

Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis
Annual Congregational Meeting
April 3, 2022: 11:15 – 12:53pm
FINAL MINUTES

From our Safe Congregation Covenant - We covenant to affirm and promote: Honesty and authenticity in our relationships; Words that are supportive and caring not belittling or demeaning; A welcoming and non-judgmental attitude; Respect for each person's boundaries of mind, body, and spirit; Listening to one another.

Rev. Zinke presided over the Chalice Lighting and Invocation (Bonds of Each to All) prior to the meeting coming to order.

Board of Trustees Vice President, Jenn Pollitt Hill welcomed the congregation. She noted that the focus of this meeting is service connected to the "Service is our Call" portion of our Covenant. She recognized our volunteer Board of Trustees: Jane Carrigan, President, Jenn Pollitt Hill, Vice President; Kari Alperovitz-Bichell, Finance Officer; Stan Keeve, Trustee; Carrie Kotcho, Secretary; Linda Mundy, Nominating Committee Chair; Mike Wanhatalo Trustee; and Jan Bird, Trustee. She then provided technical instructions for folks in sanctuary to turn off their WIFI and for folks online how to get tech support via phone during the meeting.

She then recognized the representative of our Right Relations Team, Ellen Berkov. She recognized the good work they are doing to help us be the Beloved Community we strive to be. All participants in today's meeting were encouraged to share any thoughts, concerns, or aspirations with the Right Relations Team.

Jenn noted that President, Jane Carrigan was not able to attend in person but was on Zoom. Jenn called the meeting to order and announced that a quorum was present, i.e., 20% of UUCA the members have signed in (online/onsite combined). We adopted the agenda shared online and on screen.

Linda Mundy, Chair of the Nominating Committee presented the slate for Board member candidates.

The Officers and Board of Trustees At-Large members Up for Election for terms of 2 years are the following:

- ❖ Financial Officer (2-years) – Jenn Pollitt Hill
- ❖ Vice-President of UUCA (1-year term completing Jenn Pollitt Hill term) – Stanley Keeve
- ❖ Secretary (2-years) – Carrie Kotcho
- ❖ UUCA Board Trustees-at-Large: Jan Bird, (2-years); Mike Wanhatalo, (2-years); Soren Byrd, (1-year - completing Stan Keeve term)

For the Nominating Committee: Up for terms of 2 years are the following:

- ❖ Chelsea Ihnacik
- ❖ Kari Alperovitz-Bichell
- ❖ Dave Burman
- ❖ Caroline Hadley
- ❖ John Scott

Jenn walked through the mechanics of voting. Simple majority. No number count unless it appears close. Vote Yes or No. An abstain is a “no” in this form of voting.

Member Shauntee Daniels made a motion to affirm this slate of officers to the Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee as proposed by the UUCA Nominating Committee and the motion was seconded.

Motion passed with clear majority online and on site.

The UUCA slate of candidates has been approved as presented.

Reports

Ministry Team:

Rev. Zinke presented remarks.

She thanked the reopening team and other teams that have helped the UUCA stay connected, reopen, and remain open during the pandemic. She remarked that there has been no COVID-19 transmission at our church since we reopened last June. We have not had to close down again because we had a deep bench of volunteers who filled in roles to make sure services went on. Masking has made a difference as well. She also thanked the congregation for the compassionate care they have shown to each other.

Rev. Zinke noted we are not just returning but starting a new way of being. We are making a Hybrid church commitment to expand our reach and be more accessible and inclusive. We have had members join who live in and out of state. Many have joined during the pandemic. Our 8th Principle Implementation Group will be working with the Ministers, Board, and members to build our beloved community. She also announced there will be more opportunities for volunteering as we return to more regular operations and for members to look for announcements in the next few months.

Sabbatical Team

Lisa Fleehty reported on behalf of the team.

This spring/summer April 1 to August 1 Rev. Crestwell will be away. June 18-July 10 Rev Zinke will be on leave. The Sabbatical team has worked to provide many exciting sermons from a variety of former ministers, interns, and other professional ministers who will join us. She reported that we will be paying for some additional tech support for the summer. A hospital chaplain will help support the pastoral care team. She offered to answer any questions via email sabbatical@uuca.org.

