

# ***Draft Minutes – to be approved by Board***

## **Minutes for July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025**

Meeting opened at 7:15 by Krista Schneider

Attendance taken at 7:16 by Wes Kalbus:

Present: Krista Schneider (President), Sue Childers (Vice President), Wes Kalbus (Secretary), Wendy Debord, Stasia Hanson, Tk Barger

Absent: Geoff Slawson (Treasurer) and Kathy Crowther

Opening words at 7:16 – Wendy Debord read a quote from Psalms about unity

### **NEW BOARD ACTIVITY**

Krista Schneider introduced icebreaker activity for new board – Think of what we would include in our “dream church”.

- Stasia brought up a new piano as UU’s is out of date. It was suggested that Julia Baldwin’s baby grand piano could be an option as she has been looking to get rid of it.
- Sue would expand UU’s outreach and involvement in social justice.
- Wendy said a kick-ass kitchen because ours is currently quite limited, and Carla does an amazing job with what we have!
- Krista’s idea was a UU bus that could take us to events, protests, and transport people to services.
- Wes Kalbus suggested a nice playground for kids
  - The issues would be with insurance but it is a nice idea
- Tim’s idea was future sanctuary renovation, a building that is larger and fits us better
- Stasia suggested that we should post a copy of the minutes on the website and a physical copy posted in the office, perhaps in a three-ring binder available for public viewing.

**Action Item:** Approve June minutes as submitted

- Stasia moves, Sue seconds
  - Passed unanimously

## TREASURER'S REPORT

*See attached Treasurer's Report for full details*

- Geoff was absent, so the minutes were reviewed briefly by Krista.
- Krista also suggested having a text group for the board.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*See attached President's Report for full details*

- Krista found a report she wrote in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, talking about her dog having puppies, which she included in the president's report
- Improving forums and communication – Stasia has been hyping the website during the sermon and a suggestion was made to make that a regular inclusion in the sermon. The goal is to make the website the primary source for Toledo UU information. There is a calendar on the UU website, so please use it!
- Idea was suggested to bring back Chalice groups to foster unity and communication
  - Angie Fitzpatrick, administrator for the multifaith council, was suggested as someone who has experience as a community organizer as possibly someone who could be involved in this

## MINISTER'S REPORT

*See attached Minister's Report for full details*

- 100 years ago, scopes evolution trial was carried out. Charles Francis Potter, a UU minister, was not allowed to testify as an expert despite being brought in by Clarence Darrow.
- Tim has changed his work week to Sundays-Thursdays, with Friday and Saturday off.
- Jeffrey Maxie has been doing very well as office administrator
  - 10-3, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday are office hours.

- Letter of agreement is coming up for renegotiation, which has to be finalized by spring 2026.
- Tim would like to review and revise the bylaws, which could be done by some of our members with legal experience and other relevant knowledge.
  - Tim feels that our commitment to democratic principles is not as prevalent as it could be in the current iteration of the bylaws.

Behavioral Covenant – something that is not known by many members. Was instituted 10 years ago. Currently aspirational document, has nothing to address what happens when members fall out of covenant.

Krista suggested the board taking a tour of the church, so we are all aware of where various posters, rooms, and bylaws are posted. This lets us also give tours!

## OLD BUSINESS

- Board retreat on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, online via Zoom. Opportunity to meet the board of other congregations, discuss how boards are run, etc.
- Elder's group meeting on zoom at 7:30
- Sue to give update on where we stand on security grant:
  - Stopped because of Trump, assumed it was going to die
  - Funds were released! Working on environmental assessment, quotes gotten for the doors. Assessment is thorough – including ground disturbance, dimensions of the project, etc.
  - There have been additional issues with FEMA funding.

## NEW BUSINESS

Any specific goals for the board or church or personally for the next 2 years.

- Wendy suggested a joint event with other UU congregations, possibly Maumee Valley or BG.
- Cleaning up memory garden was suggested by Stasia Hanson. It is currently full of weeds.
- Solar cells or something else to make money off the back property, already in progress by Dave and Judy Murray.

- Generally cleaning the church – Optimum has been consistently not living up to its name and we would want to change that contract if possible.
- Gini Gottman is working with someone who has experience with disability accessibility and who might want to look around the church to see what could be improved.
- Fire Drill should be organized for a Sunday in fall as we have not done one in years.
- David Strickler's Group has been meeting a lot to talk about investments and financial items. Has been discussion about changing a policy of 5% in socially responsible investing.

