

Congregational Meeting May 16, 2021

Board Present on the Zoom Webinar: John Merkel, Jason Delaney, Maureen McAndrews, Sean Golan, Jennifer Thilo, John Duggar, ShaRon Glass, Jen Bain. Absent: Allen Lee

Present on Zoom Webinar: Bryce Thomason, DeAnn Peterson, Carl Pelizza, Laura Yamashita, Janet Fulton, George Macon, June Lester, Doug Abell, Erin Golan, Ines Hoster, Beck Schillizzi, John Guyton

Call to Order: Jennifer Thilo, President Board of Trustees

Chalice Lighting: John Merkel and the Healthy Relations Committee (Doug Abell, Erin Golan, Ines Hoster, John Merkel) read the covenant.

Procedural Appointments

Co-Parliamentarians: June Lester and George Macon

Secretary: Maureen McAndrews

Timekeeper: Jen Bain

Meeting Protocols

All are welcome, but only those who (a) have been members at least 60 days or youth who joined after the last bridging ceremony, and (b) have an attributable contribution of record in the last 2 months may participate in discussions and vote. Participants must request to speak in the chat room, Q&A or raised hand functions. Write your name and Pro, Con, or Procedural in the chat. The chair will recognize speakers preferentially from the Procedural list and alternately from the Pro and Con sides. A host will enable the recognized speaker's audio. Comments are limited to 2 minutes. No participant will be recognized to speak on an issue a second time until others wishing to speak have spoken a first time. Procedural mic time is outside the 30 minute limit. Once recognized, a member may move to amend a motion on the floor. The motion to amend must be seconded, discussed, and passed (or not) by a majority, before returning to the main motion.

Consistent with our UU principles, members should be given every opportunity to present their view, as long as comments are relevant to the motion on the floor. Stopping debate before 30 minutes can only be accomplished by the President' recognition of a motion at the Procedural mc to "call the question," which requires a second and a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.

Determination of Quorum

532 current voting members

10% = 53, 20% = 116

Poll of attendees: 134 attendees responded to the poll- 11 non-voting guests, (77%) voting members. Quorum was reached.

Approval of May 17, 202 Minutes

Maureen McAndrews moved that we approve minutes of the May 17, 2020 congregational meeting. ShaRon Glass seconded.

Discussion/vote - no discussion, 92% approved, one abstention. Motion passed.

Approval of December 13, 2020 Minutes

Maureen McAndrews moved that we approve minutes of the December 13, 2020 congregational meeting. John Merkel seconded.

Discussion/vote -no discussion, 91% approved, one abstention. Motion passed.

Election of Officers, Trustees and Nominating Committee Members

Jen Bain, Board liaison to the Nominating Committee - thanked those who have served this past year. The slate for this year was presented. Bios of each candidate were mailed to the congregation with the meeting notice.

President - Sean Golan

President-Elect - Maureen McAndrews

Trustee (3 year term) - David Sjoquist

Trustee (3 year term) - Mary "Liebs" Lieberman

Stewardship Co-Chairs (2 year term) - Janel Turk Denard and David Hanna

Nominating Committee (2 year term) - Anna Apostolou, Arthur Murphy, Tina Welch, Jerry Hajdusiewicz

Maureen McAndrews moved that we elect the slate of candidates as presented by the nominating committee. ShaRon Glass seconded.

Discussion - none; 131 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention. Slate approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MISSION AND ENDS - Jenifer Thilo

This year we embarked on a 4 month visioning process. Out of this process, the board refreshed our Values, Mission, and Ends to articulate our aspirations of what we hope to become and how we will impact our greater community. We hope that these Values, Mission, and Ends will inspire, focus and ground everything we create as we move forward. Visioning sessions were conducted with the congregation January-April, 3 sessions per month.

January - Experiencing the Holy

February - Stories and Wishes

March - Vision for our Future

April - Reflection

Values: Inspired by our diverse faith community, we affirm these values:

Wonder and Awe

Love and Compassion

Courageous Engagement

Mission: Transforming lives through courageous action and soulful connection.

