



Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council
Unitarian & Universalist congregations around the globe

WINTER UUPCC BOARD MEETING
January 28 - 30, 2014
East Shore Unitarian Church, Bellevue, WA
Minutes

Wednesday - Jan 28

Members Present: Roger Bertschausen, Ann Gary, Melody Moberg, Rick Irwin, Eileen Higgins, Carol Cook, and Beverly Moore;

Present On Zoom: Gary Smith and Cathy Cordes

Also present: Nancy Hickey at the beginning of the meeting.

Welcome

At 3:15 pm PST, Vice President Bertschausen opened the meeting with a brief check-in.

New Office Manager

The new office manager Nancy Hickey was introduced. Hickey explained she is excited to be here and is learning about PCC. She started Jan 5.

Minutes

Smith moved, Higgins seconded,

Voted: To approve the minutes of Dec. 17, 2014 board meeting as presented.

Agenda Review

The Travel Report will be addressed when Jennifer Emrich arrives.

Balázs Scholars

The Board discussed the Balázs Scholar Program. For the 2014-15 school year, there were no applicants. Two Unitarian faculty members from the Protestant Seminary in Kolozsvár came instead. Most of the value to UUPCC is enhancement of the English language skills of the ministers who attend and the visits they make to partnered churches.

The board raised several questions including: Is the Balázs scholarship important for the development of partner church connections? Is there a better way to organize the visits by Transylvanian ministers? If we paid for someone to come and controlled the schedule, could we send that minister around to excite churches about the possibilities of travel. Might we also think about supporting someone in Transylvania to foster relationships there and enhance Eastern European partnerships? Could we build in an honorarium for a post Balázs scholarship in Transylvania? However, creating a program would be huge, and this might not be the time. We should start by reviewing the Balázs scholar pros and cons. Should we create another initiative? How can we enrich partnerships but also bring someone from India or Philippines. To further explore these issues, Bertschausen and Smith will plan a conversation with Arliss Ungar.

Treasurer's Report

Cordes walked through a presentation of the Balance Sheet to the board. Questions arose about

several of the restricted funds, including the endowment that was established years ago to support “Retired ministers in Transylvania.” Because the UUA Society for Ministers Relief has expanded to include other countries’ ministers, it might not be important to continue this endowment. The Hungarian Unitarian Church maintains a Pension System, and it is possible that we could just turn over the funds to them or to the Society for Ministerial Relief. Cordes will investigate the legality of the Ministers Endowment Fund and our obligations.

We may be able to do more than we are doing. We have added program initiatives, but not more full-time staff. The initiatives are very different and require different skill sets. Do we have the money to support the initiatives long-term?

How do our financial reports demonstrate to donors how their money is used? One way is on the balance sheet; another is the budget without saying where money goes specifically. How can we best show something changed in budget because they gave money? Our development consultant might have some ideas.

Concern was raised about the impact of the pilgrimage service on the available resources. How dependable is this as a source of revenue?

Bertschausen recessed the meeting at 5:03pm.

**Thursday
January 29, 2015**

During breakfast, Rev. Peter Luton, Senior Minister East Shore Unitarian Church welcomed the Board to Bellevue.

The meeting reconvened at 9:45 PST.

Present: Jennifer Emrich, Ann Gary, Carol Cook, Melody Moberg, Roger Bertschausen, Eileen Higgins, Beverly Moore, Rick Irwin

Present On Zoom: Cathy Cordes, Gary Smith, Eric Cherry, and Kelly Crocker

Also Present: Rev. Dr. Sandor Kovács, Professor and Balázs Scholar from January to May.

Bertschausen began with the UUPCC Mission Statement and chalice lighting.

International Office Report

Cherry had sent his report before the meeting, highlighting PCC activities at the International Office.

- Ambassadors in Transylvania, European Unitarians, India and the Philippines.
- Skill-sharing initiative wherein UUA staff with expertise volunteer time to spend with partners who are interested in conversation about this skill. The International Office provides interfaith overview before the volunteer is involved with partners.
- Plans for UU seminarians to have international experience continue. Further ideas are in the pipeline.
- The loose coalition of international UU organizations is still meeting, sharing initiatives such as GA planning, etc. Going deeper is desired but challenging.
- Meadville/Lombard will move its program for young international Unitarian and UU leaders to January. A second program with an interfaith contingent will continue to come in July.

