

Draft Minutes of the TJMC-UU Congregational Meeting
August 23, 2020

Introduction:

LORIE: My name is Lorie Craddock and I am the President of the TJMC Board of Trustees. Welcome to our second virtual Congregational Meeting.

Please raise your hand and keep it raised if you can hear me. I want to confirm that everyone here can hear what is happening.

If you are a TJMC member, please sign into this meeting by typing your name in the Chat Box (click chat on your screen and type your name). We need to establish the number of members here today to verify we have a quorum.

If you are visible on Zoom, please also adjust your Participant's name to include all members who are present in your home.

**Have one of the assistants look at all participants to ensure they can hear
**Unmute people attending by phone to ensure that they too can hear- per UUA recommendations for online meetings.

This meeting is being held virtually, rather than in-person, because of health concerns created by the pandemic and respect for the recommendation of public health professionals that people engage in "physical distancing." We look forward to meeting again in person when public health officials advise this is appropriate.

Our bylaws state that members must be present to vote at a Congregational Meeting.

II.2 - Voting. Any member may vote if present at any meeting of the congregation held at least thirty (30) days after he/she has signed the Membership Book.

In these unusual times, the board has decided that "present" will mean present at the Zoom Congregational Meeting. When we can convene in person, a Congregational Meeting will be held to vote on amending the bylaws to consider this situation.

Today, when we vote on Ordaining Leia Durland Jones as a Unitarian Universalist Minister, we will be using an online service called ElectionBuddy, so our ballots on that vote can be secret.

You all will be receiving an election Buddy email at the beginning of the meeting (by 1:15) with your unique identifier and links to the ballot. We will ask that you do not vote until discussion on the motion is complete. At that time, we will take a break in the meeting to give everyone a chance to vote.

So once more, if you are a TJMC member, and haven't done this today, please sign into this meeting by typing your name in the Chat Box (click chat on bottom of screen and type your name). We need to establish the number of members here today to verify we have a quorum.

Parliamentary lesson

LORIE: In this Church we use our Bylaws to govern practices and within the Bylaws, it states "Procedures shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, the latest revised edition, in all cases not covered by the bylaws." We use these rules to ensure that member rights are protected, to ensure that there is full and free discussion in democratic decision making, and to protect the stability of our process. I am pleased to announce that Matthew Diasio will be acting as Parliamentarian for today's meeting.

When it comes time to discuss motions made during the meeting, you need to use the Chat Box to make note of your desire to be recognized to speak. You will type one of three things into the Chat box--PRO, to indicate that you want to speak in favor of the motion; CON to indicate that you want to speak in opposition to the motion, or ORDER to indicate you have a Point of Order or procedural question. PRO, CON, or ORDER should be the only words you enter in the Chat Box. The Chat box is recorded (even private chats) so please be aware that the secretary will see whatever you write in the chat box.

Elizabeth Breeden (CON), Matthew Diasio (ORDER) and Elaine Chapman (PRO) will be managing the Chat Box. You must be recognized by the Chair in order to speak. Comments must be limited to two minutes and David Shutt will be acting as our timer.

Obtain the floor (the right to speak) by entering PRO/CON/ORDER in the Chat Box. Then wait for the chair to recognize you before you unmute and begin speaking. People who are accessing the meeting by phone should unmute themselves and wait to speak until they are recognized. Dawn Dirks will be monitoring people accessing the meeting by phone.

I will answer procedural questions, and alternate between PRO and CON voices. POINT OF ORDER questions will jump to the front of the line. Please don't hold up

signs. Please use the Chat Box only to request permission to speak.

We want a full discussion but hope to limit discussion to 45 minutes. Comments must be two minutes or less. If we find the discussion going long or we only have speakers on one side of the issue, I'll ask us to limit our comments to 1 minutes.

Major motions used in TJMC meetings:

"Call the Question" or "Move the Previous Question": To end the discussion and any amendments before the Chair has ended the discussion. Calling the question, in this online meeting, requires that you enter one of these phrases in the chat box and be recognized by the Chair. A 2/3 vote is required in order to end discussion, then the vote on the previous motion will be taken. Calling the question is not debatable. We discourage the casual use of this motion as it is a serious point and may lead us out of Covenant. This motion is seen as aggressive and its use may silence the minority in a discussion. You are required by Robert's Rules to be recognized for the vote because you must identify yourself to deny the minority their rights to discussion.

