

Unitarian Society of Germantown
MINUTES for the Annual Congregational Meeting
May 21, 2017

Board President Tom Ott's Opening Words

Presentation of Congregational Awards to...

- Ann Schoonmaker (Lifetime Achievement) presented by Tom Ott
- Bob Williford - presented by Bill Morrow
- David Ward - presented by Tom Ott
- Eric Foster - presented by Tom Ott
- (A Congregational Award will be given to Jeff Smith when he is able to be in attendance.)

Election of Annual Meeting Chair. Alan Windle was nominated and elected to chair Carolyn Scott was appointed to take minutes of the meeting.

The minutes from the 2016 Annual Meeting were introduced and made available and then approved.

Presentation of the Approved Fiscal Year 2018 Budget was made by Bill Dowdall

This budget was developed by the Ministerial Executive Team. Bill presented a number of overhead charts- of Revenues, Expenditures, and the line by line budget presentation. This spring's Service Auction brought in less than was expected. Hence, a Fund-raising Super Committee is to form to think of ways to increase revenue. USG will raise the cost of space rentals a bit. Salaries of staff will increase in accordance with "fair compensation" guidelines: staff except for Kent will receive a 3% increase. Kent, who is on a six-month sabbatical, had requested that his salary not be increased.

To cut costs, USG will no longer have a church band, the Urban Mystics, and will cut back a bit on the use of soloists. In addition we will discontinue using the Brennan bookkeeping services. Starting in June, Church Administrator Gloria Guldager will assume bookkeeping duties and we will use a new CPA firm, Miller Dixon Drake PC, thus saving \$6000 annually.

USG will continue paying our full share UUA dues and will apply for a Chalice Lighter Grant to help finance the capital project.

Bill Dowdall concluded his report with showing two pie charts, one for expenses and the other for revenues. They show where the money comes from and where it goes. The largest expense is payroll, and it is about 60% of total expenses and member contributions at 71% of total revenues are the largest source of income. This means that we need to have an average contribution of \$1250 for each adult member to cover expenses.

CIF (Consolidated Investment Fund) Balance presented by Mark Bernstein

Michael Campbell was the past treasurer.

Questions:

How do we feel about the size of our endowment? Is it adequate?

Are we investing in socially responsible funds? Trillium - Yes

Comment: not doing deficit transfers

What the general endowment has been

Mark's main comment was that USG currently is much more organized and on top of revenue, expenditures, and investments than he had experienced in past years.

Presentation of MET (Ministry Executive Team) Report by Linda Bernstein

Rev. Kent Matthies would ordinarily give this report; in the minister's absence, Linda Bernstein gave it.

MET consists of the minister (Kent), the church administrator (Gloria,) and three lay leaders. This past year those three laity were Bill Dowdall, Linda Bernstein, and Jenn Leiby. Because Kent is on sabbatical, to create continuity and smoother transition until he returns in mid-August, Bill and Linda will remain on MET to help orient the new laity: Kay Weiser, Dennis Brunn, and Delores Hill.

MET meets two hours every week to address USG's day to day functioning. They have worked on budget, put a stop on discretionary expenditures, planned for Kent's sabbatical, and strongly interacted with the Worship Arts committee.

Linda Bernstein also stepped back into the Caring Committee when Kent went on sabbatical. The Caring Team currently consists of Connie Simon (Intern Minister), Bonnie McDairmant, and Linda.

Building and Grounds team is fabulous, handling various emergencies, such as the boiler needing to be replaced this past year. Our Social Justice team has been excellent, with Mel Strieb and Anne Gwynn co-chairing it and implementing various initiatives such as a monthly movie. The Annual Dinner was superb; the Stewardship Committee did outstanding work with their awesome videos. The Capital Campaign for the addition of a new elevator, walkway and improved driveway from Johnson Street is underway, and an architect has been contracted for the elevator, expecting to break ground after Labor Day and the elevator to be ready by Christmas.

Presentation of Refreshing USG's "Welcoming Congregation" Status by Barbara Dowdall

1983 was the Gay Rights March

1985 Congregation voted to have unions conducted in the Sanctuary

1998 USG achieved Welcoming Congregation status, which has benefitted LGBTQ members and friends, provided a meeting space for Gay chapters, and obviously enabled USG to be more truly inclusive.

Now we need to refresh that status. The Board has voted to approve the process. Barbara Dowdall will lead the committee and asks for volunteer participants to join her.

Presentation of the Firearm Policy by Eric Foster

USG has various safety & security policies, such as the policy to keep children and youth safe and the Covenant of Right Relations, to ensure members' and friends' well-being and respectful treatment.

In this past year, following killings in churches and other public places, USG has worked to improve congregational security. On the Security Team were Beth Lazer, Board President Tom Ott, Church Administrator Gloria Guldager, Rev. Kent Matthies, Eric Foster, David Wurtzel, and Jeff Baird (a security expert and husband of member Susan Zingale Baird), and they met with members of the local 14th District of the Philadelphia police.

The "No Firearms" on USG premises policy was developed by this team after much discussion.

A comment was made that the word "respect" in the opening line was inappropriate for a church when talking about the carrying of a firearm. The suggestion was made to use the word "acknowledge" instead of "respect."

The team had considered posting No Firearms signs but decided that was not welcoming. However, the team wanted to communicate the policy to the congregation so that people could know that it is a policy and thus could ask anyone carrying a gun not to. It was suggested that we need to inform anyone renting the space of this new policy, to include it in the rental agreement.

Presentation of UUPLAN by Dennis Brunn

Dennis Brunn summarized a resolution that had been adopted unanimously by the USG Board of Trustees at their November 2016 meeting. It read in part: "That the Board of the Unitarian Society of Germantown agrees that we as a congregation should enter into a covenant with UUPLAN (Unitarian Universalist PA Legislative Advocacy Network) with a goal to provide UUPLAN with financial support of \$5.00 per member of our congregation for the next 5 years....through two measures: (1) Share the Plate donation; and (2) in the case of further need to meet our goal, a donation from the USG Budget..." After adopting that resolution, the Board decided to bring the resolution to the 2017 Annual Meeting for a final congregational vote. Dennis Brunn made a motion that the resolution be adopted by those present at the May 21 USG Annual Meeting. Those in attendance constituted a quorum and the resolution was passed unanimously.

submitted by Carolyn W Scott