

The Draft Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of the UU Charlottesville June 6, 2021

The Congregational meeting started at 1:04 pm

1. **Introduction:** Lorie Craddock
2. **Parliamentary lesson:** Kelsey Cowger
3. **Call to order & establish quorum:** Lorie called the Annual Meeting of the UU Charlottesville to come to order at 1:16 pm. The first order of business was to establish a quorum. Membership stood at 371 members as of May 7, 2021. According to our Bylaws 10 percent of the membership or 37 members constitute a quorum. Lorie requested a report from the head teller, **Breck Gastinger**, who reported a count of **105 members** and certified that this constituted a quorum. Lorie recognized that a quorum was established and our Congregation may conduct business.
4. **Greeting:** Lorie welcomed everyone to this virtual Congregational Meeting. Lorie invited everyone to read the Covenant along with her. Lorie recognized the Secretary of the Board, the Parliamentarian, the staff of our congregation and the technical team.
5. **Opening words and chalice lighting-** Reverend Leia Durland-Jones
6. **Approval of the agenda of this meeting**

The Board Treasurer, Stan Walker made a motion to remove the budget discussion and vote from this agenda and defer this to a future congregation meeting.

This motion was seconded. The participants voted in favor of this amendment to the agenda of this meeting. There were no additional additions suggested to this agenda. A motion was made to approve the agenda. This motion was seconded and a majority of the member participants voted in favor to approve the agenda.

7. **Approval of the minutes of September 27, 2020 Congregational Meeting**

There were no additions or corrections to the minutes of the September 27, 2020 Congregational Meeting. There was a motion made to accept the minutes of this previous meeting. This motion was seconded and a majority of the member participants voted in favor to accept these minutes.

8. Interim Lead Minister Annual Report, August 2020 – June 2021

What a year it has been! You have welcomed me warmly, although I've been in your physical presence fewer times than the fingers on my hand. With the commitment and love of the leaders and members of this congregation, much has been accomplished in our Covid era/on-line ministry!

Healing was what I heard was a number 1 need of the congregation a year ago. This has proved true, and there have been hours of listening to individuals and groups to let stories and feelings be revealed. On June 20, the Summer Solstice, there will be a service and ritual to offer a chance for mourning and release, which will be another step in the journey of healing those most wounded by the past.

Of course, the ongoing conversation all year was around two subjects: dealing with the Pandemic, keeping our ministries vibrant and our connections strong; and the decision to change the name of the congregation.

The tasks of Interim Ministry which I am charged to guide you through to transition to your future, are listed here. Many thanks to the Interim Team who have offered their time and hearts to help me – Ann Salamini, Bev Ryan, Chris Little, Kay Frasier, Pam McIntire.

Interim Tasks

History *Lifting up the facts and mythology of a congregation's life.*

Through one-on-one listening sessions, group history review sessions (in September and May), in sermons and video stories, we began to remember and review the joys and sorrows of your history. A new Archive team (Wayne Arnason and Sandy Brooks) began working on organizing the physical archives, and there is new interest in collecting more stories in video.

Identity *Identifying features, vision, self-image, and ideals of a congregation*

In the fall, leaders of the Interim Team hosted listening circle to ask people what they most love about the congregation. These conversations, in addition to the listening circles

(summer 2020 and spring 2021) about a new name for this congregation, began to give you a new sense of your identity. Always in formation and evolving, the “snapshot” word image (above) was created.

Leadership: Supporting *leaders and discovering new leaders.*

Many groups were able to continue their ministry, on-line or in different ways, and essential functions thrived – governance, pastoral care, religious education, worship, social action, membership, finance. The Pledge Drive Team enlisted more than 40 members to help with a very successful campaign. A new Soul Matters group met, to help nurture new facilitators to begin growing small group ministry to serve more members and friends. There is a stirring of excitement and possibility of more involvement by more people in all areas as we look forward to returning to in-person community!

Connections *Strengthening or creating links to other communities – UUA, UU congregations, interfaith neighbors, community partners*

A number of members took advantage of participating in on-line worships, workshops and classes offered by the UUA and other congregations. We kept actively engaged with community partners – the Charlottesville Clergy Collective, PACEM, IMPACT – and we welcomed to our services and gave offerings to those chosen to receive the monthly Social Action Collection.