Major points:

-If the point you wish to make has already been made, there is no need to restate.

-Please limit time speaking in favor or against a motion to 2 minutes. David Shutt is our timekeeper and will signal to you when you have ten seconds left. We will shorten the comment time to one minute when we have heard all the comments from either the PRO or CON line.

2. Call to order & establish quorum

LORIE: This specially-called Meeting of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church Unitarian Universalist will come to order.

Our first order of business is to establish a quorum. Membership stood at 376 members as of July 24, 2020. According to our Bylaws 10 percent of the membership or 38 members constitute a quorum. May I have the report from the teller?

BRECK GASTINGER, Head Teller: I have counted at least 115 members and I certify that this constitutes a quorum.

LORIE: Thank you. A quorum has been established and our Congregation may conduct business.

3. Greeting

LORIE: Once again, I am Lorie Craddock, President of Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist. Welcome to this virtual Congregational Meeting.

I invite you to read with me our covenant, which is printed on the screen.

In order to create the beloved community we all desire for ourselves, we, the Congregation of Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church Unitarian Universalist covenant to:

- Communicate with compassion and respect, especially when we disagree,
- Celebrate diversity and nurture our inclusivity,
- Embrace one another spiritually and emotionally,
- Promote social justice within our congregation and the larger community,
- Generously support the ministries of the church with time, money and enthusiasm, and
- When we have fallen short, lovingly call each other back into covenant.

I begin by recognizing Beth Jaeger-Landis, our board Secretary, who is taking minutes for us today; Matthew Diasio, who is serving as our Parliamentarian; members of the Task Force to Explore Ordaining Leia--: Lorie Craddock, Elizabeth Breeden, Larry Moulis, Dawn Dirks, Laura Horn, Elaine Chapman, Karen Prairie and Pam McIntire (Chair) along with Mary Rose Curtis (Honorary Member).; and all members of the church staff and Board who have helped prepare for this meeting.

I also want to thank Sean Skally and Caroline Heins and the entire tech team and staff for running this Zoom meeting and providing extra technical support. Thanks also to our assistants available by phone to help anyone who has difficulties with the voting system which we will use later in the meeting. I would also like to recognize Rev. Linda Olson Peebles.

4. Opening words and chalice lighting

I invite Rev. Linda Olson Peebles, to offer opening words, and to light our chalice, as you to light your chalices at home to represent our joined light in the world.

REV. LINDA: Lighting of the Chalice and Opening Words

Opening Words/Chalice Lighting (Rev. Linda Olson Peebles)

I invite you to find a flame to light, or bear witness to this chalice I light now, as I offer us words of blessing from two women whose words have inspired me for many decades. ... The writer Annie Dillard reminds us: "We are here to abet creation and to witness to it, to notice each other's beautiful face and complex nature, so that creation need not play to an empty house." May our time together in this meeting help us see one another

as a part of the creation.

Unitarian minister Barbara Wells-Tenhove offers this prayer - "O Spinner, Weaver, of our lives, Your loom is love. May we who are gathered here be empowered by that love to weave new patterns of Truth and Justice into a web of life that is strong, beautiful, and everlasting." May our time together help us add to the creation, by how we listen and how we weave our voices and our votes into the fabric of the life of this church!

5. Approve agenda

LORIE: Thank you. "Let's all take a deep breath. Our first item of business is approval of the Agenda. (Agenda Slide was shown). Are there any additions or corrections to the Agenda? Please put your addition or correction in the chat box so we can call on you. If you are on the phone unmute yourself. Please realize we must vote on all additions to the agenda.

There were no entries in the chat box and no one on a phone unmuted to be recognized.

There being no additions or corrections to the Agenda, do I hear a motion to approve the Agenda? The motion was made to approve the Agenda

LORIE: Do I hear a second? The motion was seconded.

LORIE: The question is on the approval of the Agenda. Please raise your hand to vote only if you are a member. Only members can vote in Congregational Meetings. Those of you accessing the meeting by phone will be briefly unmuted to give your vote. Those in favor please raise your hand and keep them raised so we can count the votes.

Please lower your hands. Those opposed please raise your hand and keep them raised. Please lower your hands. Abstentions please raise your hands and keep them raised. Please lower your hands.

Teller: A majority has voted in favor.

LORIE: There being a majority vote in the affirmative, the motion carries, we have approved the Agenda.

