

University Congregational United Church of Christ - Church Council Agenda

6:45 pm – 9 pm Wednesday, May 20, 2020

Time	Topic	Purpose	Lead/Presenter	Pg #
6:45	Gathering			
7:00	Declaration of Quorum		Moderator	
	Prayer		Todd	
	What of life's happenings would you like to share with this circle of church?	Circle of Sharing	All	
	Grounding for our work and ministry.	Growing in our faith	Catherine	
	Consent Agenda	Approve or move for discussion	Margaret	
	Minutes of April 2020 Council Meeting		Margaret	13-14
	Reports/Old Business			
	Financial report (PPP, online giving, special offering, pledges vs budget, OCWM)	Review, discuss	Don	
	Ministries and Leadership Staff Reports: How are our ministries living out their goals during this pandemic time?	Information-sharing	Ministry Reps and Leadership Staff	2-12
	New Business			
	AIR - At-large Rep to Council	Church governance and policy	Margaret	15
	AIR - Officer elections	Church governance and policy	Margaret	16
	AIR - Confirm committee chairs, new liaisons	Church governance and policy	Margaret	17
	Honor outgoing members		Terry	
	Gavel hand off		Terry/Margaret	
	Update: other Annual Meeting communication		Terry	
	Parish aid fund update		Catherine/Kyna	
	AIR - LT portfolio recommendation committee		Terry	18
	AIR - Interim Search Committee expenses		Todd	19
	AIR - Community Investment Committee		Don/Kyna	20
	Principles on when/how we can re-gather		Amy	21

8:45	Once Around			
8:55	Closing Prayer		Amy	

Next Meetings

- Council – June 17, 2020

Leadership staff time away TODD VACATION end of May

COUNCIL REPORTS

Leadership Team Council Report

~Amy Roon, Catherine Foote, Todd Smiedendorf

We have moved from the initial period of adaptation (March – April) and have entered a middle phase: the long liminal where we have left past patterns yet have not arrived yet in any sort of lasting physical regathering that we might recognize. We are into the new connection “norm” of online, phone, and physically distant connections as church. Given all factors, we as a church have adapted well so far. Yet, we recognize this adaptation is a greater or lesser change with greater or lesser consequences for different individuals in our congregation and without.

We continue as a staff and clergy team to adapt our work practices to do the work of the church. We enjoy successes and satisfaction as new skills and projects and patterns are shown to work. We redirect and re-shape our efforts when they don’t.

In this long liminal time, we recognize that the toll, emotional, cognitive, and financial, will accumulate and that pacing and renewal will be required. We are seeing unfolding scenarios that make regathering safely in old ways a significant challenge. Yet, we know that this long liminal reality makes our connecting to Spirit and with each other more important than ever to maintain. By all creative means possible, we continue to focus on new sustainable ways of connecting and serving be it by virtue of Home Circles, Covenant Circles, or other intentional means of virtual gathering. These connections are our manna in the wilderness.

As we continue to be church amidst this new pattern of connecting, our learning continues on how to interpret and express the Gospel. It is time also to keep our broad view of that Gospel expression, looking and listening for God’s call to minister to our city, region, and nation as well.

We continue to look forward, to listen to credible sources, and to discern what ways we can gather and serve as this new reality evolves.

Keep praying, keep connecting, keep being the church.

Amy Roon

Important highlights from this past month:

- Working with the Sabbatical Committee on the Lily Grant Application. The Lily Grant seeks to “strengthen Christian congregations by providing opportunities for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection.” The vision for this time is a two-month journey to Malawi and Ethiopia in fall of 2021, to explore African heritage from a place of deep belonging while enabling our congregation to deepen its understandings of the racial justice journey we are taking here at home. The theme chosen for the sabbatical application is “I Am Because We Are: A Journey Toward Belonging” (grounded in the African ethic of Ubuntu). The committee members are

Kathryn Robinson, Tom Vasquez, Becca McMullen, Kathy Williams, Toni Higgs, Trent Siegel and they will be working on the application and efforts to engage the congregation in the Ubuntu ethic leading up to and during the sabbatical time.

- Supporting Heidi during this time of transition, and supporting the Worship and Music Committee as they begin the search for Heidi's replacement. The personnel committee has approved a proposal to seek a Transitional Music Director, at 25 hours per week and full benefits. This role is hired by the Worship & Music Committee with the support of the Minister of Worship and Christian Education. The reality of the pandemic and social distancing is particularly difficult for the choir, and pastoral care is a priority as well as communicating a plan for hiring the new Transitional Music Director: with the job description posted by the end of this month, interviews happening in July, with the hope that a hiring decision has been made by the beginning of August. Heidi is working to facilitate some music opportunities for the summer.
- Weekly online worship continues to be a major technical achievement, and it is worth lifting up gratitude for all those whose efforts support our weekly worship production. In particular, let's celebrate the work of Trent Siegel, whose professional video editing skills and deep care for this church community has made all the difference in our transition from in person to online worship.
- Continued work with the Christian Education Ministry, as they settle into new patterns of virtual connection. Celebrating the work of outgoing Director of Children's Ministry Betsy Herring, and welcoming Interim Director of Children's Ministry Jennifer Butner. In an effort to align the responsibility and authority of the Director-level roles leading Children and Youth Ministry, Personnel has approved a proposal to move Jennifer Butner and Margaret Swanson to salaried positions instead of hourly. This is part of an ongoing effort to empower these roles and to grow the CE Ministry.
- Prayerful discernment around the question of "when can we gather in person again?"

