

# Board of Trustees

**MEETING: February 8, 2021, 7:45 pm, Eastern Time**

Pursuant to notice duly given, this meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association was held via Zoom conferencing.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Genevieve Baldwin (youth trustee), Greg Boyd, Kathy Burek, Barbara de Leeuw, Charles Du Mond (Co-Moderator), Suzanne Fast, Susan Frederick-Gray (President), Sherman Logan, Leslie MacFadyen, Patrick McLaughlin, John Newhall, Lucia Santini Field (Financial Advisor), Meg Riley (Co-Moderator), Tom Schade, Rebecca Throop (youth trustee), Bill Young

**ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS:** Andrew McGeorge (Treasurer), Stephanie Carey Maron, Marcus Fogliano, Mary Heafy, Debra Boyd, Mandolin Restivo, Viola Abbitt, Melissa Carvill Ziemer, Jeane Orjas, Larry Ladd

## Meeting Minutes

The meeting opened at 7:45 pm with a check-in in breakout groups for Board members and participants.

### Consent Agenda

The Board unanimously received and affirmed the consent agenda, which included the joint announcement from the UUA and the Association of UU Music Ministries about agreements for AUUMM's participation in General Assembly.

### Board Covenant

Rebecca Throop and Genevieve Baldwin shared the proposed new Board covenant (Attachment 1). The Board unanimously adopted the new covenant.

### Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee

Viola Abbitt and Mandolin Restivo joined the meeting as co-chairs of the JTWTC came to discuss their reflections on the Committee's process as the JTWTC prepares to transition out of its role in the coming year. As a committee created by the UUA Board in response to the 1997 Journey Towards Wholeness resolution adopted by the General Assembly, the Board affirmed its intent to sunset the JTWTC when the new accountability group is in place as recommended by the Commission on Institutional Change and affirmed by GA resolution in 2020. The co-chairs noted that, in its over two decades of existence, there were times when the JTWTC was not as effective as could be, and identified a number of reasons for that dynamic:

- Over time, administrative staff support for the JTWTC was reduced.
- Relationship between the JTWTC and the Board relied for a time on individual informal relationships between leaders of the two groups, and



when those individuals changed roles the connection between the two groups suffered.

- The fallout from the UUA organizational crisis of 2017 related to racial bias in hiring disrupted the JTWTC's role; the JTWTC was not invited to take on a specific function in the UUA's response and did not claim one. Once the Commission on Institutional Change was formed, it made the JTWTC's role even less clear since the COIC was charged with addressing issues that had previously been in the JTWTC's portfolio.

The co-chairs described the experience of the JTWTC members as feeling like had skills to offer and were disappointed that they were not being utilized. They noted that the JTWTC was never explicitly invited to Board meetings or any other discussions with the Board; they did attend open Board meetings to provide process observations but are unsure what impact they had.

The JTWTC asked the Board to consider how the new accountability group will have enough staff support to succeed, and to clarify what formal relationship it should have with the Board. Discussion with Board members explored these questions and affirmed appreciation for the commitment JTWTC members have shown.

### **Stewardship Income Report**

Lauren Smith, Director of Stewardship and Development, presented to the Board a brief report on the types and trends in the UUA's various fundraising income sources. This specifically addressed the attainment rate and income from congregational giving through the Annual Program Fund, noting that APF income was in a strong position this year after seeing a decline in 2020 due to the pandemic.

### **Bylaws Update – Barbara**

Barbara de Leeuw gave an update from the Deep Divers bylaws working group. She shared the group's initial thinking on the following bylaw changes:

- Not requiring a competitive election by changing language whereby Presidential Search Committee must nominate "one or more" instead of current language "no fewer than two."
- The possibility of adding a provision for Board to approve the PSC's nominees.
- Changing the timeline to shorten the length of presidential campaign.
- Possible changes to the petition that would restrict the process for Presidential election to focus on the PSC nomination process

The Board discussed these items but did not make any decisions. The Deep Divers agreed to bring specific terms and language for approval at future Board meetings. Additional discussion on the bylaw changes was tabled.

### **Financial Secretary Report**

Kathy Burek reviewed the report she had submitted as Financial Secretary on behalf of the Values and Resources Alignment Working Group. Planning for the



FY22 Board budget, the VRAWG recommended that the Board would have only one in-person in addition to in-person meeting at GA. All other meetings would be online. Kathy noted the VRAWG will also be holding conversations with other UUA committee leaders about reducing travel and in person meetings in the coming year.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board moved to executive session at 9:25pm for the purpose of discussing appointments and committee liaison roles.

The meeting ended at 10:35pm Eastern

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Carey McDonald

Recording Secretary



## **Attachment 1**

**UUA Board of Trustees Covenant - Adopted February 8, 2021**

### **Short Version**

We light this chalice to remind ourselves that we are human, and we are both lifted and limited by our humanity. May we be kind, compassionate, and make room for growth, both within ourselves and within this group.

Here, we practice governance rooted in love.

### **Full Version**

*Framing Statement:* This is a covenant for the Board of Trustees to guide our interactions with each other. We covenanted to join in a fulfilling, safe, loving community with each other while facing outward to do the work of the association.

1. We agree to treat ourselves with the patience and respect we all deserve, remembering that we are human. We will remind ourselves that we are worthy and competent individuals, but also that we can't do it all. We will communicate when we need help or when something feels like it is beyond our abilities.
2. We agree to treat each other with empathy, integrity, and open heartedness, remembering that we all come from different experiences. Respect for each other's humanity is the foundation upon which we will act. We will take time to welcome each other, check in with each other, and say goodbye to each other in our meetings. We work as a team, and so we will care for each other, recognizing our interdependence
3. We agree to make room for community building and spiritual care in this virtual space. This is holy ground, where we do the work of our faith. We will show up prepared and focused to the best of our ability and take the time for breaks when we need them
4. We agree to respect each other's boundaries, including our time and confidentiality. We will make documents available prior to the meetings they will be used in, stick to our set meeting times to the best of our ability, make clear distinguishments between business time and relationship building time, and maintain confidentiality, but not secrecy. We recognize that there are boundaries not included in this list, and we will make our personal boundaries clear to each other.
5. We want our space to be a space for growth. To facilitate that, we agree to check for understanding and encourage questions and discussions.
6. We recognize that we will mess up sometimes. When this happens, we agree to take the time to debrief, clarify what happened, apologize, learn from mistakes, and make changes to our processes. We will use positive and non-blaming language to discuss our mistakes (ex. "I need to give feedback"). We will return to this covenant and to our principles as Unitarian Universalists and use mistakes to grow and change.