Ends: UUCA is a vibrant, innovative hub of engagement for Atlanta and beyond, where together we:

1. Articulate our Unitarian Universalist faith tradition and identity, teach it to our children, share it with others, and live it courageously in the world.
2. Ground ourselves in creative, innovative worship and spiritual practice to nourish and heal our souls.
3. Advance justice, wholeness, and equity for people, our Earth, and all life on it.
4. Advance the goals of our Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multiculturalism resolution.
5. Create connected community that ministers to one another's physical, spiritual and relational needs.
6. Grow leaders rooted in and committed to our Unitarian Universalist values.
7. Cultivate and embrace an increasingly diverse community of faith that will transform and enrich our congregation.
8. Connect with resilience across differences, honoring our Covenant of Healthy Relationships in all the work we do.

Maureen McAndrews made a motion to approve, Jen Bain seconded. No discussion. Vote - 124 yes, 2 no, 5 abstain. Values, Mission and Ends statements approved.

PROJECT PHOENIX REPORT - DeAnn Peterson, Chair

- 100% construction documents submitted to Dekalb County for permit; review is underway
- Land Disturbance Permit (LDP) expected any day
- Contract with Choate is being negotiated
- Construction loan is in appraisal process
- UUCA and UUCA Endowment Fund loan details are being finalized
- Lease renewed for the Treehouse to April 2022

CONSTRUCTION COSTS AND FUNDING

Costs are estimated to be \$7,604,000, funding estimated at \$7,105,566. Funding includes a \$650,000 loan from the Endowment Fund. DeAnn thanked the Climate Action Team, which secured \$62,500 in grants for the project at this time.

NEXT STEPS

- Complete contract with CHOATE
- Revise plans as required by Dekalb County
- Finalize UUCA/UUCAEF loan details
- LDP and Construction Permits are the current factors that determine the timeline

Questions: How long will the construction take once approvals are secured? About 9 months.

ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT - John Guyton

Mission of the Endowment Fund

- Fund projects that contribute to UUCA's future prosperity
- Provide an opportunity for donors to make long-term investment in the congregation and its values
- Up to 3% of assets are available for grants each (normal) year

The Endowment is funded in several ways:

- Bequests (Legacy Society)
- Direct donations
- Birthday Club donations
- AmazonSmile

2020-2021 Highlights

- Donated \$200,000 to capital campaign in fall 2020
- Hosted *Wills and Estate Planning* ARE class in August
- Reiman Scholarship awarded to Adam Snedden
- Approved a loan to UUCA in support of the building renovation

UUCAEF Board of Directors

- Mary Crawley, Secretary, Kay Golan, John Guyton, Treasurer, DeAnn Peterson, MaryAnne Gaunt, Judy Shaklee, Newly elected board members: Cindy Hoffner, Sally Meyer, Mark Honeycutt. EF Board will select new officers at their next scheduled Board meeting.

VOTE TO ACCEPT AND REPAY LOAN FROM THE ENDOWMENT FUND

- The Endowment Fund and UUCA Board of Trustees are currently negotiating the final terms of the loan.
- The terms will be finalized and approved by both boards once negotiations have been concluded.
- Current proposed terms are:
 - 20 year term including 3 year drawdown
 - 30 year amortization period
 - No interest due for 10 years
 - Interest rate = prime minus 1%
 - Construction loan rapid first
 - Monthly EF repayments to be included in UUCA budget starting year 4

MOTION

Concurring with the UUCA Board of Trustees and the Endowment Fund Board approval to move forward with negotiations for a loan from the UUCA Endowment Fund, Maureen McAndrews, Board Secretary made the motion -

“Be it resolved that the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, Inc. (Fed Tax ID 58-0707530) is committed to borrowing no more than \$650,000 from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta Endowment Fund (Fed Tax ID 23-7085616) to renovate our 2650 North building at 2650 North Druid Hills Road property and to repay that debt within 20 years of the closing date of the loan.” Seconded by Jason Delaney.

