

GENERAL MEETING INFORMATION

Our annual membership meeting will be held on Sunday, March 26, after services, beginning at 1 p.m. To help prepare members for the meeting and for those who are not able to attend, it is hoped that this information sheet will be useful. In the following, you will find an overview of the current issues and status of Unity of Louisville.

TRANSITION

1. Are we still considered in a transition phase? Yes, in many respects. While a number of very pressing issues, such as the sale of the Brooks Street location, have settled, we do not have a permanent home or a regular minister.

2. Are we still following the transition plan that the Board adopted? No. The Board adopted a nine month transition plan at the end of 2021 that addressed the financial crisis, the lack of any minister, and the stagnant sale process of the Brooks Street location. That plan was successfully followed and resulted in the crucial restoration of financial capability, the sale of the Brooks Street location, and the hiring of an interim minister. The Board considers this current period a time of stabilization and return to normalization as we prepare for a time of thriving and growth.

3. What will be the focus of this stabilization period? The focus will be on determining our permanent space, sizing our financial commitments to a reasonable and secure financial plan based upon our income, and securing the services of a regular minister. The stabilization will also include reaching out, inviting, and welcoming the full participation of all members of Unity of Louisville.

4. Will we continue to have classes and small group activities? Yes. The Board hopes to facilitate the continuation of classes, workshops, and small group activities that enhance individual spiritual growth as well as several fellowship events during this time.

5. It seems like we are already in a period of growth. We are. It is a growth of participation, excitement, and energy. Our Sunday attendance numbers are up. We are averaging an attendance of about 70 individuals while, in the months preceding our move to our current location, our average was about 45. With a safe, vibrant, and smaller space, our Sunday services reflect a greater participation of our members. Most of the increase in attendance is from current members of Unity. Church collections have remained the same since the move and have not increased as a result of the increased attendance. This is to be expected as the Church has always depended on the generous support of members who are not able to be regular attendees. Last fiscal year, there were a total of 125 financial supporters of Unity of Louisville.

SPACE

6. How long is our lease for our current space at Highlands Community Ministries (HCM) campus? At the time of the general meeting, we will be three months into our one year lease.

7. How much is our lease and what does it cover? We pay \$1700 per month for exclusive use of the Sanctuary, Activities Room, kitchen, upstairs classrooms, Barrett Room (Gerry's classroom), and Edenside conference room on Sundays until 2 p.m. and the Barrett Room on Saturday mornings (men's group). It includes utilities and maintenance. We can usually go beyond those times with no extra charge as long as we have coordinated with HCM.

8. How does this compare to our building costs at the Brooks Street location? Our average monthly expenses for utilities, basic building maintenance, and building insurance was \$3,000 per month.

9. Where is the furniture and other items from the Brooks Street location? Only those items that were anticipated to be needed at our current location were brought to HCM. The rest of the items are being stored in a climate-controlled storage unit on Bardstown Road as well as in outbuildings (those items not needing climate control) of two Unity members.

10. What are our responsibilities as a tenant at HCM? Pay our rent on time and return everything on Sunday back to the way it was found.

11. Can we use the things in the kitchen? Yes. Just clean them and return them. The refrigerator and freezer can be used but items should not be left in them. The kitchen is not rated as commercial so the stove can only be used to heat up food - city regulations prohibit the kitchen from being used to cook. Unity has designated cabinet space where items like coffee supplies, cups, etc. are kept.

12. Is HCM being considered as our permanent home? When we first began lease negotiations with HCM, we were informed that HCM was willing to help us through our difficult transition period but that HCM was not open to being our home on a longer term basis. We were told to expect no more than one year at HCM. After our move and as we have become more familiar with each other, HCM is now open to the possibility of a longer term lease agreement. No negotiations have occurred and no specific commitments by either side have been made.

13. What are some of the potential benefits and detriments of a long term lease with HCM? HCM is located in a vibrant and relatively safe area of town. The Highlands is an area that is located near where a significant portion of our current congregation resides and has a resident population that is likely to resonate with Unity's message. It has sufficient and easily accessible parking. The facilities are sufficient for our needs, especially if we secure additional dedicated space. We will not have to share space with another congregation on Sundays. The projected lease cost is within our budget. HCM has been a reasonable and easy to work with landlord. Resolving our longer term location earlier will allow us to stabilize quicker and plan for growth and vitality. Potential issues are that the physical proximity of the rooms are not ideal for our uses, the facilities are not newly renovated or in the best of conditions, and potential issues for accessibility may exist.