6. Approve minutes of July 12, 2020 Congregational Meeting

LORIE: The next item of business is the Approval of the Minutes of our last meeting.

Are there any additions or corrections to the Minutes of the July 12, 2020 Congregational Meeting? As before, please enter your desire to be recognized in the

Chat box, or if you are on the phone, unmute and wait to be recognized.

LORIE: There being no additions or corrections, do I hear a motion to accept the minutes? Please raise your hand to be recognized.

A motion was made to accept the minutes.

LORIE : Do I hear a second? Again, please raise your hand to be recognized.

The motion was seconded

LORIE: The question is on the approval of the minutes. Please vote only if you are a member of the church. We will briefly unmute those of you on the phone to get your vote. Those in favor please raise your hand. Please lower your hand. Those opposed please lower your hand. Abstentions please raise your hand. Please lower your hand.

There being a majority vote in the affirmative, the minutes are approved as distributed.

7. Decision on Ordaining Leia Durland Jones

LORIE: The next item of business is the decision on ordaining Leia Durland Jones. In August of 2019, the TJMC-UU Board created a task force to explore ordaining Leia, and in February, voted unanimously to bring a motion to ordain Leia to this congregation for a vote. The Board and the Task Force spent a long time discussing and approving the exact wording of this motion and hope to present it for a vote exactly as written. A vote in favor by 80% of those voting is required to pass this motion. The motion will be voted on as moved, without change.

LORIE: First, Rev. Linda will describe to us what ordination means to us as Unitarian Universalists.

REV. LINDA: The Meaning of Ordination

Ordination is one of the most important traditions of our faith. And how UUism views ordination reveals so much about our history, our polity and our theology –all interwoven.

In eastern Europe, during the Reformation, Unitarian ministers were ordained by bishops or governing bodies of the church – in some ways keeping the model of the Roman Catholic church. That continues today in our sister churches in Hungary and Romania. Our American roots of Unitarianism lie in the congregational communities of 17 th century New England – the Puritans in Plymouth and beyond. In congregationalism, the power to ordain rests with the members of the gathered community, the congregation. That tradition has continued for 400 years! When the Universalists arrived in the 18 th century, from a reforming branch of English Methodists, they brought with them the tradition of Bishops and governing conferences.

When someone was conferred ordination in our Universalist branch of the UU family tree, it was authorized by the Annual Conference. Although – before the Universalists got themselves organized - there is the one story of Hosea Ballou - an early important American Universalist - being ordained by the simple act of another minister hitting him in the chest with a Bible and saying the words “You are ordained!”. In 1961 - the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America consolidated to become the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations – the UUA. One of the many things they had to agree upon was how they would see ordination. It was agreed that ordination was a power granted only to the congregation – not to the Association, not to an individual, and not to a Bishop or a Seminary. It is only when the congregation sees the powers and gifts of ministry in a person, and accepts that it will honor that person as set in charge of the spiritual leadership, only then can a person receive UU ordination. This fits with our polity and also with our theology – that whatever is divine or god-given or even a power within an individual – whatever that is cannot be claimed without the affirmation of the community. Authority exists in relationship – it is granted by those who see it and acknowledge it. Of course, all faith traditions and the UUA expect there to be some level of training and expertise in anyone seeking to be ordained. The UUA has set very high standards for “certifying” people to be eligible for religious leadership. That makes sense of course. So the UUA has its reading lists and seminary degrees and Clinical Pastoral Education and Internships. And the UUA has an examining committee – the Ministerial Fellowship Committee – which helps discern who is ready and who is not. But all of that is just to add to and affirm what also MUST exist for ordination – and that is the recognition of the people in a gathered covenanted community – a congregation – that the individual has the qualities which inspire respect and acknowledgment: that THIS person is seen as a MINISTER – in the best and fullest sense of the word. Conferring the power to lead and preside at rites of passage, and honoring the integrity of the person’s character as evidenced in their actions for the well-being of their community. In our faith tradition, our relationships are voluntary and based on covenants (or promises) that we make to each other. We form and sustain covenantal relationships through connection to ourselves, to each other, and to something greater than us. The question of the ordination of Leia Durland Jones offers us a chance to see the living example of what is valued most highly in our history, our polity and our theology. While she doesn’t have a MDiv from a seminary, she has in fact achieved an admirable level of academic and post-graduate education in all the areas needed to be a UU minister. And while she hasn’t appeared before the MFC, she has appeared before a UUA credentialing committee which examines professional religious educators, achieving a credential which signifies that the UUA affirms her professionalism and qualifications as a leader, a teacher, a worship leader. (As an aside, I have served on both the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and the Religious

Education Credentialing Committee, and I can tell you – they both require excellence of knowledge and character!)

