

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Board of Trustees of Mount Vernon Unitarian Church**  
**3 June 2008**

**Board members present:**

Lauck Walton, Chairman	Reid Adler
Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson	Bill Clontz
Tamara de la Camp	Lisa Guide
Birgit Robbert	Mike Walker
Doug Jemison, Youth Representative	

**Others present:**

Ron Brandt, Church Administrator  
Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster, Interim Minister  
Al Erickson, Treasurer  
Wendy Burns, MVUC Natural Playground Coordinator  
Kristen Reidy, Laura Comb, Alison O'Quinn - Representatives of Ft. Hunt Preschool  
Seileen Murphy, Religious Education Committee  
Jamie Barnett

**Absent:**

Joan Darrah  
Megan Henry, Director of Religious Education (on vacation)

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 by Board chair, Lauck Walton.

1. The agenda was approved; the minutes of the Board meeting on 6 May 2008 were approved.
2. Wendy Burns and representatives of the Fort Hunt Preschool requested approval to replace deteriorating playground equipment with a new play structure made by Earthscape Structures. FHP will fully finance the project (estimated to be \$20,600), including removal of old equipment and purchase and installation of the new structure, and will coordinate scheduling of work with the church office. The play structure is natural-looking and is made of recycled materials, fitting in well with MVUC's natural playground concept. **The Board unanimously (and gratefully) approved the request.**
3. Jamie Barnett requested that the Board grant him authority to officiate at a wedding in Mississippi in September. Board members are further researching this request, getting clarification on ways to grant authority from JPD and the UUA district in Mississippi. **Request was tabled.**
4. Calendar:
  - August 22 and 23 - Board retreat. Pam and Bruce Tinker's vacation home will be available for our use again.
  - October 19 – Installation of Kate Walker. The Ministerial Search Committee will work with Kate in planning the late afternoon event.

5. Al Erickson gave the Treasurer's reports (attached). Any surplus in the operating fund on June 30 (the end of the 2007-2008 church fiscal year) will be designated for Property Major Maintenance (PMM) as outlined by MVUC policy.
6. The Stewardship Campaign update recently sent by Al Robbert to Board members and other stewards was noted. It appears the campaign will reach its goal of \$360,000.
7. DOM Melodie Feathers' report (attached) was noted.
8. Interim minister Rev. Don Vaughn-Foerster gave his final report (attached). Don made observations and helpful recommendations for MVUC's future well-being. It was suggested that this report should be shared with other church leaders.
9. Ron Brandt gave the Church Administrator's report (attached). Ron and Al E. have been sorting out numerous small accounts that have been pooled together, mostly special collections or contributions. Ron has begun disbursing the funds to the appropriate recipients.
10. Bill Clontz gave the Program Council's report (attached). The **Board adopted the following amendment to the MVUC Policy Manual** concerning the Program Council's coordination of committees and their charters:

Committee charters will be reviewed by the program council and forwarded to the board for approval. The church administrator, working in coordination with the program council is the repository and maintaining official for committee charters.
11. Lauck proposed reviving the Committee on Ministry. Mimi Stevens will be asked to help in reorganizing the committee as well as to help in drafting a new charter for the committee. Some members of the Ministerial Search Committee will be asked to serve on the committee as well.
12. Mike Walker reported on plans for Recognition Sunday and the list of awardees selected after polling church leaders for nominations. The Board approved the list. Bill Clontz has been working on getting a special memento to give to MVUC members in recognition for service. He has found a jeweler who can make pins with the "Hill of Dreams" logo. The Board approved spending \$250 for having a cast made for the pins, and Board members contributed \$20 each to fund the initial set of pins.
13. The Board went into executive session to discuss MVUC's professional staff's terms of employment. Reid Adler reported that the Personnel Committee continues to negotiate with DRE Meagan Henry and DOM Melodie Feathers to complete their respective Letter of Agreement.

Action Items:

1. Bill C. will have jeweler make cast for pins.
2. Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson will contact the UUA district in Mississippi concerning Jamie Barnett's request.
3. Mike Walker will talk to Mimi Stevens about the Committee on Ministry.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15.

Respectfully submitted,  
Birgit Robbert, Board Secretary

Attachments:

1. Interim Minister's report
2. Music Director's report
3. Church Administrator's report
4. Program Council report
5. Revenue and expense report
6. Building revenue and expense report

**Final Report of the Interim Minister to the Board of Trustees  
of Mount Vernon Unitarian Church  
Alexandria, Virginia**

**Preface**

This is my final report, for the interim ministry year of 2007-2008. As Board and Interim Minister, ours has been an enjoyable and mutually productive collaboration. There are problems and issues that remain, of course. One year is seldom enough time to deal effectively with some attitudes and practices that have been built into the culture of any congregation. Later in this report I will identify some things that have struck me as prejudicial to the healthy operation of MVUC and I will suggest possible remedies. But, first let me emphasize some of the most important and prominent aspects of this congregation.

