

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting— November 20, 2025

Board decisions are in bold-face type; action items in red.

Reports, incl. Treasurer's, follow the meeting minutes.

Present: Joy Atkinson, George Buchanan, Barbro Hansson, Anne Marsh, Christine Robinson, Richard Speck, Charles Stephens, Janet Tillman.

Opening: President Richard called the meeting to order at 3:04pm Eastern - 2:04pm Central - 1:04pm Mountain - 12:04pm Pacific. George offered an opening reading from Ojibwe Canadian author Richard Wagamese on gratitude.

Check-in followed, responding to the question: *What are you thankful for this month?*

Consent Agenda was accepted. Barbro asked to add conference items.

Matters for Discussion

1. Office of Church Staff Finances Webinar:

Over 70 people attended our Zoom with Richard Nugent and staff. The webinar was recorded, and Richard (Speck) is working with our Zoom Master to get the recording posted. All agreed this presentation is worth doing every year in November. Christine suggested a little more presentation, perhaps including brief general updates about church staff finances, and a little less Q&A.

2. Awards:

Charles is setting up a committee to choose recipients of the Unsung UURMaPA and Creative Sageing awards. No one had specific suggestions for committee members, but Joy noted that past UURMaPA presidents might be helpful. It was also noted that a Canadian would be a valuable addition. **Richard will send the membership mailing list to all of us.**

3. Treasurer:

Paul Johnson has resigned as Treasurer for health reasons. According to the Bylaws, the Board names a replacement to fill out his term. **Richard moved that we appoint Richard Nugent, and Barbro seconded. The motion passed unanimously.** The two Richards will work out a starting date. **Richard S will send a message to Paul on behalf of the entire Board thanking him for his work as UURMaPA Treasurer and for his long service to Unitarian Universalism.**

4. Goals:

Richard had sent draft goals with the agenda. He shared them on his screen, and we reviewed each section:

- Strengthening Connections
- Improving Fundraising
- Developing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As we discussed each section, Richard made changes, additions, and timeline adjustments. He will revise his draft accordingly and send it out to all of us.

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As for specific assignments:

- Janet agreed to take the lead on exploring the creation of a skills exchange to share resources, skills, and information. A survey she is working on may help us see what is needed. An article in *Elderberries* about the survey was suggested.
- Janet is also taking the lead on exploring new small groups, which she is already working on. Included here is the exploration of possible groups for BIPOC, LGBTQ+, financially challenged, and those with disabilities.
- Joy is already working on the mentor/companionship program, and will revise this section of Richard's draft for the December meeting.
- Richard and Christine are interested in taking the lead on special interest meetings. In addition to the finances topic already decided on, Christine suggested a session on the new *Sing Out Love* hymnal. A program on planned giving was also suggested.
- Richard will take the lead on fundraising, along with Richard Nugent when he joins the Board.
- Richard is also taking the lead on the annual fundraising letter, which is ready to send out.
- Susan Smith from the Conference Planning Team is working on accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities at conferences and beyond. Barbro will talk with her.
- Christine will check with Skinner House on possible books for a DEI common read.
- George will draft a possible land acknowledgement for in-person Board meetings to be discussed in December.

Bio/stretch break for 5 minutes

5. Membership Coordinator Update:

One person contacted Richard to ask about the position and said they'd think about it. The person noted they have impaired vision. Richard will get back to them, see if they're still interested, and find out what they would need to be successful. Richard would like some back-up suggestions in case this volunteer withdraws; send him your ideas. Richard noted that with the new database software, the Membership Coordinator job does not take much time. Janet and Joy agreed that the system is easy to learn. Since there still seems to be a problem getting Intent to Retire forms and death notices from the UUA, Christine will double-check to be sure that Richard S (subbing for Membership), Janet, and Joy are on the distribution list.

Richard noted that the database shows those recently added. The system automatically adds conference attendees; since some are guests, not UURMaPAns, we should designate them as Visitors.

Richard will offer a training session on the database for Board members on a date to be determined.

