
Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2024

Attending:

A meeting of the UUCOD Board of Directors was held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024.

Board Members attending in person: Bob Rancourt, President, Julia Alberg-Burbank, 1st Vice President, Fran Hoag, 2nd Vice President, Jerry L’Hommedieu, Treasurer, Claudia Simmons, Secretary, Rev. Ian W. Riddell, Minister, Walter Gendell, Director at Large, Carol McDaniel, Director at Large.

Absent Board Member: Walter Gendell, Director at Large (out of country)

Others Present: Earl Hoover

Others Present Online: Sheryl Eaton, Rod Belshee

Welcome and Call to Order

Bob called the regular Board Meeting to order at 5:00 PST.

Chalice Lighting

Rev. Riddell offered inspirational sentiments and lit the chalice.

Check-In

Bob welcomed everyone and he and the Board checked in.

Process Moderation

Process monitor was assigned to Fran Hoag.

Consent Agenda

- The Board made a motion to approve the January 16, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes [Moved by Carol McDaniel and seconded by Julia Alberg-Burbank].

Voices of the Congregation

- Review and Consideration of the Finance Committee’s Fixed Assets Reserve Study
 - Earl Hoover from Finance gave an update to the Board (refer to UUCOD Reserve Fund Requirement Report attached) as to the kinds of reserve funding that UUCOD needs and/or should be planning for.
 - Earl made the case that the \$21,000 should be set aside each year to handle anticipated deferred maintenance.
 - Jerry L’Hommedieu stated that this line item is not currently in the budget for the coming fiscal year as the Church is looking at a deficit for the year.

- Jerry L’Hommedieu said that we will retain the Finance Committee’s document and plan for these budget reserves as soon as is practicable.
- Linda Savard reported that the Leadership Committee is doing well with getting new Board members for next year.
 - Still looking for a Second VP, another person to join Leadership Development Committee. Mel Wilkinson has agreed to stay on as Co-Chair of Facilities. Hospitality will hopefully have someone in place soon. New Archivist will be Barb Ketay.
 - Stewardship and Membership are continuing talks about combining the two committees.

Old Business

- Review, Consideration, and Discussion of Rev. Riddell’s Sabbatical Leave
 - Rev. Riddell began a conversation around the tenants of a minister’s sabbatical leave, its purpose, what it is and is not, how it is funded, and Rev. Riddell’s plans for his sabbatical leave provided in his agreement with UUCOD. Reverend also provided a handout that discusses ministers’ sabbaticals (see attached docs).
 - Accruing one month per year of sabbatical leave, Rev. Riddell will have accrued 4 months by the end of June 2025.
 - Rev. Riddell wishes to take two months of sabbatical in July/August of 2025 and two months of sabbatical in July/August 2026.
 - Rev. Riddell will work with the ministry team and the congregation to plan for filling the pulpit, planning for pastoral care as well as other work necessary to continue in his absence during that time.
 - No action needed at this time.
- Review and Consideration of the Committee on Ministry’s Membership
 - Two new members for The Ministry Membership will be needed by the end of June 2024 to replace Jane Zaun and Joaquin Galeano, who will be rotating off the team. Walter Gendell will be continuing. The Board will need to choose one new member, and Rev. Riddell will need to choose one member. The new members should have a good understanding of the congregation, and the appointees should be in place by the end of June 2024.
- Review and Planning of Second Church Council
 - Julia Alberg-Burbank sent email to committees about the Saturday March 9th Council meeting. Use of a Zoom link has been requested for those who cannot attend in person.
 - The committees will share their successes and will submit dates for the church’s calendar of events for the following church year, FY 2024/2025.
 - Reverend Riddell will lead the Committee Chairs in doing some vision and mission work.
- Nomination and Designation of Attitude of Gratitude Note Recipients
 - Carol McDaniel agreed to substitute for Walter Gendell this month by sending out attitude of gratitude notes.
 - For pledge testimonials: Jim Swanson, Walter Gendell, Julia Alberg-Burbank, Jerry L’Hommedieu. Chris Eager for heading up the Pledge Drive. Vicki Porter for taking on the appreciation project. Barb Storms was helpful with annual recertification. Tracy

Flynn for membership and ushering. Earl Hoover to be thanked for work on the financial analysis, Rev. Riddell will send out thank you emails for helpers involved with Gloria Kapp's service.

Unfinished Business

- Further Review, Consideration, and Discussion of Personnel Advisory Committee's Draft Recommendations for Ministerial Evaluation Process and Procedures
 - Per Ministerial Agreement, a process is being developed to evaluate the Minister over time. Evaluations may be done on annually.
 - Essential ministerial functions have been identified, core competencies created and Minister's specific goals will be set forth for a particular year.
 - A group of people will be identified to fill out evaluation forms. Evaluations will be compiled and reviewed with the Reverend to discuss.
- Review and Discussion of Board Reading: "Transforming Conflict: The Blessings of Congregational Turmoil" (Ch. 6).
 - All participated in conversation citing meaningful points revealed in these chapters.
 - Read Chapter 7 for next month's meeting.

