

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

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

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

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

Absent: Richard Nugent

Opening: Richard S. called the meeting to order at 3:02pm Eastern - 2:02pm Central - 1:02pm Mountain - 12:02pm Pacific. He offered an opening reading adapted from Rumi by Leslie Takahashi from *Voices from the Margins*.

Agenda Review: No changes; George apologized for misspelling Fred Wooden's name.

Check-in followed, responding to the question: What is lifting your spirits this month?

Consent Agenda was accepted. **Richard S. will send a President's report** soon.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Virtual New Member Welcome

Charles asked for input on several issues:

- Book to give to new members - In the past, we've given *The Seasoned Soul: Reflections on Growing Older*. Charles suggests instead *Taking Retirement: A Beginner's Diary* (Beacon). He invited **everyone to take a look the latter and let him know of any concerns.**
- Date - Last year's gathering was on September 22, but this year, that is the date of our AI webinar. After discussion, we settled on September 2 or 3.
- Invitees - At Barbro's suggestion, we will invite those who've been retired for a year and didn't come to last year's gathering, and will also send a general invitation to all who may wish to learn more about UURMaPA and/or to welcome new folks.
- Program - Charles reviewed the "order of service" for last year's program. Suggestions were made to modify this by breaking up the line-up of speakers with a Q&A session, and ending with breakout rooms whose participants could respond to the question: "How can UURMaPA serve you at this point in your retirement journey?" It was also suggested that we not include a presentation on finances, since we will offer a stand-alone webinar on this topic in November. **Charles will send out a draft program for comments.**
- Zoom Master - We decided to ask Cynthia to run the tech for the New Member Welcome event. We will pay her \$325. **Barbro will send Charles contact information for Cynthia, and Charles will then be in touch with her about dates.**

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

2. AI for retired ministers:

As noted in Christine's report, we will offer a webinar on AI on September 22 at 1pm Eastern - 12pm Central - 11am Mountain - 10am Pacific. The presenter is the Rev. Dr. Emma Farrell, and she will charge us "the price of a sermon." The presentation will be recorded.

3. Upcoming Board Meetings:

The Board retreat will take the place of the September meeting. Charles will preside at the June 23 Board meeting, as Richard S. and Janet will be in Transylvania. New board members Fred Wooden (*Elderberries*) and Mary McKinnon Ganz (Secretary) will be invited to attend.

4. Conference Update:

- Spring Conference - As noted in Barbro's report, there were 190 registrants, and about 100 filled out evaluations. The most-attended programs were theme presentations, opening worship, Odysseys, and the Remembrance Service. Barbro has sent inSpirit gift cards to thank the Odysseans and Planning Team members. She reported that about \$1,200 in scholarship donations were not needed this time, so those funds will go into the scholarship endowment for future use.
- Richard N. has agreed to be Zoom Master Cynthia Becker's supervisor. She is reviewing the job description and letter of agreement, which will be discussed when she meets with Barbro and Richard N. Cynthia is also working on a proposal to move UURMaPA's website to a different platform.
- Fall Conference: As things stand now, Barbro is still the Conference Coordinator. She is working with the Nominating Committee to find a replacement. (See item 6 below for further discussion.) Registration opens August 3; the fee will be \$60 through September 24, \$80 thereafter. Barbro submitted a draft budget for the Fall Conference, and hopes the tech assistant will stay on. We can offer \$100 to pod attendees for their expenses. On the evaluation forms, the most-often mentioned suggestion for a Fall theme was "elderhood," and many prefer the panel format.

Bio/Stretch break for 10 minutes

Conferences, continued:

Board members have traditionally had the right of first refusal for leading opening and closing worship at conferences. Barbro invited Board members to think about whether they would like to do this, but not to decide yet. Decisions should wait for the new Board to form, and the Planning Team is considering whether to replace the closing worship (which isn't well-attended) with something else.

Richard S. screen-shared Barbro's proposed budget for the Fall Conference. She expects to have 10-15 non-paying guests. 150 paying registrants would allow us to break even.

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

5. Retreat Planning:

Richard S. reminded us that the Board retreat will be held at Bon Secours from Monday evening September 7, through lunchtime(ish) on Thursday, September 10. New *Elderberries* Editor Fred Wooden will attend on Zoom rather than in person. Richard S. has asked Richard N. to secure the dates. When Board members have made travel arrangements, Richard N. can figure who will be present for which meals.