**What Went Well**

The quality of congregational life and its worship and celebration has been maintained. The Sunday services have been well received, in large measure due to the mutually supportive way music and thought melded together. Religious education for both youth and adults maintained a high level of creativity because of the commitment and competence of its leadership. The sustained efforts of the Caring Associates, the Good Companions, and the Every Thursday group demonstrated the depth of community that exists here. The great success of the Wednesday Fellowship dinner showed a desire and need that even more attention be given to enabling members to create and deepen personal relationships. The interface of this congregation with the larger community has been well served by the many successful projects of the Social Justice Task Forces, as evidenced by the two major awards it received from the UUA and by being certified as a Wildlife Sanctuary. Even in the realm of church finances, great strides toward clarity and competence in the material affairs of the church have been made. The physical setting of this church and its facilities continue to be a truly great asset and this year has seen these things well cared for. That this congregation has done well by itself this year showed in the almost unanimous vote that called the Reverend Kate Walker as its next settled minister. This year has ended on a high point of optimism and enthusiasm, something for which every interim minister hopes.

**Some Points of Concern**

However, as with almost any congregation, there are issues and concerns that require careful thought and, it is to be hoped, corrective action. There are three areas of concern that have most prominently caught my attention and occupied a good bit of my time. They are:

- A. Difficulties that arise because committees sometimes have not been in proper communication with one another and with appropriate staff members. Also, some principals within those committees have seemed to be more motivated by their vested interests and biases than by objective and fair handling of issues;

- B.** There has been some dissonance around and within the professional staff that arose mainly because of two factors: unclarity about how the roles of professional staff relate to each other and ineffectual supervisory arrangements;
- C.** The role of minister seems ambiguously understood both by some key committees and within the congregation at large.

These concerns exist largely because of the culture of this congregation. To put it simply: MVUC is a church of nearly 400 members but it often operates like a church that is less than half that size. That is, its committees and programs easily become led by friendship groups rather than by more formal, less biased leadership that could view situations dispassionately and fairly.

Taking these three concerns in order, first let me elaborate on “**A.**” Committees within a large group such as MVUC need to have their relation to one another and to office and professional staffs spelled out clearly. For instance, it should be clearly understood as to who has the authority to assign jobs and projects to office staff. Otherwise, impromptu requests of staff can pile up a work load that exceeds the staff’s contractual obligations. Also, noticeable in both personnel and Sunday service matters have been what seemed to me, as an interim third party, to be personal agendas unnecessarily slanting outcomes that required more dispassionate handling. Instead of getting into details, which would be gratuitous at this point, I refer you to my recommendations concerning infrastructure that will come latter in this report.

An allied concern that goes beyond office personnel/volunteer relationships is the difficulty of finding and training volunteers in the first place. The absence of a volunteer coordinator (either hired or volunteer) hinders both the integration of new members into the congregation and the adequate implementation of church programs. Not steadily feeding new volunteers into the system tends to put onerous obligations on those who have already volunteered.

Regarding area of concern “**B.**” the problem of how professional staff and volunteers should relate to one another often centered around who should make judgment calls. Should the judgment of the committee or its leaders prevail in “either-or” situations or should the professional’s judgment prevail? This is not a comfortable question in a congregational polity system where the assumption is that the congregation runs itself but hires staff and calls ministers to see that the “running” actually occurs. Under the congregational system, however, the basic assumption on the part of professional staff is that they are engaged to implement policies and programs according to their best professional judgment. In the sense that the individual professional is engaged by the congregation through the board of trustees, the average lay person (leader or not) does not have the authority to override whatever contractual agreement exists between the professional, the minister, and the board. There is clearly a need for the members of the church to understand that requests for the time and energies of office staff should be managed by one person, either the church administrator or the minister.

As for the difficulties that have arisen within the professional staff this year, they probably would not have occurred had the supervisory responsibility for staff been vested in the minister. To this point, as minister (albeit “interim”) I found that, technically, I could hold no

other staff member responsible for their actions or behavior even though on occasion they affected the way in which I could fulfill my own responsibilities. This is a situation that I understand has been adequately rectified in the letter of agreement with the incoming settled minister.

The most problematic aspect of this year, I found, was area of concern “C”, which seems to be at the root of most of the difficult issues that arise at MVUC. The bylaws, where this role should be identified clearly, if not silent, are at least ambiguous on what a minister's responsibility is expected to be to this congregation. The bylaws are clear enough on how a minister is to be called, who shall determine the minister's compensation and conditions of employment (the Board), what meetings the minister may or may not attend, and what role the minister is to play in the administrative and supervisory day-to-day running of the church (the board determines these things.) The bylaws also assert that the minister shall be responsible for conducting church worship services and, in doing so, has a free pulpit. But, the bylaws do not say which church services or how many. That, presumably, is left up to the Board and, by extension, to whatever committees it appoints in this regard.

