



Minutes for Board Meeting on DECEMBER 14, 2023

Opening Prayer – The monthly meeting of the Unity of South Sound (USS) Board started at 6:40 PM (online via Zoom) with an opening prayer by Rev. Meghan.

Board of Trustee (BOT) members: Michele Zwosta, Steve Ryan, Nancy Jackson, Stacey Lawrence, Chris Lizarraga, Rev. Meghan Smith Brooks, were in attendance. We have a quorum.

Check In – Board members checked in with one another.

MONTHLY REPORTS – calling out exceptions/concerns only

Approval of agenda

Approval of Secretary's Report / Board Minutes – Nancy Jackson submitted the November 9th minutes by email, and they were approved by email.

Tithe Report – See attached: Steve Ryan submitted the November Tithe Report by email. Nancy Jackson made a motion to approve the Tithes, Stacey Lawrence seconded, all Board Members approved.

Treasurer's Report – See attached: Steve Ryan submitted the November Treasurer's Report by email. Nancy Jackson made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Stacey Lawrence seconded, all Board Members approved.

Minister's Report - see attached - Rev. Meghan and Al Hove met with a representative of a local foundation, who has affiliation with Unity of South Sound, and Unity of South Sound has received a commitment to receive a significant donation for 2023. This will help balance the 2023 budget. Truly a blessing. More will come at the Annual Meeting.

UPDATES ON OLD BUSINESS

Budget Committee – Rev. Meghan, Steve Ryan, Chris Lizarraga, Stacey Lawrence, Michele Zwosta met twice so far working on operating costs.

Board Nominating Committee – Annie Lane (Lead), Herlinda Garcia (backup), Nancy Jackson (Board) **open 2024** – (2) – 3-year positions – (1) 1 year position (to fulfill a term) – (1) 1-year Alternate position.

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Meeting Date – February 25th following church service.

Executive Session – Board went into executive session. The board approved an appreciation gift for Heidi. Michele Zwosta had to leave early and was not in attendance.

Business to return to in future meeting

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging Training - Bring back

Michele has setup a planning calendar in Office 365 for 2024 Calendar of events

Google Ad Grants – bring back

ACTION ITEMS:

Rev. Meghan -

Welcoming Videos - in Process

Event Coordinator - Now focused on developing an Event Team to coordinate all USS activities. Along with a Community Outreach Team as well.

Investigate DEIB training

Unity of South Sound: Upcoming events

12/21/2023 - Solstice Event 7-8 pm

12/24/2023 - Children's Play /Cookie Exchange

1/01/2024 - Yoga & Meditation Retreat

1/30/2024 - 2/27/2024 - Prayer Class (zoom)

2/25/2024 Annual Meeting

3/8/2024 - 3/10/2024 Chaplain's Retreat

Closing Prayer – Rev. Meghan closed the meeting with a prayer and the meeting ended at 9:05 pm.

Next Month's Board Meeting is January 11, 2024, at 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Jackson, Secretary

DATE: 12/22/2023

Unity of South Sound NOVEMBER Board Meeting – Dec 14, 2023

Rev. Meghan Smith Brooks Ministers Report

Here are my highlights of activities from November/December and plans moving forward:

- **Our Prosperity:** Celebrating a successful Prosperity Funding event Nov 11th – we grew by almost \$10,000 after expenses! And seeds of prosperity have been planted to mature in 2024☺

- **Board Leadership Follow-up:** We met Nov 28th to confirm the definitions and plan for our Administrative staffing in 2024, as a result of Heidi resigning her current position to follow her new career path as an independent bookkeeper. This actively sets into motion our Phase 2 Analysis plan for 2024 based on the UWM program ‘The Power of Focused Ministry’ we are committed to following. Beginning with our Administrative Office, we are focusing on re-defining our administrative, marketing and financial staffing positions to set into motion a foundation that supports our revisioning for a thriving ministry of the future. Our intention is to establish a stable financial budget plan that may reduce our current expenses as it enhances our base.
 - We have agreed to hire a QuickBook bookkeeper on contract for up to 4 hours per week on a set monthly rate with the allocation for approved additional hours at an agreed hourly rate based on current market research, including identifying what other Unity ministries are paying for bookkeeping services. We are actively seeking the ideal experienced candidate who is available to meet our needs. I have several recommendations I will follow-up with.
 - Our Administrative role has been broken into two roles; Office Administrator and Marketing & Communications Manager. The Marketing position rolls in our current Social Media and Website management, the E-Blast and creative marketing materials creation and planning. Ideal candidates have been identified within our current USS staffing and are set to transition into their expanded roles beginning Jan 1, 2024. This plan allows for each position to be served by those with the best skills for the responsibilities required for efficiency and effectiveness. It will also support a reduced payroll budget for 2024.
 - Budget planning for 2024 has begun with a goal of completion by year end to have ready for board approval in January and ready to present to our membership at our annual meeting in February 2024.