## BOARD LIASONS

*Tentative list as we have two absent members, to be updated at future meetings if changes are needed*

Sue Childers: Leading Families Home, Implementation, Social Justice, Kitchen, Safety

Stasia Hanson: Building and Grounds, COSM, Endowment

Kathy Crowther: Caring Circle, Fundraising, Nominating Committee

Wendy Debord: Stewardship, Capital Campaign Committee, Music, RE

Krista Schneider: AV

## FUTURE ITEMS

- What it means to be a chalice circle
- Event for local apartment complex as suggested by Joe Moran – tabled for now
- Letter of agreement is coming up for renegotiation – Stasia, Krista, Susan Smith, Teri Acocks
- Bylaws review/update bylaws, update behavioral covenant - Full board
- Wendy and Kathy coming up with ideas to outreach to other UU congregations
- Figuring out cleaning up memory garden and getting memorial bricks down – Wendy will ask Leitha, and Stasia will ask Ginny Washing if her son can help as he is a bricklayer
- Sue reaching out to safety and security committee for organizing the fire drill. Sue also could organize presentations about safety in various scenarios, such as active

shooter drills – for 9:45 Sundays. Spring could be a good time for tornado drills – can bring to next meeting if needed

- Geoff to double check with bookkeeper about financial statements.

Closing words by TK Barger at 8:31

- Tim emphasized that he is our minister, please reach out to him if you need anything or just want to talk or share a positive memory of your life.
- Discussed in a free religious community, the congregation's relationship to the board and how we need to find more of what this is. The work of the church is the work of the people, it is the work of building the world in which we dream. Related to UU ministry. Service is an act of faith.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35

- Stasia moves, Sue seconds
  - Meeting adjourned unanimously

## **MINISTER'S REPORT**

**July 2025**

**Rev. Dr. TK Barger**

This is the first meeting of the 2025–26 board. Welcome to the new members and officers, as well as the board members in the midst of their terms. I hope this will be a year with good energy and rewarding work for all of us.

Since the last board meeting, I've been concentrating on some particular pursuits and events. I finally have gotten a start on the relaunch of our library. I'm in the midst of entering books into an electronic library catalog and assigning call numbers. Some items will be difficult to get numbers, so at that point I intend to ask one of our retired librarian members to help with those. I'm also preparing library cards for the digital checkout system we'll use. I hope to have it all ready by Ingathering on September 7, and the cards as part of the member packets I'm preparing which will be distributed soon after Ingathering once the new edition of *The Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide* is published.

We've continued the occasional ukulele lessons over the summer, preparing to have a ukulele orchestra play a song or two at the Ingathering service. I'm not sure if the group will continue after that, as the turnout has been light—five or six players at a lesson. I'll be consulting with the music director about the group's continuing after Ingathering.

I'm changing my work week. I had been working my regular 40 hours Saturdays through Wednesdays, with my days off being Thursdays and Fridays. Saturday was my regular sermon-writing day. There is enough room in the schedule to permit about one evening per week for meetings, with a shorter day to compensate. This past year I was a bit better about getting sermons written further in advance, so I'm going to try to have Saturdays as a day off, along with Fridays, and I'll work Sundays through Thursdays. I haven't decided yet which of those workdays will be dedicated to sermon writing, which would be a "do not disturb" day for appointments and other activities.

Jeffrey Maxie has begun his second job at the church, in addition to music director, as office administrator. He has already made some changes, and I'm pleased that he's dedicated to making First Unitarian better. Gini Gottman has continued her good work as director of lifelong learning, plus she gave a summer service (Jeffrey's summer service will be August 17, and also this month we had summer services presented by Rebecca Phillips, Phil Park-Thomas, and Andy Gottman). A year ago I chose to assign summer Sundays to both the director of lifelong learning and the

music director so they could have an “individual” service besides the ones in fall and spring that were representing their program departments. Both departments will also have regular written reports to the board this year.

I have also met with Krista Schneider, our new president, to consider our plans for the year and our working relationship.

There are three things I’m bringing up to the board that we might address this year. The first is that it’s time again for another every-three-years review of my ministerial letter of agreement. An LOA is not a work contract, but is more of a covenant between the congregation (represented by the board) and the called minister. Most of the contents are from a standard letter developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association, and we make some changes for congregation characteristics and needs of the minister and congregation. Because there have been some calls for more review of my work here, rather than have this be developed and negotiated only by the president and the minister, then considered and approved by the board, this year we’ll have the



president, the chair of the Committee on Shared Ministry, and the chair of the Personnel Committee involved. We have the full church year to develop this, so it's not something on which we need to work immediately.

The second thing is our bylaws. I have asked in the past that we have a bylaws review and revise them, rather than amend the existing ones. There are provisions that I think should be in the bylaws but aren't (such as having the possibility of people being on the ballot who want to serve but are not on the nominating committee slate), and structures put into the bylaws but never developed (the area councils) that might be considered for change or deletion. I would like to be a member of the bylaws review committee, as I have relevant background from previous career work as a legal editor and with legislation; I don't think it's appropriate that I take the lead in revising the bylaws.