Today, you have the chance to use one of the powers granted to a congregation in our tradition – to say what you have witnessed in Leia’s work with you, in her character, in her skills; to affirm that you have witnessed in Leia a dimension of spiritual leadership which has led you to say you see her as a minister. To me, that is the greatest examining committee there can be – living in community and showing up in your lives and creating a sense of trust in one another. And her colleagues – religious educators and ordained ministers alike – have known her for years and also affirm that she will be welcomed by them as a minister should her congregation vote to ordain her. There are two traditional elements in UU ordination ceremonies – offering her the right hand of fellowship (the colleagues blessing) – and laying on of hands, by which the power of the spirit of ministry is conferred – these traditions will be affirmed and welcomed if you affirm and vote to ordain.

One more thing I offer you – while voting to ordain Leia is about her, it’s also about you, the congregation. It is a recognition of tradition and lineage; of connection to other congregations and to colleagues, to the larger community, to a UU movement with its own history. Ordination is a recognition of something beyond that beckons and calls us, and to an entire web of relationships and the commitment to service that form the theological basis of how we covenant to be together and to choose our leaders. Think about voting to ordain Leia as a way to uplift YOUR values and YOUR power as a congregation in this great religious tradition. This is an opportunity to affirm your covenant to work together to create the beloved community.

LORIE: Thank you. I call upon Laura Horn, from the Task Force, to describe the work of the task force, and the recommendation.

LAURA:

The genesis of this proposal was an understanding that reconciliation and healing of our community would require strong, wise, dedicated leadership, leaders who understand our history and our people, and leaders with a clear vision that reflects our UU principles and values. We recognized that we have such a leader, a minister, in our midst.

So In August 2019 the board created a Task Force: Pam McIntire, Dawn Dirks, Elaine Chapman, Larry Moulis, Elizabeth Breeden, Lorie Craddock and Mary Rose Curtis and I, were asked to explore ordaining Leia.

Let me describe what we did. We:

- Committed to act in covenant and to make sure every congregant had a voice and the chance to engage

- Did research, consulted with UUA National and Regional staff, interviewed past and present clergy and our own congregants especially those who made ordination their specialty.
- Facilitated two Congregational Conversations and other group conversations, some over tea, both with and without Leia's presence, hosting more than 100 people
- Met individually with those who wanted to talk privately
- Consolidated a picture of Leia's training, contribution, experience, commitment.
- Created documents reflecting a collectively shaped vision of Leia's ministry; collected questions and formulated answers; posted and shared our documents; staffed an information exchange table in the social hall; and a representative met monthly with the board.
- Posted video of "Dreaming your Soul's Purpose," Leia's sermon that answers, in her own words, what ministry means to her.

In February of 2019, we made our final recommendation to the board that the congregation vote on ordaining Leia as our Minister of Faith Development, the Reverend Leia Durland-Jones. The Board and the Task Force spent a long time discussing and approving the exact wording of this motion and hope to present it for a vote exactly as written. The board voted unanimously to bring that recommendation to the congregation, in a Congregational Meeting first scheduled for March, 2019. You all know what happened between then and now.

Let me answer the questions that we heard most often:

Is this okay with the UUA? Do churches do this? Yes, as Rev. Linda already has explained earlier.

Does ordaining Leia as our Minister of Faith Development, Reverend Leia Durland Jones preempt a larger congregational discussion on the organizational and leadership structure of our church? NO, the Congregation wide discussion on the leadership structure of our church will be a critical part of our interim ministry work this year.

Would Leia be our lead or settled Minister? *No. Following the term of our interim minister, Rev. Linda, we would expect to welcome a settled or developmental minister.*

Does this mean we add headcount to our staff? *No.*

How would Leia's role in our church change? Would her job description change?

What launched this work is the understanding that Leia's job has outgrown her job description. And honestly, every single member of our staff has far eclipsed their job description in the last year, if not for longer.

