

Proposed UUSM Newsletter Team Charter - August 31, 2019

Name of Group:

UUSM Newsletter Team

General Purpose:

The UU Santa Monica Newsletter Team, a UUSM committee, is a working group of member volunteers responsible for editing, curating, and maintaining an online collection of submitted articles (a multi-author blog) about church news, ministries, programs, and activities. The goal of the Newsletter is to foster a shared sense of community, identity, and purpose at UUSM by connecting members to programs and events, letting visitors to the church know about events and ministries to which they can contribute their talents, and introducing UUSM to the larger community. Our guiding principles are the Unitarian Universalist Seven Principles and the UUSM Church Covenant.

The Newsletter strives to complement, not duplicate, content located on other online communication channels, such as weekly announcements of meetings and events generated by the church office. The development of the online Newsletter is a work-in-progress and content integration will evolve as other online channels mature.

Policy:

Refer to the UUSM Policies, C.3.9, currently being revised as of May, 2019.

Leadership and Membership:

The Newsletter Team is composed of volunteer editors, writers, photographers, and others previously affiliated with the printed Newsletter. Additional contributors are welcome. A staff box is located in the sidebar on every page of the Newsletter. The Team will choose its own chair(s) every two years or as necessary, to be known as the Managing Editor(s), and will notify the Board of Directors of their decision. The Managing Editor(s) may serve multiple two-year terms subject to continued approval by the Newsletter Team and Board of Directors.

The Managing Editor(s):

- Ensure(s) all content is consistent with UUA Principles, UUSM's Mission, copyright law, and the UUSM Newsletter style guide;
- Supervise(s) the everyday operations, such as: assisting the editors who edit and publish content (content editors), finding editors for special editing projects, providing training, suggesting story ideas and special projects, recruiting new team members, handling problems, and keeping everyone on schedule;
- Determine(s) the importance of articles, in what order the articles appear in the blog list, and what will be included in the Newsletter Digest;
- Interface(s) with the Communications Team to help coordinate with other UUSM communications channels;
- Ensure(s) that there is sufficient tech support to keep the technology platform up-to-date and secure;
- Submit(s) budget requests greater than \$100 to the Newsletter Team for approval for submission to the Board;
- Coordinate(s) with the office staff to distribute the Newsletter Digest and to update articles about events.
- Occasionally interface(s) with staff to request content. Does not supervise staff.
- Prepare(s) and submit(s) reports to the Newsletter Team for approval in response to requests from the Comm Team and the Board.

The Newsletter Team:

- Develops by consensus and agrees to follow a standardized grammar and usage online UUSM Newsletter style guide based on standard journalistic resources such as the AP Stylebook;
- Develops a schedule for the timely editing and publishing of content based on categories (see below);

- Prompts authors for articles within their content area if needed (e.g., Rebecca Crawford or Barbara Andres, as the writer and editor in charge of music content, reaches out to the choir director for a music program update);
- Meets semi-annually or more often as needed to build team cohesion, select Managing Editor(s), and for face-to-face review of policies, practices, and problems.
- As of May 2019, writing and editorial assignments are below. These are subject to change and will appear as updates and revisions to this document.

Article	Writer/Contact	Editor Who Publishes It	Schedule
News/front page	~	Curated by Pam and Barbara	As needed
Worship calendar (includes Heart & Soul)	Worship services spreadsheet	Joyce Holmen	20th of each month
Second Sunday supper	Karl Lisovsky Beth Rendiero	Pam Teplitz	Third or Fourth Sunday/mo.
Board of Directors	Rebecca Crawford	Lois Hutchinson	Third week/mo.
Stewardship	Jacki Weber	Lois Hutchinson	Second week/mo.
Membership (new, spotlight)	Sarah Robson Norm Richie	Audrey Lyness	As needed
Minister's Column	Minister	Barbara & Pam	15 th /mo.
Faith in Action	James Witker Sarah Mae Harper	Barbara Andres	As needed
Music	Barbara Andres	Rebecca Crawford	As needed
Art Wall	Bob Dietz Barbara Andres	Barbara Andres	15 th /mo.
From our DRE	DRE	Pam Teplitz	15 th /mo.
Right Relations	Audrey Lyness	Rebecca Crawford	As needed
Obituaries	Audrey Lyness	TBD	
Personal and Spiritual Exploration for Adults	Sarah Robson	Sheila Cummins	20th of each month
Special Book Group Announcements & Reviews	Sarah Robson James Witker	Sheila Cummins	As needed
Podcasts	Delaney Hutchinson	Lois Hutchinson	Second or Third Sat./mo.
Denominational Affairs	Abby Arnold	Joyce Holmen	As needed
Governance/ ministerial transition/ special articles	President Minister Others	Elizabeth Fuller Sheila Cummins Rebecca Crawford Barbara Andres Pam Teplitz	As needed

Outcome Measurements and Goals (2019-2020):

During the first year of online publication, the Newsletter Team will develop a framework for understanding how to measure the usefulness and impact of the online Newsletter. So far, Google and Jetpack Analytics show increasing visits to news.uusm.com website articles after Newsletter Digests are emailed. Our longer term goals include:

- Analytics showing more direct intentional visits by members between Digests, especially to the home page;

- More members choosing to receive more frequent Digests;
- Ending confusion between Thursday Announcements and the Newsletter;
- Committees submitting more articles and photos;
- Finding a path forward to reaching tech-challenged or disabled members who have trouble accessing the online Newsletter;
- Individuals and committees in the congregation feeling more connected to each other because they know more about what's going on in their church community;
- Conducting a survey one year after the transition to the online Newsletter to verify movement toward the outlined goals;

Although not our initial focus, organic traffic (people searching by keyword in online searches) will be more likely to find UUSM online.

Annual budget and spending authorities:

The Newsletter currently has no budget. The Team foresees no need for funding. Minor requests for WordPress plugin purchases will be made to the office and paid out of Administration or Dazzle funds.

Reporting Structure and Relationship to Staff:

The Newsletter Team reports to the Board of Directors through the Managing Editor(s). The Newsletter is an integral communications channel for UUSM and coordinates with the Communications Team, along with other church communication channels, to provide effective dissemination of information within the congregation and wider community. The Staff Communications Coordinator is an ex-officio member of the Newsletter Team.

Through the Managing Editor(s), the Newsletter Team:

- Provides regular updates to the Communications Team;
- Submits an annual report to be published in the church's "Report on Programs";
- Provides the Board with a written report as requested;
- Works closely with the ministerial and office staff, the Board, and committee chairs.