This arrangement makes the minister an agent of the board more than a called leader of the church who is primarily responsible for the congregation's public expression of religion. The end result is a minister who is expected to be the spiritual leader of the congregation but, ultimately, is not fully empowered to do so. A minister who is considered accountable on spiritual matters to a board of trustees has a barrier between him or her and the congregation. As an interim minister, this is of no great moment for me. I am hired by the board of trustees, not called by the congregation. But, because of my lengthy career as a settled minister, I am acutely aware that a minister cannot fulfill his or her role properly unless the spiritual dimension of the congregation is not the board's but the minister's ultimate responsibility. Therefore, I will include a recommendation concerning this in the next section of this report.

## **Recommendations**

The following are recommendations that grew out of my experience this year at MVUC. They are not designed to guarantee that no problems in these areas would arise if it is the will of this board and this congregation to enact them. But they are ways that I have found in my experience that will regularize church operations and free both staff and volunteers to do the jobs most appropriately assigned to them.

- The infrastructure of the MVUC organization needs to be tightened considerably. This can be helped by more clearly defining who can be on committees, how many committee members are appropriate, and making it clear that the board appoints and does not simply ratify committee chairs. The current effort to regularize committee charters is a major step in this direction. But also, in order to encourage new leadership, specifications need to be added that prevent one person from being chair of more than one standing committee at a time.
- A volunteer coordinator should be hired or appointed; if appointed, a member of the Membership Committee could be assigned this function.

- The supervisor of professional and office staffs should be the settled minister.
- There should be a provision in Article IX. Minister(s) that makes it clear that, whereas the board of trustees is in charge of the material welfare of the congregation, the minister is in charge of the spiritual welfare of the congregation and is the designated leader of all programs of the church that encourage or enable spiritual growth. That, presumably, is why ministers are called and not hired.

This last recommendation necessarily will include at least pastoral (caring), educational, ethical, and social concerns. Of course, the minister needs to be involved in the material welfare of the congregation and the board needs to be involved in the congregation's spiritual welfare but only as consultants to each other.

### **Conclusion**

Although the bulk of this report dwells on difficult things, let this not mislead you as to the health of this congregation nor as to the great joy and sense of accomplishment with which I finish this year among you. This is, indeed, a fine congregation. Its only problem is that it is made up of human beings. But that is also its glory.

I wish you well!

Rev. Don W. Vaughn-Foerster, M.Div., A.I.M.

Interim Minister 2007 -2008

**Report from the Director of Music  
to the MVUC Board  
May 2008  
by Melodie Feather**

*My personal mission in life is to help others embrace their gifts  
so that, together, we can learn to share treasures from within.  
As a musician, I strive to fulfill this mission by embracing  
my love of music and creating opportunities  
so that others may share their gifts.*

**Shared Ministry**

- **Ministers** –Don and I continue to plan for services through June. I provided music and keyboard services for one of the Sundays in May, and I coordinated volunteer musical support for two others. The first Sunday in May was the Music Sunday service that I coordinated entirely. We used a familiar hymn tune, to which Don had set lyrics to, for the Memorial Day service. These lyrics spoke well to the theme of the service and the concerns that several members of the congregation continue to express in regards to the service content for this day.
- **RE** – I continue to work with Meagan to help verify the announcements for the Kids' Choir and Voices of Youth. We met with Don twice and with each other once this month.
- **Other Staff** – I attend staff meetings and coordinate with staff on an as-needed basis. The support staff is wonderfully supportive in pays close attention to detail in regards to all aspects of service planning in regards to the music program.
- **Lay Leaders** –I collaborated with Sandy Rutiser to plan the Music Sunday on 5/4. I have begun coordinating music for the 6/8 service with Mike Walker.
- **Choir** – Weekly rehearsals continue on Wednesday evenings. The choir helped lead the Music Sunday service on 5/4. We will continue rehearsals through mid-June, and the choir will sing on 6/8 and 6/15 before we end the season.
- **Music Committee** –Sandy Rutiser continues to focus her work on organization and structure for the coming year. She has also begun work as the summer Music Associate (coordinating accompanist support for summer services).
- **Director of Music Relations Committee** – Mimi Stevens, Trish Waters, and Robin Roberts serve on this committee. I am in communication with members of this group.
- **Supervisory Group** – Per the request of this group, I continue to work on being in right relation with staff and lay leaders.