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6. Conference Questions:

Barbro reported that 10 Canadians registered for the fall conference. She raised the following conference topics:

- She would like to use the surplus funds from the fall conference (around \$5,000) to help pay for a big-name speaker for spring. She is talking with Richard about how to do this.
- The Ohio pod will not be coordinating worship for the spring conference. Barbro and co-convenor Jeff Briere hope to find a cluster (perhaps in Virginia) to take on this task. Wayne Arnason and Kathleen Rolenz have agreed to lead the Opening Worship. Richard offered to lead Closing Worship, and Barbro will keep him as back-up, since he is already doing so much. Christine suggested that leading worship is a good entry point for deeper involvement in UURMaPA.
- Spring Odysseans need to be invited as soon as possible. Barbro will check the fall conference evaluations and send any suggestions to Richard, who will then recruit.
- Because of her husband's health, Sonya Sukalski is stepping down as conference co-convenor. Barbro will approach Ginger Luke to invite her to work as co-convenor with Jeff Briere. Anita Farber-Robertson might be interested, but she has UUMA Retired Minister Chapter responsibilities. Sonya will continue to work with conference pod organizers, and may be able to return to co-convening in future.

7. Job Descriptions:

We discussed the existing job descriptions for President, Vice President, and Secretary, and found that some tasks no longer fit those descriptions. **Richard, Charles, and Anne will revise their job descriptions accordingly and send them out to the Board.**

In the course of looking at the Secretary's job description, we found that our Operating Procedures state that Board members serve as liaisons with some non-Board positions. Although these do not seem to apply at present, **we decided to discuss at our December meeting which (if any) liaisons are still needed, and who should those liaisons be?**

Closing and adjournment: George closed with a beautiful passage from Richard Wagamese. The meeting adjourned at 5:10pm Eastern - 4:10pm Central - 3:10pm Mountain - 2:10pm Pacific.

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 18, 3pm Eastern - 2pm Central - 1pm Mountain - 12pm Pacific

Reports Submitted for November 20, 2025

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1) President's Report - Richard Speck

It has been a busy season. I was gone for two weeks visiting family and friends and during that time, Paul Johnson resigned. Since I was the previous treasurer before Paul, I was still on the bank documents and will be able to take up the financial end until we have another treasurer appointed and have all the bank documents signed. Paul is sending me some checks and the debit card via mail now and will mail the files when his family visits next week to help him get them to the post office. We are grateful for his service and sorry that his health precludes him continuing.

I have drafted the fund-raising appeal letter and will download the database to send it to the printer. I received several suggestions for improving it and incorporated some of it in the final document. I will have any checks sent to my return address so they can be deposited.

We are still without a database manager since Ann Marie Alderman resigned from that position. I have been managing that portfolio and we are advertising for a new person to take over the database. I am updating the file as we receive death notices or intent to retire forms. Due to my familiarity with the system, I can deal with the inputs since they are few right now.

I drafted a set of goals for the remainder of this year that we will discuss at our November meeting. I set milestones for each goal to show progress.

I am working with Barbro Hansson to finish up the accounting for the fall conference and assisting the planning team as they shift to new people. I am trying to consolidate all of the Google files of the Zoom recordings into one drive. They are scattered in two right now. My goal is to finish this in December. I also need to give our new Zoom master access to all these files so she can learn from them.

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2) Connections Coordinator's Report - Janet Tillman

Area Connectors

There has been no change in the number of Area Connectors since my September 2025 report (Areas with Connectors – 17, Areas with Identified Connector Prospects – 2, and Areas without Connectors – 15). Recruitment for Area Connectors is an ongoing and challenging process.

Connection Groups

There has been no change in the General-Interest Groups since October. Three new Focused- Interest Groups were announced in an email sent to the membership on November 11, 2025. The new groups are:

a. ***Penelope's Bones Book Discussion Group*** - Convener: Holly Horn

This group meets monthly (beginning November 17) to discuss *Penelope's Bones: A New History of Homer's World through the Women Written Out of It* by Emily Hauser. Published in 2025, it is a great combination of imagination, the very latest scientific research, scholarship, feminist and queer analyses. One chapter is to be discussed monthly for sixteen months.