Leia would continue to do the things she already does for and with us. Leia would still lead our Lifespan Faith Development program as she has done for 27 years. We would not replace her in that role. She would still provide pastoral care, participate in strategic and programmatic planning, and support volunteers in various aspects of church life.

Leia would weave worship and preach on Sundays, and conduct services marking milestones and rights of passage. She would continue as a minister in our church and her ministerial role would be formalized.

She would maintain her professional covenant with, accountability to, and support from the Liberal Religious Educators Association, LREDA.

What is the financial impact of this decision?

Neutral. The UUA Fair Compensation Salary Recommendations for Leia as our Director of Faith Development with 27 years of experience are similar to those for an Assistant Minister.

What does TJMC stand to gain by Ordaining Leia?

- Ordaining Leia bonds us to the leadership of our longest-serving, incredibly dedicated, and effective minister.
- It promises us that we, and our children, will be able to experience Leia's ministry, undiluted, undisguised, amplified.
- It sets the stage for bringing in a settled minister whose skills complement Leia's and whose success will be substantially magnified by having Leia's leadership, experience, and relationship with our congregation.
- It places our church in the forefront of organizing and operating in the way we want the world to be.

LORIE: Thank you. I call upon Dawn Dirks, from the Task Force, to present the credentials of Leia Durland Jones.

DAWN: Presents Leia's credentials

Leia Durland Jones is a birthright Unitarian Universalist. She quite literally grew up steeped in our UU faith at the First Unitarian Church of Lubbock, Texas, and from an early age, she felt a calling to serve our faith as a UU professional. She attended the University of Texas where she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Humanities with a concentration in Women's Spirituality. She is a trained Labyrinth Facilitator and has

participated in and coordinated UUA trainings, worship conferences, and workshops that are too numerous to list here. She completed the UUA's Religious Education Credentialing Program in 2006. She has been serving, leading, and ministering to our congregation with deep faith and commitment continuously since 1992.

I would like to talk briefly about some of Leia's accomplishments:

--Leia is widely respected in our congregation and in the wider UU world. She is recognized as someone who leads by example with integrity, wisdom, clarity, and kindness, with steadfast commitment to living by our UU values. Everyone we spoke to through this extensive process recognizes Leia as Unitarian Universalism at its best – wise, open, kind, committed, and expressing love in action.

In our congregation, Leia has been acting as a minister for 28 years. In addition to all she does as our Director of Faith Development,

- o Leia provides pastoral care,
- o she guides spiritual development,
- o she conducts rites of passage
- o she officiates at weddings
- o she leads memorial services
- o she serves in the pulpit and leads worship
- o she engages in stewardship, budget, strategic planning, and development
- o she provides management and church administration skills
- o she guides volunteers to work they will find meaningful and fulfilling, and supports and celebrates their development and contributions
- o she provides education on issues of justice, and
- o she provides senior leadership and overall care for our congregation.

As The Reverend Dr. Linda Olson Peebles, President of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association for four years, told me, Leia's leadership exemplifies the qualities that ordained ministers look for in colleagues. She said that Leia understands covenants and boundaries within Congregations, she is committed to continuing education and she looks toward the well-being of the whole community/congregation. Linda noted that Leia has the qualities necessary in a person who is qualified to be ordained and Leia IS IN FACT respected and acknowledged as qualified for this role by ministers and UU professionals outside of our congregation.

Connie Goodbread, Acting Co-Lead of the Southern Region Congregational Life staff team stated that A congregation can recognize a minister in their midst when someone has the skills of a minister, including diplomacy, staying power, leadership, and wisdom

and she believes that we should even raise the standards to include the levels of emotional maturity and leadership that Leia possesses.

Leia is recognized as a leader in Unitarian Universalism not only in our congregation, but in the Southern Region and Nationally. Leia is engaged in national ministry. She has been an active member and leader in the national General Assembly. She is coauthor of the UUA Family Ministry Training and co-leader of the UUA Renaissance Modules. As I mentioned earlier, in 2006, Leia went before the UUA's Religious Education Credentialing Committee where she was granted Credentialed status after demonstrating both in person and through a portfolio her competency in eighteen specific areas considered crucial for excellence in church leadership. And, more than these concrete accomplishments, as Makaanah Morriss, UU Minister, said, Leia is a "well-known and a most excellent" UU professional. She is, in fact, already ministering to us through her actions, service, dedication, and leadership.