14. Are leases the only thing being considered now that the Brooks Street location has been sold? Yes. While we have received the proceeds from the sale, they are not sufficient to purchase the facilities that we need in the condition we would want. To do so would require the use of all of our financial resources as well

as attempting to borrow additional resources. The Board believes that this would be financially unsound and difficult to achieve as well as saddle the congregation with all of the obligations, expenses, and responsibilities that come with building ownership.

15. How will the decision be made with regard to HCM and what is the time-line? HCM expects office and other space on the upper level to become available sometime in June. It is anticipated that in May negotiations for that space as well as reassessment of our current lease terms will be made to determine if a mutual agreement can be reached for a longer term lease. As part of that process, input will be sought on areas and issues that might be addressed in negotiations that would result in an optimal use of the space by Unity.

16. Will the decision to do a longer term lease with HCM be brought to the congregation for a vote of approval? As a lease, our by-laws do not require the decision to be approved by the congregation; however, the Board intends to call a special meeting if it believes that negotiations have produced a potential agreement for a long term lease that is in the best interests of Unity and should be accepted.

17. If there is a longer term lease with HCM, will we become involved with the ministries of HCM? The Board has already begun efforts to learn how Unity and our congregants can volunteer or otherwise assist with the many charitable services that HCM provides. Congregants who wish to volunteer or learn more about their programs may contact HCM directly through their website. <https://hcmlouisville.org/> If a longer term lease is completed, Unity will join HCM as an affiliate church and have a representative on the HCM Board.

18. What about signs at HCM? Size and content of signs have to be approved by HCM. The Board has ordered temporary signs for placement at Breckinridge Ave. and at Barrett Ave. If we enter into a longer term lease with HCM, we will negotiate more permanent signage as part of the lease.

19. Is the Building Location Search Committee still looking for other alternative places as our permanent home? No. After learning that HCM is now open to the possibility of a longer term relationship and lease, the Board instructed the Committee to pause its efforts until a determination was made about HCM. Researching and finding potential locations was and is an extraordinarily difficult and time consuming process. The Committee was at a point where further decisions by the Board on the extent of moving our service times to accommodate potential shared locations, specific parking availability, cost of renovations and other issues had to be resolved before further action could be taken. Once a determination is made on the HCM space, the Board will give guidance to the Committee.

FINANCES

20. Does Unity have a budget and how closely is it followed? Yes. Unity's fiscal year is the same as the calendar year. In December of last year, the Board approved a budget for this fiscal year. Prior to that, Unity operated on a budget specifically prepared and approved for our transition during a period of financial crisis which helped us achieve success in moving us out of that financial crisis. Our current budget is meant to help

us stabilize and achieve our major priorities of securing a long term space, hiring a regular minister, and staffing in line with our current needs and resources. Both budgets were based upon recent collections history, were designed to have expenses within projected income, and assumed no major, unexpected sources of expense or income. The budgets are guidelines and, like most budgets, have seen slight variances in specific categories of expenses and income. Overall, however, we have had balanced and successful budgets since the Fall of 2021.

21. Are the budgets available to be reviewed by members? Yes. Simply request a copy from our Board Treasurer Todd Royer at todd.royer@aecom.com. Copies of the current budget will be available at the general meeting as well.

22. How much money did Unity receive as a result of the sale of the Brooks St. location. After expenses connected with the sale, Unity received a little less than \$600,000.

23. What is the total amount of funds that Unity of Louisville has now? It varies from month to month; however, as of the last of January 2023, Unity had \$840,000 total in various accounts. This includes our general checking account from which monthly expenses are paid, a small savings account, the remaining funds in the generosity initiative, and investments. \$800,000 is invested in short-term treasury notes that mature on a rotating basis which will yield a little more than 4% interest per year or about \$35,000 per year. The budget reflects the use of the interest as available income but no portion of the \$800,000 principal.

24. How much was Alan Scherer's bequest to Unity of Louisville and were there any restrictions or guidance as to its use. Our beloved Alan left Unity approximately \$160,000 from his estate. To date, Unity has received some \$110,000 and will receive the remainder when the estate is completed. Those funds already received comprise a portion of the \$800,000 principal that is invested. There were no restrictions or directions on the expenditure of the funds.

25. Currently, how much is our normal monthly income and expenses. Our monthly income is about \$14,000 a month in all sources of income, including normal Sunday collections and donations as well as interest income. Our monthly expenses vary, but overall, have averaged about \$1,000 less than income.