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b. **UU Mystics Group** - Convener: Lilia Cuervo

The group's purpose is to help its members nurture and enhance their spiritual life, especially by being attentive to the first source of our UU living tradition, *the direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life*. This group was formerly offered through a UUMA Chapter but moved to UURMaPA to make it available to a larger audience. (This group acquired four additional members two days after the announcement was sent bringing total participation to eight.

c. **Living and Dying Sustainably** - Convener: James Zacharias

This group will address concrete sustainability actions that make a real difference. Participants will share steps they have taken such as divestment and green burials. The group is designed to learn from each other by sharing what projects they have engaged in for a cleaner/healthier planet as well as inspiring stories of progress they have gleaned from the media. Together participants will explore how to live - and eventually die - in ways that reflect their environmental values.

Connecting New Retirees/Partners

I sent emails to five new retirees/partners informing them of the various ways to connect with other retirees and partners.

2026 Objectives

- Survey partners to see what their interests are to encourage more partner participation in UURMaPA small groups and conferences.
- Collect small group members' testimonials, preferably video, sharing their experiences to encourage new members and/or formation of new groups. Testimonials could be added to the UURMaPA website and aired at conferences.
- Recruit conveners for small groups focused on the experiences and needs of marginalized people, such as *LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, people with disabilities, and those financially challenged*.

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3) Conference Coordinator's Report - Barbro Hansson

The fall 2025 conference is now behind us, and the Planning Team Conveners and I are turning our attention toward the spring 2026 conference. By all accounts, the fall conference was a success. Yes, there were glitches here and there, but our new Zoom Master, Cynthia Becker, did an excellent job.

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

This was the 11th virtual conference since 2020, and it had the highest number of registrations so far. According to my count, we had a total of 191 members of UURMaPA registered. Here are the details:

- 201 Total Individuals (including dignitaries, special guests, and Zoom Master)
- 183 Paying registrations

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- 8 Discounted registration (a \$50 value for each)
- 2 Surviving adult children who attended the Remembrance Service as our guests (Anne Rex, daughter of John Rex, and Philip Sams, son of Marjorie Montgomery)
- 2 Spouses who attended as our guests
 - Mitch Howard (Gladys Howard) and Barbara Stevens (Wes Stevens)
- 4 Dignitaries: 2 from the UUA and 2 from the UUSC
 - Carey McDonald, Richard Nugent, Laura Randall, and Mary Katherine Morn
- 1 Guest who introduced an Odyssey presenter: Rev. Cory Lovell
- 1 Zoom Master: Cynthia Becker

Of the 191 registered UURMaPAns:

- 161 Ministers
- 30 Partners (who are not also ministers)
 - 4 at the Kingston MA, pod, organized by Judith Campbell
 - 23 at the Seabeck WA pod, organized by Jaco ten Hove (only 19 indicated on registration)
 - 9 at the Waverly OH, pod, organized by Sylvia Howe
 - 9 at the Wilmington DE, pod, organized by Richard Speck (only 8 indicated on registr.)
 - 2 at the Winnsboro SC, pod organized by Meredith Garmon and LoraKim Joyner
- 9 MiniStory presenters, recruited by Wayne Walder
- 25 Facilitators, recruited by Anita Farber-Robertson and Linda Wright
- 7 Worship Team members, recruited by Joan Van Becelaere
- 9 UURMaPA Board members
- 2 Planning Team Co-Conveners, Sonya Sukalski and Jeff Briere
- 8 Planning Team members
- 2 Odyssey presenters
- 2 UURMaPA Chaplains, Christine Robinson and Marni Harmoni

The income from registrations came to \$9,150.00, while expenses came to 6,068.57, leaving a surplus of \$3,081.43. We received a total of \$1,420.00 toward scholarship donations, with only one request for financial aid from a pod attendee. That amount had been set at \$50.00 per person. To make accounting more simplified, all System Charges by Planning Center and 3rd Party Charges (credit card stripe fees) should be subtracted exclusively from the Conference income.

