

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana
Seeking the Spirit, Building Community, Changing the World



Board Minutes
September 18, 2024

I. Call to Order and Chalice Lighting	2
II. Check-in	2
III. Approval of the Board Minutes	2
IV. Reports	2
A. Religious Education Monitoring Report	2
B. President's Report	3
C. Treasurer's Report	3
D. Lead Minister's Report	3
V. Unfinished Business	4
A. Start-up Weekend	4
VI. New Business	4
A. Facilitating Communication with Congregants	4
B. Bylaw Revisions	5
C. Right Relations Committee	5
VII. Executive Session	5
VIII. Adjournment	5

Board members attending in person: Regina DiLamore, Bill Lonnerberg, Jane McLeod, Linda Pickle, Pam MacLaughlin, Steve Mascari, Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray

Board Members Absent: Mary Craig

Guests attending in person: Stephanie Kimball

Submitted by: Regina DiLamore, Secretary

Attached Documents:

- A. Religious Education Monitoring Report
- B. Financial Dashboard

C. Lead Minister's Report

I. Call to Order and Chalice Lighting

President Jane McLeod called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The chalice was lit, and a quorum was in attendance.

II. Check-in

III. Approval of the Board Minutes

There were no further comments on the August 2024 Board Meeting minutes. The minutes stand approved.

IV. Reports

A. Religious Education Monitoring Report

Stephanie Kimball, Director of Lifespan Religious Education, provided the Religious Education Monitoring Report.

The previous month has been remarkably busy with nine events in six weeks. Sixty-seven (67) children have been registered, more than double the number of children compared to last year. The OWL service also elicited a significant amount of interest in the program.

The religious education (RE) program volunteers are stretched very thin given the program interest. The number of volunteers is greater than previous years, but not enough to cover the program adequately.

The adult RE program has 14 offerings this year; but no enrollment numbers are available to date.

The RE Volunteer Handbook has been published, and Stephanie Kimball, Director of Lifespan Religious Education, will be strategizing on how to increase the number of RE volunteers and childcare workers.

The final proposal for the mental health grant is due in October.

See Attachment A for the full Religious Education Monitoring Report.

B. President's Report

President Jane McLeod provided the President's Report. President McLeod announced that moving forward the Board meeting agendas will be reorganized so that monitoring reports are provided first. She also reported that Jo Bowman, Communications Coordinator, is working on the governance section of the UUCB website. President McLeod encouraged Board members to sign up for open Sunday Board Representative slots and discussed upcoming Perspectives articles. The date of the next Congregational meeting was changed to December 15.

C. Treasurer's Report

Bill Lonnborg, Treasurer, presented the second report of the fiscal year which is 17% complete. Expenses are tracking on target and income is ahead of schedule. The asset/liability ratio is better this year compared to previous years. The Finance Committee met last week. Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray suggested that the budget be drafted in February allowing the Finance Committee to decide on goals in advance of the pledge drive. See attachment B for the Financial Dashboard.

Bill Lonnborg, Treasurer, provided an update on the external audit. The auditor is currently reviewing the information provided by UUCB and will draft a report within the next 1-2 weeks. The Finance Committee and the Board receive a copy of the draft report.

Bill Lonnborg, Treasurer, met with the Building Committee on September 3, 2024 about the capital budget. The Building Committee reported that a handful of window replacements should be added to the capital budget. The committee estimates capital expenses of \$50K over the next five years, not including windows, and \$412K over the next 25 years.

The Board discussed developing a small team to develop a five-year capital plan.

Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray mentioned that the initial phase of the five-year capital planning process will involve creating a detailed expense plan, which will be completed during this fiscal year. Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray then led a discussion about how to fund capital expenses and how the Board will need to invest time and effort to establish the priorities for our capital campaigns. The Board will regularly update the Congregation on our long-term goals and how they are reflected in our capital budget strategy. Bill Lonnborg, Treasurer, agreed to draft the first step of the five year capital expense plan.

D. Lead Minister's Report

Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray reported that she recently had three welcoming parties and will be attending a minister's retreat on October 15-16. Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray then led a discussion about the process of deciding

whether to move to two services in the future. The process will include discussion, recommendations, and a plan. More staff hours will be needed if we move to two services in the future. More welcoming volunteers are needed now to help with parking.