Catherine Foote

- What has been your focus this last period?

Pastoral care, Worship, Bible Study, Love and Justice, developing small groups, developing more capacity to use technology, Gathering Ground work

- What joys have you experienced?

Worship continues to be a highlight of my week as well as Bible Study. The release of my book and the Story Night celebration. learnings, seeing the community come together in new ways.

It continues to be a joy to work with Kyna Shilling on issues of communication, administration, budgeting and justice. She is an excellent leader and just the person for our congregation's finances and operation at this time.

It has been a joy to work with Carol Coleman on Parish care connections and congregational life.

It has been a joy to see our Love and Justice ministry respond to this crisis in generous ways.

- What have been your challenges?

Staying connected and helping others stay connected.

- How is the partnership between your ministry, other ministries, and the church council working for you?

In this time it feels like every ministry is stepping up to its calling in profound ways so that we are working together to stay connected, to care for one another, and to be the church the world needs us to be in this time. Thank you all.

- Considering these things, what reflections do you have for church leadership?

I continue to encourage us all to care for ourselves and one another. As we spend more time in this physical distancing let's continue to dream of new ways to be church. Let us know what you need. Help where you can. And know that God will lead us through, together.

Todd Smiedendorf

- How is your ministry adapting to the pandemic?

In general, OK. A strange norm has been reached as my computer screen and Zoom seems like an office "place", my spouse and I negotiate workspace in the house, and while my eyes see Boulder County out my windows I am thinking of the Sound and its people and creatures.

- What have you learned?

That we as a church institution are more resourced for change than I expected. Often, an institution of the age of UCUC has its established strength accompanied by a lack of agility and an inability to change. I have found UCUC a congregation overcoming those trends at this time.

- What joys have you experienced?

Watching UCUC overcoming the usual resistances to change of such church institutions. It has been a salve for my own grief over what is happening. It has also been a joy (though in a strange form) to be home in Colorado.

- What have been your challenges?

To stay connected in the broader range of relationships beyond immediate staff and lay leader relationships. This was more possible and efficient while onsite and gathering in person.

To grieve this pandemic change and loss while staying active and learning new forms of workflow.

- How is the partnership between your ministry, other ministries, and the church council working for you?

Given circumstances, I am satisfied with the emerging patterns of this new position of Minister of Vision and Stewardship. It is still early in the process (also amidst pandemic). More to come.

- Considering these things, what reflections do you have for church leadership?

Mostly, to resist the temptation to wonder when we will be going back to normal and to be reflecting on and moving to meet the liminal present and a new future with creativity, courage, and compassion.

Kyna Shilling

- How are you and your team adapting to the pandemic?

We're slowly settling into a pandemic rhythm. The office staff is connecting each day for a video check-in, to help us stay accountable and collaborative. The custodial team is working new/reduced hours in the building, support the essential programs taking place there (Teen Feed - 6 days a week, UDYC - every day 9:00 - 6:00 pm, CLCC - open to serve children of essential workers) and working on special projects. Sione has been able to use this time to finish his Facilities Management course!

- What have you been working on?

I created "contract tracing" sheets which have been posted on each door so we can track who is in the building, and keep the space clean. I did a cyber security assessment with CG tech, and am taking steps to make working from home more secure. And after a harrowing process, we finally got approved for the Paycheck Protection Program loan/grant through the SBA, which funded last week. This is really exciting news! With the increased liquidity that this funding provides, the Stewardship & Finance Committee has voted to send the remainder of our annual balance of OWCM funds to the Pacific NW Conference this month.

- What joys have you experienced?

I continue to find joy in collaborating with the leadership team and UCUC staff as we face this unprecedented time with creativity and courage. I am enjoying getting to attend UCUC and Plymouth worship services on Sunday (instead of having to choose between them). I am appreciative of the ways this job involves both granularity and opportunities for vision, for spreadsheets and creative writing. I am loving getting to know the congregation (I had a particularly wonderful zoom meeting with the UCUC Horizon House group). I also appreciate the chance to be involved in discussions of justice, and anti-bias work with Cynthia and Diane.

- What have been your challenges?

The bookkeeping has been the most difficult to transition to a work-from-home model, so we've hired a retired accountant named Judy Horton to assist Su with data entry and to support best practices for cash/check handling. And... working from home can be frustrating, zoom calls can be exhausting, and there are times of deep grief for all the things that are no longer possible. We're all struggling with this.

- Considering these things, what reflections do you have for church leadership?

I'm proud of the ways our church leadership has stepped up + stepped into this pandemic time. We've changed and grown so much, so quickly, with compassion and humor and prayerful support of each other. I'm grateful to be part of it.

Moderator's Report

~Margaret Stine

In this my final report to council as Moderator, I would like to take time to thank all of you and those who served in leadership before you, for being on this part of our walk together in church. There have been many joys, a few unexpected twists, more unexpected twists, community, and isolation. We got a big kick into finding new ways to be together, and stay together, and ponder the meaning of church 3.0.

We are still in a space of exploration and discernment regarding the shape and makeup of church leadership going forward. A search committee is formed and beginning to meet and prepare for their task. A separate committee will meet to revisit and complete the process of assigning leadership roles to the pastors. Thank you to the members for continuing this long and complicated journey. More details on these items will be discussed during the reports.

The shut down caused by the pandemic has obviously had major impacts on all aspects of the church, and we don't have a grasp on when any significant new permanence can be expected. An extended state of flux without a capacitor. We are OK financially, but not unscathed as a community. The needs that existed before are still present, mingled with the new needs and uncertainties.

