

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — July 17, 2025

Board decisions are in bold-face type; action items are in red. Reports, incl. Treasurer's, follow the meeting minutes.

Present: Joy Atkinson, George Buchanan, Barbro Hansson, Paul Johnson, Anne Marsh, Christine Robinson, Richard Speck, Janet Tillman

Absent: Charles Stephens

Opening: Richard called the meeting to order at 2:06pm Eastern - 1:06pm Central - 12:06pm Mountain - 11:06am Pacific. He lit a chalice and read Jane Rzepka's "Just Regular Folks," from *Bless the Imperfect*.

Check-in followed.

Agenda Review: Christine asked that we spend time on the At-Large Chaplain part of her job description; Richard added this to the agenda.

Consent Agenda was accepted. Richard shared our covenant on his screen.

Meeting dates:

Our Board Retreat will serve as our August meeting. It begins in the evening on Monday, August 18 and ends just after breakfast on Thursday, August 21. **We agreed that starting September 18, our regular monthly meetings will be on third Thursdays at 3pm Eastern - 2pm Central - 1pm Mountain - 12pm Pacific.**

Conferences:

Barbro had submitted a report. The theme for the fall conference is "Stories of the Faith behind Freedom." Richard will introduce the theme and set the historical context. Some non-UU speakers were suggested, but the executive planning team opted for UU speakers only. Details are still being worked out, but the planners hope that denominational speakers will address the theme and how it is playing out today. The team will meet soon with Christine about UUA/UUMA participation.

Richard reported that he has recruited the ministerial Odyssean, and hopes to hear soon from the proposed partner Odyssean. Since no Board members volunteered to lead worship, Joan van Becelaere will coordinate the three services.

We agreed that Barbro will serve as registrar for the fall conference, and that in future, the Board member who is Conference Coordinator will serve as registrar or recruit someone to do so. Richard will train Barbro in the Planning Center software system. As registrar, Barbro will okay requests for scholarships when people register. If attendees wish an additional sum (\$50 at this time) to help with pod participation, they will send receipts to Paul for reimbursement after the conference.

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Barbro invited any interested Board members to join the Planning Team in discussing possible themes for the spring conference at a Zoom meeting on September 25 at 12pm Eastern.

Richard will remind Vice-President Charles Stephens that the VP coordinates the selection of the recipients of the Unsung UURMaPA and Creative Sageing awards, which are given at the fall conference.

Christine will contact the UUA Transitions office to invite them to take a slot at the fall conference, and to ask them to focus on the status of the Targeted Ministry Program, along with whatever other issues they would like us to know about.

Zoom Showrunner:

Planning Team members Susan Smith is chairing the search committee for a new Zoom Showrunner. Barbro had sent us the job description and proposed letter of agreement for the position earlier. It was noted that the letter of agreement specifies that the Board member who is Conference Coordinator supervises this position. **We approved the job description and the letter of agreement.** Christine suggested that the new Zoom Showrunner and planners review the job description after the fall conference to see if changes are needed based on conference experiences.

Chaplain Role:

One of the roles for the Board's UUA/UUMA Liaison is to serve as At-Large Chaplain for UURMaPA. This is a pastoral role, not to be confused with Good Offices. Here is the relevant excerpt from our minutes of February 13, 2025:

Barbro had sent a piece giving background on the history of UURMaPA chaplains, and Wayne had earlier sent a draft for inclusion of the Chaplain role in the job description for the Board's UUA/UUMA Liaison position, as follows:

Serves as a UURMaPA Chaplain-At-Large, with publicized availability as a listening ear for UURMaPA members, both ministers and partners, with interpersonal problems with fellow members that might inhibit full participation. The Chaplain-at-Large also can serve as an intake and referral resource for UURMaPA members whose concerns might suggest UUMA Retired Ministers Good Offices support or UUA or UUMA staff support. If the Board has no partner member, the Chaplain-At-Large will be asked to be sensitive to partners' concerns as they arise in Board deliberations. The Chaplain-At-Large also recruits and manages the three-person chaplain teams serving during UURMaPA Conferences.

The Board approved Wayne's Chaplain-At-Large description. Ned will revise the job description for the UUA/UUMA Liaison to incorporate this role. He will send the revision to Wayne to check, and then send it on to Susan for approval at next Board meeting. Wayne noted that Good Offices will now be done through the Retired Ministers chapter of the UUMA.

