

MidAmerica Region, UUA  
Board Meeting Minutes  
July 6, 2021  
Approved August 3, 2021

Trustees Present:

Rae Jane Araujo, Dorit Bergen, Tammy Lemmer, Autumn Mahoney, Jim Moir, Patty Notch,  
Mandy Beal

Absent:

McKenna Revel, Hans Kelson

Staff Present:

Sharon Dittmar, Director of Congregational Life Jessica York attending while David Pyle is on sabbatical

Call to Order

Tammy presided. The meeting was called to order at 7:34pm EDT.  
Jim read opening words from Isabel Wilkerson.

Check In

We spent time sharing a bit about ourselves. Welcome to newly elected member Rev. Mandy Beal who lives in Brighton, Michigan and is the senior minister at Birmingham Unitarian Church. The recent General Assembly was praised by those who attended. We learned that the various workshops can be viewed online at the UUA website.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

A correction to the June minutes was made, the subcommittee investigating reparations and restitution includes Rae Jane and McKenna, and NOT Dorit.

Dorit made a motion to approve the corrected minutes and Rae Jane seconded. Approved at 7:53.

Selection of Officers

Tammy explained that it is up to the board to select who among us will serve as officers during the fiscal year. In amicable conversation, we quickly agreed upon the proposed slate—Tammy as President, Dorit as Secretary, Rae Jane as Treasurer, and Patty as Vice President.

Jim made the motion to approve the slate and Autumn seconded. The officers were approved at 7:58 pm.

### Regional Lead Report

Sharon pointed out highlights from the report prepared by David. Jessica pointed out that in addition to taking a sabbatical during times of less activity, David also timed his sabbatical to accommodate the upcoming sabbatical needs of other Regional Leads.

### Third Quarter Financial Report

Our finances remained healthy in the quarter ending March 31, 2021. We will no longer use an outside accounting service – staff will do this work with internal checks and balances. Efforts to reorganize our accounts are proceeding smoothly.

### Regional Assembly for 2022

Sharon provided feedback received regarding our Assembly in April 2020. For next spring, we have three possible formats: 1) Virtual programming; 2) In-person programming; or 3) Hybrid programming.

In-person has the advantage of better networking and social opportunities. But virtual is more inclusive and less expensive. A hybrid, multi-platform approach would offer something for everyone but is the most difficult for staff.

In praise of virtual meetings, Jessica said that it is important to ask **who** attended, not just how many.

Autumn said that if we did not do virtual programming, it would be a step back for inclusion.

Given the many benefits offered through virtual assemblies, Jim asked if we might be able to find other venues or opportunities for the social and networking activities.

Mandy speculated that what we might need are two different experiences, each with content exclusive to its own format. (Not offered simultaneously!)

Sharon will need to begin planning soon, and asks for guidance from the board in early August. Mandy questioned whether the board ought to be voting on something that will result in work performed mainly by staff.

Because an in-person only event has been effectively eliminated from consideration, Tammy asked members to think about two options: A) the Top Choice for staff or B) the Worst Choice for staff!

### Board Retreat Plans

Two dates are most likely for a retreat, the weekend beginning October 22 or that beginning November 12. Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, Indiana has been used by other UU groups and may meet our needs. We are looking at a retreat that begins Friday morning and goes through Sunday afternoon. MidAmerica staff will begin inquiries about dates and sites. Both the host site and the UUA require all participants to be vaccinated.

### Congregational Life Report

Jessica commented on the shortened time for the UUA presidential campaign and on the failed proposal to nominate only one candidate for the post. She said that staff generally supported both ideas. Others chimed in with comments about distrustful attitudes among some UUs.

In response to Tammy's question, Jessica spoke more about her role as Director of Congregational Life. The word "overwhelmingness" was mentioned!

Jessica also mentioned her appreciation of contacts with congregations and will be working on the plan to replace or reconfigure advisory councils. An important goal for Jessica is to help develop lay leadership in regions.

The Congregational Life staff received high praise from Jessica for their work during the pandemic.

Sharon asked for one last push to enter data from calls made to MidAmerica congregations.

#### Process Check-in & Future Business

For the August meeting, we will discuss two sections from *Widening the Circle...* : **Accountability & Resources** and **Final Thoughts**.

Appreciation was expressed for Jim's work as Secretary and for the people who accepted leadership roles this year. Tammy said she would do an orientation with Mandy.

We intend to review the board's covenant at our autumn retreat.

The next meeting is slated for Tuesday, August 3.

Jim read more words from Isabel Wilkerson as a closing.

Adjourned at approximately 9:12 pm EDT

Respectfully Submitted by  
Jim Moir  
Secretary