The third item is our behavioral covenant. We have had it for 15 years, and it seems to be an aspirational document on what we want to be while having no mechanisms for dealing with people who might be out

of covenant. It's a difficult challenge to recognize that, while we welcome all, there can be times when we have to limit some people's participation for the good of the congregation. The behavioral covenant might be the right vehicle to address that.

Also this past month, I attended a special meeting of our elders, as we examine how to understand some recent congregational conflict. I attended other regular church meetings. I gave some pastoral care. I presided at a wedding (actually a vow renewal), and members of that family might join our church as members. And I was part of a group advocating for social justice (other Toledo Unitarians there were Krista Schneider and Tina Baker) that attended a board meeting of the Corrections Center of Northwest Ohio about its contract with Immigrations and Customs Enforcement to house detained immigrants; I was one of four people to speak before the board, and I emphasized the golden rule and that many sacred texts emphasize that strangers be welcomed. That received some media attention, too.

Let's have a good year.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Tim

**First Unitarian Church of Toledo**

**July 2025 President's Report**

**Krista Schneider**

I'll be brief. I've only been president for 22 days, so there's really not a whole lot to report. And, I have a very sore left thumb which makes it a bit painful to type.

This is my first President's Report for First Unitarian Church of Toledo. For some reason, it feels a bit daunting, and I have procrastinated completing it. I don't really know why. I have written many reports over the course of my work and school life. In fact, recently when I was going through some old boxes of school papers and pictures that I got from my dad's basement, I came across a report about my dog that I wrote in second grade.

MY DOG IS 2 ½ YEARS OLD AND SHE HAD 2 BATCHES OF PUPPIES AND SHE IS PREGNANT NOW HER NAME IS BRUNHILDA SHE EATS ALMOST ANYTHING WE LOVE HER VERY MUCH SHE IS A THOROUGHLY BRED DACHSHUND SHE IS 30 ,, LONG AND 10 ,, TALL AND SHE HAS BROWN EYES SHE IS BLACK AND BROWN I PLAY WITH HER A LOT SHE SLEEPS A LOT TOO SHE HAS 8 BOOBS

I don't think that anything I write in this report will be able to compete with that. But here goes:

I have been adapting to my new duties as church president and learning a lot about all that is involved. I am now part of an email discussion group for board presidents of UU churches in the Central East Region (CER), where many different governance issues are discussed, for example, the different church security measures that congregations have adopted, or what the different ways are that churches in the region engage with political or social issues in their communities.

I have signed our board up for an August Zoom UUA retreat/training with other boards in the CER region.

I'm working to better familiarize myself with the current systems in place here at the Toledo church. I met with Rev. Tim, Stasia Hanson, and Jeffrey Maxie to have a preliminary discussion about updating important church forms and procedures as well as updating our systems for recordkeeping and calendars. One of my goals for this year is to make sure that information is readily available and easily accessible to folks when they need it and that we have important dates that require action or spending on a calendar well out into the future. We talked about the continued improvements of our webpage, and making sure that congregants are fully aware of the information there. We plan to go through the webpage together as a board at an upcoming meeting.

I have tried to engage with our social media more and also had several in-person discussions with congregants who wanted to voice their thoughts about church matters. One person that I spoke with offered to help facilitate an audit, which is something that I feel the church should definitely pursue in the next quarter, after our new bookkeeper has settled into her position. Another wanted to help with hosting events, which led to a discussion about being more deliberate and strategic about our fundraising efforts.

I am trying to attend committee meetings and talk to congregants as much as possible. I have participated in the Caring Circle meetings, the Unitarian Action meetings, and a meeting of past and current church leaders called by our Committee on Shared Ministry. I am also trying to represent our church in the community and was happy to attend a press conference and protest with Rev. Tim regarding the ICE contract that is held by a Lucas County jail.

I am sure that these reports will evolve, and focus will shift toward board and church activities as my two-year term proceeds. I hope that the next two years bring membership growth, greater congregant participation in church activities, and a sense of beloved community between us all. Peace.

## **First Unitarian Church of Toledo**

### **Treasurers Report**

### **July 22 2025**

\* Add Money Market account to our list to take advantage of credit earned on money in Capital Campaign while waiting on projects to be estimated, approved by the board and

then jobbed out. On July 10th, both Board President Krista and Treasurer Geoff Opened this account while they updated the check signing card.