Reopening Committee:

Jamie Harms reported for the committee.

The committee is made up of medical professionals, Jan Bird, Scott Eden, Staff Warren, Kari Alperovitz-Bichelle, Jamie Harms and others have been offering guidance and up to date information to our Ministers and staff. They meet with Ministers regularly to advice on best operations practices. She noted that the Church never really closed. We closed the doors but adapted quickly to Zoom to protect each other. The committee, Ministers and staff recognize the emotional differences different people have about the loosening of restrictions. She told the congregation they are focused on a balance of safety and meaningful workshop. For some the risks may be higher and they will remain online but there are others who may be languishing in loneliness.

The Plan - Social Distancing does not need to be strictly enforced, but there will be seats in the narthex for folks who want more distance. High quality masking is key. Cloth masks or ones that you have to keep pulling up are not to be used. We have been and will continue to increase ventilation. Windows will be open near the choir and opposite side when it is over 55 degrees. Jamie advises eligible members to get the #3 booster vaccination. Its highly effective in reducing severe illness. She also recommends folks have test kits on hand and if people have had symptoms take a test before you come to church. If you are sick, please stay home. Stay flexible and be well.

8th Principle Implementation Group

Soren Byrd presented on the work of this group.

Soren leads this group and is also a member of the People of Color group. She shared her pleasure at being elected to join the Board of Trustees.

She introduced the committee members and gave a summarized history of UUCAs actions towards dismantling racism and becoming a multicultural beloved community. In 2018, the Congregation voted to adopt the 8th Principle. Not all UU Congregations have done this and although change is difficult--this was an important first step. She related a story about her own experience about making a change, but then did not know how to live and operate in her new changed environment. She stated that this working group is tasked with helping us build on our past progress to fully implement the 8th Principle and make the work accessible by all members. More participation from the full congregation will be part of the next phase of our work as an 8th Principle church. She recognized the hard work of 12 previous committees, teams and groups who have helped the church move forward.

SEE SLIDE DECK FOR MORE DETAIL

Phase 1 of the work will have 6 goals to achieve by September and before we move to Phase 2. She encouraged all members to take the 8th Principle education series.

Finance:

Kari Alperovitz-Bichell is our outgoing finance officer.

She presented about a proposal to change our fiscal year to July-to-July fiscal year. That fiscal year change will require a Congregational vote as per bylaws. It better aligns with our program year and the UUA's fiscal year. It will enable us to change our stewardship to an annual fundraising drive. The Board and Finance team working through the necessary details. The fiscal year change will allow us to know what pledges have been made before

the vote on the upcoming year's budget. Jenn added that we will have many more communications and conversations about the fiscal year and stewardship changes.

Facilities/BEEC2

Jeanne Jehl reported for the committee.

She announced that we have a (long awaited) public works agreement with the County. She thanked Marilyn Martin for tenaciously following up to make that happen. She noted that renovations are always challenging, and we have discovered things that needed to be fixed in order to move to the next step. She anticipates that the speed of progress will increase now that we have the agreement with the County.

She noted that the little food pantry will be moved to the other side of the lot and gave a reminder that the food in our little pantry should be foods that do not need to be cooked.

Faith Formation

Julie Burman leads Faith Formation for UUCA.

She reported that we have 130 children in our Faith Formation programs. It is on par with pre-pandemic numbers. She noted that we now have Friday night youth groups, family activities, volunteer opportunities, and shorter-term programs all with intense involvement. This all adds up to a highly engaged group of families and youth. Julie and her team used the pandemic time to try new things and have had remarkable success.

Shining Lights Awards

Linda Mundy presented well deserved recognition to members who have gone above and beyond in their service to the church and wider community. She noted that UUCA has been doing this recognition for over 20 years. She shared the list of all known recipients. There are many, many members who have been recognized over the years. The members of the Nominating Committee joined Linda on the dais to recognize this year's Shining Lights Awards recipients.