Thank you to all those who have plumbed the financial needs, and those who have reached out to hold our friends near and far. Thank you to all who have just carried on and led us in worship and in fellowship.

I can't speak much as to specifics of what went on this month in meetings and planning, because with my deep gratitude, Terry and Ed have stepped up and really taken on the reins this past month. They have been terrific in working with the new committees and keeping the process moving forward. I know the church is in such good hands with these two in leadership.

Finally I want to thank our leadership staff for everything you do to be guides, and teachers, and a prayerful presence. Thank you for invitations, opportunities, and support. You are all very special.

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE MINISTRY REPORT

submitted by Roger Garrett

Financials (Preliminary YTD thru 3/2020)

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- Revenues \$46.8K favorable compared to YTD budget of \$333.6K
- Expenses \$17.6K favorable compared to YTD budget of \$379.6K, largely due to timing differences
- Net Position \$64.4K favorable compared to YTD budget of (\$46.1K)

Regular Business

- Kyna provided an update on church activities in response to COVID-19. Other than the janitors, all staff are now working from home and measures are continuing to be undertaken to enhance work at home capabilities. Day-to-day groups that use the church facility, such as Teen Feed, the child care center, and UDYC are continuing to use the facilities, and in some cases, expanding to better manage social distancing.
- Kyna and Don provided an update on the emergency response financial planning initiative, which is made up of the three pastors, Kyna, Don, and Roger. The team is in the process of forecasting a revenue shortfall (currently estimated at somewhere between \$150-200K) and an increased need for parish aid (perhaps a similarly sized number). The church has made an application for the Paycheck Protection Program, which will cover up to 2.5x monthly payroll which has now been approved and should cover most of our anticipated revenue shortfall. The team is exploring options to bolster the parish aid fund and have identified a few potential sources, such as the New Initiatives fund and the Dale Turner Legacy fund. These potential transfers will require action by various church committees and, in some cases, Council.
- The finance committee approved a motion to transfer the entire balance of \$23.9K from the Audit Reserve fund to parish aid.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT

submitted by Priscilla Grundy

At its meeting on Sunday, May 17, the Worship and Music committee approved the mission statement:

The worship and music committee advises on and supervises the spiritual and devotional life of the church and all services of public worship, including advice on and assistance with the sacraments of baptism and communion and oversight of the ushers ministry. Worship and music planning supports and implements the declarations, actions and other policy directions of the congregation and Council. The committee also advises on and supervises the music and liturgical arts programs and personnel of the church and has responsibility for the care of the musical instruments and liturgical banners and paraments owned by the church.

Discussion of the online church service noted challenges in reaching those who do not use computers but also the opportunity to reach out to people not geographically near or previously associated with the church.

Search for a new music director: a job description may be complete by the Wednesday Council meeting. Assembling a search committee is under way.

Plans for celebration of Heidi's contribution to the church are under way. The board plans to assist in that process.

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

submitted by Tim Croll and Virginia Felton, Search Committee Co-chairs

The Pastoral Search Committee has now met three times via Zoom and will meet once again before the Council meeting, as our established weekly meeting is on Tuesday evening.

The team is being led by co-chairs Tim Croll and Virginia Felton. Committee members include the following: Bob Perkins, Cara Helmer, Emily Morishima, Fred Heidrich, Joyce Jackson, Linda Scott, Lori VanderBilt, Rachel Schmidt and Terry Moore.

After an initial organizational meeting, we spent one meeting with Conference Minister Mike Denton. He helped us understand the overall process and the role of the national and conference-level church in the process and cautioned us that a search and call process during this pandemic might, indeed, be a bumpy road. It may affect the number of ministers seeking a new call and make it more difficult for us to discern who might best fit our needs.

We spent our third meeting working with consultants Cynthia McLeod and Diane Schmitz, who have worked with our church on racial justice issues. Our goal in inviting them to meet with us was to better understand how we can neutralize the effects of our biases on the search and call process.

In the next several meetings we plan finish preparing our Local Church Profile, which is the first step in being able to advertise for a new minister. Ministers who are seeking a new call read through these profiles to find out what churches are seeking new ministers and to discern whether a church might be a fit for them. We await clarity from the Church Council about which ministerial role we will be seeking to fill before we can complete and post our Local Church Profile.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY REPORTS

Youth Ministry Committee

submitted by Margaret Swanson, Director of Youth Ministry

What we've focused on:

In April, we focused on our virtual/digital ministry format for youth and parent ministry. Events we did via zoom were 9am Sunday morning Youth Group, 9am Sunday morning parents of youth gathering, Letter Writing (a 3 week series) with Cat Gipe Stewart, Youth Mental Health Check In with Bruce Wilson (2 check ins) and a few cooking events. We have sensed a shift of folks needs at the start of May. High school youth in particular are feeling busier and have full schedules. So, we're sensing that family's needs are different. We're continuing to evaluate our events (the types and the frequency) to help make sure we're meeting the needs of our youth and families.

For May and June we are working on planning Youth Worship (May 31), the End Of Year Party (June 7), and some celebration events for the H.S. Seniors.

UPDATES ON APRIL & EARLY MAY EVENTS:

Sunday Morning Youth Group:

We have been running 9am Youth Group on Sunday mornings via zoom since March 15th. Starting in April, we began helping the youth plan Youth Worship. The theme is around keeping hope, joy and faith in this Covid time. The youth really wanted to be able to share their perspective. Youth Worship is May 31st and we are feeling good about it.