Richard S. asked to send him Ideas for retreat topics. These topics were suggested today:

- How can we better get who we are and what we do out to a wider audience?
- What are the policies around use of our endowment? Can we use it to benefit retirees in some way? Or for some other special purpose? Richard will send the endowment documents to Board members for discussion at the retreat.
- With only one full conference each year, how do we handle Odysseys, Remembrance Services, and Connections Rooms in between? We need to re-imagine our programming and scheduling, perhaps setting up an experimental framework to try for a year, then re-evaluate.
- Can Connections Rooms be structured so that folks could move from one group to another? Barbro noted that Susan Smith knows how to do this. Could Cynthia talk with Susan?
- How can we encourage more pods, subgroups, connecting groups?
- Should we try a large in-person hybrid conference at a conference center, with zoom for those who can't attend? Or does this take too many volunteers and/or cost too much money?
- Conference Coordinator or Conference Liaison (see below)

6. Recruiting New Conference Coordinator:

The Nominating Committee is going back to folks who showed some interest in the past. The new job description is less onerous, but still may be too much. That being the case, what if the At-Large Board position for Conference Coordinator were to become a Conference Liaison (as used to be the case), with no expectation that the person in that role would also serve on the Planning Team? The Planning Team Convenor role would not be a Board position. The Board would set policies, budget, and broad goals for the conferences, but then delegate the rest of the work to the Planning Team. We would like to delegate more, and to do so, we need to make boundaries clear.

Barbro said she would take the role of conference Convenor, if someone else would serve on the Board as Conference Liaison. This new division of labor would make the Board Liaison's job easier, but the Convenor would still have many responsibilities. At the retreat, the Board will discuss whether this change might work, and what policies are needed.

Closing and Adjournment:

As closing words, Richard S. read "Ground of Being," by Natalie Fenimore.

The meeting was adjourned at 5pm Eastern - 4pm Central - 3pm Mountain - 2pm Pacific.

Next meeting: Tuesday, June 23 at 3pm Eastern - 2pm Central - 1pm - 12pm Pacific

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

Reports Submitted for May 26 Meeting

1) President's Report - Richard Speck

I have spent the month answering correspondence and assisting the Treasurer while he was dealing with a personal issue. I continued to update the goals for the Board with new additions from the Board members. I have been in contact with the two new Board members who will join the Board in July. I have helped coordinate the Board retreat scheduled for September at Bon Secours Retreat Center. I wrote an article for *Elderberries*.

I coordinated the “Board in the Loop” for the spring conference and acted as the Conference Moderator for the Q&A portions of the various sections of the conference. I have begun seeking names for the Odysseans for Spring 2027. With the decision to eliminate the spring conference, we will have to be creative to attract people to hear the Odysseys. I assisted the Conference Coordinator in determining the fees we paid for services by Planning Center and Stripe for the spring conference. I assisted the Membership Coordinator in starting the process to publish a new membership directory.

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2) Connections Coordinator's Report - Janet Tillman

A. Status of 2026 Board Goals assigned to the Connections Coordinator

1. Explore (and develop, if feasible) a member skills exchange/skill sharing section on the website.
 - The Skill-Sharing Network is up and running.
 - Added another skill to the network – Sustainable Investing.
2. Create new focused interest connection groups.
 - I am still working on recruiting facilitators for groups focused on *Living with Less* and *Living with Chronic Illness*. As soon as I have identified two co-facilitators/conveners, I will publicize these groups.
3. Explore a focused interest group for BIPOC members.
 - Plan to write articles about UURMaPA for the next newsletters of BLUU, DRUUMN and UUMA.

B. Area Connectors

- There has been no change in the number of Area Connectors since my March 2026 report. Recruitment for Area Connectors is an ongoing and challenging process.
- UURMaPA membership is clustered into six regions and 35 Geographical Areas. The chart below shows the areas with Connectors as well as those areas in need of Connectors.