Meadville has just brought on board a staff person for international initiatives for Meadville/Lombard –Claudia Espinal. Her brother is doing ministry in Columbia.

Notable Events: The ICUU Council Meeting was held in the US. International presentations at GA were great.

Cherry was on sabbatical from Sept to Dec. He spent 2/3 of the time with UUCP and learned things related to our work. Leadership development and dormitory project are good. He thought about the structure of the international UUA engagement for future planning. Holden India and UU-UNO are doing well.

There is a transition plan in Philippines. It is a detailed 3-year project with specific goals. It makes institutional changes including plans to reshape the board, structure regional clusters, increase compensation for ministers, skill building for ministers, nominating process, and how the handful of people can be identified to lead. UUPC will likely share the document. One can send a request to Rebecca Sienes. Now they have a roadmap. Fred Muir will be at their annual meeting in April.

The CCB program in the Philippines did not figure into the plans for institutional reorganization. If there are enough interested people in Bicutan, it could be possible. Cherry and Higgins will work together on this.

Cherry said the video of the introduction of UU International Organizations is available on the International Office website. It is a great introduction. The Board liked the idea of highlighting it on our website and social media. They also thought it could be used in district meetings and at the booth at GA. Cordes will speak to Cherry's assistant and will post it and highlight it regularly.

10:10 am –**Deep Chairs Transition Discussion**

What else could we be doing with available money? Smith encouraged the Board to “dream big.” Should we enhance current efforts or do others?

1. New partnerships program: Bertschhausen, Emrich, Higgins and Cordes reaffirmed the benefit from the New Start Weekends. There is much interest in expanding this to support existing partnerships. This concept is being pilot tested in late April.
2. Improved communications: Face-to-face with local congregations is worth some expense. Increased contact with functioning partners as well as non-functioning ones. Is it possible to encourage more inter-church connections? Is it possible to establish regular communication with Khasi Hills leaders and US churches partnered there? Ask churches if they are interested. Strong partnership churches could talk with weaker PC Churches in North America. Perhaps it is best to set up these meetings and allow partners to opt out if they want.
3. Involving a new generation: How do we involve young people at startup weekends? The team is working to include younger generations in the start up weekends.
4. Reinstigate the notion of networking: Identify leaders at the congregational level. Find those who are talented in partnerships and promote them as leaders. Establish a system to trade information and be independent. Both here and there.
5. Promote new partnership with congregations that do not have partners: Program to get seminarians or young religious leaders to this country for less than a year to excite congregations about partnerships. Identify potential partners and get to know them. Would want this to nurture both sides of the partnership.
6. Youth Initiative: International youth camps would be bigger investment but would provide great opportunities to stimulate partnership. Youth would break barriers.

7. Another staff person responsible for programs: When all are volunteers, we do not have enough capacity.

Establishing priorities

The dreams would begin to shape job descriptions. The office manager job might morph to be more of an administrator of UUPCC and executive director to program director. The Board reaffirmed the current initiatives and direction and expressed a desire to not increase the staff of the UUPCC at this time.

The board went into Executive Session to discuss personnel and Cordes left the meeting.

11:22 am - Break

11: 30 Laurel Amabile joined the meeting via Zoom Bertschausen reconvened the meeting, thanked Amabile, and asked board members to introduced themselves.

Financial Development

Amabile thanked everyone for the work they have done to reach out to members personally. She reported that this had a clear effect on the recent Annual appeal with key donor contributions up almost 34%.

The board asked Amabile how we can communicate through budgeting how specific contributions are making a difference in programs and services.

Amabile suggested that, unless the donor has specifically requested something different, all donations should be viewed as unrestricted in the general budget. Specific line items in the budget can be highlighted in reports to demonstrate how programs have benefited from the increased donations.

Board members related some of the stories they heard from their conversations and felt it was beneficial to have made the calls. There seems to be general consensus that the youth initiatives are well supported and so is the travel grant program.

Amabile is putting together a strategy for the year based on our experience so far. The strategy will include an event at GA, house parties (scheduled ones in Concord MA and Cincinnati OH), and continuing phone calls with updates on initiatives and programs.