Parent Ministry Gatherings:

Gatherings for parents of youth on Sunday at 9am began back in March. First by Kim Segall, then Toni Higgs led a few and now Rebecca Schmidt is leading a few. We are grateful for the space made available for parents to check in and connect.

Letter Writing (3 week series):

For 3 weeks in April, youth and leaders Cat and Margaret got together to write letters/cards for others. It was a small attendance, but meaningful for the people who came. Cat did a wonderful job of giving us prompts (write letters of gratitude, encouragement, connection and more). She gave prompts, offered quotes to use and played music as we all wrote. It was a fun and good connecting time.

Youth Mental Wellness Check-In:

Rev. Bruce Wilson who is both a chaplain and a licensed mental health counselor. Margaret asked Bruce to lead an info and check in time to help youth learn coping skills and have a safe space to check in. It was well attended for the first gathering so we offered another one two weeks after. There were less attendees the second time, but we might offer the gathering again in a few weeks at a different time.

Other gatherings:

We have also done a few baking events – Rice Pudding in April and making Scones in early May. We are also doing a Middle School Game Night in this week and a baking event to make cinnamon bread this weekend.

May 9: Digital Mindfulness Series:

We cancelled our March event to show the second video in the Screenagers series: “The Next Chapter”. The Screenagers group moved to offering their videos digitally, so on May 9th, we offered our 2nd event in the Digital Mindfulness event. Our third offering in the series was originally scheduled for May 9th – a workshop with Christina Malecka. We decided that that event is better in person, so we’re hoping to schedule that in the fall.

YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAM – GOING FORWARD:

End of year events:

We are working on planning our End of Year Party that is scheduled for June 7th. That will likely be on zoom, though the youth ministry committee is considering whether there’s a way to do an in-person, but distanced, gathering at a parking lot or something. Lynn Schafer and Margaret are working on some celebration surprises for our H.S. Seniors. More to be revealed later.

Summer:

At the May Youth Ministry Committee meeting the committee decided to postpone the H.S. Mission trip that was originally set to be the last week of June. We hope to go ahead and plan it for August. We are in touch with the folks on San Juan Islands that we were going to work with to see if August will work for them. If we are not able to meet in person, Margaret has some ideas of ways we could do a local service week – yard work or other things for elders (in our church community or others).

Currently the M.S. Mission Trip is still set for its original dates in July. We will make decisions as we get closer.

Youth Group gatherings at 9am on Sunday will continue on into June. Normally we end our gatherings in May, but given what we’re going through, we will continue through June. Come July we will re-evaluate. Our guess is that we will still gather weekly but maybe it will be at a different day of the week or time.

We have lots of ideas for fun events we can do. Currently our energy is around Youth Worship and the End of Year celebrations. But after that, we have several ideas of things we can do to keep youth and families connected and engaged.

Children’s Ministry

submitted by Jennifer Butner, Interim Director of Children’s Ministry

Dear Council,

This is my first report to you. In my understanding, Tim Johnson usually provides a report. We can all rejoice with him, Ashleigh and Apollo that their new baby Evangeline has entered the world and they are all quite busy. I’ll provide this quick synopsis of our last Christian Education meeting.

Alongside John Worthington, we reviewed the challenges and joys of recruiting liturgists, bringers of light and leaders of the opening words. John shared that he finds that the feeling he gets from parents of light bearers and opening word readers is one of overwhelm. There is a great deal going on in the lives of elementary schoolers and there are few that jump at the chance to lead right now. On the other hand, those that do jump at the chance

would be willing to lead every single time! Similarly, there is a challenge, especially for our elders, to manage the technology necessary to feel confident reading and recording the scripture, then submitting the recordings. Some on the board recommended having tech deacons or some who might have skills to share be available to offer coaching so that more folks might be comfortable/able to be liturgists. We join John in prayer for this ministry, for the liturgy is the work of all the people.

The majority of the rest of the meeting was devoted to an important conversation about our ministry as Christian Education and more broadly, the way we experience and/or need church to be in this new time. I had asked the board to consider the question, "What is church to you?" I asked folks to answer the question from their own individual perspective and also, if they could stretch their imagination, to answer from the perspective of a parent with a child in the program and from the perspective of a child. This was a deep, brave and moving conversation.

It is difficult to summarize such a wide ranging conversation, but I will offer these summary points:

- There is a great longing to "see" one another.
- There is an unmet need for some children to connect with church friends.
- Some children are overwhelmed with online meetings and/or do not find any sense of connection while online.
- Finding an "anchor" point: people we know, seeing our church sanctuary or various places inside or outside the building, hearing familiar liturgy/songs/prayers/scripture. Some members called this idea "orienting".
- Connecting in new ways as a family. Some mentioned doing things for each other that they used to have others do for them.
- Families with young children notice a new understanding of communion. We talked a long time about the "rules" in most traditions about who says the words and breaks the bread, etc. It has been empowering to many families to do many of the elements of worship themselves.
- It has been moving to see inside other church members' homes as they give/receive communion as a family. This has fostered connection and been moving.
- Some members talked about church bringing a sense of belonging to a family and to something beyond.

We ran out of time before our needed discussion of how to recognize the achievements and transitions of children and youth (and others). Graduations and transitions and all sorts of "moving up" from one thing to another. Program staff will discuss this make plans as needed before our next meeting.

Lecture Series Committee

submitted by Betty Speith-Croll

What has been your focus this last period?

