

## **Congregational Meeting May 15, 2022**

**Board Present on the Zoom Webinar:** Sean Golan, Maureen McAndrews, Jason Delaney, Jen Bain, David Sjoquist, John Duggar, John Merkel, Mary “Liebs” Liebman

**Panelists present on Zoom Webinar:** DeAnn Peterson, Bryce Thomason, June Lester, George Macon, Barbara Begner, Mark Honeycutt, Beth Martinz, Janet Fulton, Johanna Merkel, Leta Woo, Carol Ann Arvan, Rev. Megan Lloyd Joiner, Travis D. Vaughn, Michael Dangerfield, Gary Youngblood, Sha’Ron Glass, Aiden McMahan, Rev. Taryn Strauss, Anthony Stringer, Arthur Murphy, Laura Beth Brown

The Congregational meeting was called to order. Bryce shared updates on the most recent phishing scams and tips for how to avoid them. Then John Merkel, Board Liaison to Healthy Relations Committee, and Johanna Merkel reminded us of our covenant of healthy relations. After Sean Golan shared opening words, the following procedural appointments were made. June Lester and George Macon will serve as co-parliamentarians, Mary “Liebs” Liebman will take minutes as secretary and Jen Bain will serve as timekeeper.

After the procedural appointments, meeting protocols for a zoom congregational meeting were reviewed and Quorum was determined. The congregation currently has 582 voting members. 10% or 58 members are needed for the electoral vote and 20% or 116 members are needed for all other business. 44 absentee ballots were submitted ahead of the meeting. 115 voting members responded in the poll and 8 additional members responded in the chat. A total of 167 members were counted. A quorum was reached.

### **Voting Matters**

#### **Approval of December 19, 2021 Minutes**

Mary Liebman moved that we approve the minutes of the December 19, 2021, congregational meeting. No second is needed. There was no discussion. Results: 97% of voting members approved, 3% abstained, motion passed.

#### **Election of Candidates**

Thank you to those officers who are rolling off of the board of trustees, nominating committee, and stewardship committee for their terms of service. The candidates for the board of trustees, nominating committee, and stewardship committees were introduced.

Mary Liebman moved that we elect the slate of candidates as presented by the nominating committee whose bios were sent in the congregational mailing. No second is needed and no discussion followed. Absentee ballots were counted through the zoom poll, the chat, and absentee ballots.

Results: 100% of voting members approved. 0% of voting members abstained. Motion passed.

### **Stewardship Chair discussion**

Mary Liebman moved that we authorize the Board of Trustees to appoint a stewardship co-chair to the vacant position without a congregational vote. In the ensuing discussion, it was determined that the nominating committee could recommend a candidate to the board. The board could then appoint the individual to the stewardship co-chair position, but that person would need to be approved by the congregation in the December congregational meeting. The motion was withdrawn.

### **ANNUAL VISION OF MINISTRY REPORT- 2021-2022**

Rev. Taryn Strauss reminded us that the word of 2021-2022 was Emergence as we emerge from the isolation of the pandemic and emerge into our new physical space and our position in the Atlanta community. Through her Annual Vision of Ministry, Rev. Strauss focused on the 4 areas below.

1. Renew people's engagement with their spiritual lives, inspire transformation through excellence and depth in ministry and worship design, spiritual and community engagement.
2. Chart the path from visitor to leader.
3. Plan for our arrival at our new campus.
4. Focus the congregation toward cultivating impactful partnerships advancing justice in Atlanta.

Rev. Strauss shared thanks for the staff, and lay ministers and provided updates on our Community Ministers, Religious Exploration, and the Congregational retreat. She spoke about the beginning of the transition of the Nominating Committee to look at leadership development, including training that Laura Beth and Bryce provided for the committee. In addition, she described the experience of attending The Orange Conference with a number of staff and volunteers to learn about how evangelical churches grow their programs and their church.

Rev. Strauss offered sincere thanks to Bryce and shared the plethora of ways that he has worked to ensure the financial health of our congregation, the success of Project Phoenix, and our congregation's strong relationships with myriad stakeholders. In addition, she shared her focus on building relationships between our congregation and our community, specifically the GA Interfaith Public Policy Center, Big Bethel, Nicholas House, GA Interfaith Power and Light, and deepening relationships with Immigrant Action and the Muscogee Creek indigenous community.

Over the summer, Rev. Strauss will be spending time preparing for our transition into our new building. For the next 6 weeks, we will have guest preachers and we will not meet for traditional worship in July. Our soft opening in our new building will occur at the beginning of August with our Grand Opening following on September 18th. In the near future, we should be hearing about our new Arts Blueprint that will connect our programming with all of our ministries.

The work for the coming year is BEYOND.