Amabile and Cordes will work on a contact list, initiative updates and talking points.

The meeting was recessed for lunch at 12:05 PM:

1:12 pm, The meeting reconvened.

Youth Initiatives Report

Sara Ascher, Chair of the Youth Initiatives Committee, reported.

The Virtual Youth Group initiative is in the testing stage both in the US and in Transylvania. The first pilot session was successful between a west coast church and an east coast church. Five session outlines and a facilitator's training manual have all been completed. The model is somewhat like

small group ministries. We are working with Norbert Racz, Minister Kolozsvár Unitarian congregation and Julia Fulop, Youth Minister Transylvanian Unitarians.

The concept is that in the end, we will have a product to share with congregations that will describe the technology needs, provide the session guides, and a manual for facilitators.

There are two longer range goals to arrange a unique summer camp experience for high school teens in Transylvania with local teens and to explore the potential for a college students gathering to coincide with the ICCU conference in August 2016.

Smith said he thought the UK youth groups were eager to connect as well.

Ascher said we also want to test this with India.

Smith said the UUPCC should be aggressive, not passive in disseminating this initiative and suggested we continue to think about what is needed from UUPCC in terms of staffing and time.

Ascher said Crocker did a fabulous job with the facilitator manual, which will be sent to the board.

General Assembly (GA) Booth, Programming

Cordes reported that UUPCC has a program slot for a worship service on Friday of GA. We are inviting the International Coalition to co-sponsor the event, so we can continue visibility for international groups. Kinga-Réka Székely may be coming from Transylvania. (Cordes has subsequently learned that she will NOT be coming.)

The International Coalition has been working together well on GA collaborative planning. However, the GA Planning Committee has notified all organizations that there will be no booth sharing. Booths can be side by side with two organizations per booth. The International Coalition feels this is contrary to the collaborative way our organizations have been working today and so they have sent a letter to the GA Planning Committee.

On Friday of GA, the Board will meet early in the morning, our Annual Lunch and Meeting is at noon, and the UUPCC will have a development event that evening. Having done this once now, Amabile feels we can be even more effective this year.

Membership report.

Cordes reported. The most outstanding is that the Prague Church might finally get a really good partner. Finding partners is labor intensive. What might be most effective is asking churches without partners to invite one of our ministers to come and speak. Start minister to minister. Emrich, Smith, and Bertschausen will call ministers and volunteer to preach.

About 15 overseas churches are waiting for partners. They are on the website. Can we make people aware at GA of churches that are looking for a partner? We could strategically invite non-partnered leaders to the reception? We could have an event for only non-partnered people and teens; and have youth to present the congregations looking for partners. Four Philippines congregations are on the list.

New Partner Start-up Weekend Task Force Report

Roger Bertschausen reported. The first Pilot was in Sarasota with Cordes, Bertschausen, Higgins, Emrich, and John Dale. Another is scheduled for Savannah with Cordes, Emrich and Bertschausen.

The weekends are tailor made to congregations.

The Sarasota church organized a busy schedule, and there was good attendance. They were interested in travel and Dale's information. It was not clear how many in the church were aware of the partnership until we were there. We preached on Sunday and that brought people in.

What would be different next time? We should have collected name and contact information of all who came.

Emrich added that every congregation has more connectedness than they know. How do we communicate that these weekends will give you more than they cost? We know that partnership can interconnect and produce a congregation that is looking outside itself. We are offering something they want but can't articulate. You have to tell the congregation that we have something for everyone. We are trying to pay particular attention to including the young families and youth.

The technology piece was amazing for the service. The partner minister and his wife were there with their kids, in real time via Skype at the beginning of each service.

Cordes said the next step is to send invitation letters to churches who have partnered in the last two years. Cordes has put together whole set of resources for partners.

Travel Report.

Ann Gary reported. John Dale's report was received by the board. We have fewer people scheduled for 2015, so less income. Now, we are having a down year. Last year, we had 20th anniversary trips. They are over.

Gary stressed the need to be proactive about helping congregations visit their partners. We are not doing much active marketing. We wait for people to call us. Our travel population is aging. How do we attract younger families and travelers? Can we structure tours about young families? We need to think about subsidizing travel for younger families.