The Lecture Series (TLS) committee met recently, for the first time in well over a year. A couple new program ideas are bubbling up that we discussed and are taking next steps on though nothing is set in stone yet. The first idea is an online series of sessions with previous Lecture Series speakers along with potentially some new speakers. Details of the series are yet to be determined. The second idea would be a large in-person event with a target date of late May 2021. We recognize even a year out may be too soon to host such an in-person gathering, so this event remains fluid with many details to consider.

What joys have you experienced?

The Lecture Series hasn't hosted an event since February 2019 (Rev. Dr. Jim Antal) and we are frequently asked if there will be more lectures. It's a joy to think we may be coming back with new learning opportunities for our

UCUCC community and the region. Hopefully something will firm up and we'll be back. The committee members that were present for the recent Zoom meeting were very happy to be back together.

What have been your challenges?

Committee membership is changing due to age and ability to engage in Lecture Series planning and event hosting. These events take a lot of work and many volunteers so we hope to build the committee out more.

How is the partnership between your ministry, other ministries, and the church council working for you?

Because we've been on hiatus, TLS doesn't have an active partnership with the ministry or church council. Suggestions welcome.

Considering these things, what reflections do you have for church leadership?

We'd welcome anyone interested in The Lecture Series to get in touch to hear your thoughts on our continued programming.

Seabeck Committee

Submitted by Gina Massoni

The Seabeck Committee met in person in February and by zoom last night (=5/13). We had just sent out registration packets for our All Church Summer Camp and begun to accept registration forms when the stay-at-home time period began. We contributed individual videos for a composite Seabeck Sunday video reminding people of why we love going to camp and holding out hope for holding camp. Then we've stayed home holding onto the hope of being able to actually go to camp. The Seabeck Conference Center was also holding onto this hope and in the meantime prepared to provide space for shelter-in-place for their county residents (which had not been needed as of early of May).

Last week, a formal decision was announced that we will not be able to gather in person in our large group of around 200 church friends, and that we will move to holding Seabeck as a virtual camp experience. The committee members are still trying to wrap our brains around exactly what this will look like but there is a strong commitment to hold onto our traditions, like having the camp! and including a talent show, morning devotions, the women's song circle, cabin graces, and campfire. We think it may be a very important time for our church to come together in the midst of this year of change and uncertainty.

Our speaker Professor David Roon has agreed to step up to this new version and has begun preparing a full adult program. Our new Children's Ministry Coordinator Jennifer Butner has begun working on programming for our elementary and youngest cohort and we expect that the same will be true for the middle & high school groupings once we are able to check in with Margaret Iribarra-Swanson.

We have confirmed that the church office will be able to help us set up an online registration process similar to what has been used for other church events like Moving Mountains. We expect to charge a program fee using a supporting/supported/sustaining fee structure and to encourage additional donations for the support of the conference center as they are deeply impacted by not being able to host large groups this year.

We will likely need some technical support with video production and broadcasting, with Zoom events/feeds, and additional volunteers to host various parts. We welcome creative ideas and especially reminders of what your favorite parts of Seabeck are and how we can continue them as best we can. We will also need your support to promote the event and to encourage us when our grief surfaces about all that we cannot do this year.

Calling, Engagement, and Community Ministry Report

submitted by Ed Coleman

The various elements of the CEC Ministry continue to chart a path forward in the midst of these Covid-19 days. What a month ago seemed like the end of a sprint to address the immediate needs surrounding physical

separation of our congregation, it now seems like we must settle into what could be a very long period of “abnormality” that may evolve into a new normal that is different in many ways from what we have all known as the life of UCUC.

Here is a list of things that have taken place with involvement from those within CEC Ministry:

- The role of the Zoom online connection tool for UCUC Engagement and Community has become clear. To support that a pair of emails have been set up to provide people with Zoom help.
 - zoom@universityucc.org is the place to send an email if you hear about a gathering that you would like to join and want to get the link information. For privacy / security reasons link information is not being provided where people outside of our community might be able to get it.
 - zoomhelp@universityucc.org is the place to send an email if you need help with any aspect of hosting or participating in Zoom gatherings. Our collective Zoom expertise is growing rapidly and people who are confident with this tool have generously offered their help to others.
- The importance of our online directory tools (both on the universityucc.org website using the MyUCUC portal and via smart phone app) is growing with time. These tools are a great aid in being able to stay connected and engaged with each other. A Zoom session was offered by Virginia Felton and Ed Coleman to help people with getting up to speed on these tools. Only one person attended so a follow-up is not planned. Please contact Virginia or Ed directly if you want help with this.
- With the Lenten experience of gathering via Zoom, some of those groups have continued to meet regularly. Any who have not but would like help to make this an ongoing practice are encouraged to “Just Do It” and to reach out to our Zoom support team (zoomhelp@universityucc.org) if they need some help with that.
- Making face masks for use by several organizations including at Pilgrim Firs Camp where people needing to live separately due to COVID-19 infections can be housed. The group doing this has expanded their reach providing masks to many members of our congregation. They now have their own email address (maskmakers@universityucc.org). Send them an email if you have mask needs or are interested in supporting their efforts.
- Help with grocery shopping and other simple tasks that allow the most vulnerable of our congregation to limit their Covid-19 risks are on-going. If you are willing to help or know of needs for yourself or others please contact Carol Coleman via her church email at parishcaresupport@universityucc.org.
- A number of groups within our congregation that have traditionally met in person have been successful with virtual gatherings. Among these are the monthly Men’s Soup dinner and the Women’s AWE dinner. Others are encouraged to try this if they have not yet.
- On a sad note, the Seabeck Committee made the tough decision recently that Seabeck All Church camp will not be able to take place this summer at the Seabeck Conference grounds on Hood Canal. This is the first year in a very long time that this event will not be held the first full week after July 4th. The Seabeck Committee is exploring ways that some of the magic of Seabeck can be captured and shared via socially distanced means.