LORIE: Thank you. I now call on Pam McIntire, who chaired the Task Force.

PAM: Madame Chair, I move that we, the members of Thomas Jefferson Memorial church, ordain Leia as our Minister of Faith Development with the title of Reverend Leia Durland-Jones. This motion will be voted on as presented.

LORIE: Is there a second? The motion was seconded.

Lorie: The question is on the approval of this congregation's ordaining Leia Durland Jones.

Before I open the discussion, I'll remind us of how this will work:

You need to use the Chat Box to make note of your desire to be recognized to speak. You will type one of three things into the Chat box--PRO, to indicate that you want to speak in favor of the motion; CON to indicate that you want to speak in opposition to the motion, or ORDER to indicate you have a Point of Order or procedural question. PRO, CON, or ORDER should be the only words you enter in the Chat Box.

Then wait for the chair to recognize you before you unmute and begin speaking. People who are accessing the meeting by phone should unmute themselves and wait to speak until they are recognized.

Matthew Diasio may answer Point of Order questions, and I'll answer any that need to come before the congregation. I'll alternate between PRO and CON voices. Please don't hold up signs. Please use the Chat Box only to request permission to speak.

Let's begin the discussion.

Pro: Pam McIntire: Through her 27 years as our Religious Education Director and Director of Faith Development, Leia has studied, trained, engaged in national ministry and education, and had considerable experience in all aspects of church life ministry. She has acted as a minister to our congregation on many levels: providing pastoral care, serving in the pulpit, stewardship, administration, spiritual development, rites of passage, worship, senior leadership and overall care for our congregation. She is a minister in our congregation. She is recognized in the greater national and regional UU community as a skilled, wise leader. Throughout the decades, she has led us with integrity, wisdom, perseverance, tolerance, kindness, and a steadfast dedication to living according to our UU principles.

As the Task Force engaged in the exploration of ordaining Leia, we came to see that ordaining Leia and empowering her as one of our ministers sets our congregation on a course of being the best, most loving and caring we can be and, in fact, empowers our congregation to be the place of healing and action that we can achieve. We are urging you to now vote to ordain Leia as a UU minister, as our Minister of Faith Development, to recognize her as a minister in our congregation and to take a stand for who we are as a congregation dedicated to empowering leaders who lead with determination and loving kindness.

We are asking you to vote yes to “Should TJMC UU ordain Leia as our Minister of Faith Development with the title of Reverend Leia Durland-Jones? Yes”

(No one in the Con line or Point of Order line)

Pro: Estelle Phillips: In addition to all the wonderful qualities and experience that has been delineated, certainly I am in favor of Leia’s ordination. I have a question, is there a distinction between the type of minister that we are attempting to ordain her as and another type of ministers that are ordained, i.e. settled ministers.

Lorie: Refers to the links that are in the Friday email.

PAM: There are two types of ordaining ministers who are ordained by UU Churches. One type is the fellowship minister who goes through the educational process obtaining a Master’s of Divinity and then there is a type of minister that is ordained to a specific congregation.

Pro: Julia Sakarlarios: I did not plan to say anything but I would be delighted to say that I have never found anything but stellar qualities in Leia since I returned to Charlottesville four years ago. I appreciated her steadfast kindness and beauty in dealing with the children and everybody in the Congregation.

Pro: Cathy Lawder: We have talked about Leia's credentials, but I want to speak to how Leia has contributed to my personal spiritual growth with Leia bringing the Dream Quest to our church every year. This is a seminal event for me every year. She brings in a national facilitator. She has brought us a valuable labyrinth ministry. Especially appreciative of how she has guided us through the COVID situation. FEEFIE has been creative and wonderful; I hadn't been a part of family worship until then and I think it really adds a component of availability of worship services. I also had a personal tragedy come up and she stopped everything and gave me resources.

Pro: Susan Bremer : I thought I was voting in favor of wonderful Leia D-J and all of her talents I have known for 20 years; I didn't know I was putting myself up to speak.