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Christine noted that the Chaplain-At-Large could recruit a small team for this pastoral role. Publicity is needed to let our members know that pastoral care is available. (This is now an agenda item for our retreat.) Janet noted that once we have more details, she could send out notices to area connectors. Articles in *Elderberries* and announcements at conferences will also be important. **Christine will talk with the Melissa Carvill-Ziemer at the UUMA about issues with ministers raised by UURMaPAs who are not UUMA members and whether/how UUMA Good Offices might come into play.**

We took a seven-minute bio/stretch break.

Connections:

Janet reported that, apropos of our new onboarding procedures, she has not yet received any notifications of new members from Membership Coordinator Ann Marie Alderman, but she has a template ready welcoming new folks and letting them know about UURMaPA programs and services.

Website Directory:

Richard sent an email and has put instructions on our website on how to update one's entry in the new directory system, Planning Center. Do we want to take the Directory off the website for security reasons? If so, when? (This is now a retreat agenda item.) It would be helpful to offer training in how to use the system. In response to a question from Paul, Richard noted that two-factor authentication is required for access.

UUMA Retired Ministers Chapter:

Christine reported no update, since everyone is taking the summer off. At GA, she talked with incoming UUMA president, Robin Tanner, who is very aware of UURMaPA (perhaps in part because her spouse is our Membership Coordinator, Ann Marie Alderman!) After the fall conference, Christine would like to discuss further with UUMA Retired Ministers Chapter leaders our two organizations' different foci and programs. Former UURMaPA President Susan Rak reported some crossed wires at GA concerning the roles of UURMaPA and the UUMA Retired Ministers Chapter at the Service of the Living Tradition. Opinions on this differ; conversation and clarification are needed.

Retreat Agenda:

In response to a question from Christine, Richard noted that our multi-day, in-person (when possible) retreat has several purposes: to get to know each other better, to plan for the year ahead, to talk through substantive issues in depth, to consider who we are and what we want to offer our membership. To these ends, the following agenda items were suggested:

- Membership directory: When will the website directory be retired? What can users do if they have problems? What training and assistance can we offer?
- IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory): Facilitator Sue Sinnamon is reportedly still available to lead the Board through this process. Richard suggests doing it sometime in the fall. Arrangements need to be made.

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- Decide what to do in UURMaPA slots for fall conference.
- Make a plan or schedule for reviewing and updating Board job descriptions. Should this be done annually?
- What special Zoom programming outside of our conferences shall we offer in the year ahead? The session on retirement finances with Richard Nugent last year was well-attended. Christine suggested a program featuring UUA Vice-President Carey McDonald. Janet thought three programs each year might be a good goal. Both partners and ministers are concerned about the future of the church and UUism.
- If we offer additional special programs, remember to budget for these, as they require additional work from the Zoom Showrunner.
- Mentoring program: It's now a pilot - what next? We will need to recruit program leaders, since two of our three leaders are no longer on the Board. We also need to be in communication with the UUMA Retired Ministers Chapter so that we collaborate rather than duplicate.
- New member welcome event this fall - when and who?
- How can we encourage more people to participate in ongoing UURMaPA small groups?
- Publicity for Chaplain-At-Large role
- How can we encourage the UUA/UUMA participants in the fall conference to relate the theme (Faith Behind Freedom) when they speak about what they do?
- Consider whether we want to change the amount of aid offered for conference attendees that are part of a pod - not this fall, but moving forward. Our income may well allow for this.

In discussing transportation to the retreat, it was noted that we may need two rental cars because of flight schedules. Board members affected will figure out arrangements by email. Ditto for discussions of snacks and beverages.

Closing: Richard closed the meeting by extinguishing the chalice and reading "Losers," by John Corrado. The meeting adjourned at 3:55pm Eastern - 2:55pm Central - 1:55pm Mountain - 12:55pm Pacific.

Next meetings: Retreat August 18-21; then Thursday, September 18, at 3pm Eastern - 2pm Central - 1pm Mountain - 12pm Pacific

REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR JULY 17, 2025 MEETING

1) President's Report - Richard Speck

I have started the president's tenure with a flurry of activities. I have reached out to odysseans and have secured one minister yes and a tentative partner yes from the other. I am waiting to hear back with a solid yes. I have worked with the conference planning team to draft a letter of agreement to find a replacement for our Zoom Runner, Jon Clane. I worked on our agenda for this meeting. We have a date for the board retreat at Bon Secours and I will be working with the board on the agenda.

