

Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua

December 8, 2022

Meeting held hybrid, at church and via Zoom, due to COVID-19

In person: Brenna Woods (President), Burns Fisher, Rev. Allison Palm, Victoria Agnew, Lindsey Hedrick (Vice President)

Online:

Caro Barschow (Intern Minister), Anne Smith, Robin Trudel, Cecile Bonvouloir

Excused: Jodie K. Holway (Clerk - thus this month's meeting minutes are formatted differently)

Minutes Approved by: Lindsey Hedrick, Anne Smith, Robin Trudel, Victoria Agnew, Burns Fisher

6:30 Check In

6:50 Chalice Lighting: Allison's Story

Value: Wonder

Christmas Eve is one of the most wonder-filled services we have here.

6:55 Follow Up Story Telling

7:05 Consent Agenda

November minutes have not had enough approvals to be finalized yet. Will be moved to the consent agenda in January.

7:10 Minister's Report - Allison

This is the first time this year we're seeing a minister's report in the format Allison uses. This month she did not include any policy interpretations, but we can expect to see them in future months.

We had approved money for doors for the preschool. The doors just arrived and the plan is to have them installed before the end of the calendar year

Interplay is a group using story telling, movement, and improvisation. Caro and Ginger Hedges have had a lot of experience in the past and hope to continue having a group meeting. Historically, our church's annual operating expenses usually exceed income at the start of each year, then this switches

in January so that income may start to exceed expenses. The fact that our income currently exceeds expenses is great, at this early point in the year.

Currently our number of pledge units is in the 180's. This is the number of pledging households (different than our number of members). This number includes those that are getting a pledge grant, and excludes those that choose not to pledge. A pledge grant is one that is financially unable to make a donation and Rev Allison makes a pledge on their behalf for \$1.58 that is paid out of the minister's discretionary fund.

7:30 Monitoring Subcommittee

Monitoring meeting is made up of Jodie, Lindsey H. and Anne –

Wanted to do this this month and not wait for Jodie since the upcoming months will be busy.

This document has been reviewed in sections 1, 2, and 4. We are now looking at the 3rd policy to indicate that we have thoroughly gone through the whole document to monitor.

Executive Director performance will be considered to be synonymous with the performance of the church.

Section 1 - above sentence in yellow felt contrary to Lindsey H. and Allison indicated that we do not follow this as thoroughly as we have written. When we review Allison in the Spring – we review Allison's work and not how the church is doing as a whole. The sentence highlighted feels as though it goes against this idea around Allison's review. Allison agrees. Brenna asked which way would be more helpful in terms of reviews. Would we want to keep this or keep doing ministerial reviews?

Allison believes it is dangerous to not review the minister and should probably still happen. Allison does not necessarily find the written review helpful but knows that it would be more necessary to have one in good faith. Lindsey H. suggests that we remove this sentence altogether as it goes against current practices.

Focus was brought to the word "synonymous" and how that feels a little over the top. Comments included that we review Allison as a manager – and while she is the leader of the congregation, this sentence does not feel fair to what we review of her. We determined that the implications of this sentence are clearer in the sentence before it.

Section 2 - changed the wording in order to make it more legible and clearer. Our goal was to make it easier to comprehend. We also made some minor grammatical changes that needed to be cleaned up but nothing consequential.

Policy B. (Executive Director Performance) -Previously this chart indicated how we would review things based on frequency, the how and the where of the monitoring would occur. We took things out to match what we are better doing. In 4E we have removed half of this to be moved to the job

description in a later subcommittee – took out the mention of the external audit. Monitoring committee talked about how there would be more reports done internally to monitor ourselves but we are unsure of what those are now.

Allison is working from a different monitoring table that appears to be newer than what the Monitoring committee has come up with. Allison will forward the newer monitoring table to Lindsey H. and the Monitoring Committee will review the forwarded one from Allison and see how it meshes with the updates that have been made to the document. Allison does like this monitoring table better because the wording is clearer and breaks things down month by month.

Policy C and Policy D were not touched or edited.

Update for Rev Allison: Frank Grossman presented at our August retreat to the Board. He showed what the FRRC reviews each year and the process that they use to perform their review. It makes sense to have the FRRC report to the Board and not the Congregation because by reporting to the Congregation, they effectively report to no one.