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

Reg	Area	Connector(s)	Reg	SEEKING CONNECTORS
1	MAINE	Lucy Ijams	1	BALLOU-CHANNING
1	NEW HAMPSHIRE	Nadine Swahnberg	1	CANADA EAST
1	VERMONT	Brendan Hadash	1	CENTRAL MASS
2	J. PRIESTLEY NORTH	Paula Maiorano	1	MASS BAY NORTH
2	OHIO MEADVILLE	Janet Newman	1	MASS BAY SOUTH
2	ST. LAWRENCE	Richard Gilbert	1	CONNECTICUT VALLEY
3	VIRGINIA	Fritz Hudson	2	J. PRIESTLEY SOUTH
3	FLORIDA	Bob Murphy, Eleanor Richardson & Peter Richardson	2	METRO NY/NJ
3	SOUTHWEST	Jonalu Johnstone	3	EASTERN CAROLINAS
4	HEARTLAND NO.& SO.	Frederick Wooden	3	WESTERN CAROLINAS
4	CEN.MIDWEST NO.& SO.	Marcia Marino	3	MIDSOUTH/TENNESSEE
4	PRAIRIE STAR NORTH	Roberta Haskin	5	ROCKY MOUNTAIN
4	PRAIRIE STAR SOUTH	Diane Miller, Seeking co-connector	5	ARIZONA/SO. NEVADA
5	NEW MEXICO	Christine Robinson, Claudia Elferdink & Gary Kowalski	5	NO.CAL.INLAND/ NO. NEVADO
5	CANADA WEST	Carl Ulrich & Linda Horton	5	NO.CAL.COAST/HAWAII
5	OREGON/ IDAHO	Suzie Matranga-Wilson	5	SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
			5	WASHINGTON/ALASKA
			6	OVERSEAS

C. Connection Groups

- There has been no change in the General-Interest Groups. (Total Groups Active – 12, Total Participants – 69).
- There are seven focused-interest groups.

D. Connecting New Retirees/Partners

- I received no notifications of new retirees in May.
- Three Area Connectors were notified of deaths in their areas.

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

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3) Denominational Liaison's Report - Christine Robinson

I have only one matter to report. The date for the 'AI for retired ministers' seminar is September 22, at 10am Pacific etc.

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4) Conference Coordinator's Report - Barbro Hansson

Spring 2026 Conference - April 27-29 “Holding It Together When Democracy is Falling Apart”

It is clear that the Spring 2026 Conference was successful, not only in terms of registration numbers but also in the responses to the post-conference evaluation. We received 100 responses, representing 52.6% of attendees. For the first question, “Overall, how satisfied were you with the Spring Conference?” 57% gave 5 out of 5 hearts (the highest rating), 39% gave 4, and 4% gave 3. For the second question, “How did the conference theme resonate with you?” 50% gave 5 out of 5 hearts, 30% gave 4, 16% gave 3, 2% gave 2, and 2% gave 1 heart.

Actual Registrations for Spring 2026 Conference

- 190 registrants (including 6 SCHOLARSHIPS, 4 FIRST-TIMERS, 1 NEWMAPANS 9 SURVIVORS, 1 GUEST)
- 1 registrant who paid \$50.00 by check
- 147 registered who paid \$50.00
- 21 registered at \$70.00 per person
- 19 Partners (excluding ministers who are also partners)
- 164 Ministers (4 of whom are also partners)

Fall 2026 Conference - October 19-21: No theme selected yet

Although planning has begun, the first official meeting of the Planning Team is scheduled for June 24 or 25. Several people have rotated off, but we have new UURMaPAns coming on board. The Planning Team includes:

- Jeff Briere will continue as Publicity Coordinator, create the slideshow and select the soundtrack, and serve as host.

- Ned Wight as Connecting Room Coordinator.

- Sonya Sukalski as Pod Promotion & Support, and Archivist.

- Jef Gamblee as Tech Assistant #1.

- Marcia Marino as Scribe.

- Ginger Luke, role not yet identified.

- Wayne Walder as MiniStory Coordinator is a possibility, but not confirmed

We still need to fill the following roles:

- Convener

- Theme Presenter Liaison

- Worship Coordinator

- Tech Assistant #2

Duane Fickeisen and Roger Rochester are our two Odyssey presenters for the fall.

Fall 2027 Conference - October 25-27: No theme selected yet.