## Congregational Support

- **Accompanying** – Barbara Schelstrate was the paid accompanist for the Music Sunday service on 5/4. Sally Henrehan and Kelly Watson provided volunteer keyboard support on Mother’s Day, and Joanne Masterson and Eric Pourchet supported the music on 5/18. I played the organ for one hymn at the 5/25 service, and it was well-received.
- **Songleading** – I enjoyed being free from the piano to lead the congregation in music for the Music Sunday service on 5/4. Don Vaughn-Foerster, Meghan Gray, Joe Kitrosser, and Alan Bunner provided songleading support this month as well.
- **Ingathering** – I continue to provide a variety of different types of music for this. When I am present, I am now beginning services with an Ingathering hymn.
- **Special Musicians** – Special guest musician, Thomas Poole, was soloist for the Music Sunday service, and the Davies Recorded Duo provided special music as well.
- **Administrative** – I wrote an article for the June *Windmill*. I provide updates and information for the in the Weekly Bulletin and the weekly email. In addition to face-to-face meetings and rehearsals, I continue to respond to dozens of emails and phone calls each week in regards to activities related to music at MVUC.
- **Other** – I continue to communicate with Angel Collins in support of the Kids’ Choir (ages K-5<sup>th</sup> grade) and Voices of Youth (ages 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades). Voices of Youth and the Kids’ choir sang in the May 18<sup>th</sup> service. This was supported by Angel Collins, their director, and Joanne Masterson (piano) and Eric Pourchout (guitar).

## Denominational/Community

- I was asked to organize UU participation for the Northern Virginia Habitat For Humanity benefit concert on May 4<sup>th</sup>. The Polymnia Bells Handbell Ensemble from the Arlington church rang in this concert.
- I continue to work with the GA Planning Committee to prepare for GA 2008 in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, on June 25-29th. Many deadlines are approaching fast for our work for this event.
- I have accepted the invitation to be the Music Leader and a member of the Worship Arts Team for the UU Leadership Team Institute this summer during the last week of July. This training is co-sponsored by four UUA Districts (JPD, Ohio Meadville, Metro New York, and St. Lawrence).
- I have begun preparations for leading workshops and directing an “ad hoc” handbell ensemble at the UU Musicians Network Conference this August in Boston.
- I have been working with Skinner House Publications to publish a family songbook that includes simplified arrangements of hymns from *Singing the Living Tradition* and *Singing the Journey*. This book is scheduled to be released in October 2008.
- As Acting Director of Publications for the UU Musicians Network, I am coordinating a CD project that will provide teaching and accompaniment tracks for songs in the children’s songbook, *May This Light Shine*.

# Report to the Board of Trustees

Ron Brandt, Church Administrator

June 2008

## Finance

**Financial Records** – Nancy Fox has continued to work periodically on analyzing our “books.” The QuickBooks file goes all the way back to 1999, which is cumbersome but makes the process feasible. She is correcting entries, then re-closing and archiving each financial year. She expects to report her progress to the Finance Committee this Thursday evening.

**Unclaimed Accounts** – I have tried to determine the “ownership” and intended use of a number of accounts categorized as Short Term Liabilities in an effort to get the money to where it belongs. As a result of my inquiries, I have made the following disbursements:

- \$4928.31 “Playground – Early Space” (Yamarik Fund) to MVUC/Preschool Playground.
- \$345.86 “Trees” to Grounds Committee to purchase two new trees.
- \$1561.85 “Memorial/Music Fund” to Music Committee to pay for future guest musicians.
- \$240.06 “BEL Center” has been sent to UCM Bryant Early Learning Center.
- \$1459.33 “Kennedy Shelter” has been sent to New Hope Housing Kennedy Shelter.

For the following accounts, I request authority from the Board, pending approval from the Finance Committee, to make the following adjustments (figures may change slightly with Nancy Fox’s refinements):

- Consolidate: \$517.66 “Social Action,” \$1031.04 “Our Larger World,” and \$1633.90 “Larger World – Other.”
- Transfer \$5538.95 “Remington Memorial” to “Floor – Folk Dance” (fund to refinish the chapel floor), now \$5924.77.
- Assign \$759.44 “Music Clearing House Fund” to Music Committee to purchase sheet music.

## Maintenance

**Painting** – With guidance from Wendy Burns, our tenant, Mike Carlisle, has been painting the Meeting House Commons and hallways. We have also made arrangements for volunteers to paint the minister’s office and the RE Director’s office in Hollin Hall during the summer. As requested by Nina Tisara, Mike Carlisle has also been working a few hours each weekend to help prepare the property for wedding rentals

**Meeting House Chairs** – As requested by Russ Stumpe, I have purchased 200 new felt glides to be installed on the base of the maroon chapel chairs. The existing plastic glides have been breaking, making the chairs wobbly and damaging the floor. We will need to refinish the wooden chapel floor sometime soon.

## Personnel

Lauck Walton and Reid Adler have been meeting with Meagan Henry and Melodie Feather to renegotiate their letters of agreement.

