

Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley
Congregational Meeting
May 17, 2015

MINUTES

Call to Order and Determination of the Presence of a Quorum

President Deborah Schmidt called the meeting to order at 12:38 p.m. and asked for a count of the members present. 116 members, were counted, more than a quorum.

Adoption of the Agenda

Jean Gleason moved adoption of the agenda, Marin Fischer seconded, and the motion passed.

Reading the Covenant

Deborah Schmidt lead reading the church's Covenant of Right Relations.

Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Congregational Meetings

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2015 Congregational Meeting was made by Maryann Simpson, seconded by Anne Greenwood, and passed. A motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2015 Congregational Meeting was then made by Jean Gleason, seconded by Maryann Simpson and passed.

Presentation of the Schweitzer Award

Kay Fairwell presented the Schweitzer medal to Cynthia Asprodites, noting her long service to the church, and Cynthia replied by thanking the church for giving her the opportunity to serve.

President's Report

Deborah Schmidt reported on the year of change, from saying goodbye to Bill and Barbara Hamilton-Holway to all the new things that Greg Ward has set in motion, pastoral and worship associates, program council and social justice design teams, and she also recognized the work of the stewardship connectors and both the transition and search teams.

Coordinating Team Reports

Beth Pollard spoke of the work of everyone's hands contributing to both the long-term viability of the church and to attracting the best possible minister. She asked for new hands, saying that ours are the hands we are waiting for. She also thanked Greg Ward for his work on restructuring both staff and volunteer leadership, noting that we hold the people whose jobs are affected in our hearts.

Capital Campaign Projects Report

John Cahoon reported that the first two projects, the replacement of the patio and the removal of the dangerous trees, both the dying pines and the limb-dropping eucalyptus, are being held up in the Contra Costa County design review and permitting process, but that contractors are in place and work will begin as soon as the county allows.

Stewardship Report

Anne Greenwood rejoiced in the pledge increases -- 73% of them increased from last year, 105 of those up by 20% or more -- and recognized the role of the connectors in this achievement. She also announced that she was retiring and was looking forward to her replacement as stewardship chair outdoing her just as Linda Laskowski had when she took over as treasurer.

Bylaw Revision

Stephanie Ann Blythe described the three changes proposed for section 8.1: an increase in the vote required to call a minister from two thirds to 90%, the appointment of a negotiating team to arrange the specific terms of employment for the called minister, and a reduction in the vote required to dismiss a minister from a majority to 30%.

A motion to approve these changes was made by Larry Nagel and seconded by Angie Harlow. Greg Ward suggested that the title of the bylaw section be changed from "Hiring a Minister" to "Calling a Minister" since the two processes are entirely different. Linda Laskowski moved and Warren Zittel seconded a motion to make this change. After some discussion of this amendment Paul Hudson called the question, which passed, as did the motion to change the name of the section. Following further clarification of the main motion Paul Hudson again called the question, which passed, as did the motion to amend the bylaws.

Treasurer's Report

Linda Laskowski reviewed the projections she had made in light of the increased pledge income and then presented the budget for 2015-2016. A motion to adopt it was made by Larry Nagel and seconded by Virginia Silver-Rimbach and passed with five opposed including Paul Hudson who objects to the failure to fund our ongoing liability for building maintenance. Anne Chapman thanked Linda.

Social Justice Council Project

Nancy Kelly and Jane Eisenstark presented plans for a year-long Confronting Racism project and asked that it be sponsored by the congregation. Bob Moore moved to approve this, Dave Rockhold seconded and the motion passed.

Endorsement of the Nominating Committee Members

Deborah Schmidt asked for a motion to endorse Nancy Kelly, Ralph Nelson and Rhonda Servin as members of the Nominating Committee. The motion was made by Linda Zittel, seconded by Jean Gleason and passed. Deborah then recognized the continuing members -- Christina Creveling, Ira Nelken, Judy Sam and Lonnie Moseley -- and thanked those whose terms are ending -- Lynne Cahoon, Selene Fabiano and Abbot Foote.

Thanks to Richie Dawkins

Deborah Schmidt asked for a round of applause for the delicious lunch.

Blessing

Greg Ward agreed that it was a blessing to work with Richie Dawkins, lifted up the blessing it is for all of us to have Linda Laskowski as treasurer, and also recognized the transition team, the Board and the Coordinating Team, and especially President Deborah Schmidt.

Respectfully submitted, Jane Lundin, secretary