New Business

- Review and Discussion of Monthly Reports
 - See attached detailed reports.
 - Treasurer reviewed the current year cash flow projections (see attached 240220 Financial Update Report for latest breakdown of projected revenue and expenses).
 - If we have a deficit, the financials will show that we have a loss.
 - Pledge Drive Statistics: A shortfall from our goal will impact next year's budget.
 - Based on current expense projections for FY 24/25, UUCOD can anticipate as \$28,000 deficit.
 - Board discussed various fundraising and 'fill the gap' options to raise the \$28,000 deficit. It is the congregation's responsibility to help UUCOD reach its financial goals.
 - Minister's Report: Reverend will be away March 18-24, 2024.
 - Carol McDaniel: Highlight that UUCOD needs A/V volunteers.
- Review, Consideration, and Discussion of Social Justice Committee's Request to Fundraise for Laundry Love (refer to Laundry Love flyer attached)
 - Sheryl Eaton would like to get Board approval to set up a table outside during Coffee Hour on Sunday March 17, 2024, to get congregants to sign up as volunteers to facilitate UUCOD's Laundry Love night on April 17th. Sheryl would also have a jar set up at the table for collect any change if congregants would like to donate to the cause.
 - Denise Janssen Eager assured the Board that Laundry Love has nothing to do with Share the Plate. She also reported that she has had several requests from congregants who are anxious to volunteer for this event.
 - Rev Riddell wanted to ensure that there would not be a conflict between Share the Plate that Sunday and the 'ask' for quarters and volunteers for Laundry Love.

- Motion from the Board voted to approve Sheryl Eaton to arrange a table to collect change and sign-up volunteers for Laundry Love. [Claudia Simmons approved the motion, Jerry L'Hommedieu seconded it].
- Review and Consideration of Possible Employee Policy Changes
 - Employee time off for Jury Duty, MLK Day.
 - Telecommuting policy. Means you are still working.
 - Looking at clarity for vacation time for people working less than 20 hours per week.
 - Board is considering an advisory committee to investigate changing UUCOD's employee policy.

Process Moderation

- Fran Hoag reported that the Board Meeting ran on time and that everyone had been heard.

Chalice Extinguishment

- Rev. Riddell extinguished the chalice with words of gratitude.

Adjournment

- Bob adjourned the regular Board meeting at 7:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Claudia L. Simmons, Secretary

Date Approved: March 19, 2024

Attachments

Monthly Reports
Sacred Grounds Update
UUCOD Reserve Fund Requirement Report
Laundry Love Flyer
240220 Financial Update Report

To: UUCOD Board
From: Julia Alberg-Burbank, 1st VP
RE:February 2024 Board Report

- I attended safety training on 1/27/24
- I was Worship Associate for 1/28/24 service
- I also provided a pledge drive testimonial on 1/28
- Helped facilitate clean up after the Chili Cook off
- I attended the Worship Associates meeting 1/23/24

Church Council:

An initial email reminder was sent to notify participants that the Church Council is scheduled for Saturday March 9, 2024 at 8:30 am. I will send another email with an agenda. There has been a request for a Zoom link to accommodate participation from various locations.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Alberg-Burbank

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
2nd VP report to the Board
February 20, 2024

Stewardship

Chili Cookoff: The Committee evaluated the success of the event and determined that it was “a success!” It was a fun way to start the pledge drive. There was huge participation with around 90 judges and 13 Chili Chefs in 3 categories: Vegan, Vegetarian and Chili with Meat. The amount of chili to sample increased the fun, but it did mean that some people had to use 2 plates to carry it all to the table. It also increased the amount of food waste and we were unprepared for food composting.

The prizes were presented at the next worship service. Bob Hoss won for Vegan Chili, Vicki Porter for Vegetarian Chili and Joni Paddock for Chili with Meat. Reuben Galleano won for the second time for the best overall Chili.

Thank yous go out to Jack Fitzsimmons for creating the great pledge drive and cookoff imagery; Aly Bibo for the chili mood music in the patio and Charlotte Bibo for creating the awards for the chili categories.

Caring Circles: The idea originated with Carol LaVoie who sent invitations to an email list asking people if they would like to join in sending healing energies to a person as they went into surgery. This was so well received that the Care Team and Rev Ian will coordinate this effort going forward.

Growing Connections To Our Community : the second article in the series was published in the February Newsletter. The topic is Generosity.

Pledge Drive Conclusion: The committee is planning a Pizza Party Celebration on March 3 after the worship service.

Volunteerism: Ideas are under discussion for improving communication of volunteer opportunities with lobby displays.

Chuckwalla Preserve

The letter of support from the Board is under final review by Rev Ian as many of the talking points were derived from his sermons.

Membership

Sunday Attendance—Jan/Feb. Numbers have continued to climb and remain steady at between 90-110 per Sunday in attendance and approx.. 18-25 on Screen streaming.

Instant Church Directory: Membership has continued to work diligently on rolling out the new directory format. They have scrubbed the lists of members and friends, making sure that everyone is included. Soon they will be sending an email to the list giving all the background of the pilot project and instruction on how to use it.

New Member Recruitment & Classes: We have several new people already signed up for upcoming classes on March 10th & 17th, with next New Member Induction happening on Easter Sunday, March 31st. We expect anywhere between 10-15 folks to attend these classes.

Committee Leadership: It has been difficult for Leadership Development to recruit for the Chairs of the Membership and Stewardship Committees. The two committees are starting to discuss a possible merger and what that could look like. It is too early to make recommendations to the Board.

Submitted by Fran Hoag

Board Member at Large Report February 2024

Hospitality

- Margaret and Sandy continue to do a fantastic job.
- There were no issues or concerns but the search continues to find a replacement for them by June 30th.

Human Resources

- Met with Ian on January 14th to review and finalize a draft of the Ministerial Assessment form that will be presented to the Board in February. The draft was reviewed by the Committee on Ministry for their input on January 30th.
- At the January 30th COM we also discussed various ideas on how to solicit and receive feedback as part of the evaluation process. The Committee felt that a fairly simple process should be utilized for an annual review – and then every three to five years a much more in-depth process that might include focus groups and a broader set of questions.
- The evaluation review process is still being formulated. It is anticipated that a draft process will be shared with the Board at their March meeting.

Attitude of Gratitude

- I sent thank you notes to 12 individuals in January.

Pledge Drive Testimonial

- On February 4th I gave a testimonial as part of our Pledge Drive.

Submitted by:

Walter Gendell

Board Member at Large

February 8, 2024

I check on 3 committees.

