

# **UCOT Board Meeting Minutes**

February 18, 2023, at 1:00 pm via Zoom

**Meeting id is 979 0569 7987**

**I. Attendance** – Present were Emily Gillispie, Joe Mazza, Mimi Owensby, Annette Rubin, Chuck Fawns, Be Scott, and Sara Sautter.

**II. Opening Words** – Annette read opening words about the strength of working together by Mashona Dhliwayo, an African-born Canadian-based philosopher.

**III. Minutes of the January Meeting** – A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed to approve the January minutes.

**IV. Membership Committee Report** – Sara gave the Membership Committee report. The Committee met yesterday. Sara Sautter, Annette Rubin, and Jo Gall were present. Sara reported that in January there were five first-time visitors, two new members, and 58 members in all. The Membership Team will contact all members who haven't returned since the pandemic. The Sharing Circles are an active entry point for new members. A suggestion was made to ask everyone to put their name tags in a basket at the end of worship service so we can trace who's present and contact people who haven't come for a while. The suggestion was discussed, but it was decided not to do it. We will put out the name tag board for use during the Sharing Circles as well as the paper name tags so everyone can have one. This will allow us to greet everyone by name and make them feel welcome. Joe said that if Board members notice someone hasn't been at any events for a while, they can let the Membership Team know so they can be contacted.

Sara asked about social justice/community service projects. Members of the Charitable Giving committee steward a Little Free Pantry and prepares dinner for the Men's Shelter on the fourth Friday of every month. There are three pairs of people who make dinner for 15-20 men and deliver it at 5:00 pm. Sara suggested that we could hold several lunch-packing events after a Sunday service and deliver them to the men's shelter. The camaraderie of preparing lunches together could help recruit people to ongoing UCOT projects. Mimi will check with the director of the shelter to see if this would be appreciated. There is also the annual highway cleanup event followed by a lunch. Sara asked if UCOT needs a social justice team.

The Membership Team plans to restart a Women's Social Group.

Chuck mentioned that he's OK if someone else wants to take over making the visitor packets, and Sara said she would do this going forward.

The UU 101 class has been announced via email, but only two people have registered. That is not enough to hold the class. Sara will announce it again tomorrow and another email will be sent. It is scheduled for the first three Sundays in March, in person on March 5th and 19th and via Zoom on March 12.

**V. Treasurer's Report** – Joe gave the Treasurer's Report. An additional \$1,870 in pledges has come in. If all goes as budgeted, we'll be \$1,680 in the black. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to accept the Treasurer's Report as written.

## **VI. Items for Discussion**

- a. 2023 Services and Circle Schedule: The Blessings for the Animals has been added for October 1. Be reported that Michael called the head of Stray Hearts, who was thrilled that we'd be doing this event. He'd like to bring a few animals available for adoption. Be will write an article about it for the Taos News to publish a week before.
- b. Services: A protocol is needed for bad weather. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to switch to Zoom rather than cancel worship service on snow days. If Taos is not green on Covid Act Now, there will be no coffee or singing, and everyone will mask. Covid policy: It was decided that the best way to communicate our covid policy is to include a link to it in the weekly emails as well as posting it on the website. The agreed-upon Covid policy can be found here: <https://uutaos.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/UCOT-Covid-Policy.pdf>
- c. Circles: Circles will not be cancelled on snow days. Be will always go to the Lodge.
- d. Events: Several new members have joined since the last new-member ceremony in November. It was agreed that we would have another new-member ceremony on June 18. Sara will lead it and organize the luncheon afterward as well. Annette and Richard Rubin will host the July 4th picnic. Annette will consult with Sara on the use of the sign-up genius website to organize the food. This is the list of events the Board approved at the January meeting and discussed today:
  - o 03/05 - UU 101 Part 1 - Sara at 9:30 - tentative depending on sign-ups.

- 03/12 - UU 101 Part 2 - Gary via Zoom at 4:00 - tentative depending on sign-ups.
- 03/19 - UU 101 Part 3 - Sara at 9:30 - tentative depending on sign-ups.
- 06/18 - New member in-gathering service with lunch afterwards (replaces the previously approved Memorial Day event)
- 07/04 - Picnic at the Rubins' house
- 10/01 - Blessing of the Animals (with Stray Hearts) - Gary
- Thanksgiving potluck luncheon, date TBD
- 12/24 - Christmas Eve service

The Happiness class that Sara considered doing is an online event. However, it seems better to do events live as we rebuild membership post pandemic, so this class won't be given. We won't try to schedule any adult enrichment classes until after the UU 101 class.

- e. Chuck reported on the Dinners for Six: Nancy set it up to run without her intervention and they seem to be going well. One group met at a restaurant. Chuck wanted the Board to know that when the group is meeting at a restaurant, the "host" does not need to pay for everyone's meals.
- f. Lodge/Masons Update: Joe reported that snow removal is in place. We pay half of the \$150 fee, split with the Masons.
- g. Supplies: Should the supplies line item be increased? Only \$100 is allocated. It should include coffee and tea, paper goods, and UUA pamphlets for the congregation. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to increase it to \$250.
- h. UU Subscriptions: Chuck reported that UU subscriptions are sent in. There were 42 subscriptions at a cost of \$336. He requested that someone else take over this task that he's been doing for 15 years. Emily will ask for a volunteer at the next circle and service.
- i. Sara suggested an annual sign-up Sunday. The Membership Team will discuss this. Emily will check with Gary and Munro about a ceremony in September for a "Water In-gathering" to celebrate coming back together after the summer.
- j. Protocol for last-minute minister unavailability: It was suggested that first the other minister be asked to fill in, and if not, to fill in with one of the following people: Jeanne, Sara, and Be. Another option is to livestream another UU congregation's service, although we are not set up to do this at this time. Chuck suggested connecting with the Santa Fe, Albuquerque, or Los Alamos UU. They also might have an intern they could send on short notice. Emily will write a proposal to discuss at the next board meeting.

## **VII. Committee Reports**

- a. Charitable Giving: Mimi reported that they are working on decreasing the number of nonprofits we donate to.
- b. Music Committee: no report needed.
- c. Membership: Sara reported at the beginning of the board meeting.
- d. Care Team: The Care Team needs a new leader. Emily has asked two of the members if they wish to chair the committee. Jo Gall and Jay both declined. She'll ask the other two soon.
- e. Worship Team: It would be good to have one. This will be discussed at the next board meeting.
- f. Fifth Sunday Programs: Emily reported that seven topics were offered. The committee trimmed it down to five. They are: Housing Issues in Taos, Querencia (attachment to the land), Being a Good Guest on the Land, Living Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic and Youth Projects in Taos.

## **VIII. Closing Words**

Mimi read closing words by Rumi.

## **IX. Next Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 pm. The next meeting will be on March 18 at 1:00 pm via Zoom.