

**Board of Trustees  
June Meeting Minutes**

**All Souls Church, Unitarian**

*June 15, 2016*

*7:00 pm*

**Trustees, Officers, and Staff in Attendance:**

Peg Barratt, President  
Anne Bradley, Second Vice President  
Ken Ambrose, Trustee  
Erin Boeke Burke, Board Secretary  
Cledwyn Jones, Moderator  
Vickie Lindsey, Trustee  
Susan Newman Moore, Senior Minister  
Gary Penn, Acting Executive Director  
Kate Saylor, Trustee  
John Strongman, Treasurer  
Tracy Zorpette, Trustee

**Also in attendance:** Emily Koechlin; OJ Moore; Betsy Culligan

**Not in attendance:** Kysseleine Jean-Mary Cherestal, Trustee; Whitney Cooper, Trustee; Chuck Dulaney, First Vice President; Robert Hardies, Senior Minister; Leo Jones, Chief Program Officer; Laurie Lester, Membership Secretary; Katie Loughary, Executive Director

**Chalice lighting and reading:** Peg Barratt

**Minutes:** Erin Boeke Burke

There were several amendments to correct the spelling of names.

**Motion:** Ken moved to accept the April minutes, as amended.

Kate seconded.

The motion was approved.

**Safe Congregations:** Emily Koechlin

Chuck Dulaney and Peg Barratt previously reviewed most of the amended Safe Congregations manual, which will be made available to the Board after the meeting.

The Emergency Action plan, written by Rose, was approved by the DC Fire Marshall. The discussion then turned to the proposed to hold a Church-wide fire drill. According to the fire marshall, there does has to be a fire drill annually, but it can take place on a weekday when only the church staff are in the building - having a fire drill with the congregation is not required.

When Emily was on the Board, Rev. Hardies thought it was a good idea to conduct a fire-drill including the congregation, and Emily agrees. Now that she is on Safe Congregations, the idea is being revisited. Previous discussions focused on having the drill over the summer as the attendance is lower and there is only one service, but there is concern about interrupting a service with the guest speakers Rev. Moore has arranged for the coming months. Emily wanted to consult with the church leadership before pursuing the plan further.

Peg said that we can do a congregation-wide fire drill, but obviate any panic by announcing in advance that there will be a drill so it isn't a surprise. Emily asked whether people would come to church if they knew in advance there would be a fire drill. Rev. Moore responded they would. To further minimize the disruption, Ken added that we could do it near the end of service, after the sermon is finished, in place of the benediction. The staff will be in their places, the children will be in their RE classrooms, and people would not need to make their way back into the sanctuary to continue the service. Kate noted that the music director should be informed in advance, since it would obviate the benediction in music.

Peg then asked whether the ushers are ready to assist with such a drill. Vickie responded they aren't yet, and they are hoping to have usher training before conducting the fire drill. Emily added that the usher trainings are scheduled for August 20 and 27, which would make it difficult to accomplish before the drill assuming we do it in the summer. Vickie said that the ushers are the people the congregation would turn to during a service, if there were to be a chaotic event. Rev. Newman added that the ushers need to know in advance which doors to direct people to, including those who have disabilities or restricted mobility, and be able to help them get to those exits. Emily explained that there is a map in every room to tell people which door they should use. The sanctuary will be divided into four or six sections, and each usher will be responsible for a section and will wear an identifying item. It will be the usher's job to get people to use the appropriate exit to guide people out of the building.

As a final point on scheduling, Rev. Moore raised the possibility of holding the fire drill the week that Rev. Keithan gave the sermon, so as not to disrupt a guest speaker or Rev. Parker's last service.

Peg said that it was time to move on, but the fire drill should happen. She deferred to Emily, Vickie, and Rev. Moore to work out the finer points of implementation. She thanked the Safe Congregations team, including Rose, for their work, as well as their work on the manual.

**Gratitude for Kate Saylor's Board Service:** (Peg Barratt)

Peg thanked Kate for her service on the Board, and presented a copy of Singing the Living Tradition with the Church's gratitude for her service inside the cover. The hymnal will remain at All Souls when Kate leaves in several weeks to start a PhD program. Kate said that in five years, she will return to finish her Board term.