26. How does this compare to when there was a full-time minister and full staff. Historically, when we had a full staff, it took some \$26,000 each month to meet all the expenses, of which \$16,000 was staff salaries. For some number of years, income on average did not meet expenses and other funding sources available to the church were used until those sources were almost completely depleted. During Covid, income to the church significantly declined and has not rebounded. Although the church participated in the two available Covid government funding programs, it just allowed the church to meet the reduced expenses during the limited time of those programs.

27. Does the current budget include the ability and intention to hire a minister? Yes, but as a part-time position. It also includes refocusing job responsibilities of current staff and the hiring of part-time administrative support. It includes a significant increase in the stipend paid to Sunday speakers. It also includes a projected increase in lease payments for wherever we locate. When these actions are completed,

there will no longer be a small surplus of income, but the budget is projected to stay balanced both then and going into the next fiscal year.

28. Why is the minister position going to be part-time? Hiring a full-time minister is a significant expense that currently far exceeds our capability to afford and keep our expenses within our income. Our total income will need to increase to \$18,000 - \$20,000 per month to be in the position to hire a full-time minister.

29. Why don't we use our savings to pay for a full-time minister? The Board is committed to keeping expenses within our projected income. Unfortunately, our history reflects the extreme issues and critical difficulties that can arise when savings are chipped away to pay for normal and recurring expenses. Such an approach would also be unfair to the full-time minister as our ability to pay the minister continued to be more and more problematic as our savings declined. Finally, our normal income now includes reliance upon the interest yielded by our investment savings. As that amount decreased, it would have a cascading effect on our budget and ability to pay all of our expenses. It is hoped that, as our church is stabilized, we will be able to grow our congregation and regular income to eventually encompass the ability to hire a full-time minister.

30. Are we making any donations or other financial support to charities? As our financial situation has improved, the Board is currently considering how best to restart some level of financial giving to charitable causes. The Board will seek input from the congregation to help identify which charities may benefit.

MINISTER

31. Why doesn't Reverend David stay as our regular minister? Rev. David is an interim minister who specializes in helping churches through phases of transition. By the terms of the Unity program under which he serves, we are prohibited from offering and he is prohibited from accepting a regular minister appointment. Our contract with Rev. David runs through April. Because he and his wife live in the Kansas City area with his family nearby, he does not desire to extend our current interim minister arrangement where he spends one week a month in Louisville. The Board has been extremely pleased and grateful for the wonderful work Rev. David has done for Unity of Louisville and our congregation. Both the Board and Rev. David are open to exploring a consulting or mentoring focused relationship as events develop; however, beginning in May, Rev. David will no longer be performing normal ministering duties for us.

32. How will we find our minister? Unity Worldwide has designed a process for congregations to hire their ministers. Churches submit an information packet about the church and its minister requirements. A "want-ad" by the church is posted on their website <https://www.unityworldwideministries.org/openings> and ministers who may be interested are sent the information packet by Unity Worldwide. The Board, with Rev. David's assistance, is preparing the packet.

33. Who chooses the new minister? In accordance with our by-laws, members determine the new minister by vote of at least two-thirds majority at a meeting of the membership. Our by-laws provide that it is the responsibility of the Board to identify and recruit potential minister candidates either by itself or with the assistance of a minister search committee. Board members Linda Luking and Frank Nussbaum have been tasked with leading this effort. They have already conducted an information and questionnaire session. They

are assembling a search committee of congregants to assist with the process as applications through Unity Worldwide are received.

34. Will we get a chance to hear the applicants speak? All applicants being considered will be offered an invitation to speak at a Sunday service and to interview with the Board of Trustees.

35. What is the likelihood that we will receive applications? Unknown at this time. Designating the position as part-time may exclude otherwise interested candidates. By the same token, it may attract candidates who have other employment in the area or work remotely or who are semi-retired and do not want the full range of responsibilities that come with full-time employment. There is simply no way of telling until the information packet is submitted, the ad posted, and applications are received.

36. Will our regular and guest Sunday speakers continue after hiring a regular minister? Yes. The budget provides for such continuance. The minister information packet will reflect such intention. Both Gerry and Raamesie have indicated a willingness to continue to be regular speakers at least once each month.

37. Isn't the position really full-time that we can only pay part-time? No. There are a number of things that make listing the position as part-time appropriate regardless of our ability to fund the position. First, our congregation is small - certainly significantly smaller than in the past when a full-time minister was clearly appropriate. Second, our continued intention to have guest speakers at least twice each month substantially reduces the required time of the minister. Third, because we no longer own a building, those duties that have traditionally fallen to the minister (opening, closing, taking care of small maintenance items, finding and scheduling building upkeep, etc.) will not be required. Fourth, the planned hiring of an administrative assistant will alleviate many of the administrative functions that often fall to the minister of a small congregation. Fifth, our having an active and vibrant chaplain program reduces the responsibility and time expended for pastoral care by the minister. Finally, the Board will be able to negotiate other matters that will bring the minister responsibilities within a reasonable range of the effort being compensated.

