

Minutes of Coordinating Council Meeting

February 3, 2026

In Attendance:

Olga Hebert Rev. Amy Petrie Shaw Thom Reeves John Spitzer Annie Harrison
Marcia Smith Sally Erb Jean Barlow Eileen Leapley

Meeting began at 9:30 a.m. Chalice was lit; opening words were spoken by Rev. Amy.

1) Team Reports –

There is a lot of lettuce ready to pick, per Olga, courtesy of the Green and Grounds Team.

Thom was congratulated on his new A/V hire, Dean Rowe.

Sally reported that a new UUCOV Forms book is now located next to the copier for forms that are copied regularly.

Jean B reported that the Hospitality Team is humming along. More volunteers have signed up, but we really could use another leader or two, to give Jean an occasional much-needed break.

2) Eileen reported on the Five Wishes document, which is a type of Advance Directive that informs our loved ones how we would like to be treated if we get seriously ill. The document, when properly signed, is valid in most states, including Florida. Eileen would like to give an informational presentation to interested members of the congregation, along with Cathay Keough. All agreed that this is a good idea.

Karlus Trapp will return on a Sunday afternoon in March to present part two of his Roots of Black Music in America.

Rev. Amy will participate in a panel discussion of the pros and cons of Separation of Church and State, sponsored by Conversations Across the Aisle on Feb 12, from 5 – 8 p.m. at 40 N. Adams Drive in Sarasota.

3) Annie reported on Membership. She would like to make sure the Coordinating Council understands that although we have been gaining members, we have also been losing them. We currently have 187 active members, 7 emeriti, and 32 friends.

It was recommended that we provide green visitor slips in the living room/library in Waters Hall, as several visitors attend Meatless Monday, Book Club, et cetera, and they should be given an opportunity to fill out the slips.

The ever-present need for volunteers was discussed. Amy noted that during “Things You Should Know,” she could add, “Here’s what we’ll need help with this week...”

For the next Pathways event, Annie will distribute the paragraphs that describe what each team does, and ways that new members can help.

Marcia said the recent Checkpoint event was, overall, a success. Each speaker should be mindful of speaking for a shorter time. All agreed that it was a worthwhile meeting, and should be repeated.

We definitely need to schedule a class on Breeze. A document can be created that includes step-by-step instructions on how to access Breeze. Rev. Amy, Ayleen, and Marcia will collaborate on this.

4)“Meetings with Marcia” have started. She will continue to meet with all the Team Leaders over the next few weeks. This will help in transitioning the new Coordinating Council chair in April.

5)Removing the water fountains in the Sanctuary was discussed. All agreed that since they have not been used in years, they are taking up valuable space and should be removed.

The status of the organ in the Sanctuary was discussed. Any decision was tabled for now.

6)Discussion was held re: what should we do about young children in the Sanctuary during the service. Crayons and coloring books have been purchased and are located at the Welcome Table, should any young children come in.

7)Security was discussed. Rich Cannarelli is concerned about the entry codes for our two buildings. Should they be changed every six months? Rev. Amy thought perhaps two or three years would work. Changing them yearly is a good compromise. Should we have more than one code? It was decided to continue using the same entry code for both buildings.

8)The Venice Musicale chorale concert date was discussed. It was decided that Sunday, March 22nd at 1:30 p.m. will work. Baskets for free will donations will be put out.

9)Three Shareholder meetings are planned, for February 8th, February 22nd, and March 8th, at 11:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. We need to encourage attendance by all. This is an excellent opportunity for members and friends to ask questions. Rev. Amy will promote the meetings at the pulpit. Signup will not be necessary; people should attend whichever date is convenient for them. Marcia will emcee the meetings. Emphasis will be on providing input to the leadership, rather than just on finances.

John announced that pledge packets are being sent by email, with an investment card attached to be printed out, filled in, and returned, either in the collection basket or mailed to the office. For those who do not use computers, or don't have a printer, blank forms can be mailed. They will also be available at the shareholder meetings. Friends will get the same packet as members.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, March 29th after the service.

Discussion was held about whether we should have refreshments on the day of the Annual Meeting. The Board had decided against refreshments, but after discussion, it was decided that we will have snacks but we will strongly encourage people to get back into the sanctuary as soon as possible.

Discussion was held about keeping Joys and Concerns to a one-minute maximum. Rev. Amy will encourage very short speeches.

Rev. Amy discussed clapping after musical pieces are played. She is meeting with the Men's group on this topic. After discussion, it was agreed that it's okay to clap after the sermon, or if Lise plays a particularly moving piece, but not after the interlude music is played, which is right after the meditation.

It was agreed that the worship associate should wait a full minute after the meditation before sounding the singing bowl, or nodding to Lise to play the interlude.

Rev. Amy will conduct one or two meetings on a Wednesday or Thursday in March, to hear any suggestions the congregants may have.

Meeting ended at 10:44 a.m. Next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 3rd, at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Eileen Leapley