**Break-In and Safety Concerns:** (Rev. Susan Newman-Moore)

The Saturday before last there was a break-in at the Church. CoA was here until 9 pm, as usual for a Saturday. The All Souls staff checked the doors before they left, after closing up. When Katie came in the next morning the break-in was discovered. Someone had apparently used a screwdriver to break into Gary Penn's office, and others. They took a camera belonging to the church, as well as a laptop. This needs to be a wake up call for us. The church has recently seen an uptick in vagrants and aggressive intoxicated individuals on our property causing trouble. Rev. Moore emphasized that once people realize there is no camera or alarm, they take what they can at the time, and will often return with a van to get larger, more valuable items. Following the break-in, the police asked to see security film, but we have no security cameras so there was none to provide. In response, the ET has been discussing getting a security system, and Katie has authorized procurement. Gary is working on that acquisition.

Gary said that he has been working with OJ Moore, who is service as an expert advisor on the project. OJ was head of a construction company that worked on security systems and wiring; he previously helped as a church consultant during the TCC construction. Gary and OJ met with Also met with Solomon earlier in the week to formulate recommendations.

Gary and OJ then outlined the recommended plan of cameras, sensors, and alarms. OJ recommended buying the equipment ourselves and then hiring an installer. We are hoping to stay under \$2500 for equipment, but will not know the final amount until after the package is bid. The installation costs would not to exceed \$2500. Hiring a monitoring company would be an additional \$30-50 per month, but would eliminate our need to have the church staff walk the building perimeter alone late at night. They are looking into the possibility of hiring someone with more direct skills and experience do the search on nights the church is open late — if our desk staff had encountered the person during the break-in, they could have gotten hurt. We will try this option during the summer, as the church is only open late twice a week, and can consider expanding that options come fall when we are open late more nights. Rev. Moore added that we want to have a panic button at the front desk.

Rev. Moore explained that she has had numerous conversations with OJ about why he recommends this approach, as opposed to just hiring a single company to provide the equipment, do the installation, and provide the monitoring. OJ explained that security companies make their money off the monitoring, so do a simple, chip installation and then charge high monitoring costs. While this may reduce the up-front cost, the recurrent costs are much higher. Using the recommended approach has a higher up-front cost, but significantly lower monitoring costs going forward. Also, we would be able to use OJ's licensed security agent discount to purchase equipment. Kate cautioned the group not to sacrifice quality for cost in their decision; OJ said that the difference in monitoring quality is not in who is doing the monitoring, but in what happens when a concern does arise: who receives the alarm and how will they respond.

Ken said that he thought the church already had an alarm system; Gary explained that there was a system before and during the renovation.

Tracy noted that the church should check for property insurance discounts once the system is installed. Also, it would be a good idea to have a one-time police walk-through to detect any security vulnerabilities, if we haven't already — it should be free. She then asked why we have a church staff member walk the building at night. Gary explained that it was mostly to make sure all doors were closed. OJ added that once the security system is installed, we will not be able to set the alarm unless all the doors are secured. The other thing benefit of a nightly walk-through is that they can look in case someone entered the building earlier in the day and tried to hide until after hours. Tracy asked whether this will be a necessary task once the security system is installed as it can show unlocked doors. She noted that we should be careful about adding additional personnel costs at this time of budget pressures.

Emily offered two comments on behalf of Safe Congregations:

1. One concern that keeps coming up is that during working hours the Harvard Street door is often not monitored.
2. Emily has previously talked to a Sargent with the DC police, and they will do not a nightly walk-through for the church, they will do a single walk-through to review vulnerable points. Tracy concurred that was what she had meant. Emily said she can be there during the walk-through, and she will invite members of the church staff and Rose and others who are interested to join once it is scheduled.

Rev. Moore said that the next time the ET meets, they will review the bids and make a decision.

Peg said that the Board is counting on the ET to figure out how to make it work in the Budget.

**Generosity Team:** (Betsy Culligan)

In response to Board request, Betsy is presenting on pledge rates and how the Generosity Team (GT) is doing compared to the recent years. Betsy said this effort highlights a significant challenge for the committee: none of the four co-chair have access to the past pledge data, and needing to ask the staff for information can lead to delays. They have also had problems with data consistency. Betsy is concerned there are trends in pledges that the committee does not see because they “don't see what we don't ask for.” She noted that Chuck and Gary have been very helpful in response to committee questions, but the GT isn't always sure they are asking the right questions. The GT has recruited a volunteer to help them develop these questions, and will be working with Katie before the next campaign starts in the fall.