## **Data Management**

**Inactive Members.** I recently prepared a draft policy dealing with inactive members for consideration by the Membership Development Committee. The policy, which when refined will probably be brought to the Board for approval, is in response to concerns expressed recently by Board members about dues paid to the Joseph Priestley District and the UUA for members who do not contribute or participate.

## **Communications**

**Construction of New Website.** Arrangements are underway for construction by Steve Kizer of the new MVUC website. I and Bill Alsmeyer-Johnson have had some email correspondence with him but I have no additional information.

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MVUC MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** BOT  
**FROM:** BILL CLONTZ  
**SUBJECT:** PROGRAM COUNCIL REPORT  
**DATE:** JUNE 3, 2008  
**CC:** MINISTER, ADMINISTRATOR



**1. Attachments (3):** Minutes of the May Program Council Meeting  
Charter Update Schedule and Proposed Format Changes  
Proposed Revision to the MVUC Policy Manual

*Highlights from the Program Council in May:*

**2. Program Council Goals**

The Council, following election of two new members, shared goals by portfolio and for the Council collectively over then next year (attached). The BOT may find them useful in reflecting on our own goals as we move into the new church year and our upcoming BOT retreat.

**3. Charters, Formats**

As we close of finally getting current copies of all charters, two further actions are proposed.

- One, following our discussion at the last BOT meeting, a copy of an amended format for charters (attached) was circulated in the Program Council for review and as an action item next month. If adapted, Committees will adapt the new format no later than their next annual revision.
- Two, the Council proposes **for BOT approval** an addition to the MVUC policy manual (attached) establishing the Program Council as repository and maintenance agency for Committee charters.

**3. Whiter Wednesday Fellowship Nights?**

The final Wednesday Fellowship Night for this church year was conducted on 21 May. We sent out a memo to past attendees indicating there would be an organizational meeting for a new team to pick up the program – yielding to an expected decline in attendance (!), but we still had about 40 attendees and a group of eight volunteers is organizing itself to pick up the program again in the Fall.

**4. Committee Activities**

See the attached meeting report and follow on notes. Please note the feedback on the midday timing for Annual Meetings and the request from the Sunday Services Committee to begin consideration later this year to reinstate the 1 hour between services format on Sundays.

**5. Calendar Software Review with the Church Office**

Jim Potter, Ron Brandt, and I are working through the ever shortening list of calendar software to improve church operation. This is by far our most pressing automation requirement, one we hope to resolve this summer.

6. **Next Meeting of the Program Council:** Thursday, June 12, 7:30 PM, HH Dining Room

**Other Items (non Program Council) of Interest**

The MVUC Leadership Seminar specifically developed for newly elected Board, Program Council, and Nominating Committee members was conducted on 30 May – 31 May.

**Program Council Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, May 15, 2008  
7:30 PM, Meeting House, Commons**

Present:

Bill Clontz  
Tanara de la Camp  
*(BOT member,  
incoming Convener in AUG)*  
Kim Cobb  
Joan Darrah (BOT Visiter)  
Doug MacCleary  
Sandy Peterson  
Georgeta Pourchot  
Don Vaughn-Forester (Minister)

Absent:

Seileen Murphy  
Mary Barnett  
Megan Henry (DRE)

**Agenda**

Topic	Discussion Leader	Results, Notes
1. Welcome new members	All	New members Seileen and Georgeta have jumped in with both feet!
2. Personal and Council Goals for the Year	All	See attached priorities list
3. Photo Directory	Joan D.	Council will support with ideas for sign ups, volunteer support. Recommend RE consider a youth run coffee shop in Meeting House as fund raiser and to hold overflow.
4. Fellowship Wednesdays	Kim	Assignments were covered for the last scheduled event, in May. Program will recommence if volunteers step forward. An email has been sent to past attendees and notice posted of an organizational meeting
5. Review of Annual Meeting	Bill	Council members agreed the after Sunday Service format worked well on this occasion and can be considered in the future, but cautions that for more contentious agendas the longer evening format is better, and reminds that normally, the communal meal is an important community builder (although most agreed we had more than enough such opportunities in recent weeks). Somewhat more refreshments would be welcome for the midday format.
6. Review New Charter Format (T), Charters, Schedule for Updates	Bill	Prospective new format was a discussion item, for decision at June meeting. The annual renewal schedule puts us on a system model for updating charters, reviewing membership, etc.
7. Committees & Groups News	All	Next Leadership Seminar, 30-31 MAY See attached notes

8. Schedule for next meeting June 12, 7:30, HH DR	All	Topics include review of annual calendar, new charter formats
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Attachments:

- (1) Goals & Priorities for the Church Year
- (2) Prospective charter format changes

- (3) Charter review schedule
- (4) News of Committees

**MVUC Program Council  
Goals and Priorities for the Coming Church Year**

-as discussed at the May 2008 Program Council Meeting

*The following goals and priorities were offered by Program Council Members. A number were repeated often by several Council members. Some are portfolio specific, others are more broadly focused. No order of priority is implied.*

