

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Jackson
Winter 2020 Congregational Meeting
Sunday, December 06, 2020**

Agenda

1. Opening Reading and Chalice Lighting
2. Call to Order and Establishing Quorum
3. Unitarian Universalist Principles
4. Minutes
5. Minister Report
6. President Report
7. Ministry Teams, Advisory Councils, and Task Forces Reports
8. 2020 Financial Report
9. Special Building Fund
10. Ongoing/New Business
 - A. 2021 Minister's Contract
 - B. 2021 Pledge Drive: A New Beginning
 - C. 2021 Budget Proposal
 - D. Building Fund: Building the Future
11. Ministry Teams
 - A. Facilitators and Record Keepers
 - B. Communication Plan
12. Closing
13. Extinguish the Chalice
14. Set Next Meeting

Congregation Members in Attendance

Jim Becker
Freeman Bennett
Stacy Callender
Patricia Ice
Kristin Golden
Frank Rosenblatt
Lisa Dunn
Ray Shenefelt
Dary Shenefelt
Tom Kersen
Lisa Kersen
Katie Coates
David Morgan
Natalie Maynor
Justin McCreary
Bob Keller
Eric Wood
Bob Saulter
Jason Griggs
Jill Morgan
Ranjan Batra
Maureen McGuire

Call to Order and Establishing Quorum

The chalice was lit and the meeting called to order at 12:06 PM. Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the meeting was held virtually over the Zoom video conferencing platform. Twenty-two

congregation members were in attendance. This met the necessary quorum of 30% or more of active members in good standing required to vote on church business.

Minutes

The reading of minutes from the Summer 2020 meeting were delayed until the next congregational meeting so they can be located.

Minister Report

Rev. Justin McCreary read his minister's report.

Ministry Teams, Advisory Councils, and Task Forces Reports

Exploring Our Beliefs - Jim Becker said the Worship Committee is doing well with a solid team of volunteers. Religious Education hasn't met regularly due to the pandemic, but the youth group meets most Sunday afternoons. Small group ministries are being planned for early 2021.

Jim also mentioned the Retooling for a New Reality workshop. Five congregation members are participating with members of other small congregations.

Living Our Values – Patricia Ice said the CARE ring (Natalie Maynor, Katie Coates, and formerly Brenda Taylor) has sent out greeting cards to members recently. Previously, they have provided birthday cakes, sent cards to ailing members or to families of those who' have lost loved ones.

Changing Our World – Patricia noted the congregation book club finished reading a couple of titles during the pandemic months, the last one completed entirely virtually. The next congregation-wide book reading is How to be an Anti-Racist by Ibram X. Kendi. After that, the UUCJ common read will be next. In the meantime, Patricia asked the congregation to read a chapter from The Joy of Sects, Chapter 4 on Buddhism (p. 83-149). Stacy added the Stewpot donation on Stone Soup Sunday.

Transition Task Force – Stacy Callender said that although the past year was not optimum, the church does now have a paying tenant in the State Street building who is currently making improvements on the property. She has contacted the architect/contractor about fixing the french drain at the back of the West Street worship building.

Board Priorities - Stacy reported the board is working on communication with the congregation. They have cleaned up the membership/contact list. The board is currently working on the policy and procedure manual with hopes to have it completed by spring. They need help in identifying members interested in leadership roles in the church, and are working on a leadership development strategy to make it easier for volunteer to learn how to do various roles within the church leadership.

Community Outreach and Engagement Task Force - Katie Coates said the group met with a contact who thought the church had great potential as a farming site using "Hoop Houses," a method that wouldn't require plowing up the existing property. Justin added that the church's neighborhood is a food desert. For this reason, the task force decided a farmers' market would be a good first project. The question was how would it be managed – by the church or by a separate 501c3. In addition, according to Justin, the UUA southern region is interested in using our church building as a location for OWL sex-ed courses.

2021 Minister's Contract

The 2021 Minister's contract was not yet finished. Once negotiations are completed, a special congregational meeting will be called to approve it.