AV says WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

FACILITIES:

- > A new clock has replaced the clock in the sanctuary.
- > Dave Emerson has asked about composting and recycling. They discussed doing an activity for Earth Day and bringing out/using the recycling blue bin from Pam's office on Sundays as needed. New how & what to recycle papers have been placed on the refrigerator's door and blue trash cans.
- > Weed & grass pulling (2-13) went well
- > The (refrigerator's) ice maker is dead

SOCIAL JUSTICE:

- > Thanks to everyone for their work for Gloria Kapp's memorial service.
- > Side with Love/UUCOD t-shirts are being sold this month. This will be the only order for this year. A few extras will be bought to be used as loaners.
- > This month a table has been manned on Sunday to offer information on Prop 1
- > Infant formula (rather than toddler) will be asked for on Formula on the Fourth.
- > We plan to help Galilee's Easter Food project.
- > The carrot boycott against Grimway and Bolthouse Corp. was discussed and tabled.

Carol McDaniel, Director at Large
2-20-2024

Minister's Report to the UUCOD Board

February 20, 2024

The Rev. Ian W. Riddell

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.

A. Counseling and Pastoral Care

- The Care Team continues 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 presented a workshop after the service on January 21 sharing our new guiding document and engaging the congregation in conversation and exploration around the questions of "How are we a caring community?" and "What does it mean to care for each other?" More than a dozen people attended and the conversation was good. We are working out plans for ongoing "caring energy" circles.
- I continue to meet with congregants in need of connection and conversation by phone and Zoom and in person. I am also beginning the year with the intention of reaching out to every member at least twice over the course of the year. I am starting with our newest members.
- I am heartened, as always, by the ways I see you all take care of each other when people are in need.

B. Administration, Governance, and Staff

- I meet weekly with Pam Bibb and Jim Tong to check in on work expectations and how things are going.
- The Committee on Ministry met this month and continued to work some plans for several projects we'll be exploring coming months, including the CoM's involvement in ministerial evaluations.
- The Committee on Ministry is made up of three members, two chosen by the minister and one appointed by the Board. They have staggered 3-year terms. We are at a point now where two of our current members (Jane Z and Joaquin G) will be finishing their terms of service at the end of June (Joaquin stayed on for an extra year). This means that the Board will need to choose a replacement member and I will need to choose one as well. One of these people will serve for two years and one will serve for three. Walter G will remain on the committee for one more year.
- As usual, I met with President Bob Rancourt and First Vice President July Alberg-Burbank to plan the Board agenda, as well as discuss the upcoming Board retreat and Church Council meeting. I'll be starting the exploration of our vision and mission at these upcoming meetings.

- I met with Bob Rancourt, Jerry L'hommedieu, Julia Bell, and Chris Eager to review the draft budget for 2024-2025.

C. Membership and Committees

- I meet monthly with the DIB Ministry team. We are educating ourselves about issues of neurodivergence as we explore a broad view of inclusion and welcome. We are also working with the assessment last year's team did of our congregation around ARAOMC issues in the ways we live out our goals in community.
- I worked with Jerry L'Hommedieu to present two of our new Safety Procedures (Earthquake and Medical Emergency) at two Saturday afternoon workshops this past month.

D. Lifespan Faith-Development

- I meet monthly with the Chalice Circle Facilitators. The Chalice Circles continue to follow our monthly themes based on the newly articulated Article II values.
- I offered a three-session class on preaching for lay people. The attendance was not as high as last year's offering. I'm considering re-designing the class for a future offering.

E. Worship

- We have service leaders planned through the end of May.
- I continue to lead the weekly Production meetings, though others take the lead when I am out of town or away. In our production meetings, we continue the practice of reflecting on the service the day before and noting any issues we need to address.
- I led or participated in worship several times:
 - January 21 — The Justice of Care with Ginger Hemingway as Worship Associate.
 - January 28 — Watch us Grow! Heart, Treasure, and Spirit with Julia Alberg-Burbank as Worship Associate [our pledge drive kick-off service]
 - February 4 — A Generous Heart: Finding a Generosity of Spirit with Ginger Hemingway as Worship Associate.
 - February 18 — Generosity of Mind: Thinking Beyond the Given with Steven Toporoff as Worship Associate
 - February 18 — Celebration of Life for Gloria Kapp
- We welcomed member Jonathan Fast into the pulpit on February 11.
- We are regularly having high attendance at our worship services again. This is a wonderful thing and I'll want to work with our ushers to help latecomers find good seating.

F. Denominational Activities

- I regularly consult with local and regional colleagues on issues affecting our congregations.

- I provided the Invocation/Call to Worship for the Installation service of the Rev. Omega Burkhart at Neighborhood UU Congregation in Pasadena on Sunday, February 4
- I participated in a collegial gathering to honor a colleague and friend, Jim Grant, who died last month. I will be unable to attend the Celebration of Life for Jim this month.
- I continue meeting monthly as a mentor to a person in the ministerial formation process for feedback, support, and context setting as they move through the credentialing process. I also mentor to another new minister as he works through his Preliminary Fellowship. Both of these mentoring roles together take about 2.5 hours a month of my time.
- I serve on the nomination committee of my UU Ministers Association chapter and will coordinate worship for our upcoming retreat.

G. Prophetic Outreach, Interfaith Activities, and Local Collaboration

- I completed an online training on disability justice offered through the UU Ministers Association.

H. Personal and Professional Growth

- I continue meeting monthly with a coach for ongoing support, learning, and accountability as I minister to the congregation in our diversity transition work. My coach is Rev. Julica Hermann de la Fuente
- I meet monthly with a small group of colleagues in our region in reflection, sharing, and collegial support and learning.
- I am grateful for the week of Vacation from January 6 through the 13th when I was able to visit my family in Kingston, Ontario.

in peace and deep love



My weekly schedule is as follows:

Currently, my day off is Friday. Thursday continues to be my writing/reading day, which I try to keep free of meetings.

