

UCC Belmont

Congregational Annual Meeting

February 6, 2016

Preliminaries

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM by Steve Ramos, the Church Council moderator.

Quorum Check

Parliamentarian Micki Carter declared there was a quorum.

Opening Prayer

Rev. Kristi led the congregation in a prayer for guidance.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Agenda Review

The agenda was approved as proposed.

Old Business

Approval of the 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved unanimously as submitted and included in the handout for the 2017 annual meeting (pages 2-7 of the Annual Meeting booklet).

2016 Financial Report

Greg Thornhill, chair of the Board of Trustees, presented the 2016 financial report to the congregation (the report appears after page 29 at the end of the Annual Meeting booklet). We ended up a few thousand dollars in the black for a budget that had a planned deficit. There were several contributing factors. See the budget for details. One thing to note: even with all the rain we have had, we had no leaks or water damage; the roofing repairs a few years back really were worth it.

Acceptance of 2016 Annual Reports

The 2016 Annual Report, excluding nominating and budget reports, but including the auditor's report, submitted at this meeting, were accepted as presented. The acceptance was passed by acclamation.

New Business

2017 Budget

Greg Thornhill, chair of the Board of Trustees, presented the 2017 budget proposed by Trustees (this budget is at the end of the handout for the 2017 annual meeting). The Trustees are proposing a budget for 2017 that has a \$28 surplus (!) for a budget of about \$247,500.

Income Changes

- We have one fewer pledge this year (the report as written shows three fewer pledges, but two more have come in since it was printed), but an increase of \$2500 over last year. (This does not reflect the two added pledges.)
- We are raising the rent on the apartment (it will still be under market rates); we have reduced the rent for CPNS, as they are in a precarious financial state and we want to show support.
- Al-Anon has left the office we rented them.
- We are budgeting \$2000 of income from Vacation Bible School for this year; this is based on last year's experience.

Expense Changes

- We added a Building Use Coordinator position. The yearly cost is \$4800.
- There are modest raises for the church administrator, the organist, Rev. Kristi, and Director of Christian Education, Ursula Jorgensen. The total impact of the raises is \$4283.
- Capital improvements were reduced from \$5000 to \$2000. This partly reflects the healthy condition of that fund.
- Our OCWM contribution has been held flat compared to last year. We are giving them the same amount of money, but this is a slightly reduced % of our budget.
- We have reduced the reserve for the pastor's sabbatical from \$1,500 to \$900.

Greg moved the adoption of the 2017 budget as proposed.

Discussion

Comment: We are going to be renting the rummage room for \$300 per month.

There was no further question or discussion.

Conclusion

The budget was accepted by acclamation.

Renewal of Thomas Crosby's Three-Way Covenant

The covenant was approved unanimously.

Thomas spoke about his work at the VA. He thanked the church for our support at the Christmas Sing-along. His work there is changing. He also thanked the support committee at the church that he

established this past year. There was a chaplain boundary meeting Thomas held at UCC Belmont; it was a great success. Thomas will be preaching here on Feb. 26th.

Chocolate Fest Plans

Danielle Chamberlin presented. The next Chocolate Fest will be October 20th & 21st. It is one week later than usual, since we could not get the old time slot for the banner over Ralston Ave. The 2016 Chocolate Fest generated more visitors and more money than recent years. We are going to improve on the good ideas of last year and add more features.

We want to reach out to our social action partners earlier and get them more involved with Chocolate Fest. There was a discussion about how we might help involve CPNS: possibly helping with child care and using that as advertising point for CPNS.

We also talked about expanding the silent auction.

Family Fun Day Plans

Ursula Jorgensen presented. She has nominally taken this over since Yumio moved. Ursula has been looking for someone to manage the event. Sarah LaTorra has agreed to help organize and co-lead Family Fun Day with Ursula.

The youth group is willing to sponsor a lemonade stand.

If we are going have another Family Fun Day we must start organizing now; the event is scheduled for April 1. Several people offered to help. Ursula asked that they contact her later individually so she can find out what areas they would be willing to work.

Steve Chamberlin raised the idea of having (vetted) vendors selling arts and crafts in conjunction with Family Fun Day. That is a possibility, along with having the Fire department and/or Recology and similar organizations also have a stand.

There is also going to be a rethinking of how we offer food for Family Fun Day, such as having food trucks provide the food.

We also discussed how we charge for various attractions.

Micki is putting down \$200 for the banner over Ralston on Wednesday (Feb. 8th).

Vacation Bible School

We will have Vacation Bible School August 7-11 this year. The theme is Mission Possible.

Nominating Report

Steve Ramos presented the slate of nominations for the church's boards and positions (see page 28 of the handout for the 2017 annual meeting). He noted a couple of empty positions on the nominating slate as printed in the Annual Meeting:

- We do not have a Vice Moderator
- We don't have a third Member-at-Large
- We do not have a Building and Grounds coordinator.

Henry Altorfer volunteered to be the Building and Grounds Coordinator.

Mary Beth Gray volunteered to be the third Member-at-Large.

After considerable discussion we did not get a solid volunteer for the Vice Moderator position.

Micki Carter emphasized the seriousness of our lack of leadership, shown by the difficulty of filling our leadership position. The congregation had an extensive discussion about this challenge.