8:05 Endowment Subcommittee

- Update for Rev Allison: It may not be wise to move our money to the UU CEF now in the midst of a lot of financial events happening in the church with the potential campus updates.
- Burns attended the last UU CEF meeting.
- UU CEF was 5% down in the past year which is on par with other benchmarks.
 - One of their funds is UJEMA, and they had a speaker at the meeting to present on it.
 - Burns is still impressed with the UUCEF after this meeting.
- More research is needed to confirm the best way to handle transitioning our money, stocks, etc. to them (assuming that is a decision we choose to make).
- The committee will also check to confirm that the UU CEF meets the goals of our new endowment policy that was written last year.

The Nashua Cemetery Association will need to decide if they want to move their money to the UU CEF (as a separate account) or if they'd like to retain control of their money as it is now.

- Still need to connect with the Nashua Cemetery Association to discuss potential updates to how we handle our endowment. Victoria agreed to attend their next meeting.

Brenna is requesting that the endowment committee put together a brief paragraph that outlines what they have been doing for the past 3 years for us to have in order to respond with. We want to make it clear that we have not voted on a plan yet. We have not voted on a plan that is happening that we are confident we can afford. We do not want to cause any stress in this area. It is not

necessary.

8:35 Debrief Congregational Meeting (Brenna)

The goal in the near future is to defuse anxiety. We are taking this step by step and do not want to get this ahead of ourselves. Until we vote to perform a capital campaign for x amount, we have not officially voted to confirm a plan.

It is really important that the congregation feels successful with this campaign. If this one goes well, and achieves step 1, then in 7 years, we could have another capital campaign to achieve step 2, and because this capital campaign went well, we will feel confident in a second one.

The November vote needed to happen in order to give baseline information for the Financial Feasibility Study to happen.

Technical issues - We're proud of ourselves for stopping when we needed to stop to let the online people catch up, and have the same experience as the rest of us. The congregation was very understanding and patient. In the future, we will ask online participants to attend 15 minutes earlier and watch the voting video. This will save time in the actual meeting.

In the future, we need to make a new video that explains online voting as lots of information was incorrect. Additionally we should look into a Chromebook because things look different.

Board members had the room divided up into quadrants and each had their own section to count the votes for. We felt that went very well, and could continue to use that process for close votes in the future.

Look at how we word the online votes in the script. Should they be asked to vote altogether, or take each vote separately. Make sure things are worded clearly, and that people online are able to do what is being asked of them. (It is better to take the online vote all at once - yes, no, or abstention, instead of trying to get them to do 3 different votes.) We can ask the tech team to review this and help with the necessary updates.

8:45 Housing Approval (Allison and Brenna)

We vote every year to approve Allison's housing allowance. Typically this is done in September, but since she was on sabbatical, we did not vote on it.

MOTION: For the calendar year 2023, we move to designate \$24,000 as her housing allowance. It will stay the same amount every year until changed.

MOVED: Burns makes the motion. **SECOND:** Victoria seconds it. **MOTION PASSES.**

8:50 Extra December Meeting (Brenna)

Tuesday, December 20th - 5:30pm - 7pm

Meet on Zoom. No one will meet at the church.

We are being asked not to share the report with anyone until we have had a chance to discuss it.

Please find a private place to zoom. We're using Mark's zoom link.

8:55 Check Out (Brenna)

- How did we do this evening?
- Did everyone feel heard?
- Are there any concerns or compliments you want to give to the group?

9:00 Closing Words (Allison)

Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees
Rev. Allison Palm
UU Church of Nashua, NH
December 7, 2022
Covering November 11 – December 7, 2022

It is so good to be back with you all after 5 months of Sabbatical. As you might imagine, my first week has been full of conversations and catching up on what all has happened while I was away. I am grateful to the staff and lay leader who handled everything that came up so ably in my absence. This really is a remarkably healthy and resilient congregation! Obviously, I have only been back for a week, so I have consulted with the staff to compile this report covering the last month.

November was very focused on supporting the Building Our Vision Team and the Board in preparing for the vote on Nov. 20. It sounds like good conversation was had at that meeting, and there was strong support for moving forward in that work. As you know, we worked with Mark Ewert to complete a Financial Feasibility Study this past weekend. The Board will receive the results of that study and meet with Mark to process it later this month.