1. Provide a smooth, stable year for the Congregation. Support our new Minister
2. Increase congregational participation in service tasks as a community function. Facilitate the volunteering process – make it easier to be a volunteer. Perhaps MVUC could offer a volunteer options brochure, for example, featuring one time or fixed amount of hours tasks, and more one on one outreach for volunteers.
3. Help committees grow, with increased and more diverse (generational) membership.
4. Make administration an essentially invisible set of functions for the Congregation. Continue to improve organization, systems, administration within all Program Council areas.
5. Continue progress on financial management. Fully fund our operations budget.
6. Focus stewardship effort on non contributing/low contributing members- raise our baseline.
7. Harness the energy and ideas of leadership groups, like the Program Council.
8. Support a conversation about minimum requirements to be a member – time, talent and treasure contributions as a commitment in membership.
9. Support efforts to increase membership (shoe leather, member classes, and MDCOM initiatives).
10. Develop a “what your money buys” information paper to support social action contributions.
11. Develop an annual, integrated Social Justice plan.
12. Encourage more intergenerational activities.

**Prospective Charter Format Changes**  
*As approved, to be implemented NLT annual review schedule)*  
*[Changes are in color and in italics]*

**MOUNT VERNON UNITARIAN CHURCH**  
**Outline for Writing Committee Charters**

**Charter of the (title) Committee**  
*(PROPOSED REVISIONS MAY 2008)*

**1. Purpose**

Give a brief statement of the general purpose of the group.

Example: (for Finance Committee) Oversees all areas of church finance.

**2. Type Of Committee And Program Area**

State whether Standing or Special Committee and the Program Council area.

*Standing Committees* serve a continuing purpose. Example: Finance Committee.

*Special Committees* have a specific task and are time limited. Example: Construction Task Force. Chartered committees are responsible to the Board of Trustees.

Program areas are Administration, Property, Religious Education, Our Home Community, Our Larger World, and Worship.

**3. Membership**

**COMPOSITION:** Describe the composition of the committee, stating any special requirements such as representation from the BOT or other groups. Staff members or the minister may be listed, usually as advisory, non-voting members. Specify how membership is determined (open to anyone? If elected or appointed, by whom or what group?)

***SIZE: Normally, voting members of a committee will be in the range of 5-7 members; usually an odd number is desired. Committee meetings are open by MVUC bylaws and others are welcome to attend and support committee activities.***

**4. Chairperson**

Tell how the chair is selected: Elected by the committee members, subject to review?

All Chairs are approved by the Board of Trustees unless otherwise stated in the Bylaws.

***Specify the length of the chair's term. Normally tenure will be 1-2 years. No terms are indefinite and renewals will be submitted to the BOT through the PC every 1-2 years, consistent with the committee charter.***

***VICE CHAIR: Although not a requirement, Committees are encouraged to designate a Vice Chair, with a view toward continuity in leadership. This is particularly important for committees with major, recurring functional responsibilities, such as Personnel, Finance, RE Council, Social Justice Council, Membership Development, Property, Grounds, and Sunday Services.***

**5. Activities, Duties, and Responsibilities**

Tell what committee members do. List any functions for which the committee is responsible.

Examples: Members of the Used Book Sale Committee collect and sort donated books. Twice a year they organize a weekend sale open to the public. The Personnel Committee advises the

BOT on the process by which all staff members receive annual performance reviews.

*Each committee member has specific lead responsibilities within the broader committee portfolio. As of the last review of this Charter, individual responsibilities are as follows:*

*A.*

*B.*

*C.*

*D.*

*E.*

*F.*

*G.*

#### **6. Authority Delegated or Retained**

Specify any aspects of financial or other authority that the BOT delegates to this committee, and authority retained by the BOT. Example: All profits from book sales conducted by The Used Book Sale Committee go to the operating budget of MVUC. The BOT retains authority for their expenditure.

#### **7. Annual Assessment**

The Committee will assess its activities on an annual basis and will review this charter annually to reassess its adequacy and to recommend any proposed changes to the BOT. **Each committee shall report to the Program Council annually its charter review and leadership status, for forwarding to the Board of Trustees as required.**

Date this charter was reviewed and approved by the BOT: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Annual Review: \_\_\_\_\_