Upcoming Travel Schedule:

- I will be on Study Leave from Monday, March 18, through Sunday, March 24. During that time I will travel to Phoenix for the spring UUMA Chapter

UUCOD Treasurer's Report January 2023

As of January 31, UUCOD held cash deposits of \$295,327.76 which includes \$215,286.41 invested with UUA and a CD with Pacific Premier Bank. Of the total amount, \$236,003.85 is held in either dedicated or restricted funds. This leaves \$59,323.91 in available unrestricted funds; up from \$52,336.49 in November.

Totalling \$5,370, plate collections and contributions of record were exceptionally good in January; driven by five vs. four Sunday collections, the commemoration of our Sacred Grounds, and Share the Plate collections. Pledge revenue was up with the receipt of several one-time pledge payments paid through minimum required distributions from retirement accounts. Share the Plate collections for Safe Schools Desert Cities totaled \$1,880, including matching funds.

Of the \$26,787 in total revenue, \$7,047 was the result of an increase in the value of investment funds. Monthly operating revenue was \$19,740 for the month. January expenses were \$19,724. There were no unusual expenses. We project receiving about \$32,000 in remaining pledge payments through the remainder of the fiscal year. Projections indicate the potential for deficit spending in this fiscal year.

Julia Bell, Chris Eager, Bob Rancourt, Rev. Riddell, and I developed a first draft of the FY 24 – 25 budget which will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and Board of Directors in February. Comments will be considered as we develop another draft for consideration. The most significant missing component is the final amount of the pledge drive effort which should be available at month-end.

This year's pledge drive was kicked off January 28 with a chili cookoff following services with help from Stewardship and Hospitality members, as well as others. Stewardship will also be coordinating a pizza and salad luncheon on March 3 to celebrate the end of the pledge drive. The goal for the pledge drive is \$195,000; up 5% from last year.

Jerry L'Hommedieu
February 6, 2024

Monthly Report – February 20, 2024

UUCOD Secretary Claudia Simmons

1. I was present and took the minutes of the January 16, 2024, Board Minutes. The draft has been prepared, reviewed by Board members and is awaiting approval at the February 2024 Board Meeting.
2. On Saturday, January 27th, I attended the UUCOD Safety Training led by Rev. Ian and Jerry L'Hommedieu.
3. On Sunday, February 4th, it was my turn as Board Secretary to open the church service by welcoming everyone and introducing myself to the congregation and sharing what it is I do as a Board member that helps bring the work of the Board to the congregants by producing the minutes which are then uploaded to the UUCOD Website for all, who wish, to read.

Sacred Grounds Report to the Board February 2024

Desert Canyon Habitat

The Habitat plantings are growing incredibly! Some mallow and desert lavender have easily tripled in size and are full of blooms. The garden is also full of wildflowers, some planted (e.g. desert bluebells) and some volunteers. In particular, the browneyes primrose is crazy this year – that last time I saw it this thick was the year that we had massive swarms of painted lady butterflies!

Sue added some beavertail cactus and barrel cactus to the plantings and it looks great.

Celebration Garden

After the Celebration of Life for Gloria Kapp many people lingered on the patio for a long time. Many were observed walking the Celebration Garden, with wonderful, positive comments.

Geocache Adventure Lab (outreach)

Last month, the Board approved Dave Emerson's proposal for designating the Desert Canyon Habitat a Geocache Adventure Lab. The Adventure Lab provides a fun digital treasure hunt and opportunity for people to learn about Gene's art, the Peace Pole, the native species in the habitat and the labyrinth.

Since going live, the reviews have been an astounding 4.8 stars, with seventeen people leaving glowing comments. Dave has run into a couple of people at the garden drawn in by the geocaching.

Here's the description in the Adventure Lab listing:

Welcome to the Desert Canyon Habitat which includes a garden, sculptures and a labyrinth. The Desert Canyon Habitat is a 7,500-square-foot demonstration garden that is intended to inspire others to protect the desert environment. The garden, which includes 25 tons of boulders and more than 100 native plants, has been certified as a Sacred Ground by the National Wildlife Federation.

Take your time to walk the labyrinth, admire the artwork, study the native plants and look for the native creatures that live here. The Adventure Lab has been sited here with permission from the landowner. Please respect this place and its sensitive ecology by staying on the paths, taking only pictures and leaving only footprints.

CV Independent press article (outreach)

Diane Carmony's PR efforts led to a wonderful, detailed article in the Coachella Valley Independent, written by Haleemon Anderson, published January 17, 2024: [Connection With Nature: The Discovery of an Endangered Plant Leads a Rancho Mirage Church to Create a 'Sacred Garden'](#)

Rod has met at least one person drawn to visit the Habitat due to the press article.

Garden Tour (outreach)

The Desert Horticultural Society annual garden tour is March 16, 10:00-3:00. The main tour is five non-native gardens in south Palm Springs, but the Society is intrigued to add native gardens. The Desert Canyon Habitat is featured this year as a “bonus” garden, with the idea to return again in another year or two so people can see how fast a native garden grows.

UUCOD will provide multiple docents at the garden, along with the existing signage and website. Note that DOS Shabbat School also occurs that Saturday morning, but we do not anticipate any issues.

The Garden Tour, \$25, is the Desert Horticultural annual fundraiser to support scholarships.

Weed Pull Parties and Tuesday work parties (engagement)

The Tuesday work parties had shrunk to often only Jerry, or Jerry and Tom S. To try to engage more people, we started promoting a monthly Weed Pull Party, with fun and refreshments.