In addition to the ongoing activities listed above, there are a few new engagement and community opportunities on the horizon that people should be aware of:

- Our tradition of MixSups gatherings where small groups get together for a one-time small group dinner with each participant bringing a part of the meal will not be possible following the model of visiting in our homes. In place of that we will be having MixZups (the Z for Zoom) gatherings on Friday evenings. All comers are welcome via Zoom and the Zoom breakout room capability will be used to divide into smaller groups for a chance to visit with each other virtually.

- New small groups are being formed that will meet weekly via Zoom. Hosts have been found and signups are underway. Please see UCUCG weekly emails for details.

It is even more clear now than it was last month that we will be facing an ever-evolving set of guidelines, recommendations, and requirements related to limiting transmission of COVID-19 infection for quite some time to come. It continues to be important that we remain flexible in our response. While an amazing proportion of the UCUCG community seems to have handled the first two months of this adventure quite well, it is likely that the impacts of isolation and distancing will wear on all of us more as time goes on. A key focus of the CEC Ministry and the overall UCUCG Parish Care team is to provide support where needed and as needed for as long as it is needed to carry us all through this.

One request is that our Parish Care Coordinator (Carol Coleman) be kept in the loop regarding both needs for support and offers to provide support.

The appropriate email address for this is parishcaresupport@universityucc.org. Issues needing quick attention should be brought to the awareness of our ministerial staff via the pastoral emergency line 206-445-3378.

All of us in the CEC Ministry thank everyone in the wider UCUCG family that is finding their Calling to be Engaged in building and supporting Community at this time.

**MINUTES - The Council of the University
Congregational United Church of Christ met on
Wednesday April 15 via Zoom.**

Catherine opened our time together with a prayer.

A quorum was noted at 7:04 pm and the meeting was called to order by Margaret Stine. We did a Circle of Sharing to start.

We participated in a grounding exercise for our work and ministry, led by Todd. During the exercise, we explored our personal reactions to the polarities of change and continuity.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes of March Council Meeting
Vote to accept the consent agenda: Passed unanimously

Leadership Staff Reports

We went around the Zoom circle, each noting particular highlights of the reports.

Financial report – Don Guthrie

- February financials highlight: offerings were way ahead of budget; we were overbudget on staff however (to allow a better transition from David to Kyna).
- March financials are not quite final yet but offerings were down in early March. However, March pledges were essentially on budget. At this point, our year to date pledges and offerings are slightly ahead of budget. On-line giving has more than doubled between February and March. March financials will likely be ready next week. Catherine added that this congregation has had incredibly strong stewardship over the years and we are in a good place financially.
- Don reported that \$20,000 of extra money in the audit fund was transferred to our Parish Aid Fund which now has balance a \$32,000. Catherine reported that Parish Care is implementing the existing structure/process that we had to assist our congregation members, and adapting additional ways to assist during the Covid-19

crisis. Amy reported that we have a number of families who may not self-identify as “in need” and that they may need to be approached with an offer of assistance.

- Ed added that he hoped, if we have extra funds, that we might increase our support for the UCC Conference as both camps have had to close, resulting in a significant loss of income. The conference is now using reserve funds.
- Kyna reported that we have completed an application for the payroll assistance program from the CARES Act which may provide up to \$200,000 of assistance that is completely forgiven if we retain our staff. This will cover salaries as well as health insurance costs.

Ministry Updates –

Several ministry liaisons commented on details of their reports.

New Business

AIR Form – “To Postpone the Annual Congregational Meeting” - Margaret Stine

Motion Requested:

To postpone the 2020 UCUCS Annual Meeting until public gatherings are recommended by public health officials, and to have the council members take the following actions at the May Council Meeting:

- To vote in new elected officers of the Council
- To confirm new ministry and committee chairs, and to affirm continuing chairs
- To confirm new council liaisons and alternates, and to honor any church leaders stepping down from their lay leadership roles
- Any other business that would normally occur at the Annual Meeting

in their authority as representative body of the congregation, and that this vote may be ratified by the full congregation at a future in-person gathering.

Margaret presented the motion and Terry seconded the motion

Discussion: How compelling would it be for the congregation to meet to approve what council has already done? We may need to check the by-laws to see what is necessary and appropriate. The motion does not include a time frame so we should be able to

combine with another meeting, perhaps the November budget meeting.

VOTE: Unanimously approved, with no abstentions.

2020-20 Officers:

Assistant Moderator: Ed Coleman has graciously accepted the position of assistant moderator, so a new Calling, Engagement, Community liaison is needed.

Council Officers, liaisons and committee chairs – please either submit a willingness to continue or the name of your replacement. Some terms have limits and Kyna will check on these and perhaps exceptions will be appropriate.

Minister Profile Update: Todd reported that the leadership team is not in the place that they were last month after more discussion about current roles/ portfolios. There is concern that implicit bias may have impacted the assignment of the roles of the current pastors. This is a time of discernment of the “fit” of the roles with our current pastors, and may impact the portfolio of the new pastor for whom we will be searching. More information will be brought to Council before or at the May meeting. Virginia Felton noted that the Pastoral Search Committee has a fair amount of initial work to do including anti-bias training before they will need the portfolio and final UCC Profile. The Profile is now a 35-page document!