On July 10, I had major back surgery that kept me in the hospital for four days. I am home recovering and getting stronger every day. I expect to start physical therapy in a few weeks and be essentially back to normal after about six months.

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2) Connections Coordinator's Report - Janet Tillman

Below is a summarized, updated report based on the previous Connections Coordinator's June 12, 2025, report. **New information in red.**

AREA CONNECTORS

Areas with Connectors: 22

Areas with Identified Connector Prospects: 2

Areas with Uncertain Connector Prospects/Activity: 12

ZOOM GROUPS

General-Interest Zoom Groups

- Total groups reported: 12
- Total participants reported: 69
- UURMaPAs referred to prospective groups: 0
- UURMaPAs awaiting referral to a group: 0

Focused-Interest Zoom Groups

Ongoing Groups Open to New Participants

Goddess – Convenor: Sydney Morris

Caregivers – Co-Convenors: Makannah Morris, Yvonne Strejek, Kathleen Ellis

Grief Support – Convenor: Duane Fickeisen

Writing for Witness as Resistance – Convenor: Gail Collins-Ranadive (A new group with twelve participants who will have their first meeting on July 30.)

Proposed Groups Seeking Participants

Atlanta, GA Area Retired UU Clergy – Convenor: Jeff Jones

Ongoing Focused-Interest Groups at Maximum Number and Seeking Additional Convenors

Partners – Convenor: Janet Tillman

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3) Conference Coordinator's Report - Barbro Hansson

It's a joy to work with such wonderful UURMaPAns. Not only on the conference planning team but also, of course, the UURMaPA Board of Directors. I've entered my last year of my second term as Member-at-Large for Conferences, and the conference planning team is in good hands with Sonya Sukalski and Jeff Briere as co-convenors and Susan Smith, a former UUA District Executive, as scribe and archivist.

Fall 2025 Conference, October 20-22: "Stories of the Faith Behind Freedom"

After a successful theme retreat and agreement from the Board of Directors, the executive team decided on the theme for the fall conference, "Stories of the Faith Behind Freedom." Richard Speck will provide a presentation to place the theme in its historical context, and the planning team anticipates including vignettes of stories connected to the theme throughout the conference. This conference will likely feature many storytellers rather than a theme presenter. In addition, the planning team wants denominational VIPs to address the theme, but is still working on specifics.

Joan van Becelaere continues as worship coordinator and is working with her worship team on creating two relevant and meaningful worship services and a moving remembrance service with brief, insightful eulogies that hopefully connect to the theme.

Registration will go live in August after the Board retreat.

Spring 2026 Conference, April 27-29: Theme to be determined

A virtual theme retreat to brainstorm and explore a relevant theme for the spring 2026 conference has been scheduled for September 25, from 12:00 noon until 2:00 pm Eastern. Board members are invited to attend and contribute. It is hoped that Odyssey presenters for the Spring 2026 conference have been identified by then.

With a view to the future:

Fall 2026 Conference - October 19-21

Spring 2027 Conference - April 5-7

Fall 2025 UURMaPA Conference Planning Team

Sonya Sukalski, Co-Convenor

Jeff Briere, Co-Convener and Co-Producer, Publicity, Slide Show

Susan Smith, Scribe, Historian

David McFarland, Evaluations

Joan VanBecelaere, Worship

Wayne Walder, Mini-stories

Anita Farber-Robinson, Connecting Rooms

Linda Wright, Connecting Rooms, All ability access

Jef Gamblee, Co-Producer

Terry Ellen, Odysseys

Barbro Hansson, Registrar, Board Member at Large for Conferences

TBA, Zoom Master/Show Runner

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4) Zoom Master/Show Runner Search Team's Report - Barbro Hansson

The Search Team for a new Zoom Master/Show Runner to replace Jon Claney consists of Susan Smith, Jeff Briere, Jef Gamblee, Sonya Sukalski, and Barbro Hansson, Ex Officio.

