

TJMC Congregational Meeting – Nov 12, 2017

Draft Minutes

Before the meeting started, Adam thanked Lori Craddock for her tireless help with the food for our auction / talent show last night. She takes charge and always comes through in a spectacular way.

Parliamentary lesson – Amy Wissekerke reviewed Robert’s Rules of Order for us. We use them to protect member rights and the civil process, especially when a discussion is heated.

1. Call to order & establish quorum – President Adam Slate acted as Chair, calling the meeting to order at 1:03PM. As of October 31, 2017 membership stood at 430. According to our Bylaws 10% of the membership, or 43 members, constitutes a quorum. Breck Gastinger, Head Teller, reported 54 members have checked in. Thus a quorum has been established and we may conduct the business of the church.
2. Greeting – The congregation read our covenant together. The Chair thanked Ann Salamini, Board Secretary, for taking the minutes, Jen Caswell Colbert for creating the original script and editing it for today’s meeting, all members of the Staff and Board, Chris Rivera for acting as Parliamentarian today, and congregation members who made time to attend and conduct this community’s business.
3. Light chalice & opening words – The Chair called Rev. Erik Wikstrom to give opening words while Ellie Ransom lit the chalice.
4. Approve agenda – The Chair asked for additions or corrections to the agenda, noting that we have already moved the Parliamentary Lesson from the 4th bullet point to before the meeting.
MOTION: Accept the agenda as amended
Approved by majority vote.
5. Approve minutes of June congregational meeting - The Chair called for additions or corrections to the minutes of the last congregational meeting. None being offered, the minutes were declared approved as distributed.
6. Treasurer’s report – The Chair called on Jeanine Braithwaite, Treasurer.

Financial Statement for Congregational Meeting

November 12, 2017

Jeanine Braithwaite
Treasurer

**End-September 2017
Year to Date Month-End Report***

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Revenue	\$140K	\$107K	(\$33K)
Expenses	\$149K	\$120K	\$29K
Revenue/(Deficit)	(\$9K)	(\$13K)	(\$4K)

*Detailed Monthly Financial Reports and the Balance Sheet are available for review in the Church Office, in the red binder on the bookshelf behind the door. Kindly do not remove the reports but please make copies if you need a hard copy for your own use.

August and September saw a larger than usual lag in pledge payments. Expenses were kept under budget mainly through deferred staff and program costs.

The Finance Committee elected Stan Walker as Chair, and meets monthly on the second Monday.

We have initiated a new feature in the electronic Weekly Update, the State of the Church Financial Snapshot. This will run each week and be updated monthly so you can see a snapshot of our fiscal operating budget. If you have any questions about how to read the snapshot, please contact Treasurer Jeanine Braithwaite at treasurer@uucharlotteville.org. Please hold your helpful suggestions about another way to present the snapshot for one month while we get folks used to seeing the information.

7. Approve Bylaw updates - The Chair called Karen Ransom to review the proposed bylaws changes.

Two years ago the Board called a Governance Task Force to review our governance according to best practices for a church of our size and structure. She thanked the task force members: Sally Taylor and Bev Thierwechter, co chairs, Donna Baker, Pam Philips, Jamie McReynolds and Lorie Craddock. The Board revised their recommendations somewhat before they were approved by the congregation in June 2017.

Governance changes require Bylaws changes, which always requires a lengthy process. Bev Thierwechter, Laura Wallace, Amy Wissekerke and Karen Ransom made the initial revision to reflect the approved governance changes. There was also some tweaking to reflect the goal of a more nimble and flexible governance. Then Adam Slate

and Karen worked over the Bylaws again, consulting with Chris Rivera for input when questions arose. Every change has gone through several layers of discussion. We have tried to stick closely to what the congregation had approved, though a few areas seemed to need additional work. Notes have been kept on changes which should be made in the future that were beyond the mandate for this revision. This is the first major revision of the entire Bylaws in many years and includes updated language, grammar and format. Wording was changed to improve consistency, clarity and intent throughout the document.

Toward the goal of increasing nimbleness and flexibility, it seemed that a range of members made sense on the Personnel and Nominating committees. The Nominating committee were asked for comment and it was decided that 4-5 members each, plus a Board member, made sense. This was not approved at the congregational meeting in June but has been presented at the congregational conversations this Fall.

Some updates reflect current personnel titles (Director of Religious Education was changed to Director of Faith Development; the new Director of Administration and Finance position was incorporated). The Endowment Committee was revamped under a new article. The Committee on Ministry section was moved to Board appointed committees from the minister's section. Information that seemed more appropriate to the Policy Manual was removed. Careful notes of those changes were made so they will carry over to the Policy Manual in its next revision.

