

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date: August 20, 2025

Board Members Attending (End of Board Term): Jim Pashek, President (2027); Maria Lauro, Secretary (2027); Jean Schmidt (2026); Brian Junker (2026); Richard Dum (2027); Lucinda Beattie (2028); Deborah McGuire (2028); Casey Taylor (2028); Rev. Kate Walker, ex officio

Not Present Kyle Gracey, Treasurer (2026):

Guests; Stephanie Pawlowski, Rob Schwartz and Arthur Notaro

1. Opening

- Call to Order by Jim.
- Opening Words: Richard shared inspirational quotes from Ian Wilson, Ted Lasso, Nelson Mandela, Peter Drucker, and others.

2. Welcome & Guest Introductions

- Guests included Stephanie (Commissioned Lay Leader), Rob (Communications), and Arthur (Friend of the Board).

3. Announcements

- Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, September 17.
- Opening Words: Casey.
- Committee Reports Due: Stewardship, COSM, Finance, Safety, Marketing & Communications.

4. Consent Agenda

- July Meeting Minutes: Approved unanimously with pending edits from Jean and Kyle.

5. Minister's Report

- Two additions noted.
- Correction: Cluster meeting is on November 15, not 16.
- Discussion on using VIM Cottage meetings for behavioral covenant development.
- Wi-Fi restored after a router reset incident.

6. Committee Reports

- Education (Erica): Discussion on RE Council and youth group formation. Jean offered to speak directly with Erica.
- Finance (Kyle): Concerns raised about "negative equity." Clarification requested from Kyle.

- Building & Grounds (Lucinda): Addendum added with email comments. Ongoing issues being addressed.
- Stewardship (Maria): Kickoff meeting held. Theme: “Rooted in Justice, Growing in Love.” Tentative Commitment Sunday: September 28. Luncheon planned.

7. Lay Leadership Renewal (Stephanie)

- Stephanie presented updates to her Commissioned Lay Minister agreement.
- Motion to renew for three years passed unanimously.
- Appreciation expressed for her contributions, especially summer services and sermon work.

8. Communications Strategy Presentation (Casey)

- Data-driven overview of Pittsburgh’s religious demographics.
- Identified target audiences: lapsed Catholics, liberal Jews, spiritual but non-religious.
- Proposed next steps: Communications audit, Audience definition, Success metrics.
- Board agreed to revisit in October.

9. Strategic Plan Update (Jean)

- Two new priorities: “Haven” and “Hub.”
- Draft table in development.
- Staff input to be integrated.
- VIM to meet with professional staff.

10. Capital Projects Update (Jim)

- Electricians working on sanctuary upgrades.
- Banner installed.
- Playground completed.
- Security cameras installed and operational.

11. Stewardship Drive (Maria)

- More strategic outreach planned.
- Board members asked to make 5 contacts each.

12. Board Priorities Draft (Jim)

- Reviewed goals and committee assignments.
- Volunteers identified for various initiatives.
- Strategic plan, communications, inclusivity, and stewardship highlighted.

13. In-Gathering Planning

- Date: Sunday, September 7.
- Potluck format; board provides beverages.
- Marketing and announcements needed.
- Erica to host RE info table during picnic.

- Cassandra Montenegro (UUA liaison) invited.

14. Hybrid Meeting Schedule

- Proposed in-person meetings: October, January, April.
- Annual Meeting: May 17, 2026.
- Board Installation: September 14, 2025.

15. Security Training

- Scheduled for Saturday, August 30 at 3 PM.
- Repeat session on September 14 at 11:45 AM.

16. Acknowledgements

- Appreciation for: Brian's mentorship, Banner installation team, Strategic plan work by Jim, Playground construction by Liz, Dan, and Martin, Stephanie's impactful sermons.

17. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn passed at 9:00 PM.

Approved by the Board: September 17, 2025
Maria Lauro, Secretary