Bank Balances as of Monday morning July 21, 2025

Gen Oper Huntington Operating Checking ... 8113	\$39,954.24	TEAL
Biz Premier Money Market - Non Prof ... 0069	\$1,743.13	(The Evening Alliance and Layman's League)
CAPITAL CAMP 2024 Huntington 24 Checking ... 6407	\$10,914.73	
Money Market Acct ... 1210	\$90,000.00	
<u>Total in Capital Campaign now \$100,914.73</u>		
FEMA Secure Huntington Unlimited ... 7687		\$85.00

The Trust Company currently total \$350,226.90

July 16, we applied for the Office Administrator credit card. This is used to order office supplies, website fees and other purchases ordered on line. The credit card for Jesse was destroyed and will be turned off.

The credit card closing date was the 16th of the month. I worked with the bank to move it back as far in the month so that all future reports from the bookkeeper will be the same month accurate. Now 26th.

Currently we have \$603 value in our awards program. This will grow in the coming months and I recommend, in December we secure Gift Cards for the employee Year End bonus. Previously this has come from the ministers flexible funds. This is new from the credit cards.

This being the first board meeting of the new fiscal year, I wanted to update everyone on the process in which we handle money.

\* Duties of those who deal with the financials of our church from the UUA Guidelines. .

- \* The Counters do just that, count the money. There are always at least 2 of them who are non related working on the count. That is done twice a month and deposited to the bank the same day.
- \* The bookkeeper does not handle any money, can write checks but not authorized to sign them.
- \* The Treasurer can not write checks, can sign checks, does not count money and does not even know the combination of the office safe. The treasurer does review the credit cards weekly and has authority to turn on and turn off a credit card thru the bank website. Also the treasurer is notified every day by the bank of the current balance which would also alert them to any large unexpected money movements. Also has access to Bill Pay which the bank endorses as safer money management.
- \* All of our utilities are paid by direct withdrawal from our account, which are also reviewed on a weekly basis.

This quote from the UUA Congregational Handbook. Segregation of financial Duties.

All financial best practices depend on reducing the risk of embezzlement or theft by increasing transparency and detection by creating systems and roles that segregate key duties.

Here are some general rules to use in your congregation:

- People who control budget line items or make purchases should not be allowed to sign checks or maintain the financial records or reports.
- Office Admin and other employees can order products with credit cards that are monitored weekly by the treasurer. None of them can write checks.
- People who handle collections or deposits should not be allowed to sign checks or maintain the financial records or reports.
- The counter committee has no access to checks or financial records.
- People who sign checks should not be allowed to handle deposits or maintain the financial records or reports.
- Treasurer signs and President are authorized to sign checks. They do not count money and book keeper creates all reports.
- People who maintain the financial records or reports should not be allowed to sign checks or handle collections or deposit.
- The bookkeeper maintains financial records and can not sign checks and does not handle any money.

I would like to start adding an article to the FYI of new updates from the Treasurer. Of course I would include the board members with the news so they are aware before it “hits the streets”.

For example it could include.... Things to come.... We already have Square Up as a payment processing service. They don't charge a fee even if you don't have any charges that month. We can use it on our website, and even at the Rummage sale. We can appoint cashiers as a “team member” so they can accept credit card payments on the spot which help to encourage people to buy a bit more than just paying cash. Each “team member” needs to have a Apple phone with the software installed. I'll work with volunteers to set that up. That can also be use for ticket sales at concerts we host here or other events too. We plan to run it concurrently with Vanco and Venmo then I'll analyze it to see which is more efficient and also cost effective. Our new Bookkeeper, Lou Ann Flick, is setting up a system so we can answer, at any time, “how much have I contributed to the church”? Many members don't keep a copy of their pledge page, or they just wonder where they are in there annual contributions, both in the pledge and the Capital Campaign. This will also be utilized in the new quarterly statements going out to each member. To save postage we will hand them out in church for a couple weeks, then mail those that are not picked up. This information in real time will help us to keep up to date on where the money is coming from and when it will be received.

Our new Bookkeeper, Lou Ann Flick is actually an accountant.

With that she brings a more analytical view of how we do things. She is also from the office that I was recommending to do our financial book review. Some call it an audit, and others have referred to it as a Compilation, which is all that is required of a not for profit church like ourselves. There is a difference in the amount charged for the review.

Pledges. Last year pledges were just over \$200,000 and the year coming up is at 185,000. That averages out to \$15,456 per month with it heavily weighted to the first half, which means more income from now till the end of the year. Last month pay roll was \$12,605,76. So we can meet pay roll but with the pledges not much else. So I need to emphasize the need for additional fund raisers. With new and active committees we can even it out for the second half of the fiscal year.

Respectfully submitted

Geoff Slawson

Treasurer

First Unitarian Church of Toledo

July Board meeting.