One suggestion is that we might have co-moderators. This suggestion would likely require changes in the by-laws and the constitution.

Mary Beth moved to accept the nominating report as amended. The motion was seconded and approved without dissent.

Micki Carter moved that the nominating report be amended to require Council to work to identify a Vice-Moderator and report back to the congregation within three months with a solution.

Acceptance of this slate of candidates with the amendment proposed by Micki Carter was passed by acclamation.

Here is the final set of church officers and committee members as approved:

Moderator:	Steve Ramos
Vice-Moderator	<i>vacant</i>
Clerk	Deja Ramos
Member at Large	Elizabeth Nordt
Member at Large	Leslie Marx
Member at Large	Mary Beth Gray
Treasurer	Mike Venturino
Trustees	Deja Ramos, Steve Ramos, Greg Thornhill, Irene Hall, Henry Altorfer
Building Use	Maura Whitmore, Irene Hall
Financial Secretary	Steve Ramos
Buildings and Grounds	Henry Altorfer
Deacons	Grace Yoshida, Barbara White, Danielle Chamberlin, Deja Ramos, Jane Fernald, Richard Morgan
*Music Chair	Danielle Chamberlin
*Altar Guild Chair	Maura Whitmore
Christian Education	Ursula Jorgensen, Emily Tauscher, Susan Linares, Kristin Tewskbury, Mary Beth Gray, Leslie Marx
*Adult Education	Paul Anderson
Social Action	Laura McKenzie, Elizabeth Nordt, Paul Anderson
*Family to Family	Irene Hall
*Home and Hope	Sarah Thornhill
*Peninsula Multifaith Coalition	Susan Linares
Communications	Barbara Todd, Micki Carter, Deja Ramos, Peter Hansen

Pastoral Relations	Bob and Ella Mae Donovan, Danielle Chamberlin, Elizabeth Nordt, Barbara Todd, Irene Hall
Chocolate Fest	Danielle Chamberlin, Greg Thornhill, Deja Ramos
Family Fun Day	Ursula Jorgensen
*Parliamentarian	Micki Carter
*Auditor	Steve Chamberlin
*eScript Master	Danielle Chamberlin

***Appointed ~ Informational only**

By-Laws Change Proposal

Micki Carter walked the congregation through the proposed changes to the Church's by-laws (see the proposed changes at the back of the annual report). The brunt of the report is to reduce the number of committees and number of committee members that we are no longer filling and to allow for voting by electronic forms for committees.

Micki moved that the propose by-laws be accepted. The congregation then discussed.

Greg Thornhill proposed that we allow voting by video and conference call at the annual meeting. There was a discussion of the proposal. It would allow more people to attend, but it would potentially threaten the amount of face-to-face contact at the meeting. No formal motion was made to change the proposed changes to allow other forms of voting for the annual meeting, but there was interest in adding teleconferencing or video conferencing to the annual meeting, albeit without allowing – at this point – remote voting.

Bob Donovan proposed an amendment to the proposed changes to the by-laws to clarify that notice of meetings will be sent out by phone for those members who are not on email or the internet. The specific amendment is:

Change page 2, lines 2 & 3 of the proposed by-laws to read:

Notice must also be given by posing on the church website and by email/phone as soon as practicable thereafter.

The proposed changes to the by-laws, as amended, were passed unanimously.

Investment Policy Proposal

Greg Thornhill presented the investment policy proposal (see the proposal at the end of the annual report). The goal is to move some of our funds from cash equivalent forms, such as money market funds, into investment vehicles that would give us a great rate of return. Examples of such investments are mutual funds and ETFs.

There was considerable discussion about the proposal. No vote was needed; this is under the discretion of the Trustees. There did seem to be general support. One area for clarification is whether the added valuation from our investments would ultimately be returned to the general fund or be apportioned to each individual fund contributing to the overall investments on a pro rata basis.

The response from Trustees was that the intent was not to disburse investments earning back into the different funds but to keep them as investments for long-term growth. If and when we need to tap into these investments, the decision about how they are disbursed is with the Trustees. In the past, they have used a pro rata formula.

There was a suggestion that we require the fund manager to be a church member. There were objections to this as a poor idea. The fund manager should be chosen based on financial qualifications, plus having funds managed by a church member could become an issue if there were problems with the performance.

Another question was whether we should have the general guidelines in the proposal that Trustees included. Greg explained that they guidelines were there to protect both the church and the financial manager.

Objectives for 2017

The following goals were suggested and approved for the church for 2017:

- Micki Carter proposed we adopt as a goal the replacement of the Church's main hanging sign at the front of the Church lawn. This passed unanimously.
- Richard Morgan proposed we adopt as a goal that church Council and the congregation make developing new leadership within the church with a specific goal. We should have a completely filled nominating slate at the end of this year. This passed unanimously.
- Rev. Kristi proposed that we explore declaring ourselves a sanctuary church. We would ultimately have to have council and the congregation vote on a specific proposal. This goal is to explore the possibility and implications of such a declaration. The goal was approved with one abstention.
- Steve Chamberlin initially suggested and, after discussion, Greg Thornhill formally proposed that Council form a committee to explore and report on ways to grow the church. This committee will report to the congregation within this year. The goal was approved unanimously.

The following was not proposed as a formal goal, but Irene Hall urged that the church paint the narthex and install new carpet to match the parlor.

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 PM