Discussion/vote - When will this money be borrowed? We will first take \$650,000 from the Endowment Fund, then take funds from the construction (bridge) loan. We will pay back the money borrowed from the construction fund first, then the EF. This means we will not have a mortgage on the building. Will we need all that money? Possibly not, we do have contingency funds built into the budget, so we hope to minimize the amount borrowed. The loan will be for 20 years, with a 30 year amortization. Will we be asked to pay more? We hope to close out the capital campaign pledges, pay back the construction loan, and finally the EF loan. There may be a capital campaign in the future. The construction/bridge loan is meant to cover costs during construction when money is needed, and while pledge dollars have not yet been received. Pam Kilmer moved to call the question. Vote to call the question: yes - 109, no 13, abstained 13. Vote to approve the motion to borrow money from the EF: Yes - 123, no -1, abstain 2. Motion passed.

MID-YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT (MAY 2021) - JASON DELANEY

Jason reported that we continue to be on firm footing; giving is holding steady. Our finances are tracked and reported by the team listed below. Finances are handled and reported by those listed below.

- Jason Delaney, Finance Trustee
- Bryce Thomason, UUCA Director of Finance and Operations
- Travis Vaughn, UUCA Office Administrator
- Gary Youngblood, UUCA Bookkeeper

Revenue and Expenses

For the period of January through March 2021, we received \$276,020 in revenue, which is higher than budgeted. During the same period, expenses were \$216,576 expenses, which is within budget. We have raised more than we have spent, and PPP loans have helped us feel secure. UUCA is a real bright spot among institutions at the moment.

COVID TASK FORCE REPORT - Taryn Strauss

The Task Force met many times to develop a plan for re-opening and then the CDC released new guidelines so that plan had to be scrapped.

As we make a plan there are many things that must be considered. Complications to making plans include: new and changing info, staff and leadership bandwidth in a difficult year, high quality virtual worship - global congregation, treehouse has poor ventilation, and is too small of a space.

- a. Safety - remembering our commitment to keep the most vulnerable safe. Who that is changes, right now it's those who are not eligible to be vaccinated, our children. We cannot gather for worship indoors until all are eligible for vaccination.
- b. Selflessness - lifting up the safety of those whose care must come before anything we might want to do. Unanimous consent - if you are having a small group and one person doesn't want to remove their mask, we will not pressure them to take it off, to come inside, or crowd in. No one will be pressured to do anything.
- c. Satisfaction - grace is required. Children are an important part of our community. We will continue to find innovative ways to connect.

Town Halls will be held in mid-August.

MINISTER'S REPORT - Annual Vision of the Ministry Report 2020-2021 - Taryn Strauss

Despite everything, it has been a wonderful year for UUCA. Taryn's word for the year was "connection."

Strengthen connection and engagement with congregants' spiritual resources and religious community during a national health, economic crisis across the lifespan.

Worship team members are: Taryn, Don Milton, Laura Beth Brown, Tony Stringer, Elizabeth Field, and Shay Stewart.

- Created an authentic worship experience that was responsive, grounded in UU tradition and holistic.
- Music and Arts - musical innovations, guest artists, virtual choir practice, collaboration.
- Religious Education - spring and summer programming for K-5, virtual family chapel, religious education programs. Virtual Adult Religious Education is more popular now than when it was held in person. Topics included: Environmental Racism, Covid Vaccine 101, Would You Harbor Me? What Have You Learned this Year?
- Lay Ministry continued with lay ministers Barbara Begner, Tony Stringer, Ellen Beatty, Tracy Gagne, David Hanna, Sonja Tinsley-Hook, Bruce Gaunt.
- Worship Service Themes: The Illusion of Separateness, Building a New Way, Tikkum Olam, Qualities of Resistance, The Crowded Table, Designing a Life, Tiny Revolutions, Normalize This, Where the Sidewalk Ends. Guest ministers participated.
- Guest preachers: Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, Rev. Quyamah Rahman, Rev. Jim Keat, Rev. Natalie Renee Perkins, Rev. Jonathan Rogers, Rabbi Josh Lesser, Rev. Duncan Teague, Jason Delaney, Don Milton, Tony Stringer, Ayanna Kafi Stringer.