## Annual Charter Review Schedule

### By Functional Alignment

*E = Elected    B = Board Appointed    O = Board Oversight*

Committee, Charter Number	Next Review Due Date
<b><i>Sandy Peterson, Our Home Community</i></b>	
1. Membership Development Committee	---- JAN 2009
<b><i>Georgeta Pourchot, Our Larger World</i></b>	
2. Social Justice Council	---- JAN 2009
3. Partner Church Committee	FEB 2009- Pending review of Congregational process
4. Affordable Housing Task Force	APR 09 Cong Mtg
5. Green Sanctuary Task Force	APR 09 Cong Mtg
6. Route 1 Task Force	APR 09 Cong Mtg
7. Women's Reproductive Rights Task Force	APR 09 Cong Mtg
<b><i>Mary Bartlett, Property</i></b>	
8. Buildings	----- NOV 2009
9. Greenhouse Group	MAY 2009
10. Grounds Committee	FEB 2009
11. Memorial Walks	MAY 2009
<b><i>Seileen Murphy, Religious Education</i></b>	
12. RE Council	---- FEB 2009
<b><i>Kim Cobb, Worship</i></b>	
13. Sunday Services Committee	---- UNDER REVIEW- Expect Annual Review in SEP 2009
14. Aesthetics Committee	MAR 2009
15. Music in Worship Committee	UNDER REVIEW- Expect Annual Review OCT 2009
<b><i>Doug McCleary, Administration</i></b>	
16. Committee on Ministry (B)	---- NEW CHARTER REQUIRED, SEP 2008; Review OCT 2009
17. DRE Relations Committee (B)	OCT 2009
18. Personnel Committee (B)	MAY 2009
19. Communications	NOV 2009
20. Finance Committee	SEP 2009
21. Endowment Committee (B)	MAR 2009
22. Gifts & Bequests	OCT 2009
23. Stewardship Committee	SEP 2009
24. Susan B. Anthony Committee (O)	JUN 2009
25. Nominating Committee (E) [Note: Uses Guidelines, is governed by Bylaws]	JAN 2009 (Review guidelines)
26. Program Council	JUN 2009

**Annual Charter Review Schedule**  
*By Calendar*

**JANUARY**

Membership Development  
Social Justice Council  
Nominating Committee

Susan B. Anthony  
Program Council

**FEBRUARY**

RE Council  
Partner Church  
Grounds

**JUL – AUG**

None

**MARCH**

Aesthetics  
Endowment  
Gifts & Bequests

**SEP**

Sunday Services  
Finance  
Stewardship

**APRIL**

Affordable Housing Task Force  
Green Sanctuary Task Force  
Route 1 Task Force  
Women's Reproductive Rights TF

**OCT**

Music in Worship  
DRE Relations  
Committee on Ministry  
**Gifts and Bequests**

**MAY**

Personnel  
Greenhouse  
Memorial Walks

**NOV**

Communications  
Buildings

**DEC**

None

**The following entities serve specific service functions at MVUC; they are not constituted as committees, and therefore do not have charters:**

1. Blood Drive
2. Book Nook
3. Book Sale
4. Caring Associates
5. Circle Suppers
6. Every Thursday Grp
7. Good Companions
8. Holiday Shop
9. Intl Folk Dance
10. Rentals
11. Volunteer Receptionists
12. Windmill Preservation Fund
13. Worship Services Support (flowers, hospitality, sound system, ushers)

**JUN**

1.

## **Additional Notes and News from Committees - May 2008 Program Council Meeting**

1. The Council discussed the fact that membership commitment often increases with volunteer activity and the coming months offer numerous opportunities for us all to seek out a new or prospective member and invite them to join in supporting these activities (activities such as the Ingathering Picnic, the Minister's Installation, Holiday, Shop, Book Sale, etc.)
  2. Sandy noted that the Minister's Installation is scheduled for 19 October. ET has volunteered to handle catering. The BOT needs to appoint an Installation Committee without delay. Sandy also noted that the Membership Development Committee is very much engaged in a conversation about obligations of membership (including consideration of minimum recommended dues, volunteer commitments, fees for non pledging individuals, etc.) and would welcome a broader conversation on this theme in the New Church Year.
  3. Sandy also reported that ET continues to do well as a group, with the new book club drawing steady participation. She also noted that the Book Sale, even though down to once a year now, continues to need labor support all year long.
  4. Joan briefed that the Photo Directory pictures are scheduled for SEP 2 – 6 (TUE –SAT) and again 8-10 (MON-WED). Details to follow, likely in JUL. Some members noted that the process can get backed up, with delays in photo sessions resulting. It was suggested this may provide an opportunity for youth groups to sponsor a refreshments and holding area in the Meeting House, if there is interest in doing so and coordinating it with the directory project.
  5. Kim reported that the Music Committee has asked that consideration be made at some point towards establishing a one hour time between Sunday services, to facilitate practice by the Children's Choir. Others noted this was the original arrangement, and that should we experience the hoped for increases in attendance, the longer break may help the parking situation. However, the Council also felt this was a matter that should be taken up later in the year, once the new minister is settled and the congregation feels a bit more settled and ready to entertain changes.
  6. Kim also reported both the Sunday Services and Music Committees have recently experienced good growth in membership.
  7. It was discussed that the BOT will need to appoint a new Committee on Ministry, a process that is to be shared with the new minister. Some members of the Ministerial Search Committee should be expected to be a part of the COM, but this should not be a rebranding of the same group.
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## **Proposed Amendment to MVUC Policy Manual**