The Lead Minister's report is provided in Attachment C.

V. Unfinished Business

A. Start-up Weekend

The start-up weekend date has been finalized for January 10-12, 2025. During the start-up weekend, led by UUA staff, we will be discussing and clarifying the specific roles and responsibilities of the Board members in relation to the staff and the lead minister. This includes determining who handles certain tasks and who is responsible for answering inquiries. The start-up weekend will inform UUCB's work plan for the coming years.

The Board discussed a former Board member appreciation event to occur during the start-up weekend or another weekend.

VI. New Business

A. Facilitating Communication with Congregants

President Jane McLeod led a discussion about methods and events to improve communication with Congregants.

- Board Open Houses can be scheduled to share publicly Board initiatives and discussions. The Board will consider what information to share and how to elicit feedback; such as developing discussion questions. A date of November 17, 2024 was chosen for the first open house.
- Visiting Standing Groups – The Board discussed visiting with groups and task forces. This may be an item of discussion at the November Board open house.
- Sharing Feedback from Congregants – The Board discussed how feedback from Congregants can be shared. Some items can be discussed in an open session and other items may be shared in executive session.

Once the draft agenda is distributed for each month's meeting, the Board will inform President Jane McLeod if they have any feedback to share from congregants or additional items to add.

B. Bylaw Revisions

President Jane McLeod led a discussion about Bylaw revisions. The revision will clarify that the Leadership Cultivation Committee (LCC) is not a committee of the Board. Formal revisions will be addressed at the October Board meeting.

C. Right Relations Committee

Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray and President Jane McLeod led a discussion about developing a Right Relations Committee. UUCB had such a committee in the past. The role of the committee is to support congregants who feel they have been treated unfairly. Support is expected to be through mediation primarily. On average, the committee would likely need to intervene in one or two situations per year. This committee would be composed of three to four individuals who are respected and well-acquainted with the congregation. Ideally, these individuals would have mediation skills.

VII. Executive Session

The Board entered executive session at 8:33 pm.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:53 p.m.

Attachment A

Summary of Lifespan Religious Education

September, 2024

Our 2024-25 Religious Education program officially launched in the last couple of weeks, with the Religious Education Fair on September 8, and the start of fall classes for children on September 15. Middle and High School Youth Groups will start by October.

The last six weeks have been a very busy time leading up to this launch. There has been a Spirit Play training for new teachers as well as a Spirit Play work day to spiff up the classroom and renew the materials there; a full teacher training for all new and returning teachers; meetings with teaching teams; lots of dialogue with facilitators of adult religious education courses as we finalized the prospectus and prepared for the RE Fair; an orientation for mentors and parents involved in the Coming of Age program; and a new Parent Religious Education Orientation. In addition, there was an August worship service focused on our Our Whole Lives program.

I am excited about the scope of our program this year. With the introduction of a new middle school program, we now have offerings for all ages. Our adult programming includes 14 courses with a wide range of topics. I'm also excited about this year's new methods of communication – namely the [Religious Education Handbook](#), and the Parent Orientation which took place on the Friday evening before the start of the children's RE program.

That said, we do have room for growth. Though we are in better shape than last year, our volunteer teachers in our children and youth programs are stretched very thin. We have only 3 adults in our new Middle School program, and each has committed to only one Sunday per month, so that group is limited to meeting only twice per month. In addition, our last childcare staff has given notice so we will be operating only with volunteers starting in October unless/until we are able to hire replacements. Our RE Assistant, Eric Branigin, and I often fill in as teachers or childcare staff on Sunday mornings.

We currently have 67 children and youth registered for RE this year. This is more than double last year's number. For children and youth, we offer the following:

- Childcare
- Spirit Play (ages 4-6)
- Kids' Club (grades 2-5)
- Middle School Youth Group (grades 6-8)
- High School Youth Group (grades 9-12; some 8th graders might also participate)
- Coming of Age (9th-10th graders)
- OWL for 7th & 8th grade

There are seven youth participating in Coming of Age this year, along with seven adult mentors. This is especially exciting because there have not been enough people for a Coming of Age program since 2021.