Establish responsive social justice infrastructure within UUCA and strengthen our role in the public square as interfaith partners for spiritually grounded activism. Many

congregants participated in the election helping at the polls and participating in UU The Vote.. Beck Schillizzi came on staff and brought leadership; established a social justice steering committee; held Freedom Friday demonstrations. Morning readings were provided to members during the election process.

We were busy! 1648 zoom meetings were held since May 2020, 202 members are participating in neighborhood circles; 53 people participated in the Inquirer's Series, 15 people joined the congregation. There has been a 400% increase on Instagram and Twitter.

Chart the path from visitor to leader - continues to be a goal for 2021.

Ground the capital campaign in the vision and ministry of the congregation. Building a New Way was the theme for the capital campaign, and it was led by a group of wonderful leaders. A consultant was hired to guide us during the campaign. The campaign was extremely successful, raising \$4,250,000. A ground blessing was conducted at 2650. (Team members: John Guyton and Ellen Beattie, co-chairs, David Sjoquist, George Macon, Jennifer Thilo, Sean Golan, Leta Woo, Kay Johnson, Maureen McAndrews, Sonya Tinsley-Hook, Barbara Begner, Bryce Thomason, Beck Schillizzi, Kay Golan)

Strengthening congregational infrastructure, operations and processes for greater efficiency, effectiveness and stewardship of resources. The Adult Religious Education Team was restructured through the use of design thinking method. Small Group Ministry Steering Team remained in place. The calendar underwent a makeover and office systems were streamlined. Staffing: Meagan Lloyd Joiner has been hired part-time to work with the lay ministry program. Rev. Duncan Teague will join us as a part-time community minister.

Report from the Director of Finance and Operations - Bryce Thomason

This year we strengthened our congregational infrastructure through communication, creating efficiency, building redundancy into our systems, carefully stewarding our resources and staying accountable. Without a roadmap, we created a virtual meeting system, and on May 17, 2020 we held our first virtual congregational meeting; 162 members attended.

Our services went online and have been viewed across the country, including in CA, TX, NY, VA and FL, and across the globe in Canada, India, Saudi Arabia and the UK. Some of our statistics:

YouTube views	83,791
Hours of airtime	22,866
Likes	2,887
Shares	4,439
Videos uploaded	243
Subscribers	837

We also hosted 1,648 zoom meetings and spent 873,783 minutes looking at each other through our screens. Bryce reported receiving 11,638 emails and sending 2,482. The staff sent and received 49,400 emails, for an average of 135 per day.

We also used Slack for communication, a system that combines email, text messaging and group chat. Via Slack 45,000 messages were exchanged among staff and congregants.

We have received two rounds of PPP loans/grants, processed 328 stewardship campaign pledges, 310 capital campaign pledges, and received, liquidated and transferred 2,454 shares of stock.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Jennifer Thilo

Jennifer reported that the board completed nearly all of its work via Zoom, and we stayed strong. Board members participated in board meetings and served as board liaisons to many groups, attended Project Phoenix meetings, Capital Campaign meetings and conducted member visits, the Healthy Relations Committee conducted seminars, Nominating Committee meetings, Small Groups, Neighborhood Circles, Congregational Town Halls (7), two Board Retreats via zoom, and more. The board was active in many RE programs and participated in General Assembly 2020 (will also participate in GA 2021).

The board conducted 12 congregational visioning sessions during January - April, and spent many hours putting the hopes, visions, and ideas that were shared by members into our renewed Values, Mission and Ends statements. These will guide the congregation in the future and serve as a roadmap for the staff and board.

Jennifer thanked the board and expressed her gratitude for the participation and support she has experienced as board president.

Sean Golan thanked Jennifer for her work on the board and shared some words that board members used to describe her: understanding, calming, resilient, flexible, kind, giving, warm.

PROCESS OBSERVATION - ShaRon Glass

We did observe our covenant with respectful communication. We remained on task and followed the agenda. High energy moment was Bryce's enumeration of our many hours of zoom meetings and other statistics. ARAOMC goals were demonstrated during Taryn's report and were reflected in the Ends statements.

PASSING THE GAVEL - The gavel was "passed" virtually to Sean Golan, President.

Closing Words - adaptation from Maya Angelou