38. What is the anticipated time-line of hiring a regular minister? The normal process usually takes 6 months from when the information packet is submitted and the ad is posted. There are wide variances on either side of this timeline depending upon individual circumstances. The Board is seeking to have the information packet to Unity Worldwide by the end of April.

39. Can someone from our congregation be our minister? A minister must be ordained by Unity or be working towards ordination and receive special dispensation to serve as a minister. On a reciprocal basis, Unity also recognizes ministers ordained through the Center for Spiritual Living as qualified to serve as a Unity minister. At this time, we do not have anyone who is enrolled and working towards ordination or who is willing to do so and perform minister duties on a part-time compensation basis.

40. How will Sunday services be affected? After the expiration of Rev. David's contract and before the hiring of a regular minister, Sunday services should be minimally affected. Sunday talks will be done by both our regular and special guest speakers.

41. Who will be in charge between Rev. David's departure and the hiring of a regular minister? The Board retains overall control and responsibility whether there is a minister or not. The Board will be responsible for ensuring that essential services normally completed by the minister are covered during the time when we do not have a minister.

42. How can I help during this time? First and foremost, keep or put Unity of Louisville in your intentions, prayers, and visioning as we continue to go through this time of stabilization. It is so important to make an intentional effort to put to use the energy we have and can claim as our very own super power. Next, listen carefully to how you are being called? Can you see yourself volunteering with some of the many ways it takes to keep Unity of Louisville functioning and thriving? Finally, our finances are important. If you are not a part of the committed giving, can you be open to considering it? The expenses of the church continue whether we missed the Sunday service or not. Dedicated giving helps us meet the ups and downs of our expenses just like a regular paycheck helps you meet your expenses. If you feel called to do so, increasing your regular giving by whatever amount can help us reach the financial level we will need to obtain regular full-time ministerial support.

MEETING

43. Will the annual general meeting be live-streamed? Yes.

44. How long will the meeting last? It is anticipated that the meeting will last no longer than 2 hours.

45. What are the main items on the agenda? There will be a minister's report, a financial report, and a Board report.

46. Are there any matters for which a vote is anticipated? Yes. There are three openings on the Board: one for a regular member for the expiring three-year term of the position which Matt Bowman occupies (Matt is not running for the position) and two one-year terms of alternate members. Alternate members fill regular positions if a Board member resigns or dies before the end of their term. They attend all Board meetings, engage in discussions and discernment, but do not vote. There are no other known or anticipated matters to be voted upon by the members.

47. Who is eligible to vote? Only active members of the congregation. In order to be a member of the congregation, a person must complete membership requirements, request membership status, and have it approved by the Board of Trustees during a regular Board of Trustees meeting.

48. Can we vote by absentee ballot? Yes. Absentee ballots will be available in the Activities Center outside the Sanctuary for voting eligible members. Completed ballots can be left in the Prayer Box in the Sanctuary or mailed to Unity of Louisville, P.O. Box 2468, Louisville, KY 40201. Additionally, emailed ballots will be counted from voting eligible members. Such emailed ballots must be sent to boardpresident@unityoflouisville.org In order to be counted, all absentee ballots must be returned by the time of ballot close during the General Meeting. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

49. If I am not eligible to vote, can I still come to the General Meeting? Yes. In order to be recognized to speak at the General Meeting, the by-laws require that active members in attendance approve by two-thirds majority such participation of non-members.

50. How do we get other questions answered? You can submit your questions in the collection bags during the service. You can also email your questions to the Board. Matt Bowman is fielding the questions. He can be reached at mattbardstown@gmail.com.

We hope this information is helpful for you. All of our Board members are volunteers who love and care about Unity of Louisville. We have spent numerous hours discerning what we feel is a realistic pathway to continued stability and eventual growth and prosperity. We invite and need your help. Join us as we transform ourselves and the world with love, healing, and service. We look forward to seeing you at the Annual General Membership Meeting on March 26.

Dave Fralick, Chairperson
Frank Nussbaum, Vice-Chairperson
Nicole Bartlett, Secretary
Todd Royer, Treasurer
Linda Luking
Matt Bowman
Rev. David Mosher, Interim Minister