Health *Strengthening finances, processes, practices.*

The current fiscal year is ending without incurring debt, thanks to the Pandemic Personnel loan and careful monitoring of spending by our staff. Fundraising was strong (even on-line), and the Annual Pledge Drive achieved a record-high result. Congratulations to that team, headed by chair Dawn Dirks!

Deeper understanding of processes and structures is leading to real work in the 2nd year of interim to triage the areas of the organizational needs to strengthen this organization.

Your Ministry: Coming Together in Love; Reaching Out in Service

Besides the areas specific to interim ministry, it is also vital that the ongoing ministries of the congregation be carried out in ways that are helpful and meaningful. Here is a summary overview of the ministry you did.

Governance and Leadership — Under the wise and compassionate direction of President Lorie Craddock, your Board of Trustees has been a group of thoughtful, attentive, effective guides for this fragile ship in stormy waters. They deliberated with love in their hearts, they reached out to members, they participated in worship, and they partnered with staff and lay leaders.

Ordination — Following a thoughtful series of conversations, the congregation voted to ordain longtime Director of Faith Development, Leia Durland-Jones, in recognition of her ministry, her training and credentialing, and her commitment to the congregation. The Ordination Service of the Rev. Leia on October 18, 2020 was a joyous high point in the year.

Sabbatical — Rev. Alex McGee has served the congregation for ten years as a part-time Assistant Minister and stepped up to the plate in 2019-2020 to cover many bases when there was no Lead Minister. As is customary for UU ministers, and a sign of UUCville's wisdom as an employer, she was granted a sabbatical leave January-May 2021.

New Name — A decades-long conversation about the name of the congregation was revived in 2020, and listening circles convened to come to consensus. Christine Gresser and Liberty Powers co-chaired a task force appointed by the Board of Trustees to guide the process and bring the motion to a congregational meeting. On September 27, 2020, the congregation voted to no longer use the words "Thomas Jefferson" as part of the church's name, with 95.4% voting in favor. In the months following, out of a myriad of nominations, proposed and discussed in small groups and by survey, three finalist names were brought to the congregation to vote on June 6, 2021! Thanks to the Board appointed task force who oversaw this process.

Worship – Both the Family Chapels and the Community Worship, held each Sunday, have been well-attended and much appreciated. Many thanks to Rev. Leia and Caroline Heins for their engaging and meaningful Family Chapels; to Rev. Alex for her work last summer getting the Zoom worships in such a good place; to Sean Skally for his tech skills; to the Worship Weavers who offer warmth and welcome; to the Altar artists who design a visual focus each month; to Scott DeVeaux, the UUCVille Virtual Choir, James Smith for wonderful music; to Christine Gresser and others for sharing joys and sorrows; to our talented video editors Lucy Gilbert and Ellie Ransom who brought alive rituals and songs with their art!

Music – Scott Deveaux created, directed, and edited a Virtual Choir, learning and using new tech skills! He also provided music for a number of hymns produced into beautiful videos by our video editors. James Smith added his piano artistry to worship services, playing live from the Sanctuary.

Soul Matters – In our worships and in the weekly Wednesday “Soulful Home” e-communications, we followed the themes and resources offered by Soul Matters, a UU collaborative of leaders from more than 100 congregations. One of the 6 UUCVille Covenant Groups this year met with Rev Linda, using Soul Matters materials and methods.

Faith Development – Children, youth, and adults had a number of opportunities to meet in Zoom sessions and explore the adventure of learning in age-based and multigenerational community through Soul Matters materials emailed in Wednesday Soulful Home, middle and high school youth offerings, classes, and a Women’s Dream Retreat weekend. A number of the Adult offerings were shared with other UU congregations.

Pastoral Care – The volunteer and ministerial involvement in this area has continued offering a network of support to many members. Pastoral Visitors (Shirley Park and Patty Wallens co-chairs) is training and bringing new members. Carenet (Sandy Brooks and Lara Gastinger co-chairs) functioned smoothly to coordinate support and meals to people during crises. An intentional phone-calling network chaired by Greta Dershimer made sure that members who could not stay in touch via internet were contacted regularly.

Membership – In spite of being an e-church all year, the Membership team (Christine Gresser and Achsah Carrier co-chairs) has welcomed visitors, convened small group conversations, and signed new members.

