

UNITY CHURCH OF ALBANY
Minutes of the Board of Trustees' Meeting
September 16, 2021

Participating in Board Meeting (via Zoom call, 5:00 PM EST): Peggy Kaufman, president; Carol Morris, vice president; Karin Reinhold, treasurer; Patricia Wood, secretary; Dottie Frament, trustee; Heather Diddel, trustee; Dave Ferrill, alternate trustee; Rev. Roger Mock, assistant minister

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:10 pm.
2. **Approval of September 16th Agenda:** Motion/second/approved.
3. **Approval of August 19th Board Meeting Minutes:** Motion/second/approved.
4. **Congregational Remarks:** A member passed along a comment that several congregants were unaware of how to submit suggestions to the Board. After some discussion, consensus was that the Board needed to do a better job communicating its openness in getting feedback. Roger will add a slide to the weekly service PowerPoint slides to include the Board email address and telephone extension.
5. **President's Report:** Peggy Kaufmann reported that the fall spirit groups would focus on the book "Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself" by Michael Singer. There was a need for more folks to serve as hosts for these groups, as only three people had volunteered to date.

She noted the need to schedule the next Town Hall Meeting, and after consideration of various events, the date of Sunday, October 24th was chosen. Topics for the Town Hall would include church finances, the Search and Find Team update, and church safety precautions during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Peggy had written an article in the recent newsletter on Sacred Service, highlighting the wonderful efforts of Susan Attila. She had asked Pat Wood to write future Sacred Service articles for the newsletter. Peggy proposed that the Board set a date for a virtual Board retreat, and the date of September 24th was set (note: the date was later changed to Saturday, October 16th.) She welcomed suggestions for agenda discussion topics.

Peggy reported that she was planning on participating in the virtual Unity Northeastern Regional Conference taking place during the first week of October.

6. **Staff Reports:** Roger reported that he continued to schedule Sunday service speakers into the fall months. He announced that for the coming months, the more expansive newsletter would be distributed once per month, with a shorter version with event reminders mid-month. The next newsletter would be distributed on October 1st.
7. **Finance Report:** Karin Reinhold reported on church finances. Income for August was \$10,602, and expenses were \$13,688, resulting in a deficit of \$3,086. Karin noted that love offerings/donations were the lowest in three years. It was believed that this was due to significantly lower in-person attendance due to the Covid 19 pandemic and many congregants' reluctance to attend public gatherings. Per the Board's decision last month, the August church tithes went to assist the church's maintenance staff member, Danny Moore, as he worked with church members to secure stable housing after his recent surgery. She reported that more individuals were using the new online donation program, Vanco, which allowed for love offerings to be directed towards specific funds. A motion was made to accept the finance report; motion was seconded and approved.
8. **Church Re-Opening Issues:** The Board discussed issues regarding the Church's re-opening to public gatherings over the past two months. To ensure the safety of all service participants, the Board had established a cap of forty attendees per service, with masks and pre-registration required. Since the mid-July re-opening, attendance had been low, averaging fewer than 20 people per service. Many people still had strong reservations about in-person gatherings, and this was likely the case behind the low attendance. It was suggested that the pre-registration requirement be suspended, but all attendees would still be required to wear masks and to sign-in for each service. Roger commented that for the One Song services it would be helpful for ushers to be assigned to these events. In the meantime, Roger will set up a sign-up sheet on a music stand, for people to sign upon entry.
9. **Adjournment: Board Meeting:** The meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m. The Board then entered Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.
10. **Adjournment: Executive Session:** The Executive Session concluded at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia Wood, Secretary, Board of Trustees