The GT also went through the feedback from last years' campaign volunteers. There is not a lot of data, but the feedback was very positive feedback. Betsy said she read it to mean the campaign performed “adequately but not superlatively.” They had a goal to increase pledges by 10 percent, but ended up with pledge levels approximately level with the year before; she

understands this has been the case for the last several years. The challenge for this year's GT is to identify the game changer, and she is hoping that more data will help.

This year's campaign plan is coming together. The theme is "Remember"; the campaign will focus on remembering what drew us to All Souls and give us an opportunity to talk about membership in our community. There will be a kick-off event in September, then follow up with calls and meetings in November. Betsy noted the end of campaign is always the hardest. In recent years, the campaign has focused on individual meetings, but Betsy explained that approach takes a lot of planning and volunteer time, and does not produce as many meetings. Instead, the campaign this year will focus on small groups gatherings, and they have discussed this approach with Rev. Hardies and Katie. They hope to bring back the parties at Rob's house, which were very successful last year. These brought together top donors and new members; this year they hope to add a few more parties with other demographics. At these meetings, they will focus on a specific ask — the GT hopes that a more targeted message will yield more targeted results. Therefore, they are planning outreach to "tiers" of donors, and encourage people to move into the next tier. They are also considering sending pre-filled pledge cards, with a next-year amount based on current years' pledges plus the desired growth. The GT is looking into their ability to do this by email, as well.

Betsy then highlighted a number of ongoing debates and concerns for the GT.

- The GT has mixed opinions on striking the right balance between allowing people to make their individual contribution decisions and bringing in sufficient funds.
- Whether the GT should be a once-a-year pledge drive committee, or full-year committee to support follow-through on pledges.
- How much information and assistance and education should the committee provide to individuals? The more they help with logistics (how to use the website, complete paperwork, donate by credit card or automatic deduction), the less time they have for encouraging people to pledge.
- How to explain to people how their pledge money is being spent — she noted they are very excited for the narrative budget.
- Volunteer fatigue is a significant concern: right now the GT consists of four co-chairs and four other volunteers, in contrast to the 15 people on the GT last year. The GT is struggling to bring in a diversity of new faces; the committee is almost exclusively white and over 40. Betsy is hoping the Board and church can help bring in new faces.
- GT members don't really know what they are doing - they have experience in church leadership but not fundraising.

Anne had two major points to make in response:

1. She is concerned because many of the key questions the GT is debating are the same issues that were under debate when she was on the GT eight years ago, and she thought they had been able to move on and make progress — she thought the church had already decided we need to be more aggressive in pledge asks.

2. In 2017, we need to raise at least \$100k more than this year to cover our mortgage payment, so we need to figure out what we're doing so we don't have a deficit.

Ken suggested there may be additional resources available from the UUA; he also thought Steve Siegel, had volunteered to follow up with us if we had ongoing needs. Ken did not know if he would charge us for a brief consult, but he had talked about being supportive of us in the long term, and had already discussed the moment of transition we are in now, where the capital campaign is winding down and we need to discern how to transition to general fundraising. Anne supported the idea of targeting pledge asks based on TCC contributions as they complete.

Peg summarized the report as the GT is working hard, but they are struggling, and this year is too critical for you to muddle through. She hears that the GT needs professional assistance.

Vickie recommended Betsy attend the upcoming Leadership Social for recruitment purposes. Betsy confirmed she would be there. Peg acknowledged the difficulty of building a committee when the overall goals are nebulous, but recommended finding people for specific tasks: make calls, send letters, talk to people. Betsy said that Bob Johnson had pulled together a very collaborative GT last year, which helped cultivate leadership and keep GT operations in the democratic spirit of the church. She wants to recreate that atmosphere. Tracy recommended finding someone good at social media; Betsy acknowledged that raised another challenge associated with the diversity in the All Souls community: they need to develop a campaign plan that reaches people are tech savvy as well as not.

Kate remembered that the last time the Board heard from the Membership and Welcoming committee, there was discussion of the possibility for year-long engagement between the groups. Betsy said that they are meeting with Membership and Welcoming later in the month to see where they can collaborate. Cledwyn recommend raising the issue at the fall Church Council meeting, as well.

