

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF THE DESERT
Annual Business Meeting Minutes
April 30, 2023

Attending:

Board Members Attending in Person: President Linda Savard; 1st Vice President Bill Masco; 2nd Vice President Fran Hoag; Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu; Secretary Bob Rancourt; Director-at-Large Dave Carter; Director-at-Large Carol McDaniel

Board Members Absent: None

Minister Attending in Person: Rev. Ian W. Riddell

Number of Members of Record: 129

Number of Members Present in Person: 37

Number of Members Present on Zoom: 8

Number of Absentee Members' Cast Votes: 17

Meeting Minutes:

1. Welcome: Linda called the Annual Business Meeting to order at 11:49 a.m. PST after no one objected to continuing in assembly upon conclusion of the By-Laws Revision Meeting of the same date and location.

2. President's Report on Business of the Church: Linda presented her State of the Church Business report. Linda highlighted the calling of the Settled Minister and moving toward full-time ministry, adoption of the Eighth Principle, meeting in person all year long, getting better at streaming and holding hybrid meetings, installation of new microphones for the choir and good choir performances, diversity of folks in the pulpit, Sacred Grounds accomplishments, website improvements, induction of new members, and having plenty of visitors.

3. Minister's Report on State of the Church: Rev. Riddell presented his State of the Church Ministry report. Rev. Riddell highlighted that it was a year of emergence and re-emergence from a pandemic of physical separation. Rev. Riddell also spoke about church events that contributed to reconnection and recommitment, including the auction, yard sale, bingo, chalice circles, bridge, scrabble game, men's breakfast, and women's night out. Rev. Riddell described worship as powerful and diverse, attracting visitors through outreach such as online worship and physical participation in other parts of the community. Rev. Riddell noted staff changes, including the accompanist and choir director. Rev. Riddell noted the Leadership Development Committee name change better to reflect its purview of broadening lay participation in various roles of the church. The Reverend notes the need for volunteers and invites shared thinking for sustainability and thriving.

Rev. Riddell sees great potential and possibility, i.e., the Pledge Drive, but there are ongoing needs to make sure life of the congregation is sustainable. Rev. Riddell ended describing the work of the Committee on Ministry and the updated Right Relations policy.

4. Standing Committees Reports:

- a. Facilities and Furnishings Committee: Mel Wilkinson presented a report on behalf of the Facilities and Furnishings Committee. Mel described the past year's work of the committee, to include: A/C Bearings replacement; chairs were moved back and forth; volunteer fair in October; weed pulls in January and March; tree roots caused plumbing problems that were repaired; garbage bins were changed and disposal schedules were confirmed; successful "Paint the Curbs Red" event; and outside door to the Community Room and the Main Entrance Door handles failed and were replaced. Mel stated that the Committee's future plans may include installation of gender-neutral bathrooms and Steve Kerr putting new brand-new lights at the bottom of the main staircase due to low-level lighting.
- b. Finance Committee: Chris Eager described the past year's work for the Finance Committee. He noted that an audit subcommittee was assembled at the Treasurer's request for compliance purposes, and it meets quarterly to review the Treasurer's procedures, the processing of receipts and payments, and money-handling procedures. Chris announced the inclusion of a new member, Julia Bell. Chris noted that the Committee is extremely grateful for the dramatic increase in the Pledge Drive from last year, raising over \$182,000 this year from \$164,000 last year, since the church had asked for more money to have enough funds for full-time ministry. Chris concluded that the church's financial condition today is the best that it's been in the four to five years of his participation in the Committee.
- c. Membership Committee: LeGrand Vélez advised that seven new members were inducted in the spring and nine in the fall. The current count of active members is 129. LeGrand noted that Committee Members and Friends line up greeters and ushers, identify visitors, take attendance, and coordinate name badges for Members and Friends. This year, vaccination status checking also increased Committee work. LeGrand stated that the Committee is beginning to process updates to the directory and is planning to distribute it in the fall at the auction, including mapping Members' locations to facilitate

a sense of community. LeGrand concluded that the Committee improved its coordination with the Stewardship Committee and Care Team because the work overlaps.

d. Social Justice Committee: Denise Janssen Eager reported on the Social Justice Committee, beginning with the announcement that Julia Bell is a new member of the Committee. The Committee coordinates events and Members, Friends, and guests execute the events. This year, there were 13 participants in the Palm Springs Pride Parade. SafeHouse of the Desert Share-the-Plate raised \$900 and \$50 Target e-gift cards were distributed. The Committee raised \$2,000 for the CVUSD Migrant Edu. Program, distributing Wal-Mart gift cards and delivering 67 food baskets. The Committee hosted the second annual UUCOD Earth Week celebration. The Committee wrote letters to support Build Back Better legislation and advocated for voter registration checks. The Committee facilitated voting on the third annual Share-the-Plate nominations event. Denise noted that the fourth annual Red Nose Day was suspended this year because of a boycott. For Food on the First, over 700 food items and bags of clothes were donated. For Socks on the Second, 600 pairs of socks and hotel toiletries were distributed to Well in the Desert. Denise concluded that last summer's Share-the-Plate collections netted over \$1,067.17.

5. Approval of the Annual Budget: Jerry presented the Board's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Jerry noted that moving to 100% ministry was going to be a challenge requiring an increase in pledges, and he is pleased that the church hit the goal. \$307,000 is this year's budget; \$35,000 is being pulled from fixed assets reserves earmarked for that purpose to repave the parking lot and for Sacred Grounds hardscaping; after that, the operating budget really is about \$272,000, up only about \$10,000 from last year, so Jerry felt that it's not quite the increase it sounds like. Jerry noted that building and property maintenance, utilities, and insurance take up a little over 15% of budget, staff costs account about for 55% of budget, such that this amount, about \$167,000, about is 81% of the budget altogether. Jerry stated that remaining budget categories really are quite low. Jerry concluded that the church may have plateaued with the annual pledge drive, so Jerry recommends focusing on increasing the membership to bring in more funds to support the work of the church.

6. By-Laws Waiver: Linda explained the difficulty in recruiting a treasurer and invited a motion to waive the by-laws provision limiting the current treasurer's term to one

full term to allow the current treasurer to fill a consecutive two-year term. Questions were asked and answered. Motion was made, seconded, and approved.

7. Election of the Board of Directors: Linda introduced and presented the nominees for Board Members: Bob Rancourt for President; Julia Alberg-Burbank for 1st Vice President; Claudia Simmons for Secretary; Walter Gendell for Director at Large; and Jerry L'Hommedieu for Treasurer.
8. Election of Leadership Development Committee Members: Linda introduced and presented the nomination of Barb Storms. Linda noted that as the outgoing President, she will join the Committee per By-Laws, and Jane Betts-Stover will continue for another year.
9. Other Items and Business: Linda inquired whether any other matters needed to be addressed but nothing arose.
10. Extinguishing Chalice and Adjournment: Rev. Riddell extinguished the chalice with closing words and Linda adjourned the Annual Business Meeting at 12:41 p.m. PST.

Respectfully Submitted:



JULY 18, 2023

Robert L. "Bob" Rancourt, Jr.
Secretary

Date