Karen recognized the contributions of Patti Patterson. Last year co-chaired fundraising committee. Bringing in over 30k. She led COVID safe auction and keep the congregation having fun while supporting the work of the church. She also co-chairs the Keeping our Church Beautiful group who keeps our church looking its best.

The work of Merriam Norris was also recognized. She teaches Faith Formation EVERY Sunday and has shown extraordinary commitment to Faith Formation for many years. The pandemic caused many challenges, but Merriam contributed much work and creative ideas to keep the children engaged and learning.

Shauntee Daniels highlighted the work of Rob Malone who has been dedicated to the work of the church by serving on the Nominating Committee and Chair for 2 years. Intern search and support committees. He is taken on the leadership of Lighthouse work for the church and is our representative on its Board.

Linda Mundy honored the work of Jeanne Jehl. Although a new member she is dedicated to the 8th Principle and working to build a beloved community. She is shown humility and leadership to do so. Her work on BEEC2 has been intense and impactful.

The work of Ginny Klocko was also lauded. Over many years Ginny has worked to keep the UUCA grounds beautiful and sustainable. She is an usher and frequent volunteer.

Lastly, Kari Alperovitz-Bichell was honored. Kari had been our Finance Officer for 4 years. Her kind and clear presentations on the budget helped us all think bigger about our budget and how it represents our values. Intern committee. Reopening Committee. Marriage Equality and many working groups focused on anti-racism and social justice.

Rev. Zinke, Minister offered closing Words extinguished the Chalice.

The meeting was adjourned.

STANDING RULES We shall follow Robert's Rules, with these adjustments:

- The amount of time scheduled is adhered to unless there is a motion to extend.
- Members of the Board will bring microphones to each person who wishes to speak.
- Brevity is encouraged, with a limit of 1 minute to speak with an additional 30 seconds for a follow-up question or comment. No one speaks twice unless all who wish to speak have done so and there is still time available.
- Please trust the presiding officers to keep to the agenda and bring discussion to a close. "Calling the question" immediately stops debate, and you may not see someone behind you that has not yet been heard.
- There is a Right Relations Team at the back of the room. If you have issues, please text them at: _____, email them at: _____ (its only one hardcopy) or go to them and talk with them in person. At the end of our meeting, they will give a brief report about issues that were raised and planned follow up.
- According to UUCA Bylaws, amendments must be published 30 days before the Congregational Meeting when the vote to adopt will be taken. The proposed amendments were published on November 6, 2019. They are in order, but other amendments are not in order for this meeting.
- If a YES vote is an obvious majority, it will be so declared without counting hands. Negative votes and abstentions will be counted.

UUCA Vision Statement

At UUCA we spent time to develop a Vision Statement that we approved during our 2017 December Congregational Meeting.

At UUCA we value and aspire to:

- Courageously seek authentic relationships across differences
- Move ourselves, our church, and our Earth toward justice, wholeness, connection, and love.
- Engage in a lifelong journey of learning and spiritual growth.
- Practice radical hospitality, acceptance, and inclusivity
- Provide a haven for all beliefs and identities that align with UU Principles

UUCA Ends Statements

We have a Global Ends Statement followed by Three Ends Statements. They are:

Global Ends Statement - The UUCA exists to create the Beloved Community by inspiring and empowering all souls to live bold and compassionate lives.

1. Faith Development - UUCA creates meaningful opportunities for deepening spirituality for all persons within a safe and challenging environment.

2. Social and Environmental Justice - UUCA's theological and spiritual culture calls us to put our principles into action by creating and supporting systems that address environmental and social injustices.

3. Larger UU Movement - UUCA creates meaningful opportunities that encourage participation and leadership in the larger UU community to promote the growth of Unitarian Universalism.

UUA 7 Principles plus 1

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

In April 2018 we voted to support the 8th Principle to accountable dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

Attachments:

Agenda that includes the Standing Rules Right Relations Team Activity Form

Proposed Bylaws amendments 11/6/19

Power Point Presentation for this Congregational Meeting Submitted by Carrie Kotcho, Secretary