Ken said that this conversation also raises questions about the timing of when we consider and release the Budget, apropos hold the campaign. Other churches approach this differently, and have the budget come first. It is worth considering our own schedule in the church year.

Cledwyn said the Goals Committee will reach out to the GT to help them think about what goals and data will be helpful; the old goal of 100 percent of members pledging wasn't really useful.

Peg said the Board can help clarify the roles of the GT, versus the Stewardship team, how they relate to membership and welcoming, and how to align these missions with the narrative budget and budget timing. She also said she was tired of hearing people say why we should give generously, without hearing the gratitude for those who do. The church needs to strengthen our appreciation for those who do give generously, on a dollar-basis as well as proportionally.

**Goals Monitoring:** (Cledwyn Jones)

Cledwyn started by circulating high-level goals statements. The Goals Team continues to move through the process, but it would be helpful to have greater participation from the Board and church staff - the Team is currently being driven by the Church Council, and while the group has diverse experience in church leadership, they feel like they are wandering while they attempt to hone the vision for the goals.

The Team is currently working on developing an array of “spotlight goals,” which would force the Board to choose one or two specific items out of a broader range of desires. For example, we used to have social justice goals, with a goal of specific social justice goals to include in the regular goal reporting, but that approach was not nimble enough to respond to how the social justice sphere operates. The Board could potentially maintain a single spotlight goal over multiple years, but this approach provides more flexibility for specific areas of concern that arise.

Moving forward, the Goals Team will hold collective feedback sessions to make sure church leaders see the work that they do reflected in the formal goals and have buy-in to those goals; they will reach out to lay leaders and the congregation as a whole for these meetings. He notes the value of making sure congregants “see the church they see themselves in and want to be in.” Much of this work will take place over the summer, along with work to develop specific metrics. The Team was surprised by database decision, but has renewed the effort to figure out how to make best use of the database.

Rev. Moore noted that when she came to All Souls in 2010, we had just finished a five-year goal-setting exercise. What is the time-frame for this, and how hard is that deadline? Cledwyn responded that the Team has been focused on separating goals from metrics in the process, and the Team’s focus is on goals for a five-year timeframe.

Rev. Newman-Moore then pointed out that when the ET had its fall retreat, they would be setting their own goals for the year, and would work to align them with the Church goals. Cledwyn asked whether the lay leadership would be able to participate in that discussion; Rev. Newman-Moore responded probably not at the retreat itself, but they could engage in advance of the retreat and provide supporting documentation. Peg noted that much of the conversation at the retreat may be around strategies to achieve the goals, as well as the goals themselves.

Peg then raised a question about where a culture of service is reflected in the goals, as the church goal says “service and prophetic action,” but the metrics focus on social justice accomplishments. Rev. Newman-Moore noted the importance of the Beckner Fund and Thanksgiving collection in direct service; Peg noted the Caring Committee also supports the goal. Rev. Newman added the service done for the church or community by each covenant group during the church year. Kate noted that “culture of service” is listed under community; Cledwyn acknowledged that this needs to be integrated with how the church operates as a whole.

**Finance Committee report:** (John Strongman)

John started by highlighting a number of key points for the Board:

- 1) Core donations and contributions are essentially flat since 2011. Any increase in 2017 is likely to be modest.
- 2) Funds held by UUA and the endowment have increased since 2011, but are likely to be lower in 2017 when the distribution rate is lower in the budget.
- 3) Personnel costs have increased \$372,000 since 2011, and this may be an area for Board consideration. It will be key to see how 2017 compares; John noted that sabbatical costs are likely to be similar to 2016 due to Rev. Moore's sabbatical. Cledwyn noted that one cause of the increase could be the reclassification of custodial costs from operating to personnel, and possibly also health expenses.
- 4) The Church is likely headed toward deficit next year due to the trends in income and the start of the TCC mortgage payments.

There are a few options for closing the gap, which the Finance Committee discussed at their last meeting. These include an increase in endowment distributions, or reducing personnel costs. Ken added the possibility of a modest generosity campaign to close the gap. John emphasized that it will be very important for the Board to recognize there is a gap and think about how to close it. It will be better to seriously consider the matter of personnel costs after Rev. Hardies and Katie Loughary return from their respective sabbaticals. At that time, we will also need to consider how to pay for the steeple repairs, and how to fund the TCC mortgage. The church should consider having a debt retirement campaign a few years hence.