### **COVID TASK FORCE UPDATE**

Many thanks to the COVID Task Force for shepherding us through this current time. Rev. Taryn Strauss and Janet Fulton shared a report from the Covid Task Force. The Task Force organized a presentation from Dr. Singleton from the CDC addressing the current state of Covid at the time. We have had a little bit of an increase in cases in the last 7 days. For in-person worship, participants must be fully vaccinated (including booster) and masked. We have had visitors attend services. They will attest to their vaccination status. Attendees at Treehouse meetings are encouraged to wear a mask.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT (May 2022)**

Financial Trustee, Jason Delaney, shared an update on the financial state of the congregation. He reported that giving is holding steady and the process and personnel are steady, particularly with the transition to Realm. We will need to grow our congregation size in the new building. Jason thanked the staff and Finance Committee for their work this year.

From January-April, we are almost exactly breaking even. Any deviations from the budget are easily identified and explained. Our financial statements show \$10K of unbudgeted income and expenses from a congregational retreat. Excluding the retreat, we are almost exactly as budgeted in terms of expenses. While some givers had trouble with the transition to Realm, we expect that those kinks have largely been cleared up. We continue to be in a good financial position but anticipate that our expenses will grow as we look toward our new home. Bring your friends so that they too can enjoy our rich community.

### **PROJECT PHOENIX REPORT**

DeAnn Peterson and Carol Ann Arvan updated the congregation on the progress of Project Phoenix. As of the congregational meeting, the construction is about 85% complete with a schedule that will allow us to celebrate our first Sunday service in 2650 on August 7th. Even after we begin to occupy the new space, the final punch list items will be completed. The construction has been delayed due to new inspection requirements, supply issues, and rain.

Currently, we have spent \$4.66M on the project. We have not yet tapped into the bridge loan, but will soon. Of the \$234K in change orders that have already occurred (many due to additional requirements from DeKalb County), \$160K is covered by the contingency and grants from SouthFace. We anticipate that there will be some additional change orders. The projected balance on the bridge loan in September of 2024 is about \$100K with \$39K of that covered by remaining capital campaign payments. We will need to pay the construction loan balance and the Endowment Fund Loan (\$650K).

DeAnn shared photos of the current state of construction and photos of Alice Young visiting the new space.

### **ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT - Mark Honeycutt, Treasurer**

Mark Honeycutt, treasurer of the Endowment Fund, provided an update including the members of the Endowment Fund Board. There will be no change to the board for the upcoming year. Members are listed below.

John Guyton, President  
Judy Shaklee, Vice President  
Mary Crawley, Secretary  
Mark Honeycutt, Treasurer  
DeAnn Peterson

Kay Golan  
Mary Anne Gaunt  
Cindy Hoffner  
Sally Meyer  
David Sjoquist-UUCA Board liaison

The Endowment Fund was created in 1970 to provide long-term investment in UUCA and in the congregation. Mission: Created in 1970 to provide long-term investment in UUCA and the congregation. The Endowment fund accepts various types of gifts including bequests, direct donations, Birthday Club, memorial gifts, and more. Contributions can be made through Realm, a check noting the Endowment Fund in the memo, or through bequest language in your estate plan. Highlights from the 2021-2022 year include a \$200K gift to the UUCA Capital Campaign and an additional \$650K loan to UUCA to support Project Phoenix.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Sean Goalan shared the highlights of the board work this year. Together, the board engaged with our new Mission and End Statements, completed an ARAOMC Resolution engagement survey, and worked with the Endowment Fund to update UUCA's Donation and Gift Policy. In addition, the board worked with many congregational committees, initiated an 8th Principle Awareness Committee, and even had the chance to meet in person a few times.

Members of the board's ARAOMC Workgroup reported on the findings of the ARAOMC Resolution Engagement Survey. In addition to recognizing all of the ways that our congregation is already working toward our ARAOMC commitments, the workgroup recommended actions to further our commitment to the ARAOMC Resolution.

Sean noted that even though we as a congregation did not have many opportunities to gather in person, the board and congregation were able to stay connected. Sean was thanked for his service to the board and the congregation by Jen Bain and other members of the board. As his final act as president, Sean passed the gavel to our new president, Maureen McAndrews.

As the meeting closed, John Merkel, Trustee, served as our process observer. He noted that we stayed on topic and focused on the agenda. Through our covenant and the ARAOMC survey report, we demonstrated our commitment to the ARAOMC Resolution. The high-energy moment of the meeting was the report from Project Phoenix and the low-energy moment was the review of meeting procedures and determination of a quorum. The most meaningful moment was the election of the new slate of trustees and committee members. Sean Golan shared closing words and the meeting was adjourned.