

2023 Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem

The 2023 Annual Meeting was held on May 21, 2023.

The Chair officially opened the annual meeting at 12:03 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom for members who could not attend in person.

Chalice lighting by Janet Stevens

The chalice was lit and opening thoughts were presented.

Remembrances by Eric Schuman

The tradition is to remember those who are no longer with us and those who have passed in the past year:

- Rich Ford
- Loraine Stuart
- Mary Sohlstrom
- Kathy Giorgi
- Mary Loso
- Faith Wyckoff

Certification of Quorum

There are 74 eligible voters present in person and online and 3 proxy votes. The Treasurer, Lorna Youngs, certified that a quorum is present.

Review of Agenda

Lynn Cardiff introduced herself as the Chair of the UUCS Board and introduced the agenda for this meeting. The congregation will be voting on the UUCS Budget and the Board and Nominating Committee nominations, as well as voting on the new Vision and Mission Statements.

Board Chair's Annual Report

Lynn reported on congregational activities in the prior year, particularly noting coming back after the pandemic and the renewing of connections. This past year there were two Starting Point new member classes that led to 19 new members joining UUCS. Last year there were 11 new members. In addition, there are many new families in Religious Education.

The popularity of the Soul Matters Connections groups as well as the new Chalice Circles resulted in a need for additional facilitators to sustain and grow these programs.

Lynn noted that Lifespan Religious Education has sponsored many activities this year including game nights, parents' night out, ballroom and Latin dancing classes.

Governance actions this past year included revisiting the Strategic Plan. The Team Council is working on streamlining the process for incorporating goals of the current Strategic Plan into the new vision and mission statements.

Lynn mentioned many team activities, particularly the revitalized Art Works team as well as the large number of projects accomplished by the Landscape Team.

Other notable events include the celebration of 30 years with Rick Davis at the helm. In addition, Kay Young left UUCS a \$64,600 bequest.

Projects completed for Facilities include new LED lighting in the parking lot and the replacement of the sanctuary carpeting. The Facilities Team is about to make a recommendation for the installation of air

conditioning in the sanctuary and the fellowship hall. This amenity should result in our facility being more desirable for renting out for events such as weddings and other celebrations.

Team/Committee Annual Reports

These were available at the congregation web site.

Review of Voting Procedure

The Board Chair reviewed how to vote. Members attending in person will hold up a voting slip. Members attending on Zoom will vote electronically on the Zoom screen. The Chair provided instructions on the electronic vote.

Review of Budget

Lorna Youngs, UUCS Treasurer, reviewed the budget.

The proposed 2023-2024 income was presented. Sources include Sunday Plate Offering, non-pledged contributions, pledges, fundraisers, and rent. The Pledge Drive generated a total of \$272,995, a decrease from the current year. Rental Income and Fundraising are projected to be slightly more than this year.

The proposed 2023-24 expenditures were presented. Most of the increase in expenses is due to a 5.0% COLA for staff. The remainder is due to known or expected cost increases for services, supplies, and utilities.

The Treasurer noted that to balance the proposed budget, funds from the allocated reserve income, which is the accumulated savings from prior budget years, were utilized. Lorna explained that these funds can only be used for budget items and that there will still be a sizeable balance left in that account.

The Board Chair asked for a motion to approve the budget.

Robin LaMonte moved, and it was seconded by Alan Holland that the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem approve the 2023-2024 annual budget as presented.

Discussion – Board Chair asked for questions from the congregation. George Struble spoke about the need to preserve the reserve funds and to launch a more robust stewardship campaign in the coming year to avoid the need for tapping the reserves in the future. There was some discussion on the UUA dues amount as well as the role UUA plays for our congregation.

The congregation voted on the motion to approve the budget. The budget passed with one dissenting vote.

Board Candidates and Nominating Committee Candidates

Julianne Patton and Sara Shatto presented the Board candidates, including those who are leaving the Board and are continuing their terms.

2023 Board Nominees:

- Chair (1 yr): Lynn Cardiff – Returning position- returning as Chair after serving in 2022-23.
- Vice Chair (1 yr): Christine Ertl – New position, had previously served as Chair.
- Secretary: (1 yr): Sara Pickett – New position. Was Director Seat #2 this year.
- Treasurer: (3 yrs): Steve Ovens – New position- previously served as a Director for 3 years
- Director Seat #2 (1 yr): Greg Gregg – New position – serving the remainder of Sara Pickett's term.
- Director Seat #4 (2 yr): Robert Galloway – New position.
- Director Seat #5 (2 yr): Faith Rockenstein – New position

Returning Board members:

- Lynn Cardiff, Chair – up for re-election
- Ben Cavaletto – Director, Seat #3
- Tracy Boyle – Director, Seat #6
- Sara Pickett moving from Director, Seat#2 to Secretary

Retiring from Board

- Robin LaMonte, Vice Chair
- Lorna Youngs, Treasurer
- Lisa Marcus, Secretary
- Christine Keese-Ferguson – Director, Seat #1
- Don Wolfe – Director, Seat #5

Note: Director, Seat #1 is Open

Julianne Patton and Sara Shatto presented the Nominating Committee candidates.

2023 Nominee:

- Connie Anderson – (3 year term)

Returning Nominating Committee Members:

- Julianne Patton – (1 year remaining)
- Sara Shatto – (2 years remaining)

Retiring from the Nominating Committee:

- Barbara Stebbins-Boaz

The Chair called for a motion. Kate Walker moved, and Bob Muir seconded the motion that the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem elect the candidates for the Board and Nominating Committee as presented.

Discussion. The Board Chair asked for questions from the congregation. No questions were submitted. The congregation voted on the motion to elect the candidates. There were 75 votes in favor. The vote was unanimous.

Renew vision and mission statements

Don Wolf presented the background involved in renewing the vision and mission statements, which along with the by-laws, should be revisited every five years.

Vision

We aspire to be a generous, loving, and diverse intergenerational community that fosters and celebrates free religious exploration and expression, inspires spiritual growth, appreciates the gifts people share, and encourages lives of integrity, joy, and service to our congregation, our community, and our world.

The Chair called for a motion. Stephanie Jernstedt moved, and Sandy Hedgepeth seconded the motion that Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem approve the new Vision Statement.

The Board Chair asked for questions from the congregation. No questions were submitted.

The congregation voted on the motion to approve the new vision statement. There were 68 votes in favor. The vote was unanimous.

Mission

We are a free and diverse, multi-generational spiritual community promoting liberal religious exploration in a congregation governed by democratic principles, and committed to stewardship, friendship, and shared ministry, as we live out our Unitarian Universalist values.

The Chair called for a motion. Stephanie Jernstedt moved, and Sandy Hedgepeth seconded the motion that the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem approve the new Mission Statement.

Discussion. The Board Chair asked for questions from the congregation. No questions were submitted.

The congregation voted on the motion to approve the new Mission statement. There were 69 votes in favor and 1 vote opposed.

Board Chair Vision for 2023-2024

The returning Board Chair discussed the vision for the future.

Lynn Cardiff noted that there are 3 areas to focus on:

- Governance: We will need to work on updating the by-laws, revising the Strategic Plan and working on policy updates as needed
- Building Projects: The installation of air conditioning as soon as possible!
- Connections: Plan more activities so that we can share what is going on in our lives.

The chalice was extinguished by Janet Stevens.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 pm.