Some other highlights from November:

- We finally passed our elevator inspection!
- The Property Team hosted a Fall Clean Up. It had to be postponed because of rain, so was not as well attended as typical, but the volunteers who came did good work getting our grounds ready for the winter.
- We are starting to get more renters, including two new ones in November that both went well.
- We now have 31 families registered for this year so far with a total of 56 children (ages 0-18) signed up for faith formation programs. Most families attend 1-2 Sundays a month with a few coming every Sunday.
- Our Coming of Age Program continued, with Dave Hudson attending as a guest speaker on Nov. 20. I will be helping to lead that program moving forward, working with Sadie and Marissa Volpe.
- We had 5 youth and 3 adults from our Crossing Paths class attend Temple Beth Abraham for a shabbat service and tour/interview. Megan Holmes gave Sadie materials and Laurie Goodman helped Sadie set up an Exodus theme escape from for this group on Nov. 27th. It was a really special way to end the Judaism unit. The next religion will be explored in January.
- We have a young adult interested in starting a group and possibly a group on Discord or Slack channel for Young Adults in the church in addition to starting social events. This is still in the planning stages.
- On Dec. 4, Faith Formation sponsored an all church love in action project to collect and assemble 600 items to make 100 bags for the Hillsboro county Meals on Wheels program. Over 20 congregants donated items and our fifth and sixth graders sorted and prepped items for the congregation to then come in and pack the bags after church on Sunday.
- We are continuing to build a relationship with the NCC GSA, including offering space for a movie night for World AIDS Day on Dec. 1. We sponsored their rental and they

look forward to offering more programs and connecting. Sadie met the president of the GSA and their faculty advisor

- We officially received our 2022 Renewal of Welcoming Congregation Status, thanks to the work of our Renewal of Welcoming Team, led by Caro. We will be recognizing that renewal in worship this Sunday.
- Covenant Group leaders have been facilitating the Huntington Group in my absence, and we may continue having them support this program.
- We planned to offer a 4 session trial of In-person Interplay led by Ginger Hedges. There was a small gathering for the first session, Ginger needed to cancel the 2nd session and no one was able to attend the 3rd session on the cold night of Dec. 1st. Ginger is open to trying again for the 4th session on Dec. 15th before deciding if this program can continue.
- Sadie is working to confirm Adult Faith Formation programs for Jan.-June and hoping to start offering sign ups for those before the holidays.

In December, our focus is my return and reintegration into the staff team and the congregation, and our various holiday services. We will once again be offering two Solstice services – one a Sunday morning story service led by our children and youth, and one an online evening service led by Worship Associates. For the Solstice Story Service, we have a team of 4 dedicated volunteers, Erica Agnew, Lea Anne Atwell, Diane Wolfe & Amy Curran-Norton helping us rehearse and make the props!

We will also have two Christmas Eve services – a 5pm Family Service and a 7pm Modern Lessons & Carols. The Christmas Choir will sing at both services and begins rehearsals this Sunday. It will be our first Christmas Eve that we are fully back in person and I imagine it will be a joyful and poignant evening.

I am grateful to our Worship Associates and one of our Pastoral Care Associates, who will be leading services on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Dec. 25 will be a casual, in person only service, and Jan. 1 will be a Poetry service.

Sabbatical Report

I took my first sabbatical these last 5 months, from July 1-November 30, 2020. During that time, I focused on two big projects.

One was continued work on editing a volume of Unitarian Universalist rituals. This is a project I have been engaged in since late 2020, and am working on with a co-editor, Rev. Heather Concannon. The book will include more than 70 rituals, contributed by more than 50 UUs from across the continent. During my sabbatical, we completed a second draft of the entire manuscript, which has been turned in to our publisher (Skinner House). We anticipate that the book will be published sometime in 2023.

The second was a goal of walking every block in Nashua. I engaged in this project in hopes of grounding myself more deeply in this city where I live and serve. While I have not finished, I made really good progress on this, walking 211 miles over the course of 63 walks. I estimate that this is about 60% of the city. I am continuing to walk (though in much shorter spurts), and hope

that I might finish the rest up by the end of the church year. I may invite congregants to join me on some walks this spring. I did document all of my walks with images and brief reflections on Instagram. I'll be sharing more of my reflections on this project in upcoming sermons.

In addition to these two projects, I tried to take time for rest and renewal. I was able to dance more regularly than usual, enjoy a slower pace of life, and get back into reading novels. I spent two weeks in Minnesota with my family over the summer, which was a joy.