Gary reported on the travel surveys. The results are always really positive. More and more Hungarian-speaking ministers are running the trips. People are spending more time with Partners. There is too much food.

Spiritual experiences are one area that needs to be improved. More experience in Kolozsvár. Maybe there should be more time with headquarters about experiences. Consistently, we hear from a minority that we are spending too much time on the bus and try to cover too much. Surveys always say money was handled well and managed beautifully.

John Dale said we could anticipate 5 more years with he and Kolcsar doing the trips with him organizing and her doing them. Dale travels around the US and makes people want to go. Dale and Kolcsar have dual nationality, which works. That will be difficult to replicate.

Dale was interested in what can be added to get more people to go. Maybe we need to do a competitive review of what other tour groups are doing. Maybe there should be some trip offerings for special interests, maybe other kinds of trips. The core of most trips is partner stay.

Gary felt we could advertise more. She and Smith will design something.

We need to decide what the purpose of the pilgrimages is. At core of congregational trips is staying with partners. If we continue to recognize that core and build around it, we could support our mission and make money.

News from the Hungarian Unitarian Church (HUC) Rev. Dr. Sándor Kovács reported. Elections were held in December. Bishop Balint Ferenc was re-elected. Gyero David was elected Vice Bishop. Two new lay presidents were elected. One is Emod Farkas. The second is David Gyero's godfather, Janos Boros, he is in his late 60s. He is the lay district leader of Brasov district. Istvan Kovács is moderator or parliamentarian. So far, there are no women on the chief board. There are two key persons, Maria Pap, secretary of the Bishop's office and right hand of the bishop, and Kinga Székely, who is in charge of education and mission work of the HCU.

The election of Rev. Gyero means they must restructure the administrative job that he is leaving. The proposal presented to the Executive Committee is for the work to be shared. David Gyero will do part. He will be concerned with mission and vision. Robert Balint, Meszko minister, will take part of Gyero's current work. He will be in charge of personnel. On the financial part, a part-time lay woman takes care of financial. Gyero will continue as Assistant Bishop and President of ICUU. They are all members of the Executive Board: lay Presidents, bishop, and Gyero.

High Schools. Both are doing well. Keresztur celebrated 100 years since the new school was constructed. There are about 500 students. A few years ago, they had problems passing exams, but the last two years are better. The problem is, they must do the exams in the Romanian language.

Janos Sigismund School is doing well. It is second in Kolozsvar County, placed in high position. They have more contact with Romanians. Last year, only two kids failed and took again. The vice-president is doing a very good job. He is soul and part of the brain of the school. There is a new music teacher who is doing well. Now they are performing in Hungary with a well-known Hungarian singer. They will sing a Bohemian program with him.

Sekelykeresztur. Hungarian kids learn Hungarian. They have separate curricula. Starting in fourth grade, they follow the same curricula of Romanian kids. If curricula were changed, they would be motivated, if it were presented as a foreign language.

The seminary. There are 27 Unitarian students. Each attends for four years plus two years program. You must be aware no one can be hired without the Masters degree. We have 14 male and 13 women students. This is an unusual experience for us. There is a whole class with one male. Teachers are Czire Szabolcs, Kopandi Botond, myself and part-time teachers.

If students went to a good high school, they have good English, but if not, then don't. They can improve because there is a six-year English teacher, Hungarian by birth. Every year we have several guests from overseas. Last year, Linda, a seminarian from Meadville Lombard, came for one week. She conducted a week of intensive English Language course. Linda did a great job. One student diagnosed with dyslexia took the English exam and passed.

National Elections. The new president was an interesting outcome, a big surprise. We will see what the new president can do. He seems to want to change the mentality of how parliament works. It was a surprise because he was elected by Romanians who work in the EU. 3 million are working in EU. In first round, there were huge lines. The Romanians from abroad stayed in line for hours. When second round was organized, they did not open more pools, so more came and more stayed hours waiting to vote. That number was decisive.

One year ago, at the UUPCC Regional Conference attendees saw video of Canadian Company. Rosia Montana Gold Corporation. They want to now reconsider the contract, or they will sue the state. They stopped the process, but the thing is not settled. Big corporations usually win. They want to use the cyanide technology. What if they say they won't use cyanide? No pollution. What will they do? The president was willing to renegotiate.