Our first Weed Pull Party was January 9 and had eight people. Six were people already involved with the grounds (Jerry, Tom S, Dave E, Sue E, Randy, Rod), plus one new guest (Octavio) and Fran. The second was February 13 and we had twelve people, including two new congregants. The final one will be March 12.

We made good progress on the (never-ending) schismus grass – it is very prolific this year but so far we have kept ahead of any seed formation.

Lifespan opportunities

Sacred Grounds is ready to partner up with any of the other UUCOD Committees for classes or events in support of our value of the Interdependent Web of All Existence.

There are ideas percolating for Plein Air artist gatherings, iPhone nature photography, and programs to connect people to the land spiritually. Rod and Dave may also provide wildflower classes on the grounds during the March bloom.

As well, we might be able to create a Fall Lifespan Sacred Grounds Series: Backyard Native Gardens, Composting, and Mindful Recycling.

If there are any volunteers, more ideas could include children’s nature education, and public events, classes and tours.

Benches

Last month, the Board formalized an Ad Hoc Aesthetics task team to propose benches for the Desert Canyon Habitat, Celebration Garden and future Creosote Scrub Habitat: Denise Stevens, Jack

Fitzsimmons, Walter Gendell, John Ressler, and Mel Wilkinson. The team has starting considering options and identifying questions to investigate.

Connect Habitat and the Labyrinth

We learned during the Dedication that many people will walk between the labyrinth and the Habitat, cutting over the uneven rock creek. We considered bridge options but ultimately favored a simple path of flat stones through the dry creek, and that turned out great.

Congregational Input Meeting, February 25

The Steering Committee has developed proposals for the coming year (and beyond) and will get feedback from the Congregation after the February 25 worship service. Using that input, we will present program and project ideas to the Board in March for preliminary approval, and then start developing plans.

In addition to the Program ideas above, there are a number of projects to present to the congregation to get feedback. The Steering Committee is pretty enthusiastic about a Creosote Scrub Habitat, Year round Bloom near the building entrance, trees along Key Largo, and preserving the Blow Sand Habitat. There is also the idea of a green wall to shade the back of the sanctuary, and the possibility of a meditation garden somewhere. Development of the retention pond area needs preliminary exploration ideas, ranging from Desert Dry Wash Habitat to potentially an outdoor amphitheater.

UUCOD RESERVE FUND REQUIREMENTS
January 11, 2024

The list of major components to be reviewed for annual reserve funding were revised to:

- remove irrigation, windows, interior sprinkler system and electrical system from the list on the assumption that these items can be dealt with piecemeal as they arise and within the annual budget
- add audio/visual, church chairs, and kitchen appliances to the list

Revised list:

– PARKING LOT— remaining life estimated to be 12 to 32 years; cost to replace currently \$60,000. Using a life of 30 years (parking lot put at the longer range as it is not as heavily used as commercial lots [average life projections are based upon Commercial Property Inspections Association estimates]) 30 year life, current estimated cost \$60,000, requires \$2,000 annually to fund with hopefully the investment of the moneys set aside in the reserve fund covering the bulk of inflationary increases in the various items. No allowance has been made for the projected \$8,500 that will be needed within one or two years when the lot will require a slurry treatment — **update based on comments received from Rod: shorten life expectancy to 25 years (my estimate) and recognize that either the budget will have to carry the expense of the parking lot for slurry every three to five years or this expense should be included in the reserve fund (Rod's preference as it is recurring). Using four years as an average for the slurry, this requires an additional annual \$2,125 for the slurry and an additional \$400 added to the replacement cost. Total \$2,525**

Annual Budget Requirement for 30 years — \$2,000

Annual Budget Requirement for 25 years — \$2,400

Annual Budget Requirement Slurry every 4 years — \$2,125

Total Annual Requirement \$4,525

– PLUMBING — using Rod's calculations, set aside \$770 annually

Annual Budget Requirement \$770

– HVAC — replaced 2020, original unit lasted 15 years, if this does the same, remaining useful life would be 12 years, replacement cost \$35,000

Annual Budget Requirement for 12 years — \$2,920

– FLOOR COVERINGS, TILE — Steve Isen (760) 250 - 4294 sisen@twfaw.com) estimator at The Works Floor & Wall came to site 1/9 & 10/24 to inspect tile and carpeting, give bid on repair work needed and estimate of replacement cost. Indicated the tile was 'done' in the community room and tile along the edges was warping, breaking free where moisture is leaking in from the outside (need to fix this). Lump sum estimate to remove old tile and replace with same VCT (vinyl composition tile) is \$6,533.12, excluding the storage closet. He acknowledged we could 'coast' on the existing tile for a couple years, but the dirt buildup under the wax is getting pretty apparent — 'coast' for three years \$2,178 per year; or bite the bullet and replace for \$6,533.12?

Annual Budget Requirement for three years \$2,178

FLOOR COVERINGS, CARPET — Steve estimates we have five years left on the sanctuary carpeting; replacement at current rates is bid at \$10,506.50 for similar Philadelphia 12" broadloom carpet

Annual Budget Requirement for five years — \$2,102

If anyone wants a copy of the actual bids let me know and I will forward.

– ROOF – Solar panels were put in by the same roofer (A.L. Miller & Sons [760] 238 - 6618) so no damage to roof or its fiber membrane. At time of this work roofer advised that the roof was in good shape. Estimated remaining life of 18 years at which point a second layer would be applied, not a complete replacement – cost \$25,000

Annual Budget Requirement for 18 years – \$1,388

– 144 CHURCH CHAIRS – the chairs themselves are in good shape but the top backs are wearing out with wood showing through – cannot be repaired less expensively that it would cost to replace them. If a solution can be found for covering over this area with some form of a cap or cloth covering, the chairs have a good remaining life. If not, replacement will likely be needed within five years(?). **ChurchChairs.com** (706) 528 - 5933) charges \$97.95 per padded stackable chair with a 20 – 25 year life – to replace all 144 chairs \$14,105 before tax and shipping.