The next level of edits aimed to improve clarity and consistency, so there would be one way to say the same thing throughout the document; poorly written material was rewritten.

Adam and Karen took information questions:

John Lineweaver (POI) – What is the Policy Manual? – The Bylaws can only be changed by congregational vote. The Policy Manual is approved and can be changed by the Board. It details how to accomplish day to day business in a format that can be changed to reflect current practice. For instance, the congregation must be notified of congregational meetings in advance (Bylaws), but the method of notification is listed in the Policy Manual, since technology may change and make email more appropriate than postal service.

Edith Good (POI) – What if you don't have email? – We also use US Postal Service where appropriate.

Cathy Lawder (POI) – How is the number of at large members determined on the Board? – We need at least three, but not necessarily as many as five. We might use an

extra space for a youth member who might not be able to serve a whole term. Someone might be willing to serve as President, but only as a Co President. It allows flexibility depending on how many willing and qualified candidates are available. The actual number is at the discretion of both the Nominating Committee and the Board.

There being no further questions, the Chair called on Karen Ransom to make the motion.

MOTION: Approve the Bylaws changes as presented in entirety.

Discussion:

Karen Ransom (PRO) – This has been a two year process with a lot of great work going into it. These Bylaws changes will help with flexibility and nimbleness, change our committees appropriately and provide a good clean review of our basic document. There is more work to be done, but this revision feels really solid. Everything was talked through multiple times. I think we should approve them.

Walter Hoffman (PRO) – I move the question. - If there are no more comments, we will move to a vote...

Pat Milliman (POI) – I spent hours going over all the changes. I found that to choose a new minister, an 85% vote is required. Bylaws changes require a 2/3 majority. But the budget is a simple majority. We should consider changing that for something as serious as a \$50K deficit. We should consider such a change for the next major rewrite of our bylaws.

The Chair called the question to approve the Bylaws changes in their entirety.

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There being a majority vote in the affirmative, the Bylaws are approved.

- Presentation of Next Steps report and Board of Trustee goals

Adam presented the findings of the Next Steps Weekend. There will be another presentation for those who couldn't be here today, and this presentation will be included in the minutes of today's meeting. He recommended the Stewardship For Us blog as worthwhile on the topic. (<http://stewardshipforus.com/blog/>).

Thanks to everyone who made themselves available to meet with Mr. Ewert. Also to Jeanine Braithwaite who organized the whole weekend with him.

Presentation to Congregation

- **Present findings of Next Steps Weekend report**
- **Introduce Board 2017-18 priorities**
- **Q&A**

Next Steps Consulting Engagement

- **Goal: Assess stewardship at TJMC & consider possible capital campaign**
- **Consultant: Mark Ewert, *Stewardship for Us***

Next Steps Weekend Process

- **Church provided extensive data and documents**
- **Mark met with many individuals and groups throughout church**
- **Attended a Sunday service**
- **Delivered findings in report to Board of Trustees**

THANK YOU to everyone who participated!

Mark met with about 75 church members, most of the staff, and attended our highest-profile service of the year. · Groups represented include: Buildings & Grounds Committee · racial and social justice committees · people involved in community outreach · Finance Committee · youth · people who have served on Pledge Drive and Stewardship teams · Worship Weavers · new members · elders · Membership Committee · Committee on the Ministry · people participating in covenant groups · Religious Education Committee · CareNet and Pastoral Associates · ordained ministerial staff & other professional staff · Board of Trustees

Findings: Metrics

- **Members: 416**
- **Annual pledging: \$363K**
- **Small endowment: \$329K**
- **Long-term debt: none**
- **Last capital campaign: 1993, for social hall & church offices**

Findings: Annual Financial Giving

- **Average commitment \$1,325; median \$685 (excludes \$0)**
- **Far below other *Stewardship for Us* client churches**
- **Too much of budget being carried by few large pledgers**
- **Decline over past four years**
- **Should not do away with annual pledge drive when trying to grow stewardship**

Findings: Other Fundraising

- **Events create risk around a specific date, generally do not raise much**
- **Exchanges for services/goods can distract from idea that annual giving is vital to church life**

Strengths

- **Children's religious education program**
- **Pastoral care**
- **Buildings & grounds are well cared for**
- **Quality of worship and music on an upswing**
- **Stewardship leaders are thoughtful, spirited, knowledgeable; pledge drives are well run**
- **Covenant groups/small group ministries**
- **Skilled Worship Weavers**