Registration for Adult programs has just begun, so we do not have meaningful numbers for those programs yet.

Attachment B



Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana

Fiscal Oversight Dashboard Fiscal Year to date - 7/1/2024 to 8/31/2024

Trend Analysis – Current Operating Budget

Through 8/31	FY24-25 TD Actual	FY24-25 TD Budget*	FY23-24 TD Actual	FY22-23 TD Actual	FY21-22 TD Actual
Total Income	219,788	130,411	134,418	216,102	203,252
Total Expenses	130,241	131,025	108,499	107,449	128,587
Surplus (Deficit)	89,547	(614)	25,919	108,654	74,665

Pledges / Plate

Through 8/31	FY24-25 TD Actual	FY24-25 TD Budget*	FY23-24 TD Actual	FY22-23 TD Actual	FY21-22 TD Actual
Pledges	210,374	115,507	129,972	208,044	199,630
Plate	4,159	4,247	4,163	5,216	1,465
Total	214,532	119,753	134,135	213,260	201,095

Assets, Liabilities, Current Ratio

As of 8/31	FY24-25	FY23-24
Current Assets	164,439	124,276
Current Liabilities	192,947	240,068
Current Ratio**	0.85	0.52

Notes

* FY Budget × 17% (% of FY days through 8/31)

** Current Ratio = Current Assets ÷ Current Liabilities

Attachment C

September 2024 Lead Minister report to the Board
Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington
Submitted by: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

General Reflections

I am grateful to be preaching again and leading services at UUCB. It has been meaningful and exciting. I continue to try to be in a “noticing” phase - paying attention to feedback as well as places where I am wondering about why something is the way it is, or where there may be improvements to be made. I am taking this slow, just trying to pay attention so I can more fully understand a situation before acting. To be clear, none of the things I am noticing are urgent.

Andrew Appel continues to organize “welcoming parties” to help me get to know more members of the church in small group settings. I have had one gathering so far that had a number of parents of children in the RE program. I have more this week and have given Andrew dates for these events in October as well. I believe these will help me learn more people’s names and a little more about members of the congregation.

Calendar highlights

For my weekly calendar, Mondays are my day off and I am not available from Sunday afternoon/evening through Mondays unless for emergencies. Friday is my writing day (along with some of Saturday), so I am generally not available on Fridays for any church meetings.

I am a little behind with connecting to the local UU Ministers Association chapter. I just realized that there is a Minister’s retreat October 13-16 that I would like to attend. I have missed the registration deadline but will explore if they still have room. If there is room, I will be away October 13-16 (I’ll be back for the Board meeting on the 16th) at the minister’s retreat.

Updates or Highlights from Ministry

Sunday Services:

We have had full services the last few weeks and needed to use overflow parking across Fee Lane. Due to this, I have been receiving questions about moving to two services.

Process: One question I have received is who and how is a decision like this made. For process, here is my recommendation. I welcome the Board’s affirmation or change to this if a different process is needed.

A move to two services would happen through a recommendation from the minister with input from the staff and the congregation, and with approval from the Board.

For timeline: I am in no hurry to go to two services. There are a number of budget and staffing considerations that have to be part of the considerations and that would take communication with the congregation and planning and fundraising. It is also important to remember that the church staff is not as large as it was when the church was last at two services.

In the meantime, we have improvements we can make to hospitality - and these would be helpful to work on now because they will be assets for moving to two services.

1. We need a team of parking attendants who help people know where to park on Sundays. I have begun talking with Anabel about this.
2. We need to increase our welcoming volunteers as we support people finding seats, feeling welcome in a crowded place, and potentially supporting some overflow seating and viewing of the service. I have begun talking with Anabel about this as well.
3. We need to make sure we are staffed with custodial and sexton support for having more people in the building. There have been some issues of things not being cleaned and I am trying to understand what some of the short falls are (e.g. is it schedule related or insufficient staff for what is needed). Two weeks ago, Amanda and I made adjustments to the sexton Dylan's schedule, shifting more hours to Sunday so that that building is cleaned of food and trash after people have left. This should help, but there may be other improvements to be made.