Balázs Scholar. How chosen? It is very open process, every minister could apply if wants. Last year happened that there were two candidates. One dropped the application and the second was not eligible. First it is announced the scholarship is available. Then applicants must sign they are interested. Then a date is given for an interview with the ministerial board, the professors, the RE educators, and some lay elected representatives. Then have to prove the willingness to come to Berkeley to study and pass an English exam.

Partner Church Conference

Bertschausen went over the plans for the conference on Saturday. Cordes emphasized it is important that people understand how solid this organization is for the future.

Budget

A preliminary budget was submitted and reviewed by the treasurer. The board raised the projection for Mission Initiatives to \$30,000. It was decided not to redeem CDs at this time. There was discussion of what to do about legacy gifts or endowment. We create the story of our values and programs with the budget.

Executive Session

At 4:45, the board went into executive session to discuss personnel.

5:01 PM the meeting reconvened. Bertschausen informed Cordes that the board had decided to raise her salary for 2015 to \$70,000.

The Board decided that bonuses will be for part-time and contract staff. The executive director's compensation will be in the salary.

Travel Grants funding is in a restricted fund.

The board agreed that the Executive Director and Travel Committee should consider increasing the allocation of the travel grants and provide increased information about travel grants, including anecdotes about travel grants.

Smith and Cordes left the meeting.

There was a discussion of the break out meetings tomorrow. Then the meeting recessed until Friday, Jan30.

Friday – Jan 30

Present: Jennifer Emrich, Carol Cook, Melody Moberg, Roger Bertschausen, Rick Irwin, Eileen Higgins, Beverly Moore, Ann Gary;

On Zoom: Gary Smith, Cathy Cordes; Kelly Crocker joined at 10:15 am.

Also present: Sandor Kovacs

9:00 - Morning Worship – Jennifer Emrich, Carol Cook, and Rick Erwin

9:42 - Bertschausen called the meeting to order, welcomed all, and virtually lit the chalice

Travel Discussion

Gary explained the task and recorded the responses of the Board in regard to travel plans for the Khasi Hills, Transylvania, Youth, Philippines, other India and Philippines. Many ideas were offered on improving the attractiveness of the pilgrimages. Gary created a chart, which she will send to Smith and Cordes.

Nominating Committee

Kelly Crocker, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported. Four board terms will be up in June. The Board discussed possible nominees for the new terms. The committee will consider balance and diversity on the board with Crocker.

Budget

Cordes and Irwin explained the proposed budget. Some 2014 contributions were received in January and so will show up this year. 2015 contributions received to date: \$2-4K. The deficit is more likely to materialize this year. We are better at fund raising. We are still growing our capacity. We should add an exploratory committee about increasing the dues.

Gary moved, Moore seconded,

Voted: To approve the budget as revised and presented.

GA Events

- The Annual Meeting and luncheon is on Friday.
- There is a special event on Friday at 9:15 PM..
- Board meetings on Thursday and Friday mornings.

Cordes asked for names of people who are coming to GA to invite to the special event.

The board asked Cordes to send an email about inviting people to the event. There will be no charge. Board members should mention the event to contacts when they call them, and put them on list. One can leave message inviting them.

To Do List:

- Forming Futures Team - Smith and Gary,
- Considering membership rates - needs case statement.
- Recognition team - Higgins and Moore.
- Travel - Gary, Higgins, Emrich, Barbara Threet
- CCB - Higgins and Cordes will make recommendations.
- Confirm with Amabile that we are on board for fund raising. Each Board member should give her a status update of contacts and whether to send more. Smith to send reminders to the board.
- Mission Initiatives: Assignments are best done in each group.

Wrap-UP

New Partner Startup Notebook. Cordes showed the board the new and updated notebook on the screen. It is on the website under Partnerships, Resources for partners, to download. At Sarasota,

we were able to point out that answers were in the notebook.

Annual Review of Executive Director. The Board conducted an annual review earlier in the day. Bertschausen read through the recommendations.

PCC Conference. Bertschausen will send a report on tomorrow's conference.

The Winter Board Meeting was adjourned at 11:32 am Friday, Jan 30.

Submitted by Beverly Derington Moore, Secretary

Approved by the Board on March 28, 2015/bdm