I also nurtured some connections to the larger UU world. I attended the AUUMM Conference in July in Michigan and the Northern New England Ministers Retreat in October in Maine. I led worship twice during my sabbatical, once in person for The Sanctuary Boston in September, and once online for my home congregation, the St. Cloud UU Fellowship, in October.

I am so grateful for this time away from my regular responsibilities, and I know that I return with more mental energy and a renewed excitement for our ministry together.

Professional Development/Collegial Connection (since my June report)

- Attended Ministry Days & General Assembly in June
- Attended the Association of UU Music Ministries conference in July
- Attended Feedback session for Article 2 Commission in September
- UUMA Northern New England Chapter Retreat in October
- Turned in second draft of Ritual Anthology

Community/Social Justice Activities (since Dec. 1)

- Attended Asphalt Plant visibility & strategy meeting with GSOP
- Nashua Area Interfaith Council December meeting

Children's Winter Garden with White Wing School

- I have not yet gotten caught up with CWG-WWS so I am counting on Cecile to let the Board know anything that is important this month. I will begin attending CWG-WWS Board meetings again next week. Many thanks to Cecile for filling in!

Minister's Schedule

- I will be off Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Worship Associates will be leading the service both days.
- The church office is closed Dec. 25-Jan. 2. Staff will be available for emergencies, and will do what needs to be done for the Jan. 1 service, but will otherwise be off that week. Everyone will be back Jan. 3.

Financials

I have included a financial report for December. We are in a good position for this time of year, with expenses tracking very closely to income. I will include a more thorough Financial Monitoring Report in my January report.

Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua

Budget vs. Actuals: FY 2023 - FY23 P&L

July 2022 - June 2023

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Revenue				
100 Questions	280.80		280.80	
Endowment	50,654.49	170,500.00	-119,845.51	29.71 %
Fundraisers	7,415.34	7,325.00	90.34	101.23 %
Other Income	908.99		908.99	
Outreach Collections	11,369.86	35,000.00	-23,630.14	32.49 %
Pledges	166,120.24	358,000.00	-191,879.76	46.40 %
Preschool Contribution	9,000.00	30,000.00	-21,000.00	30.00 %
User Fees	1,230.44	6,000.00	-4,769.56	20.51 %
Total Revenue	\$246,980.16	\$606,825.00	\$ -359,844.84	40.70 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$246,980.16	\$606,825.00	\$ -359,844.84	40.70 %
Expenditures				
EXPENSES				
OPERATIONS				
ADMINISTRATION	13,406.95	33,100.00	-19,693.05	40.50 %
COMMUNICATIONS	297.89	1,300.00	-1,002.11	22.91 %
DENOMINATION	14,783.40	24,909.00	-10,125.60	59.35 %
PROPERTY	39,119.94	101,200.00	-62,080.06	38.66 %
STEWARDSHIP	335.63	1,500.00	-1,164.37	22.38 %
Total OPERATIONS	67,943.81	162,009.00	-94,065.19	41.94 %
PROGRAMS				
BOARD EXPENSES	110.81	800.00	-689.19	13.85 %
FAITH FORMATION	751.23	4,700.00	-3,948.77	15.98 %
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT		200.00	-200.00	
MEMBERSHIP	500.13	2,450.00	-1,949.87	20.41 %
MUSIC & WORSHIP	1,606.70	7,760.00	-6,153.30	20.70 %
SOCIAL JUSTICE	12,777.72	39,440.00	-26,662.28	32.40 %
Total PROGRAMS	15,746.59	55,350.00	-39,603.41	28.45 %
STAFF				
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	46,919.90	111,277.74	-64,357.84	42.16 %
MINISTER	60,141.11	150,440.02	-90,298.91	39.98 %
PROGRAM STAFF	56,731.75	128,031.02	-71,299.27	44.31 %
Total STAFF	163,792.76	389,748.78	-225,956.02	42.03 %
Total EXPENSES	247,483.16	607,107.78	-359,624.62	40.76 %
Total Expenditures	\$247,483.16	\$607,107.78	\$ -359,624.62	40.76 %
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$ -503.00	\$ -282.78	\$ -220.22	177.88 %
Other Revenue	\$ -1,200.00	\$ 0.00	\$ -1,200.00	0.00%
NET OTHER REVENUE	\$ -1,200.00	\$ 0.00	\$ -1,200.00	0.00%
NET REVENUE	\$ -1,703.00	\$ -282.78	\$ -1,420.22	602.23 %