Communications – An intensive effort was made to redesign the two weekly e-newsletters and to focus people on the web site as a go-to location. The new Breeze data base was put into effect to make contacting folks easier in a multiplicity of ways, and intense focus on a communications strategy helped the annual pledge drive be successful. Prioritizing the health of our members and succeeding at converting to digital services is a hugely important success. Many thanks to leaders Liberty Powers, Achsah Carrier, and staff Sean Skally, Caroline Heins for all their work!

Social Justice

- IMPACT Cville has recruited new team leaders to help coordinate our Networkers. Kelsey Cowger and Greta Dershimer served on research teams and brought 124 UU Cville members to the spring Nehemiah Action.
- The Social Action Collections held monthly were administered skillfully by Natalie Somer. Chair Karen Prairie facilitated a meeting in May with a record 17 applicants hoping to be recipients of the 2021-2022 monthly Social Action Collection.
- Revs. Linda and Alex, along with new member Rev. Fritz Hudson, attended monthly meetings of the Charlottesville Clergy Collective.
- The ongoing commitment to the monthly Food Bank, and the PACEM winter shelter were supported by scores of members, under the leadership of Elizabeth Breeden.
- Racial Justice continued to be a focus of learning and action, with Adult Ed classes, national workshops, community action, and sermon themes.
- The congregation renewed its commitment to the work of Green Sanctuary, with a special Earth Day service celebrating the work of the past, and tours of the gardens with previews of thoughts for the future.

Stewardship (Caring for Our Resources)

- Financial Management – Under the skilled leadership of chair Marian Wendelin, along with treasurer Stan Walker and Director of Admin and Finance Sean Skally, the Finance Committee gave wise counsel and oversight to the congregation's funds and expenditures.
- Fundraising – The Pledge Drive (chaired by Dawn Dirks) was a joyful and energizing chance to connect with members and raise the level of giving. Other fundraisers (a fall sale and spring auction) were successfully led by Kay Frazier, raising spirits as well as money.
- Buildings and Grounds – The impressive building improvements made possible by the Glenn Short Fund, have been mostly accomplished during the covid-necessitated shut-down, overseen by Sally Taylor. Maintenance and improvements of the grounds and gardens has been extensive, led by Walter Hoffman, Kay Frazier and many others. Sean Skally paid close attention to maintenance and repairs.
- Personnel – Donna Redmond, chair, and the committee worked diligently to provide parity in benefits and pay levels for the staff. They partnered with Rev. Linda and President Lorie Craddock in evaluations of senior staff.

***What a year it has been!** Although this historic Pandemic has kept us apart for more than a year, good ministry has happened, people have been supported, inspired, and cared for. It has been a wonderful and eventful year, and I continue to be grateful that our paths came together for this year just past, excited about the year to come, and hopeful for your future after I have left you.*

Rev. Linda Olson Peebles June 2021

9. Annual Report of the President of Board of Trustees 2021- Lorie Craddock

The past year has been like no other and now that we are seeing the end of the pandemic, it is good to review the past 12 months at UUC.

There have been exciting changes to our church and ministry. The Rev. Linda Olson Peebles joined us as our Interim Minister and thankfully, she has agreed to stay on for a

second year. We ordained our Director of Faith Development, now known as the Rev. Leia Durland-Jones, Minister of Faith Development. We formed a task force with the charge of investigating changing the name of our community and today we gather to vote on what our new name will be.

Our buildings and grounds have undergone amazing transformations during the past year, helped in part by oddly enough by the congregation's absence from the building and the social distancing /work-outside-only opportunities the pandemic has given us. Our continued thanks go out to the late Glenn Short and the committee that oversees the trust has been established in his name, The main church building now has new doors and windows, new HVAC units, new paint and flooring, AV equipment in the sanctuary and an improved gutter system so it only rains outside the church and not inside. The GST Fund also allowed for the creation of a Church History Room in the Lower Hall of the building to store 78 years of meeting agendas and minutes. A reinvigorated Garden and Ground Committee cleared the giant brush piles in the Summit House yard and the entire campus has been reinvigorated for a beautiful appearance this spring.

Our church finances have been changing too. We received an \$83K PPP loan which allowed us to create a balanced budget for the 2020-21 church year and that loan is now forgiven. Thanks to the investigative work of our DAF, Treasurer and many others, we have completed an audit of our church finances and created accurate records of the church endowment, Summit House bonds and various restricted funds. We had a successful pledge drive in February and the groundwork has already been laid for the 2022-23 Pledge Drive.

