

**Board of Trustees Meeting
Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa
March 12, 2020 6:30 pm**

MINUTES

Voting Members Present: Natalie Brundred (President), Sean Freese (Vice President), Cathie Wiese (Corporate Secretary), Michael Randolph (Treasurer), Larisa Ashley, Joe Como, Paula Hammett, John Mason, Mike McGirr, Karen Simmons.

Non-Board Members Present: Rev. Bonnie Dlott (Sabbatical Minister), Rev Dara Olandt (Assistant Minister), Dawn Silveira (Administrative Manager), John Ray (Saturday Breakfast Coordinator), Susan Thollaug (Recording Secretary)

Meeting called to order: 6:30 pm

Chalice Lighting, Covenant, Opening Words: Rev. Bonnie and Natalie

Minutes: February 2020 minutes were approved as submitted.

Discussion: Responsibly Handling the COVID-19 Situation

The Board unanimously agreed to close the Glaser Center through the end of March and quickly develop ways for congregants to connect and serve during this period. The Board made a series of unanimous decisions, as follows.

Communicating messages to the congregation:

A better way is needed for getting messages out to everyone in the congregation. The best and most comprehensive list of members and friends is the one Joe Como recently pulled together for the Neighborhood Meetings project.

Short term: The Board agreed that this list should be used to send messages about cancelled services, meetings, building closure, etc. during the pandemic period. For the 40 or so congregants who don't have email, facilitators will be asked to phone them about services being cancelled for the rest of March.

Long term: The Announcements list should be updated and should be available for use by the ministers and the administrator.

Format and content of a letter to the Congregation:

A update should go out asap to the congregation from the Board, Ministers and Staff. Key points must include:

- Sunday services are cancelled through the month of March.
- The Glaser Center is closed for all gatherings except: Essential business meetings of the Board, the Finance, Stewardship, and Operations/Maintenance committees. (These groups are encouraged to meet virtually whenever possible), as well as, the modified Saturday Breakfast program. Natalie is empowered to make exceptions.
- The Lay Chaplains and Caring Connections volunteers will continue to be available for support (include how to contact). Pastoral care will be confidential.
- Dawn, Laura, and Peter will work at in the building during the work week. Desk angels will not be working. Most part-time employees whose responsibilities are linked to the use of the Center will not be working.
- All of UUCSR's staff will be paid through the month of March. The Board will review this policy if the Center remains closed beyond March, taking into consideration the congregation's financial situation.

The letter should indicate that the Board is taking the pandemic very seriously, is monitoring County- and State-level guidance from health authorities, and that the congregation will be updated regularly.

Saturday Breakfast:

John Ray presented a plan to continue to provide food for the folks who come to the Center on Saturday morning for a meal:

Volunteers will distribute a bag lunch with a sandwich, fruit, chips, liquid. Coffee will probably not be served. There will be no seating inside, but the breezeway and courtyard will be open for people to eat. Bathrooms will be available. A trash patrol will be organized as usual to clean up the area. Peter will continue to clean up after the breakfast, per usual.

John Ray's first point of contact for any issues that may arise will be Dawn, who will relay them if necessary to Natalie.

The congregation needs to know the breakfast will continue in this format for this period.

The Board agreed to John's plan.

Dawn has ordered hand sanitizer equipment (coming soon), and cleaning supplies (coming the next day (Fri)).

Virtual Religious Education:

Jen Freese proposed and the Board enthusiastically supported providing a simplified Sunday program for kids through 5th grade via Zoom. A Youth Group program could happen later in the morning. There may be a nightly story reading, perhaps at 7 pm. It could be for all ages. It would be a one-way stream.

Jen wants RE to be in coordination with the rest of worship. Suggested timing: 9:15 am children's program followed by 10 am adult service. This was tentatively agreed to by the Board. Rev. Dara said that this coming Sunday may be a hybrid service as it's being adapted on the fly.

Families have already received a letter from Jen about probable upcoming changes.

Paula asked that Jen let families know that lay chaplains and caring connections are available if needed for support.

Virtual Sunday Services:

This is an opportunity to get streaming our services going. There are a lot of technical issues to sort out. The easiest and cheapest route initially will probably be YouTube. Dawn will research other options.

Sean is already familiar with YouTube, which would expedite the process. YouTube would allow us to stream the service live, then edit it for replay within the YouTube platform, and then make it available for later viewing. Personal reflections may need to be excerpted from the edited version. This will be coordinated with the Worship Associates. Copyright issues will need attention for anything that's recorded for replay. Guidelines at the YouTube and UUA websites will be helpful.

Daniel will play an important role in the camera work and audio mixing. Peter would probably be happy to do some YouTube work, and will have a lot of hours available while the building isn't being used much.

Committee to follow-up on streaming/recording services: Daniel, Peter, Sean.

Requests for Share the Basket donations:

The issue of donations and pledges should be addressed in communications to the congregation. We need to be honest about our situation, which includes a certain decline in Glaser Center income.

There should be an invitation/reminder to contribute to the congregation included the online services. People will not be going out to eat, to movies, etc., and contributions to UUCSR will help us be sustainable through a potentially rocky period.

Neighborhood Groups:

The new Neighborhood Groups are about to launch. Even though none of the groups has met in person, they can potentially be a way for congregants to be in touch with each other during this time. They may be able to communicate as a group non-physically (email, zoom, conference calls.) Facilitators should set a date in May for the first meeting, hoping that will be possible by then.

Although it would be good to involve facilitators in reaching out to the congregation, that has to be weighed with the need to get a consistent message out to everyone.

Facilitating decision-making in emergencies:

Short term:

The Board may need to meet more frequently during the pandemic period. The Board could empower emergency teams to churn through selected issues more quickly.

Long term:

A change to the Bylaws addressing emergency decision-making should be submitted to the Congregation for approval when that's feasible.

Meeting Adjourned: approximately 9:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Thollaug, Recording Secretary