Annual Budget Requirement for five years – \$2,821

– AUDIO/VISUAL – estimate of 10 to 15 years requiring \$1,500 per year reserve.

Annual Budget Requirement for 10 years – \$1,500

– KITCHEN APPLIANCES – all are nearing the end of their useful lives. Allow five years at a total replacement cost of \$12,500

Annual Budget Requirement for 5 years – \$2,500

ANNUAL REPLACEMENT FUNDING FOR ABOVE ITEMS

Parking Lot	2,000 (30 years)
Plumbing	770 (25 years)
HVAC	2,920 (12 years)
Community Room Tile	2,178 (3 years)
Sanctuary Carpet	2,102 (5 years)
Roof	1,388 (18 years)
Chairs	2,821 (5 years)
Audio/Visual	1,500 (10 years)
Kitchen Appliances	2,500 (5 years)
Additional Parking Lot	2,525

TOTAL **18,179***
20,704

* Less any existing reserve funds that can be allocated annually to reduce the \$18,179 total. Jerry indicates the following may be available for this purpose:

1. \$11,562 in the A/V fund
2. \$55,000 in the Building Maintenance Contingency fund
3. 'conceivably' use the \$20,000 in the Facility Emergency Fund for kitchen equipment and HVAC, tho "we would probably need to use general funds and the \$55,000 before we could tap it."
4. General Gift fund \$100,000 would require either a 2/3drs of 3/4ths board member vote before that could be used for non maintenance or repairs and would eliminate any funds available for a future sanctuary expansion.

Allocate what amount of these existing funds annually to defray the \$18,179 annual requirement?

Note also that we are counting on the investment of this annual allocation at a sufficient interest rate to offset inflation in the cost to have the items done.

Earl

240220 Financial Update

Current Year Cash Flow Projections

- \$52,000 Current Unrestricted Cash Reserves
- \$33,000 Remaining Pledge Payments
- \$18,000 Projected Plate Collections
- \$103,000 Projected Revenues Remaining
- <\$100,000> Projected Remaining Expenses
- \$3,000 Projected Year-End Cash Reserves

Pledge Drive Statistics

- \$195,000 Pledge Goal
- \$155,000 Received Thus Far
- 102 Pledging Units
 - 28 Pledge Units Outstanding
 - 11 Pledge Units Unlikely to Pledge
- 10 Pledge Units From FY 23 – 24 Not Pledging This Year- ~\$17,000
- 4 New Pledgees This Year
- 5 Established Friends Have Pledged
- \$183,000 Projected Pledge Total for FY 24- 25

4.11 Sabbatical Leave: The Minister may use sabbatical leave for study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional, religious, spiritual, or personal growth. Sabbatical leave accrues at the rate of one month per year of service commencing from July 1, 2021, with leave to be taken after four but before seven years of service. No more than six months of sabbatical leave may be used within any twelve-month period.

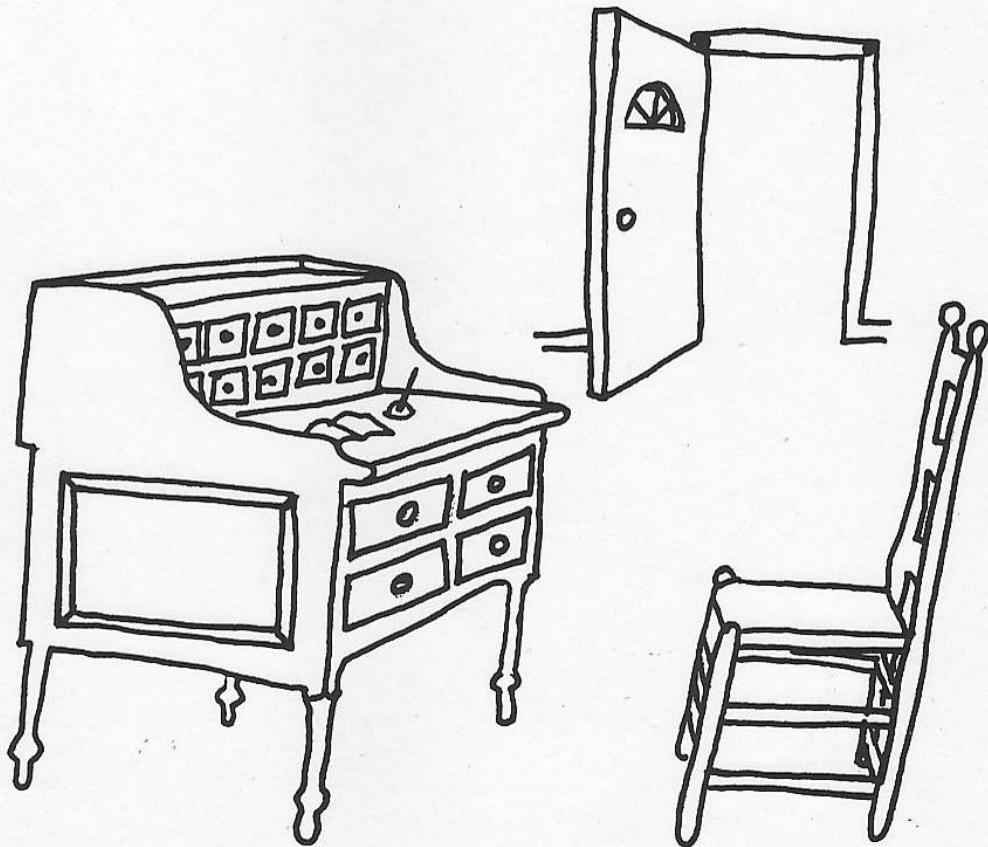
- The dates of a proposed sabbatical of more than three months should be submitted to the Board for approval at least 12 months in advance. For sabbaticals of three months or less, dates should be submitted at least 4 months in advance.
- Study Leave and Vacation still accrue during a sabbatical year but should be taken at another time during the year unless authorized by the Board.
- The Congregation will continue full salary, housing allowance, and benefits during sabbatical leave. Professional expenses, if used for sabbatical travel, are subject to IRS Regulations.
- Unused sabbatical leave is not compensable upon departure.
- The Minister agrees not to resign from service to the Congregation for a minimum of one year following the end of each sabbatical leave.
- The Congregation agrees to take no action on ministerial tenure during a sabbatical leave except for extreme and unexpected circumstances and only after consultation with the UUA Transitions Director.