Ken said that it is his hope that the narrative budget will help people expand their willingness to give, by clarifying the connections between our communal goals and fundraising, as well as providing greater transparency to the process. Transparency helps people feel heard and involved. It will also make clear that we require continued investment and support from the congregation: This project of "church-hood only happens because WE make it happen."

Tracy said that she needs to be convinced that we are acting as good stewards of the church's money before there is any discussion of another capital campaign or debt-retirement campaign — as of now she is not convinced. We don't even know who gets sabbaticals and the Board does not have a history of planning financially for these expenses. If we can't answer that question, we are not good stewards of the money. We need to review every line item, including payroll, and make sure we know what we are doing, and that that spending is in line with our values. We are putting the cart before the horse if we consider raising more money, without answering the question of "for what?".

Ken responded that he thinks the narrative budget process, of reviewing spending and figuring out how to communicate that to the congregation over the last six or eight months has helped address many of those concerns. He added that the ET have done a good job of executing the budget under the direction provided by the Board, but we can also considering going in a

different direction. To Tracy's point, it may be helpful to identify those areas we would like to examine more closely this year, and give that list to the ET so we can have that discussion throughout the year.

Peg said that we will continue this conversation about how to close the budget gap, take advice from the FC, and provide guidance to the ET. John and Katie are working to get more data on personnel costs. Ken asked that Board members and officers share their questions with him as they think of them, so he can record them and communicate them to the ET.

Rev. Moore recommended having a recommend conversation about the personnel manual and the role of the personnel committee during the next Board retreat/ orientation. There is a copy of the personnel manual on the Board Google drive, and Rev. Moore is to email a report on the sabbatical report and plan, which the Board approves before voting to approve a sabbatical. She also volunteered to provide her performance review from Rev. Hardies; while it is a personnel issue, she has the option as an individual employee to share her own information.

Finally, Rev. Moore noted that if there is to be an ET discussion, she hopes it can take place at the September meeting, when the whole ET will be present.

#### **Operations Report: (Executive Team)**

Gary Penn:

- New fencing has been installed around the large AC unit and around the trash bin.
- No update on Church of the Advent, but they know they are expected to move out before the start of the next church year
- No update from the solar installation. Ken recommended following up: if we are going to be in partnership with them they need to be responsive to us. Tracy added the importance of the potential source of additional funds.

Rev. Newman-Moore:

- We have hired Rev. Rob Keithan - as a consultant, not a staff member - to oversee the church's social justice mission over the summer. He is working with a handful of specific organizations: Reeb Voting Rights Project, Green Souls, Washington Interfaith Network, All Souls Housing Corporation, and the social justice activities of Young Souls. Erika Landberg is working with him to move their programs forward. He will be at General Assembly, but as an individual, not an official All Souls representative.

**Motion:** Kate moved to go into Executive Session. Vickie seconded. The motion carried.

The meeting then went into Executive Session.

Peg re-opened the meeting following Executive Session.

**Church Board documentation:** Tracy Zorpette

Tracy noted that the Board actions and policies have not been compiled annually either online or in hard copy in one policy book leaving a fair amount of confusion over policy and practice. Tracy, Chuck, Kysseleine, and Erin need to get together to discuss how to organize documentation of policies and procedures of the Board and associated groups (Board committees, etc.). Vickie recommend reaching out to Mark Matthews, the past Board Secretary. Cledwyn recommend reaching out to past Board presidents, and volunteered to help with this effort. Ken added that he has recently gone through much of the material, he thinks we may have more documentation that we think. If we can organize things and get them to him, he'll get them up on the Board google drive.

**Consent agenda:**

There were four items on the consent agenda; all were included on materials circulated in advance of the meeting.

- Replacement for Kate Saylor (Board)
- Appointments to the Committee on Ministry (Committee on Ministry, Deva Kyle)
- Final slate for delegates to UUA General Assembly (Denominational Connections, Chuck Shields)
- Additional grant from the Beckner Committee to Many Languages One Voice (Noel Tieszen)

**Motion:** Ken moved to adopt the consent agenda. Kate seconded. For the discussion, Ken noted that the Board should extend their thanks to Phyllis Caldwell. The motion carried.

**Motion:** Ken moved to adjourn the meeting. Kate seconded. The meeting carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.