

Great Lakes Unity Region
Board of Trustee Meeting | July 23, 2025
Minutes

Attending: Rev. Kathy Harwood Long (President), Nancy Berdasco (Vice-President/Treasurer), Rev. Debra Carter Williams (Secretary), Rev. Jeff Berry, Rev. Diane Robinson (Regional Rep and Outreach Ambassador), Susan Liddell (LUT Rep), Sandra Higgins-Smith (LUT), and Rev. Liesa Chase.

The meeting was called to order by Rev. Kathy Harwood Long.

The meeting began with Kathy adding two agenda items: a letter to the Standards Team and UWM board, and an Interfaith Power and Light sign-on letter regarding mercury and toxic standards.

Treasurer's Report:

Nancy presented the treasurer's report, noting increased quarterly tithe payments and clarifying where the discretionary tithe goes. The group discussed contractor fee reporting, with Kathy confirming that fees are listed under contract and professional fees, and Nancy explaining that Youth and Family Ministry funds are managed through the general fund. The conversation ended with Kathy noting that the treasurer's report and minutes have been updated on the website.

Ministry List Update and Communication:

The team discussed updates to a ministry list, with Sandra explaining she combined two lists, updated addresses, and verified information through church websites and Facebook. Kathy highlighted that the list has grown from 60 to 90 ministries, and she proposed adding more detailed information to the website including addresses, contacts, and leader names. The team also reviewed communications efforts, including quarterly appreciation letters.

Regional Conference

The team reviewed the website and schedule for the upcoming conference, which includes various sessions and keynote speakers, with specific focus on CEU credits available for different sessions. They discussed the conference's broad appeal and universal topics, with Susan praising it as one of the best conferences she's seen. The group also touched on budget considerations, a new tradition called "Heart of the Region", and planning for future conferences.

The team discussed conference registration progress, with 34 registered attendees and 17 paid, and emphasized the need for remaining attendees to register. Debra confirmed she would handle the technical aspects of Reverend Kelly and Dennis Muzzy's interactive Zoom session, and the group reviewed the conference budget which shows a break-even position with \$19,700 in total income and expenses. The team also discussed an upcoming site visit to Stoney Creek to gather more details about the venue's layout and facilities and noted that several notable ministers and leaders from across the region have confirmed their attendance.

The group discussed implementing a program where ministries that contributed over \$400 in 2024 to the region would receive one free conference registration worth \$200. The financial reports indicate that the region is in the black YTD by \$26,000, making the program financially feasible. The group discussed appropriate financial procedures since this is a \$7,600 unbudgeted expense. There was important discussion about whether this would require approval by the

voting assembly at the business meeting. Kathy proposed bringing the matter to the finance team for further consultation.

The board discussed conference registration fee waivers for new leaders in the region, with a focus on clarifying the policy for those newly credentialed or newly serving in leadership roles.

They agreed to create a special "welcome" registration category for those who became credentialed within the region, separate from the existing policy for new-to-region leaders.

The board also decided to review and potentially update the policy manual at the annual business meeting to address confusion about eligibility criteria.

The region has already received a considerable portion of the sponsorships budgeted for the conference.

Nominating Team:

The board discussed the work of the current Nominating Team which consists of Kurt Condra, Cindy Yamamoto, and Susan Liddell (liaison). This year, there are 3 full members of the board and 2 alternates. The team was asked to consider skill sets for candidates, including financial acumen.

Scholarships:

The board approved \$250 for Joey Short for the IYOU conference.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM (EST)