

**UCOT Board Meeting Minutes**  
October 12, 2024, at 1:30 pm via Zoom  
**Meeting id 709 932 0303**

President Emily Gillispie called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm. Also present were Chuck Fawns, Mimi Owensby, Annette Rubin, Be Scott, and Rev. Diana Davies.

- I. **Opening Words:** Annette read a Barack Obama quote about the importance of empathy in our nation.
- II. **Minutes of the August Meeting:** Emily moved to accept the August minutes. Mimi seconded and the vote was unanimous.
- III. **Treasurer's Report:** Chuck moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Emily seconded and the vote was unanimous.
- IV. **Items for Discussion**
  - a. **Services, Circles, and Calendar (All)**
    - i. 2025 Calendar: Diana will be away for the first two weeks in July 2025. She said she would enjoy taking the month off.
      1. Emily will contact Doug Inhofe to see which Sunday he is available. Then we'll schedule "This I Believe for the other July Sunday.
      2. Emily moved to have a Fall Harvest Festival on October 19, 2025, if we can find someone to spearhead it. Be seconded. The vote was unanimous.
      3. Winter Solstice – Emily moved to have an evening winter Solstice service on December 21, 2025. Annette seconded, and the vote was unanimous. Diana will do a regular service on the morning of December 15, 2024. Nothing special will be planned for Christmas Eve since so many members will be out of town. Diana offered to lead a Blue Christmas pastoral care event on an evening in December 2024. She'll suggest several dates and then we'll check on Lodge availability. Her dates, in order of preference, were Wed. Dec. 11, Thurs. Dec. 12, or Thurs. Dec. 5. We'd want to reserve space from 5:30 - 8:00. (The actual session would run from 6 - 7:30, the rest of the time is for setup and cleanup.)
    - ii. Circles: Mimi has received several responses from circle facilitators willing to participate in 2025.
  - b. **We have a T-bill coming due and need to choose the form of reinvestment:** Be moved to buy a 3 month CD because of the better interest rate. Emily is willing to handle the transaction. Emily seconded and the vote was unanimous. Addendum: Emily purchased a ninth-month CD after being advised that interest rates will go down.
  - c. **Pledge drive:** There was a discussion of the benefits of endowments. Emily will contact Lee Stringer to write a brief announcement about endowments and RMD for the newsletter and member emails. If Lee cannot do this, Emily will. Be asked Bette and Dianne to help with the pledge drive phone calls and both agreed. Addendum: Emily will handle the announcement about RMDs on 10/20 and endowments on 11/3.
  - d. **UUA items**
    - i. **Do we want to contribute to the UUA disaster relief fund? If so, how much?** Emily moved to donate \$1,000. Annette seconded. The vote was unanimous. Emily will write an announcement for the newsletter and emails.

- ii. **Do we want to join the national UUA? Our affiliation is currently regional:** A donation of 6.75% of the congregation's operating budget is required the first year you join. That would be \$2430 for us. After that, each congregation decides how much to contribute. We currently pay \$1200 for our regional membership. Advantages include representation and a vote at the General Assembly, as well as training opportunities. Diana will look for a more complete list. Addendum with Diana's information: Reasons for becoming a member congregation include (in Diana's order of importance):
  1. **Living into our faith as Unitarian Universalists/covenantal relationship with other UUs**
  2. **The ability for members and ministers to vote at General Assembly**
  3. Inclusion of UCOT in the "Find a UU Congregation" search engine
  4. Full services from Congregational Life staff of the PWR (<https://www.uua.org/pacific-western/regional-services>)
  5. UUA endowments, investments, fundraising, and grants and loans consulting and programs (<https://www.uua.org/finance>)
  6. Ability to be formally recognized as a [Green Sanctuary](#) or [Welcoming Congregation](#)And, *if* UCOT ever grew large enough to have any regular staff (salaried, not just contracted), the ability to participate in the UUA-sponsored insurance and retirement plans would be critical.

- e. **Taos News lack of publicity for our events:** Be offered to call publisher Chris Baker to better understand why we are being excluded from the calendar listings. Be will work with Gael to decide the best approach.
- f. **Contract renewal with the Masons:** Our contract expires on December 31, 2024. When Chuck first approached Dave Cordova, he said there was no problem increasing the termination notice time from 30 days to 60 days for the new contract. He asked us to be sure that all lights and stove fan are turned off when we leave the Lodge.
- g. **Volunteerism – how can we motivate more people to volunteer?** We could have volunteers say a few words at Sunday services about the benefits of contributing to the UCOT community. We could start this in December after the Charitable Giving reports have concluded.
- h. **What else?**
  - 1) We will ask Rachel to edit out the music because there is no sound. She can continue to include the chalice lighting, opening and closing words, and Joys and Sorrows. Emily will send Rachel a note to that effect.
  - 2) The Presidency: Emily plans to spend two to three months every winter in Dallas, plus sporadic travel. Mimi, as Vice President, could be available when Emily is away. Other Board Members are always available at Sunday Services and Sharing Circles. Plus, between times, we could collaboratively handle most everything that came up, and if we couldn't, we could try to connect with Emily, without expecting her to be responsive. With this backup plan, Emily agreed to continue for another term as President.

## V. **Committee Reports**

- a. Charitable Giving (Mimi): The committee decided to remove Heart of Taos from the list of supported non-profits due to the high salary of the Director compared to their donations.
- b. Music (Mimi): Nothing to report.

- c. Membership (Annette): A meeting is planned for 10:15 on Sunday, October 20, at the Lodge, before the service.
- d. Caring Community (Chuck): Marsha has been helping Patsy. Patricia Keeler said she'd like to join this committee.

**VI. Closing Words:** Annette read a Rumi quote about seeking inspiration inside yourself.

**VII. Next Meeting:** November 16, 2024, at 1:30 pm via Zoom

Respectfully submitted by  
Annette Rubin, Secretary