The timeline for the search process is:

- June 18 Job opening posted.
- July 10 July 17 Search Team meets via Zoom
- July 10- Review applicants
- July 17 UURMaPA Board votes on Job Description and Contractual Agreement
- August 4-8 Conduct interviews, contact references
- August 11-15 Make Selection, prepare recommendation
- August 18 Present recommendation to the UURMaPA Board for vote
- August 21 Extend offer
- September 1 Zoom Master/Show Runner begins

After receiving extensive input and advice from members of the Search Team, as well as from Richard Speck and Jon Claney, I finished a comprehensive job description for this contractual position. It is attached in a separate document. When Susan attended the UUA General Assembly in Baltimore in June, she posted the job opening on Whova and later on the UUA's job listing page. We also had Ann Marie Alderman send out a UURMaPA-announce posting about the job opening. We received 13 responses via Whova, indicating interest, and of those, five contacted us to receive the job description. No responses so far from either the UUA job listing post or UURMaPA-announce.

Once it was clear to me that Susan Smith should be the chair of the Search Team, I approached her and was delighted to have her accept. Susan and I met with Richard to get as much background information as possible before taking the next steps. At that meeting, Richard shared invaluable information as well as the July 2021 Letter of Proposal he received from Jon Claney, in which Jon asked for \$3,000 for Zoom conference preparation and \$1,000 for Zoom hosting. Jon started as our Zoom Master in fall 2021. Susan, Richard, and I decided the amount of contractual compensation for the fall 2025 conference should remain the same as for the spring 2025 conference, which means \$4,500 for prep work and \$1,000 for hosting. At the same time, we agreed that for additional Zoom meetings of less than two hours, the compensation would be \$650.00.

The Letter of Agreement for Zoom Master, drafted by Susan and approved by Richard and me, is attached in a separate document. The UURMaPA Board will need to vote to approve the Letter of Agreement at this meeting.

At the most recent Search Committee meeting, the questions were finalized, and two candidates were chosen for interviews. Those two interviews are scheduled to take place during the first week of August. The Search Team is moving along according to the timeline, and we are hopeful that the search can be completed on schedule.

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5) Report of At-Large Member for UUA/UUMA Relations - Christine Robinson

This will be my first meeting of the board and I'm glad to be here. I retired 8 years ago from full time ministry, and three years ago from part time ministry. I am also a member of the UUMA Retired Ministers Chapter, and from that platform have taken an interest in the relationship between retired ministers who wish to participate in the congregations and the ministers who serve those congregations. I've been mostly working with Wayne Arnason on that project, and it has resulted in a survey finding that, while most retired ministers are satisfied with their relationship with the colleague whose church they attend, 25% of ministers asking to participate in a church they had formerly served were not permitted to do so by the working minister and 11% of ministers requesting to participate in a church they had not served were not permitted to do so. Wayne and I did a workshop at Ministry Days and both of us have had mentoring conversations with ministers—both retired and working—who want to have help with this problem. Both of us are planning to continue that work.

For UURMaPA specifically I have attended my first meeting of the Church Staff Finance Council. I have also reached out to LREDA, UUMusicians and UUAdmins, to remind them that we exist, ask if they have a retired professional's subgroup of any kind, and to offer solidarity on any projects we might work on together. I have also reached out to Robin Tanner, new president of the UUMA.

I believe that the part of my job description "UURMaPA Chaplain" is new, and perhaps needs defining and publicity. May this be an agenda item for our retreat? I wonder if anyone has an interest in thinking this out in advance with me?

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6) Elderberries Editor's Report - George Buchanan

I was delayed in preparing the May Elderberries issue. The electronic version of this May issue came out July 3. The print edition was released July 9, going to 903 addressees.

I accept responsibility for this delay. This was due to personal and family challenges. I appreciate the timely work of all those who provided copy for this issue.

Treasurer's report follows...