AIR Form – Pastoral Search Committee - Virginia Felton and Tim Croll

Motion Requested:

To approve and affirm the appointment of the following members to the Pastoral Search Committee:

- Fred Heidrich
- Cara Helmer
- Joyce Jackson
- Terry Moore
- Emily Morishima
- Bob Perkins
- Rachel Schmidt
- Linda Scott
- Lori Vanderbilt

for the following reasons:

After being informed of the responsibilities and time commitment required of this Pastoral Search Committee, and after careful discernment, the

individuals listed above have accepted an invitation to join the Pastoral Search Committee to call a permanent replacement for Pastor Peter Ilgenfritz who retired from ministry here in December 2018.

The individuals above are all active members of University Congregational United Church of Christ who represent the various the age groups and demographics of our congregation.

Virginia moved that we accept, Mary Sue seconded Discussion: Some council members were not familiar with all of these names and the demographic they represented was discussed.

Vote: Unanimously approved

Annual Report

Kyna has granted an extension for Ministry and Committee submissions for the Annual Report. There is not a due date at this point, as the congregational meeting will not occur on May 17, but we are still assembling a digital report. Please submit things as soon as possible.

The meeting ended with a closing prayer sung by Amy, and adjourned at 9:17 pm.

Next Meetings:

- Council – May 20, 2020

Minutes submitted by Mary Sue Galvin

AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING OF May 20, 2020 .

Requested by: Todd Smiedendorf

Motion Requested:

To remove the Restructure Representative from the University Congregational UCC Church Council and replace that position with a third At-Large Representative, who will represent the church body as a whole.

for the following reasons:

During the restructure process, it was essential that one member of the UCUC Church Council was charged with representing the restructure at council meetings. With the term ending of the current Restructure Rep, it is a fitting time to return that role to an At-Large position.

Foreseeable objections:

Date of request: April 15, 2020

Persons to be contacted if clarification is necessary:

Todd Smiedendorf, Kyna Shilling

AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING OF May 20, 2020 .

Requested by: Margaret Stine

Motion Requested:

To approve and affirm the appointment of the following Officers to the Church Council:

- Terry Moore, Moderator
- Ed Coleman, Assistant Moderator
- Don Guthrie, Treasurer
- Mary Sue Galvin, Secretary

And to approve and affirm the appointment of the following At-Large Representative to the Council:

- Lynn Schafer

for the following reasons:

While it is unsafe to gather in person, the University Congregational UCC Church Council will conduct the business of UCUC's Annual Meeting on behalf of the congregation, including the confirmation of council officers and at-large members. This vote will be ratified by the congregation when next it is safe to gather in person.

Foreseeable objections:

Date of request: April 15, 2020

Persons to be contacted if clarification is necessary:

Margaret Stine, Terry Moore, Kyna Shilling

Requested by: Margaret Stine

Motion Requested:

To approve and affirm the following Ministry and Committee Chairs:

- Worship and Music Ministry Committee, Betty Spieth-Croll
- Christian Education Ministry, Rebecca Schmidt
 - Children's Ministry Committee, Tim Johnson
 - Youth Ministry Committee, David Colescott
 - Lecture Series Committee, Betty Speith-Croll
 - Seabeck Committee, Jessie McAbee and Gina Massoni
 - Library Committee, Edith Miller
- Calling, Engagement & Community Ministry, Jan von Lehe
 - Welcome Committee, Margaret Klockars
 - Engagement Committee, Jan von Lehe
 - Parish Care Committee, TBA
- Love and Justice Ministry Committee, Elizabeth Dickinson and Carol Nelson and Walt Puckett
 - Superfluity, Mary Sue Galvin and Jan von Lehe
- Stewardship Ministry, Roger Garret
 - Audit Committee, Don Guthrie
 - Facilities & Equipment Committee, Tom Furin
 - Investment Committee, John Kloess
 - Personnel Committee, Carol Bryant
 - Stewardship Campaign Committee, Sven Peterson
 - Stewardship & Finance Committee, Roger Garratt
- Leadership Parish Relations Committee (LPRC), Kathryn Robinson
- Search Committee: Virginia Felton and Tim Croll
- Swanson Endowment Committee, Trent Siegel

for the following reasons:

While it is unsafe to gather in person, the University Congregational UCC Church Council will conduct the business of UCUC's Annual Meeting on behalf of the congregation, including the confirmation of council officers and at-large members. This vote will be ratified by the congregation when next it is safe to gather in person.

Foreseeable objections:

Date of request: April 15, 2020

Persons to be contacted if clarification is necessary:
Margaret Stine, Terry Moore, Kyna Shilling

AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING OF May 20, 2020

Requested by: Terry Moore, Ass't Moderator

Action/Motion or Discussion Requested:

To appoint a Leadership Discernment Team, consisting of:

Ed Coleman, chair
Carol Bryant
Patti Colescott
Susan Everett
Roger Garratt
Emily Morishima
Ellen Naden
Loyce Ong'udi
Sven Peterson

The Leadership team has asked that Council reconsider which leadership portfolios Amy and Catherine should hold. Any change, if approved by Council, would be effective whenever the new minister to replace Todd comes on staff.

The Leadership Discernment Team will interview the Leadership Team and such others as they deem appropriate, and make a recommendation to Council no later than June 17, 2020. The Team has representation from Council, Personnel, Stewardship and Finance, and the Futures Task Force.