In addition, I have now figured out that discounts given to registrants and guests need not be accounted for as an expense, other than specifying how many non-paying individuals registered to attend. Income-wise, we only account for paying registrants. At the same time, the Financial Aid Endowment Fund should only involve awards given to pod attendees who request aid. The Income and Expense Report for the Fall 2025 Conference is provided as a separate document.

The Planning Team is putting the fall 2025 conference to bed on Friday, November 21, when the team reviews evaluation responses from attendees. This time, we received 101 completed evaluations, the highest number so far.

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Nearly 54 respondents gave the fall conference an overall score of 5, the highest rating, representing 55.7% of the total. The average rating was 4.49%. Most attendees, 78.2%, experienced the conference at home, and 61% in the Eastern Time Zone.

As usual, the Odyssey presentations, Remembrance Service, and Theme presentation received very positive remarks. Of the programs that included a rating, 83.9% of respondents (93) said the information in the UURMaPA In the Loop was interesting and useful. While 14% said they missed Richard Speck's "Historical Inspiration" presentation, 69.9% checked "Glad I saw it!"

For this conference, we brought Cynthia Becker on board as the new Zoom Master. Three Planning Team members, with tech savvy, assisted her with hosting and tech issues. That seemed to have worked really well. Cynthia proved herself to be a great choice for this role, and she fit in quite well with the Planning team.

Following the fall conference, Cynthia and her tech assistants held a special meeting to review tech issues, causes, and possible solutions. Anita Farber-Robertson and Linda Wright held a special follow-up meeting with Connecting Room facilitators. The responses from UURMaPAs who attended Connecting Rooms indicate how valued these small group interactions are when done right and how souring the experience can be when not done right.

All Board members received the Compiled Evaluation Summary completed by attendees, as well as the AI-generated summaries of the different programs offered during the conference, along with ideas for future conferences. While the content of the evaluation was a collaborative effort, I again used the evaluation template on Google Forms.

The evaluation included a question where attendees could indicate they had missed program offerings and would like to see a recording of it at a later date. That list is rather sizable, and the task now is to figure out how to make the recordings available and when.

A week or so before the fall conference began, Sonya Sukalski shared with Jeff Briere and me that her husband's leukemia had returned. A year ago, Mitch underwent full treatment, concluding with a bone marrow transplant. His recovery was excellent until early October this year, when his doctors alerted him to the cancer's return. He is undergoing the same treatment again, more intense than the first one. With this development, Sonya has decided, with regret, to step down as Co-Convener.

Spring 2026 Conference, April 27-29: "Keeping It Together When Democracy Is Falling Apart"

At this point, Jeff Briere has agreed to continue as Co-Convener. Several Planning Team members will continue, while a few are rotating off the team. Jeff and I have begun creating a list of individuals to potentially recruit and a list of potential theme presenters.

With a view to the future:

Fall 2026 Conference - October 19-21: *It is time to consider Odyssey presenters*

Spring 2027 Conference - April 5-7

UURMaPA Fall 2025 Conference
Total of 201 Individuals Registered

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Income & Expense Report

*Income

183 Paying Registrants at \$50.00/person	\$9,150.00
173 US and 10 Canadian paying registrants	
18 non-paying registrants	

Expenses

Virtual Producer	\$5,500.00
Pre-conference production	\$4,500.00
Zoom Hosting	+ \$1,000.00
Tech Support	\$ 89.03
For Zoom Master	\$ 89.03
Total System Charges	\$221.00
Total Stripe Fees	\$258.54
Stripe Fee US (\$1.38/reg)	\$239.74
Stripe Fee Canada (\$1.88/reg)	\$ 18.80
Planning Team Expenses	+ \$ 0.00
Total Expenses	<u>\$6,068.57</u>

BALANCE of Conference \$3,081.43

Scholarship Donations

Donations Received	\$1,420.00
Pod Financial Aid Awarded: 1 at \$50.00	\$ <u>50.00</u>

BALANCE of Scholarship Donations \$1,370.00

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4) Passages Coordinator's Report - Joy Atkinson

Since the last Board meeting, I have sent death notices to the membership regarding the deaths of the Rev. Linda DeSantis (1949–2025) and partner Dorothy Meek (1933–2025). Rev. DeSantis was not a member of UURMaPA. Our policy is to send a brief notice for non-members over age 65 who have died, but not prepare full obituaries.