Handbook on

SABBATICAL LEAVES

for

Ministers & Congregations



by Helen L. Cohen & David C. Pohl



INTRODUCTION

A cartoonist has humorously described sabbaticals as the leisure of the theory class. However, academics and ministers are not the only professionals granted such leisure anymore. The business world has realized that sabbaticals may be good for executives and, as well, for their companies. (A steel executive, for example, was recently granted a sabbatical to play all the great golf courses of the world. When he got back, his president was thrilled with the result. "That fellow," the president said, "used to play golf two out of every five working days. He's been back four years now and still feels too guilty to take even half a day off.")

Sabbaticals are not intended, of course, to impose a guilt trip on those who take them, nor to provide that kind of payback to those who grant them. Nonetheless, and in a more serious vein, there are obligations, not simply privileges, for the recipient of a sabbatical, and benefits that outweigh any debits for those who give one. Sabbaticals are neither extended vacations nor tightly-structured, highly-focussed study leaves. Sabbaticals are designed to foster rest, reflection and renewal, a respite in depth, to provide an opportunity to break away from established routine and the press of heavy responsibilities, a chance to experience different cultures and be stimulated by new learnings, and time and space to reflect on the meaning of it all. Sabbaticals typically include study and/or travel, and provide the opportunity not only for formal learning and cultural enrichment but also time for receptivity and reflection. We are able to be receptive only when we have let go of our normal regimen. Receptivity opens the way to interior healing, fresh insight and perspective, and possibly a new energy that is less driven, more balanced and productive.

Ministerial sabbaticals were not an invention of the current generation, but until twenty years ago they were granted only by large congregations or by those in academic communities where faculty already enjoyed such leaves. Unitarian Universalist ministers and congregations have been pioneers in developing a rationale for sabbaticals, and in establishing standards and structures for them. Several other faith-groups have encouraged and provided funds for relatively brief study leaves for their ministers, but Unitarian Universalists have been among the first to develop and promote the sabbatical as a valid and valuable practice for ministers and the congregations they serve. The Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association and the UUA Department of Ministry have, in a concerted effort dating from the early 1960s, helped make possible the fact that seventy-five percent of our ministers now have provision for a sabbatical in their congregational agreement. Indeed, we can now say with confidence that sabbaticals are normative in our ministry. Over a third of our ministers have already had a sabbatical and most have reported no difficulty in securing congregational approval to do so. It is now an accepted part of the ministerial--congregational landscape.

To say that is not to deny, however, that there are sometimes negative and destructive experiences with sabbaticals. Most of those could have been prevented--by paying greater attention to consultation, collaborative planning and timing, and securing the understanding and support of the congregation. Sabbaticals are not intended as escape from problems nor as entitlements due us regardless of present conditions. Nor are they meant to provide an opportunity for dissident members to make trouble in the minister's absence. A climate of trust is a pre-requisite, as well as the expectation that both congregation and minister will benefit from the experience in significant and mutually strengthening ways.

This handbook is intended to help both ministers and congregations appreciate the need for sabbaticals, and the corresponding need for planning them so as to maximize rewards for all. It explores both the theoretical and practical aspects, and shares personal sabbatical experiences as well as research from a recent survey of our ministry.

The case for ministerial sabbaticals rests on our concept of church and ministry. Whatever else we may believe about the church, most of us would embrace English poet Philip Larkin's description of it as "a serious house on serious earth." Larkin saw the church as a sanctuary harboring sacred meanings, a bulwark standing in judgment of a complacent society, and a home that nurtures covenantal relationships. Such a church is a worshipping, learning, caring and witnessing community, which needs a ministry that is learned and reflective, but also rich in leadership and relational skills. Most congregations neither want nor need ministers who merely maintain an institution, represent us in the community, or provide the weekly Sunday service. However important such functions are, they mean little without a vision, a message, and a presence that helps us to live with hope, courage, and generosity. We seek ministers who offer religious and organizational leadership that will help our churches to be "serious houses on serious earth." We look to them for help in understanding our lives and times, for inspiration and insight, an attentive ear and a reliable presence, and a mind well-versed in the great issues that brings to them a critical and creative temper. To expect our ministers to embody such qualities, and to nurture them in our congregations, means understanding that sabbaticals offer an opportunity that neither vacations nor study leaves alone can provide. The sabbatical, as an extended leave from normal duties, enables the minister not only to experience rest and recreation but the renewal that follows detachment, reflection and new learnings, renewal that brings fresh enthusiasm, new ideas and a clearer focus to the relationship.

The office and the study provide contrasting metaphors for describing the work of the minister. The office expresses the managerial and counseling aspects, the study its reflective and creative side. While not mutually exclusive, these metaphors point to the competing claims on the minister: the institution (which needs hands-on coordination and supervision), the parishioner (who seeks counseling, visitation, or help in planning a special service), and the congregation (which expects religious leadership that is reflective, informed and inspiring). All of these claims are important and necessary if our churches are to be relevant to the needs of our members and the larger community. We need ministers who are reasonably at home in both the office and the study, and see the connection between them. But in our work-oriented culture, where telephone, computers, and meetings are understandably essential, we must be intentional in nurturing all that the study represents: meditation, prayer, learning, reflection, and the arduous privilege of crafting words that seek to shed light and hope on our lives. The sabbatical leave is the study writ large, promising both ministers and congregations an opportunity for renewal that will help us live our faith with a clearer vision and a larger hope.