The Board, with much help from the Communication Committee, has looked for ways to improve communication with the congregation including publishing meeting agendas, minutes and supporting information in a timely fashion. We are doing everything we can to keep the business of our church easy to access, easy to understand and easy to join. So to those of you who Zoom into our monthly Board meetings just for fun, I can't thank you enough for taking the time to know what we know and being willing witnesses to the inner workings of this organization. You are some of my favorite people!

And finally as we look to the future, as many of you know, the Board has decided to hire a Developmental Minister for a summer 2022 start date. Beginning July 2021, the new Board will begin gathering information and looking for people to participate in the ministerial selection process.

The past twelve months have been a year for the record books and it has been a joy to serve as your President. I have nothing but deep gratitude for everyone who has worked so hard to build the trust and stability that will carry us forward as we navigate a future full of wonderful possibilities.

Lorie Craddock, Board President, June 2021

10. The introduction to the nominations for the Board of Trustees, Nominating Committee, and Personnel: Mary Beth Wiley.

The following persons are nominated for the following positions:

President: Pam McIntire (two year term)

Treasurer: Kay Frazier (two year term)

Board Members at Large: Jim Gorham (3 years);

Dawn Dirks: was on the original slate but has withdrawn her name due to a very recent decision to move to Oregon.

Hayley Owens (3 years)

Nominating Committee: Marcia Brecker, Jude Bias, Danny Gray (two year terms)

Personnel: Bev Ryan and Steve Brecker (three year terms)

There were no further nominations from the floor. A motion was made to accept these nominations for a vote. This motion was seconded. (The vote will take place by computerized ballot vote after the next discussion).

11. Name change of our congregation: Haley Owens: Introduction and explanation of the work done by the New Name Task Force.

A motion was made by Sharon Utz to to choose one name from the following choices:

Unitarian Universalists of Charlottesville

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlottesville

Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Charlottesville

The motion was seconded. There was a discussion that took place with many member participants sharing their views on these different name options. The instructions on how to vote were explained and the password was shared. There was a 30 minute pause while everyone voted.

12. Announcement of the vote: Lorie

The announcement of the two votes was made at 2:30 pm.

All of the nominated candidates were accepted to their nominated positions by large majority vote.

The new name of our faith community that was approved by member participant vote (101 votes were tallied): **Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlottesville.**

Option	Votes	Percentage
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlottesville	51	50.5%
Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Charlottesville	9	8.9%
Unitarian Universalists of Charlottesville	41	40.6%

13. UUC'ville Treasurer's Report June 6, 2021: Stan Walker

This will be as brief as I can make it. I will have a more comprehensive report for the meeting on the 27th, but for now will focus on the changes in the FY22 budget necessitated by the lack of the PPP money this coming year. First, though, I want to emphasize that the only reason we could absorb the loss of this much revenue, almost 10% of our entire budget, is the tremendous response to the pledge drive this year. Without that increased pledge income, this would have been a much more difficult budget to prepare. So kudos to Dawn Dirks and the entire pledge drive team, and many thanks to all of you who are supporting our community so generously. I am assuming that you have all read the letters from Lorie and Alex that were sent out yesterday, so I won't dwell on that piece of the budget. I will say that we have been very lucky the past few years to be able to maintain our staff. This year, though, there was no other alternative. The other items that the PPP money would have funded were all non-operational, and earmarked for reduction if we didn't receive the loan. Those reductions are as follows: UUA Annual Program Fund - reduced from \$12,500 to \$5000 General Operating Reserve - reduced from \$10,000 to \$1,000 Building Reserve - reduced from \$5,000 to \$1,000 Grounds Reserve - reduced from \$3,000 to \$1,000 Member Bonds Principal - reduced from \$5,000 to \$2,500 Payment on Unsecured 2019 Loan - reduced from \$6,000 to \$0 Total reduction - \$31,000 Regarding the last item - the lender is aware of the situation and agreed to this cut. The new proposed budget is already posted on the website, and we will have a question and answer session next Sunday after the service. If needed, we will have more Q & A's between now and the 27th, but they haven't been scheduled yet.

Stan Walker, Treasurer

14. Closing words and extinguishing of the chalice: Rev. Linda Olson Peebles

15. Adjournment of the meeting: A motion was made to adjourn the annual business Congregational Meeting of the ***Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlottesville***. The motion was seconded and the majority of the member participants voted in the affirmative and the meeting was adjourned.