Other Commendations

- **Response to summer rallies was energetic and effective**
- **Board is thoughtful and dedicated**

Opportunities

- **Opportunity to serve community, spur significant growth**
- **This summer shows we have a deeper level of resourcefulness, resilience, and capability**
- **Our volunteer and financial capacity both probably much higher than current levels.**
- **Adding resources to support stewardship and membership**

- **Financial giving provides opportunities to create meaning, increase sense of belonging, & align values with resources**
- **Working to understand readiness steps for a future capital campaign**

Challenges

- **Declining pledging**
- **Low volunteer support outside of core group; some members participate minimally/not at all**
- **Hard time filling key roles**
- **No planned giving program**
- **Board wrestling with its role vis a vis staff & places where volunteers cannot or should not be used for key tasks**
- **Frustrations about staff responsiveness, access to systems, difficulty getting things done**
- **Shared leadership among senior staff has been source of friction for congregation**

Recommendations

- **Work on restoring trust**
- **Review staffing plan and structure**
- **Incorporate better volunteer management practices**
- **Seek outside support to strengthen stewardship**
- **Better electronic giving**
- **Work on congregation's vision**
- **Revise bylaws and policies to be clearer, in line with how we expect the church to work**

Board 2017-18 Priorities: Guiding Documents

- **2012 staffing report**
- **2015 long range plan**
- **2016 statement of public witness on racial justice**
- **Next Steps Weekend recommendations**

Board 2017-18 Goals

- ***Vision:*** Develop and share church vision in effective ways
- ***Stewardship:*** Increase understanding that all TJMC members are responsible for its well-being
- ***Trust:*** Strengthen relationships between congregants, between board & congregation
- ***Racial Justice:*** Lead TJMC's work inside & outside our walls
- ***Administration:*** Ensure infrastructure can meet our needs
- ***75th Anniversary:*** Create a fun and meaningful celebration

Goal: Vision

- Better articulate our current vision
- Administer congregational survey
- Later: Start planning for visioning process/strategic plan

Goal: Stewardship

- Exceed expectations on closing \$50K budget gap
- New stewardship position
- Member expectations/healthy stewardship culture
- This year's pledge drive
- Later: Create 2018-19 budget

Goal: Trust

- Report to congregation re: Next Steps & board priorities
- Clear, open, and effective communications
- Reach out to UUA resources for support
- Ongoing: Develop understanding in congregation about senior staff model

Goal: Racial Justice

- Lead congregation
- Support racial justice committee & staff in their work
- Increase our own understanding of white supremacy culture/governance

- **Ongoing: Continue to be leaders in community**

Goal: Administration

- **Complete and approve governance bylaw changes**
- **Develop staff priorities and clarify responsibilities**
- **Work with COM, Personnel, Nominating, Membership to clarify roles and promote engagement**
- **Later: Board governance transition plan**

Goal: 75th Anniversary

- **Create planning team**
- **Feb/Mar: 75th anniversary celebration**

Questions:

Pat Millman – Will this be online? – It will be in the minutes and there will be another presentation.

John Lineweaver – I have an observation to make. As a relatively new person here and as a minister's son, I note almost everyone here has multiple responsibilities for leadership. Many people also have important positions and responsibilities at the university and elsewhere. That's unique to this place. – When people have multiple roles because they love what they're doing, it's fantastic. When they have multiple roles because not enough people are stepping up to do the work, it's less fantastic.

Jill Payne – There are people leaving this church. Why? We should interview them after the fact. Were issues unresolved causing frustration because there was no mechanism for resolution? Many of these people made major contributions, both financially and volunteer wise. – People come and go all the time. The why question is important. Is the investigation of why a job for membership committee or stewardship? That's something we need to look into.

Ruth Douglas - There is such a delay between meetings and the minutes being posted. Can they be posted right away, before they are approved? Or can this presentation be made available? - Draft minutes can be posted. That's a question for the secretary. The presentation can go up immediately.

Mary Rose Curtis – I’m worried that we are not paying enough attention to goals of social justice. It’s all racial justice. – We highlight social justice as a priority. Racial justice is a special priority, but all social justice issues are important and we are dealing with them all the time. – Mary Rose added that people involved in other areas need as much attention as racial justice people.

- Closing words & extinguish chalice

The Chair recognized Leia Durland-Jones for closing words and Christina Rivera to extinguish the chalice.

- Adjournment –

The Chair thanked everyone for coming and doing this work together.

MOTION: Adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed with an overwhelming majority.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05PM.