Chapter Two

INITIAL QUESTIONS

The following questions provide a quick introduction to the major issues that a minister and congregation consider when preparing for a sabbatical. The handbook provides ways to think about these questions, but the answers arise out of each particular situation. Use the questions as a way to think about the purpose and the details of the sabbatical, and as a checklist along the way.

For the Minister and the Congregation

1. Is this a good time for a sabbatical? Is the ministerial-congregational relationship a strong, trusting one?
2. Does the congregation understand the purpose of the sabbatical? How can we talk about it together? What benefits will there be for the minister and for the church? What are the risks and the fears?
3. Beginning at least twelve months ahead, what steps will we take to prepare for the sabbatical, and to evaluate it?
4. How will the minister's responsibilities be covered during the sabbatical?
5. What financial issues are involved? For instance, will we need to budget for extra speakers? If the minister lives in a parsonage, and will be away from the parsonage during the sabbatical, how will the housing portion of income be made available to the

minister? How will we compensate other staff members for the extra workload they will bear?

6. How will the other staff members be supported in the minister's absence?

7. What kind of communication will occur between the minister and the congregation during the sabbatical? Will the minister return for a death or other serious emergency?

For the Congregation

1. What changes might we expect in the congregation during the sabbatical?

2. Are there particular issues we would like the minister to think about or work on during the sabbatical?

3. How can we best support the minister's plans?

4. What opportunities will the sabbatical create for the congregation, and how will we best take advantage of them?

For the Minister

1. What do I really need or want most at this stage in my career?

2. What do I want to change about myself and my ministry?

3. What will renew and stimulate my ministry and myself?

4. Are there issues that I would like the church to think about or work on during the sabbatical?

5. How will I coordinate my needs and wants with the needs and wants of my family as a whole, and of each family member? Can my spouse/partner leave his/her work? For how long? Are my children at a good age for travelling? What can we afford? Will I get a genuine sabbatical only if I get away?

6. How will I return to the demands of ministry after four to six months of a different kind of experience?

UUMA Guidelines on Sabbatical

From the *UUMA Guidelines for the Conduct of Ministry*

Sabbatical leave is an investment that the congregation, agency or enterprise makes in the future of a ministry. Sabbatical leave is to be used for the minister's professional development, and is expected to benefit the institution and/or the movement.

- The minister accrues one month of sabbatical leave each year, subject to the other conditions set forth in this section.
- Unless otherwise negotiated, no sabbatical leave is to be expected prior to completion of four years of service.
- Sabbatical leave may accrue up to a maximum of six months.
- The length of any given sabbatical is a matter for agreement of the institutional leadership and the minister.
- The congregation, agency or enterprise and minister will jointly plan for ministerial services during the sabbatical period.
- If a sabbatical fund is set up, it should be clearly stipulated whether it is for the use of the minister.
- It is recommended that the sabbatical agreement refer to general conditions for sabbatical leave. This should be supplemented by a letter composed by the minister and institutional leadership that sets forth the detailed conditions for each sabbatical.
- A sabbatical may be taken separately from or together with vacation periods.
- The minister shall not use sabbatical leave to search for another position, nor accept one during this time.
- No action on ministerial evaluation, tenure or duties shall be pursued during a sabbatical period.
- The minister shall receive full salary and housing allowance, as well as insurance and pension benefits, during the sabbatical. The sabbatical agreement shall specify how other normal ministerial allowances are to be handled.
- The minister will be expected to return from sabbatical only for the most serious matters constituting an institutional crisis. In the event the minister is asked to return from sabbatical, travel expenses will be reimbursed.
- The minister may be required to continue service to the congregation, agency or enterprise for some specified period following a sabbatical. This period will not be longer than one year.
- In the event of a resignation or dismissal, accrued sabbatical time shall not be paid in financial equivalent.

Laundry Love is a new project of the Social Justice Committee. Sheryl Eaton has been the organizer. Other people working on this are Margaret Beaman & Jack Fitzsimmons.

On Sunday, March 17, Mike Mullin of Laundry Love will be in the pulpit speaking about the program (see flyer for description) & its importance for those living unhoused or economically disadvantaged in Palm Springs.

After the service, Sheryl Eaton will be on the patio tabling. Mike has asked her to recruit 6-8 UUCOD members & friends to volunteer at the laundromat at the Wednesday, April 17 Laundry Love event.

Knowing that our Congregation will want to contribute their coins for this venture, at your Board meeting, Sheryl Eaton would like to appear via Zoom to get the Board's permission to do this. This is a one time event; she will not be collecting coins on any other Sundays.

Because of the timeline, this issue cannot be moved to March's agenda. Following fundraising protocol, we'd like a decision to be made at the February 20 meeting granting her permission to do this.



laundry love[®]

WHAT WE DO: we help individuals and families/households wash and dry their clothing, bedding and towels with no cost to people who need these services. We provide free washing machines, detergent sheets, dryers and dryer sheets if desired. These services are no cost to you.

WHO WE ARE: we are volunteers from the Coachella Valley who desire to walk alongside others with dignity and respect.

WHERE WE DO THIS: Wash Time Coin Laundry, 1751 N Sunrise Way, D1, Palm Springs, CA 92262, located in Sunrise Square Shopping Center, Vista Chino and Sunrise Way.

THESE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED: on the third Wednesday evening of the month, 6-10 PM.

THIS MONTH'S WASH EVENT: Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 6-10 PM. No exceptions made.