- **UWM ‘Let’s Grow Together’** monthly prosperity zoom sessions: In follow-up from the last session of the year in November, I have a draft prepared for approval of their recommended Year-End Gift Letter and the Legacy Planned Giving Brochure in edit mode to share in the New Year. My plan also includes calling for participants in a newly established Prosperity Growth Team to assist in planning and setting into motion our annual prosperity programs and events.
 - In conjunction with our prosperity goals, we have become aware of a local charitable giving foundation with a connection to Unity of South Sound that may be a potential opportunity for annual financial gift donations. I invite us all to hold the intention of a beneficial relationship being established in support of our prosperity in 2024 and beyond☺

- **YFM:** They are in full Christmas event mode with the first of two Sunday Christmas Bazaars complete and active rehearsals happening in preparation of our Youth Christmas Play Sunday Dec 24th morning! Very grateful for our YFM staff making these wonderful events happen☺

- **Faith-In-Action Pledge Campaign update:** We will continue to bring awareness to our community to submit their 2024 Intentional Pledge Commitment in support of our goal of reaching a \$187,500 financial support of our 2024 financial budget requirements. We have reached almost \$100,000 of our goal with 29 pledges returned. We envision full ministry support of every person/family that attends our services, programs and events, in-person and online!
- **Testimonial Videos:** Our first testimonial has been edited and has been shared to be posted to our Website and Social Media. The others are in active editing mode. I am working on setting up another session in 2024 when McKenna can come with her school's professional camera and lighting to enhance future recordings and take of promotional active shots during a morning service! Stay tuned for more outreach material in the new year☺
- **Pastoral Care:** We hold in our hearts our members under special medical and hospice care at this time. We are blessed to have our Congregational Care Team led by Lynda Ash that has been providing resource support and assistance as available to our members.
- **Service Ministry Team Report:** We continue to hold the need to expand our Hospitality and Usher Team members, especially the first quarter of 2024 as several of regular team members will be out of town for extended time. We also hold the intention for the formal creation of new teams in support of our expansion and abundance: Community Outreach Team, Events Team, and Prosperity Growth Team most importantly! We note due to a lack of a team to initiate action, any seasonal outreach activities such a coat drive or giving tree, did not get established. We hope to restore a project in 2024. We are grateful for the newly established team: Sunday Service Team, 5 members trained by Heidi last Sunday ready to step in to cover what she does on Sunday morning!
- **Music:** We introduced our custom Mission/Vision song "We Are Spirit Guided" written by ChristineEss, song writer, in November with great enthusiasm. We will pause the use during the Christmas season and bring it back into our music scheduling in January. I also hope to have the long awaited music team new song rehearsal date established so we can confidently introduce the many new songs awaiting musical expression!
- **Holiday plans:** We have begun our Christmas season marathon with the first advent service Dec 3. We have also added several special timely events that can effectively be shared outside our Unity membership: A Solstice Event Dec 21st at 7pm, in our auditorium led by Jennifer Richardson and myself, and a New Year's Day Mini Yoga and Meditation event Jan 1 10am-12n led by Stacey Lawrence. Our goal is for our members to share the Social Media posts of the events to their personal groups and communities outside of USS.
- **In my personal practice of Self Care:** I am noticing the vibrational impact of the many overlapping responsibilities of my role as your minister. I will be taking intentional action to provide myself the time and space I need to be the most effective spiritual leader I can, as I am aware of feeling the edge of burnout coming upon me. Part of my plan will be in having Rev. Michael step in as your Sunday speaker every 6 weeks or so to allow for the self-care breaks I need to be effective. He is willing to gift his time in respect of our budget and the minimal Sunday's I have available to schedule a guest speaker in our budget. Noting many ministers have one Sunday a month off all year or a whole month of renewal time each year in addition to their vacation time to prevent burnout. I am in the flow of creative support of

meeting both my mind, body, spirit health needs and the needs of our ministry for consistent and meaningful spiritual messages on every Sunday throughout the year.

I am extraordinarily grateful for the vibrational shift we are feeling that is the results of the seeds of prosperity blooming as abundance within our ministry. I know our current change is creating growing pains and may trigger concerns, but in my heart I know we are on track for embracing greater good and all we need to support the strong foundation we are establishing. Thank you all for your gifts of time, energy and amazing presence in all you provide for USS. 😊

The blessings of the season are yours today and every day,

Rev. Meghan

November 2023 Financial Report
By Steve Ryan, Board Treasurer

We begin our Financial Report for USS November 2023 by checking out the changes in our Balance Sheet. Total Assets increased by \$7,726 during the month of November. The components impacting this increase include 1. Operating Cash (our checking account) was up \$3,477 and 2. Investments (Edward Jones Account) saw unrealized market gains of \$4,249. Our Short Term Liabilities (payroll taxes) increased \$843 in November to \$3,307. We are reviewing these increasing liabilities and anticipate their decrease as we move into 2024.

Moving on to our November 2023 Profit & Loss Statement (Budget vs Actual), we can quickly identify the cause of our operating cash income increasing month over month. Disappointingly, our Tithes and Love Offerings were low at \$11,149 or 64% of budget. However, our Soulful Soiree prosperity funding event grossed over \$10,500 allowing Total Income for the month to exceed budget by \$1,956 for a total of \$21,786 or 110% of budget. This is the first month this year that income has exceeded budget. While the event was a grand success, we still need to boost monthly tithing as prosperity funding events cannot always be relied on to fund ongoing operating expenses. With November Total Expenses coming in at \$19,147 (97% of budget), we saw a Net Operating Income of \$2,639. Hurray! Let's celebrate the moment!

The Year-to-Date Profit & Loss Statement (Budget vs Actual) tells our story through November 2023. Tithes and Love Offerings trail the budget at \$158,568 (82% of budget) with Total Income trailing the budget at \$179,066 (81% of budget). Despite the success of the Soulful Soiree, it essentially only made up about half of our Year-to-Date Budget Gap of \$22,240. Once again, our expenses are staying tight to budget at just shy of 101% of budget yielding a Net Operating Loss Year-to-Date of \$42,464.

Compared to last year, we are doing modestly better. Tithes dollar wise are up \$20k from Year-to-Date 2022 with the percent of budget increasing from 79% to 82%. Still a ways to go. Our Net Operating Loss is \$12k less than it was last year. These metrics are improvements, if not as big and as quickly as we may desire. Finally, late breaking news indicates a high probability of USS receiving a large year end tithe that will be most beneficial to our bottom line. We are blessed!

Steve Ryan
Board Treasurer, Unity of South Sound