Income and Expenses 2025		Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	2025 Total	Budget vs. Actual
JULY Report (through June)	2025 Budget								
INCOME									
Member Donations	\$9,000.00	\$4,780.00	\$1,230.00		\$630.00		\$422.25	\$7,062.25	78.47%
Member Donations Paypal	\$4,500.00	\$1,808.61		\$2,488.90				\$4,297.51	95.50%
Memorial Gifts	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Conference Fee Income Checks	\$2,440.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Conference Fee Income Credit Cards	\$13,950.00		\$3,528.78	\$2,617.85	\$3,122.61	\$73.09		\$9,342.33	66.97%
UUMA Subsidy	\$1,000.00						\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	100.00%
Scholarship Income	\$3,000.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Other Income	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Scholarship Endowment Income	\$1,000.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Total Regular Income	\$33,890.00	\$6,588.61	\$4,758.78	\$5,106.75	\$3,752.61	\$73.09	\$1,422.25	\$21,702.09	64.04%
EXPENSE									
On-Site Board Meetings									
Transportation	\$4,000.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Room and Board	\$5,200.00						\$718.80	\$718.80	13.82%
Hospitality	\$200.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Total Board Meetings	\$9,400.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Conferences									
Attendee Fee Refunds	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Conference Registration Fees	\$2,440.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Speakers	\$1,000.00					\$500.00		\$500.00	50.00%
Music	\$500.00					\$500.00		\$500.00	0.00%
Technology Support	\$11,500.00	\$5,500.00		\$300.00			\$5,500.00	\$11,300.00	98.26%
Hospitality	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Scholarships	\$1,000.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Misc.	\$1,000.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Total Conferences	\$17,440.00	\$5,500.00		\$300.00		\$1,000.00	\$5,500.00	\$12,300.00	70.53%
General Assembly									
Transportation-President	\$1,400.00						\$225.72	\$225.72	16.12%
Transportation-Vice President	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Room and Board	\$0.00						\$559.07	\$559.07	
Technology Support	\$0.00							\$0.00	0.00%
GA Fees & Misc	\$0.00						\$248.00	\$248.00	
New Member Welcoming Gifts	\$725.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Total General Assembly	\$2,125.00						\$1,032.79	\$1,032.79	0.00%
Communications									
Elderberries Publication	\$5,000.00		\$1,512.99			\$2,025.35		\$3,538.34	70.77%
Fundraising Appeal	\$1,600.00	\$1,533.99						\$1,533.99	95.87%
Peer Support Groups (video calls)	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Website	\$1,000.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Zoom	\$200.00						\$100.74	\$100.74	50.37%
Database Management	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Total Communications	\$7,800.00		\$1,512.99			\$2,025.35	\$100.74	\$3,639.08	46.65%
Other Expenses									
Retirement Planning Seminar Expense	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Saging & Unsung & Navius Awards	\$1,000.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Rainbow Project	\$175.00							\$0.00	0.00%
BLUU Donation	\$250.00						\$250.00	\$250.00	100.00%
Finding Your Way Home Scholarship	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Postage	\$200.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Connections Network	\$0.00							\$0.00	
Memorial Gifts - UUMA and Others	\$2,000.00	\$450.00		\$450.00	\$50.00	\$50.00		\$1,000.00	50.00%
Donations to the Endowment	\$0.00							\$0.00	0.00%
President's Expense	\$100.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Credit Card Processing Fees	\$580.00		\$32.00	\$69.00	\$115.00			\$216.00	37.24%
Bank Expenses	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$108.59			\$29.36	\$137.95	
Board Miscellaneous Inclusiveness tng	\$1,250.00							\$0.00	0.00%
Total Other Expenses	\$5,555.00	\$450.00	\$32.00	\$627.59	\$165.00	\$50.00	\$279.36	\$1,603.95	28.87%
Total Expense	\$42,320.00	\$7,483.99	\$1,544.99	\$927.59	\$165.00	\$3,075.35	\$7,631.69	\$20,828.61	49.22%
Profit/Loss	-\$8,430.00	-\$895.38	\$3,213.79	\$4,179.16	\$3,587.61	-\$3,002.26	-\$6,209.44	\$873.48	-10.36%
Ending Account Balance									
Endowment		\$109,670.33	\$111,653.14	\$111,653.14	\$109,500.00	\$89,420.00	\$92,205.87		
Money Market		\$19,252.19	\$19,252.86	\$19,253.68	\$19,254.47	\$19,255.29	\$19,256.08		
Checking		\$12,390.74	\$15,604.53	\$19,783.69	\$23,371.30	\$20,369.04	\$14,159.60		
Scholarship Fund						20,132.00	20,759.17		
TOTALS		141,313.26	146,510.53	150,690.51	152,125.77	149,176.33	146,380.72		