June 3, 2008

*(Proposed changes are in **BOLD CAPS**)*

### IX. PROGRAM

Program Council Coordination of Committees

Adopted January 2, 2007

The work of all committees and volunteer functions shall be coordinated by the Program Council. Members of the Program Council shall be six area coordinators representing the major areas of church ministry (Worship, Social Justice, Religious Education, Administration and Communication, Property, and Our Home Community), plus the minister and the convener from the BOT. Assignment of each group or individual volunteer to one of the program areas shall be determined by the Program Council. Members of the Council may elect a chair from their membership to call and conduct meetings. Coordination by Program Council members shall be limited to facilitation (such as reminding committee chairs of deadlines for reports and budget requests). Program Council members shall not direct or control committee actions. **THE PROGRAM COUNCIL IS THE REPOSITORY AND THE MAINTAINING AGENCY FOR ALL COMMITTEE CHARTERS. UNLESS OTHERWISE DECIDDED BY THE COUNCIL, THE ADMINISTRATION COORDINATOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS FUNCTION AND SHALL PROVIDE A CURRENT COPY OF CHARTERS AND CHARTER REVIEW SCHEDULES TO THE CHURCH OFFICE.**

MOUNT VERNON UNITARIAN CHURCH  
Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Revenue & Expenses  
As of May 31, 2007 - 91% of the fiscal year

Account	ACTUAL Jul thru Apr	ACTUAL May-08	ACTUAL To Date	ANN Budget	ToDate as % of Budget
<b>REVENUE</b>					
Stewardship Pledges	321,713	21,554	343,267	360,000	95.35%
Contributions	15,347	814	16,161	18,000	89.78%
Facilities use and rental (other)	18,264	1,680	19,944	19,860	100.42%
Weddings(net)	74,104	11,171	85,275	45,000	189.50%
Fund Raising Income	13,447	0	13,447	20,650	65.12%
Administrative & other income	1,845	0	1,845	500	369.00%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>444,720</b>	<b>35,219</b>	<b>479,939</b>	<b>464,010</b>	<b>103.43%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Worship programs (incl music)	3,582	244	3,826	4,500	85.02%
RE programs incl youth ministries	5,602	244	5,846	7,600	76.92%
Home community programs	118	0	118	200	59.00%
Our larger world/social justice	121	0	121	0	
Communications	4,708	0	4,708	3,200	147.13%
Stewardship campaign	0	0	0	100	0.00%
Denomination Responsibilities	27,567	1,698	29,265	29,841	98.07%
Adm programs	0	0	0		
search committees	6,573	324	6,897	16,700	41.30%
other comm. & expenses	651		651	0	
Operating Expense	21,011	1,003	22,014	27,700	79.47%
debt service	0	0	0	0	
Property maintenance	32,647	14,190	46,837	54,600	85.78%
Utilities	23,218	1,065	24,283	25,800	94.12%
Employment compensation	0		0		
Minister	83,088	7,806	90,894	109,399	83.08%
Staff	138,784	12,017	150,801	159,966	94.27%
Employee benefits	0		0		
payroll taxes	10,742	979	11,721	12,605	92.99%
insurance	4,885	437	5,322	5,103	104.29%
pensions	9,804	1,104	10,908	13,371	81.58%
conferences & contin. edu.	3,922	232	4,154	5,000	83.08%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>376,722</b>	<b>41,343</b>	<b>418,065</b>	<b>475,685</b>	<b>87.89%</b>
			0		
<b>NET REVENUE(EXPENSES)</b>	<b>67,998</b>	<b>-6,124</b>	<b>61,874</b>	<b>-11,675</b>	<b>-529.97%</b>

**MOUNT VERNON UNITARIAN CHURCH**  
**Building Fund Finance Report - May 31, 2008**

INCOME:

Balance brought forward	1,057,959.06	1,057,959.06
Received in May 08		
At McLaughlin	Dividend	427.03
At MVUC		1,900.00
		2,327.03
Total received for Building Fund (includes interest)		1,060,286.09

EXPENSES:

Paid on B&H line of credit	265,000.00	
Campaign	20,626.37	
Consultant	20,890.00	
Architect	233,606.00	
Engineers, contractors	30,261.00	
Permits, fees	4,147.00	
Other Expenses	7,606.73	
Total Expenses to Date		<u>582,137.10</u>

NET Funds on Hand for Building \$478,148.99

May Expense: Cole & Denny                      None

WHERE FUNDS ARE:

Funds at McLaughlin Inv.	230,620.97
Cash in B&H	118,243.06
CDs at B&H	129,284.96
	<u>478,148.99</u>