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

UURMaPA Spring 2026 Conference Income & Expense Report

		PROPOSED BUDGET
INCOME FROM REGISTRATIONS		
1 Registration via check payment	\$50.00	
147 Online Registrants @ \$50.00	\$7,350.00	
21 Registrants @ \$70.00	<u>\$1,470.00</u>	
TOTAL INCOME	\$8,870.00	\$8,500.00
EXPENSES FOR ONLINE REGISTRATIONS		
Virtual Producer (Fall & Spring)	\$5,500.00	
Pre-conference production	\$4,500.00	
Zoom Hosting	+ \$1,000.00	
Tech Support for Presenters (Cynthia)	\$400.00	
Theme Speaker (Glen Thomas Rideout)	\$1,500.00	
Featured Musician (Glen Thomas Rideout)	\$500.00	
System Charges (81.8% of \$231.00)	\$189.00	
3rd Party Processing Fee (81.8% of \$271.21)	\$221.21	
Planning Team Expenses	\$178.40	
Miscellaneous & Other (Tom Schade)	<u>+ \$325.00</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$8,813.61</u>	\$8,500.00
BALANCE		\$56.39
SCHOLARSHIP DONATIONS		
TOTAL DONATIONS	\$1,605.00	\$1,500.00
SCHOLARSHIP EXPENSES		
System Charges (18.2% of \$231.00)	42.00	
3rd Party Process Fee (18.2% of \$271.21)	\$49.00	
Scholarships Granted	\$270.00	
4 Registrants at \$50.00	\$200.00	
1 Registrant at \$70	\$70.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$361.00</u>	
BALANCE OF SCHOLARSHIP DONATIONS		\$1,244.00
<i>Balance to be transferred to the Financial Aid Endowment Fund</i>		

\$231.00 = System Charges by PlanningCenter during registrations Feb 2 - May 2

\$271.21 = 3rd Party Processing Fee for online registrations

UURMaPA Fall 2026 Conference PROPOSED BUDGET

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

INCOME FROM ONLINE REGISTRATIONS

150 Registrants @ \$60.00	\$9,000.00	
15 Registrants @ \$80.00	\$1,200.00	
TOTAL REGISTRATION INCOME		\$10,200.00

EXPENSES OF REGISTRATIONS

Virtual Producer (Fall & Spring)		\$6,500.00
Pre-conference production	\$5,000.00	
Zoom Hosting	+ \$1,500.00	
Tech Support for Presenters		\$500.00
Assistant Video Editor		\$500.00
Theme Presenters		\$2,000.00
PlanningCenter System Charges (about 82%)		\$250.00
3rd Party Processing Fee (about 18%)		\$250.00
Planning Team Expenses		\$100.00
Miscellaneous & Other		<u>+ \$100.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES OF REGISTRATIONS		\$10,200.00

SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$1,500.00
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SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS AND EXPENSES

PlanningCenter System Charges (about 18%)		\$45.00
3rd Party Processing Fee (about 18%)		\$54.00
Scholarships Granted		\$700.00
9 Registrants at \$60.00	\$540.00	
2 Registrant at \$80.00	\$160.00	
Pod Financial Aid Awards		\$700.00
7 Pod Attendees at \$100.00	\$700.00	
TOTAL SCHOLARSHIP EXPENSES		\$1,499.00

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5) Passages Coordinator - Joy Atkinson

Since the last Board meeting, I have sent death notices informing the membership of the deaths of the following beloved colleagues: the Revs. Doug Gallagher (1946-2026), Roy Reynolds (1944-2026) Natalie Fenimore (1958- 2026) and Paul Johnson (1944-2026). The Rev Natalie Fenimore was not retired, so was not a UURMaPA member. However, our practice has been to send notices regarding colleagues' deaths when they are age 65 or older, regardless of UURMaPA membership status. I just received word of the death of the Rev. Richard Fewkes, and will send a notice when I have more information.

UURMaPA Board Zoom Meeting — May 26, 2026

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6) *Elderberries* Editor's Report - George Buchanan

I've spoken with Fred Wooden, the incoming *Elderberries* editor. We've agreed on Monday August 10 as the working deadline for submissions for the summer edition, to be published at the end of August.

The spring edition should be available on the website this week. The print version of this will probably be in the mail sometime next week. I appreciate the timely work of all those who provided copy for this spring issue.

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Treasurer's Report delayed.