Foreseeable objections (add your rebuttals if you wish):

Date of Request: May 18, 2020

Person to be contacted if clarification is necessary: Terry Moore or Ed Coleman

AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING OF May 20, 2020

Requested by: Todd Smiedendorf

Action/Motion or Discussion Requested:

To allocate \$10,000 for interim search committee expenses, including advertising, interview expenses, startup and relocation expenses, the money to come from the New Initiatives Fund

for the following reasons:

To pay for expenses related to a search to find a pastor to help with pastoral and leadership functions to assure continuity as we create room for an intentional period of study and decisions about future focus and the needed staffing. This person will help make possible that intentionality, and we need to cover the expenses in securing that person.

Foreseeable objections (add your rebuttals if you wish):

Date of Request: May 18, 2020

Person to be contacted if clarification is necessary: Todd Smiedendorf, Kyna Shilling

AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING OF May 20, 2020

Requested by: Kyna Shilling, the Stewardship & Finance Committee

Action/Motion or Discussion Requested:

To form a Community Investment Committee with representatives of the Stewardship & Finance Committee and Love & Justice Committee and charge them with the faithful examination of our resources and the needs of our community in this unprecedented time of pandemic, with the goal of identifying funds that could be used for community investment. The committee would be guided by the following principles:

1. We affirm our covenant, that we are called to, “live sustainably within creation, sharing with gratitude the gifts we are given,” and that we, “reject the false gods of society, proclaiming the gospel of Jesus.”
 2. As a Racial Justice Church, we recognize that systemic racism in our national economic structure has given us greater access to resources as a predominantly white congregation than might be available to communities of color.
 3. We will leverage our access and use, invest, distribute and give away these resources in a way that contributes to the dismantling of systemic racist inequity.
 4. We will continue to educate ourselves regarding racism, economic inequities, and ways we might partner with work being done to address and undo the harm such a system has done.
- and would be charged to bring a proposal to Council at the June meeting.

for the following reasons:

To live more fully into our UCUCS covenant, specifically “to live responsibly within Your creation, sharing with gratitude the gifts we are given,” and in light of receiving a fully forgivable loan from the SBA, to faithfully examine Jesus’ prayer that God will “forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,” and given the justice implications of our privilege in access to funding sources unavailable to or withheld from businesses run by marginalized community, to recognize our responsibility as a Racial Justice Church to “work in our understanding of of systemic racism, and work in ways both inside and outside the church to change the system and ourselves”

Foreseeable objections (add your rebuttals if you wish):

Date of Request: May 18, 2020

Person to be contacted if clarification is necessary: Todd Smiedendorf, Kyna Shilling

Principles on when and how we can re-gather:

We know that many of you have already heard plans and news about how churches might begin to gather in person again. We do not say “reopen” because **we have never been closed or stopped being church**. It is only our physical gathering that has been on hold.

Please know that we are committed to following the science and data to ensure the safest environment for all. We are also committed to doing all we can to protect those in our community who are most at risk with this virus, and to maintain access to our gatherings to all, even those who cannot be physically present.

With that in mind, it does appear that **we will not be able to gather as a large community** (for things such as worship and most fellowship activities) for quite some time.

Since this time of physical distancing began, we have seen that **we are a highly resilient, resourceful and creative congregation**, serving an infinitely creative God who is just as determined to reach us as we are to reach out to God and one another. **We will find our way together**. Many of the creative ways in which we are learning to Be Church for one another will continue into our time of regathering. We are trying new things every day, and many of our new ways of connecting are helping us grow stronger through the struggle.

We know you are wondering about the many annual special events we hold each year. We will find a way to adapt every event we can. So far that’s been retreats, meetings, presentations, dinners, worship, small groups, Lamb Day, Bible Study, Prayer Circle, committee meetings... we’ve yet to be completely stumped. We are working to re-imagine Superfluity, to see how that event could be possible in new and creative ways. And while it has become clear that it will not be possible to safely hold our All Church-Family Camp at Seabeck, we will have a “Seabeck Week” of activities, fellowship and education.

We know that it’s not the same, and, we guarantee that **celebrations** will be had, **support and care** will be given, the **joyful work of worship and justice** will continue.

We have absolute faith that these restrictions will not remain in place for ever... but they may be with us long enough that it will feel like forever. From what we are hearing, one of the great griefs for which we must prepare ourselves is **the impossibility of safely singing as a choir or congregation**; and the **continuing impossibility of safely sharing physical space** in any of the ways to which we are accustomed. There are still far too many unknowns and not enough data to suggest what practices will truly mitigate the serious health risks to our congregation and the larger community. There are a lot of ideas, and we are considering them all, and will work with Council and all Ministries to continually **assess what we can do safely** and what we can do to keep those who need to use our building as safe as we can.

While our building has not been in full use throughout this time, several vital programs such as Teen Feed, the Child Learning and Care Center, and University District Youth Center have kept the building in continuous use and our custodians have been hard at work helping us hold this space of hospitality for our most vulnerable neighbors. **To keep our building open for these programs and for the safety of our custodians, we must limit all other access to the building**. If you have keys or a key card, please contact Kyna Shilling, Director of Finance and Operations, before using it to enter the building for any reason as the protocols for maintaining our space are under constant review.

Thank you for all the ways you have continued to step into our Gospel work in this time. May we all continue to listen to God’s call in this time.

Blessings,
Amy, Catherine, and Todd

Resources:

["Returning to Church" from The Wisconsin Council of Churches](#)
[CDC Guidelines for Community Organizations](#)
[Current information for Washington State](#)
[National Recommendations for Choirs and Community Singing](#)
[National Association of Teachers of Singing webinar](#)
[PNC-UCC Notes from our Conference Minister](#)
[COVID-19 response resources from the UCC Pacific Northwest Conference](#)