2021 Pledge Drive: A New Beginning

As of the meeting, nineteen pledge units representing 27 active members had been submitted. Two members showed interest in the Welcoming Committee, eight chose Exploring Our Beliefs, four picked Living Our Values, and seven were interested in Caring for Our World. Talent pledges came from a variety of areas. Total pledges were \$44,620 as of December 6, 2020.

2021 Budget Proposal

The church is ahead of projected income in 2020 with \$45,000. Expenses were lower. State Street expenses were less than expected and utilities, insurance, etc. on that property are no longer being paid by the church. However, the church still ran a deficit of \$12,458.

For 2021, projected income is \$69,600 due to greater pledging amounts and the monthly State Street rental. 2021 expenses are down from 2020 budgeted expenses to \$76,596. This doesn't include building improvement costs to the West Street property which are separate.

The minister's salary increased slightly due to 4% bump in pay along with additional contributions to the his choice of health plans that hadn't been made previously.

The 2021 budget deficit is much better than previous years at about \$7000. The church also has various other accounts of both funds and stocks. The Schwabs account currently has about \$83,500 in stocks and \$40,000 in sweeps. Combined with various memorial accounts and other funds, the church's current liquid assets are around \$158,000.

Jill Morgan motioned to approve the budget proposal. Eric seconded the motion. Ranjan Batra asked how much will be dedicated to West Street property for upkeep. He wondered if the congregation would vote on the amount for building improvements later on. Stacy said improvements will be implemented as funds are accrued separate from the 2021 budget. David V. noted that one reason for the large amount of routine operating expenses for West Street in 2021 was the first water bill arrived only a few months ago, but billed for usage dating back to 2019. As a result, the bill was much larger than usual. The motion to approve the 2021 budget passes with 17 Yes votes with no Nays or abstentions.

Building Fund: Building the Future

The Transition Task Force requested a building/capital campaign fund be set up to finance the renovations of the West Street property. This fund would be earmarked specifically to contain rent from the State Street property (minus insurance and real estate agent fees) to be allocated only to West Street renovations.

Ranjan Batra pointed out that in the 2021 budget, the \$18,000 in rental revenue from the State Street property is listed as income in the budget, but the renovation costs for West Street aren't shown in the expense column making the actual deficit of over \$20,000 seem to be \$7000. Stacy said this was because the specific plan of how to fund the renovations had not been approved by the congregation yet, so couldn't be included in the budget.

Ranjan suggested a line item for the Building Fund be added to the expenses so the true income/expenses can be seen. Jill Morgan and Patricia Ice recommended the building fund be kept in a separate account. Ranjan said that would not necessarily be needed as long as the funds were earmarked for the specific use.

Jill Morgan made a motion to revise the 2021 budget to reflect the West Street renovation costs. Ranjan made a friendly amendment to increase that line item from \$12,300 to \$15,000. Stacy asked Ranjan how to handle donations to the capital fund to make sure they are used appropriately. He replied all donations for that purpose would be earmarked. Jill approved the friendly amendment. Ranjan seconded Jill's amendment. The budget revision passed with 14 Yes votes, no Nays and no abstentions. This change increased the total projected 2021 expenses to \$91,596 and increased the projected deficit to \$21,996.

The creation of a separate capital fund for renovations was then addressed. Ranjan Batra motioned that a separate earmarked building fund within the church's current account be established. Jill Morgan seconded the motion which was then approved by the congregation with 16 Yes votes, and no Nays or abstentions.

Ministry Teams

Facilitators and Record Keepers

Any members still remaining on the call broke into break-out groups based their preferences or membership in the various church tasks forces and committees. The groups were assigned to select a chairperson and a method of communication.

Communication Plan

After the break-out session, the various groups returned to the main meeting. The appointed group leaders reported which method of communication they had chosen.

The CAREring – Patrica Ice, chair / GroupMe; Changing Our World – David Voisin, chair / FaceBook Messenger; Exploring Our Beliefs – Jim Becker, chair / FaceBook Messenger

Extinguish the Chalice

The chalice was extinguished at 2:06 PM, ending the meeting.