in Ministry Jan 31-Feb 4 and the UUA Pacific Western Regional Assembly (also virtually) Feb 4-6.
- I regularly consult with local and regional colleagues on issues affecting our congregations.
- I continue meeting monthly as a mentor to a person in the ministerial formation process. We will meet monthly for the year and I will be there for feedback, support, and context setting as they move through the credentialing process.

7. **Prophetic Outreach, Interfaith Activities, and Local Collaboration**

- I coordinated an after-service discussion about our congregation and the 8th Principle after service on Sunday, January 16.
- I will be participating in the Social Justice meeting in even-numbered months.
- I am part of the Desert Interfaith Council team planning a prayer vigil at the Salton Sea. Due to Covid and Omicron, we have postponed this event to a later, safer date

8. **Personal and Professional Growth**

- I canceled my planned trip to Canada to see family after Christmas. Instead I took study leave from December 29 through January 3.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doe", is centered on a light gray rectangular background.

My weekly schedule is as follows:

Currently, my days off are Thursday and Friday; I'm in the office Monday and Tuesday and available for meetings/appointments on Wednesday and Saturday.

Upcoming Travel Schedule:

I am hoping to find a way to visit my family in the next few months. I will coordinate this with congregational leaders to ensure coverage.