I have worked with Joan VanBecelaere to find some people willing to help Jay Atkinson with preparing obituaries for Elderberries and the website. It looks like we may have one to three volunteers from the pool of those who have prepared obits for our recent conferences. Jay has been in touch with these potential volunteers to explain what is involved. In the meantime I have sent obituaries I receive from the UUA to Jaco ten Hove to add to the website, so that we have at least some information on those deceased colleagues who died since January 2025, when Jay had stopped regularly preparing the obituaries. I believe with this new help for Jay, we will be able to get back on track with timely obituaries.

Treasurer's Report follows on next page.

2025 Income and Expenses		Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	2025 Total	Budget
NOVEMBER Report (through Oct.)	2025 Budget												vs. Actual
INCOME													
Member Donations	\$9,000.00	\$4,780.00	\$1,230.00		\$630.00		\$422.25	\$197.55	\$200.00	\$200.00		\$7,659.80	85.11%
Member Donations Paypal	\$4,500.00	\$1,808.61		\$2,488.90							\$297.62	\$4,595.13	102.11%
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			\$1,694.52	\$4,385.95	\$4,481.03	\$19,903.83	142.68%
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	\$197.55	\$1,894.52	\$4,585.95	\$4,778.65	\$33,158.76	97.84%
EXPENSE													
On-Site Board Meetings													
Transportation	\$4,000.00								\$1,319.87	\$1,393.69	\$626.85	\$3,340.41	83.51%
Room and Board	\$5,200.00						\$718.80	\$2,308.20				\$3,027.00	58.21%
Hospitality	\$200.00									\$100.00		\$100.00	50.00%
Total Board Meetings	\$9,400.00							\$2,308.20	\$1,319.87	\$1,493.69	\$626.85	\$5,748.61	61.16%
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									\$106.00	\$115.00	\$221.00	22.10%
Total Conferences	\$17,440.00	\$5,500.00		\$300.00		\$1,000.00	\$5,500.00			\$106.00	\$115.00	\$12,521.00	71.79%
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			\$2,067.86			\$5,606.20	112.12%
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		\$2,067.86			\$5,706.94	73.17%
Other Expenses													
Retirement Planning Seminar Expense	\$0.00											\$0.00	
Saging & Unsong & 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		\$100.00	\$300.00		\$550.00	\$1,950.00	97.50%
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				\$32.00	\$69.00		\$317.00	54.66%
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	\$100.00	\$332.00	\$69.00	\$550.00	\$2,654.95	47.79%
Total Expense	\$42,320.00	\$7,483.99	\$1,544.99	\$927.59	\$165.00	\$3,075.35	\$7,631.69	\$2,408.20	\$3,719.73	\$1,668.69	\$1,291.85	\$29,917.08	70.69%
Profit/Loss	-\$8,430.00	-\$895.38	\$3,213.79	\$4,179.16	\$3,587.61	-\$3,002.26	-\$6,209.44	-\$2,210.65	-\$1,825.21	\$2,917.26	\$3,486.80	\$3,241.68	-38.45%
Ending Account Balance													
Endowment		\$109,670.33	\$111,653.14	\$111,653.14	\$109,500.00	\$89,420.00	\$92,205.87	\$94,688.15	\$95,787.00	\$96,586.16	\$98,723.48		
Money Market		\$19,252.19	\$19,252.86	\$19,253.68	\$19,254.47	\$19,255.29	\$19,256.08	\$19,256.98	\$19,257.72	\$19,258.51	\$19,259.33		
Checking		\$12,390.74	\$15,604.53	\$19,783.69	\$23,371.30	\$20,369.04	\$14,159.60	\$11,848.95	\$8,997.38	\$11,914.22	\$15,401.02		
Scholarship Fund						20,132.00	20,759.17	21,318.03	21,565.42	21,745.34	\$22,226.54		
TOTALS		141,313.26	146,510.53	150,690.51	152,125.77	149,176.33	146,380.72	147,112.11	\$145,607.52	149,542.23	\$155,610.37		