Pro Lenore Bajare-Dukes: I joined the church at 16 after completing the Challenge Program and that was really central to my development as a Unitarian Universalist budding adult. And there were a lot of ceremonies that were very powerful in my sense of belonging and love of Unitarian Universalism. The rose that we give the child with its thorns stripped off and then the rose we give the youth with the thorns back again for Coming of Age. I remember significant moments of ministry to me growing up in the church. And then I also remember that it wasn't all just Leia, right? I am seeing a lot of faces of others here who were adults when I was growing up in the church. I actually serve as a religious educator now in a different congregation. I have a different perspective now on what it means to be in this role and to see so many people here who meant so much to me, ministering while I was growing up and I know that it takes the trust of so many people to be able to sustain and grow and lead a children's program like we have at TJMC. I think the ministry that Leia does with the children and youth is wonderful, but this perspective of serving in religious education and then coming back to this congregation as a member and seeing the richness we have here, it is actually the ministry of all the volunteers and the people who are Challenge Mentors and the people who help the children and youth grow up to secure their UU'sm is a testament to ministry beyond what is the purview of a religious educator.

Pro: Shirley Paul: I agree with the other pro's. I have known Leia since she joined the church and have observed her and have worked with her on the Adult Faith Development committee and have watched her sustain that program overtime. Bringing a lot of variety of offerings for adult religious education that is so important. She is a star quality person and we would be lucky to have her.

Pro: MJ Lightbody: Leia has so many years in this community. She knows what is important to everybody. There have been many people who come through the office who bring their "old stuff", which is good, but she knows what has been important and what has been experienced. I think that knowledge is something very important in our leaders.

Pro: Patty Wallens: My sorrow is that we are not all together in the Congregation so that Leia could be present while we give her a standing ovation and everyone celebrating what she had done for all of us all of these years.

Pro: Estelle Phillips: Leia has been with us all of this time. It is has been a wonderful contribution to our congregation's life to have this continuity throughout the years.

Elaine: *That was the last speaker.*

LORIE:

Is there any further discussion? No further discussion.

I believe we are ready to vote.

The question is on the motion to ordain Leia Durland Jones. Let me repeat it:

We, the members of Thomas Jefferson Memorial church shall ordain Leia as our Minister of Faith Development with the title of Reverend Leia Durland-Jones.

Please mark your ballots; yes to ordain Leia, no to not ordain her.

*Now is the time to access your Election Buddy ballot and enter your vote. Please access your ballot through your email account. Fill out your vote and submit it. For those of you without internet access, Sean and Caroline will take you to a breakout room to collect your vote. If you have technical difficulties with this, please email Sean to get help

We will pause the meeting for 10 minutes to allow everyone to vote. The vote will close at 2:20 PM. If you have technical issues with voting, please type "HELP" in the Chat Box, and Sean will help you privately. We greatly appreciate your patience with this online system.

We have a musical treat for you while you wait. We plan to announce the vote right here at approximately 2:20 PM. Until then, please enjoy this musical performance by Xavier Mehta.

LORIE: Welcome back and thank you again for your patience. I would like to announce the vote 158 people voted: 155 voted in favor, 3 against or abstaining. The favorable vote is 99% of those voting, and we need 80% to pass. The motion passes: we have a new Minister of Faith Development: Leia Durland-Jones. Congratulations!

We have a celebratory video that Dawn Dirks has put together.

When I adjourn this meeting, we will invite those who would like to remain for a few moments to speak with Leia, who is planning to join us.

8. CLOSING WORDS AND EXTINGUISH CHALICE

LORIE: The Chair now recognizes Rev. Linda to offer closing words as we extinguish our chalices at home.

REV. LINDA :

Closing Words As we close our meeting, and extinguish our chalices, let us give thanks that the Spirit of Life and Love has been with us during our meeting, and will continue to support us in the days to come, as our lives and the life of this congregation unfold. May we take great joy and comfort in knowing that we know one another and are known and loved. May we be grateful for reasons to celebrate, and may we never stop expressing our abundant joy that is the gift of life and love.

9. ADJOURNMENT

LORIE: There being no further business to come before the Congregation, do I hear a motion to adjourn? The motion was made, the motion was seconded.

LORIE: The question is to adjourn the annual business Congregational Meeting of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church Unitarian Universalist. For those of you on the phone, I will briefly unmute you to give your vote. (PAUSE). Those in favor please raise your hands . (PAUSE) Please lower your hands. Those opposed please raise your hands. (PAUSE) Abstentions please raise your hands. (PAUSE) Please lower your hands.

There being a majority vote in the affirmative, the motion carries, and we have adjourned the Congregational Meeting of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church Unitarian Universalist. Thank you.

Please remain here if you'd like to greet Leia when she joins us.