

DRAFT MINUTES
All Souls Church, Unitarian
Congregational Meeting
December 8, 2013, 1:22 p.m.

Call to Order, Sterling Lloyd Jr., 2013 Board of Trustees President

Opening Prayer and Meditation (The Rev. Robert Hardies)

Meeting Administration

Moderator Erika Landberg assumed the role of chair.

Introduction of the parliamentarian, Cledwyn Jones, and timekeeper, Dori Phelps.

Meeting rules explained.

Quorum achieved. 98 were required (10 percent of membership); more than 150 attended.

Motion to adopt rules; seconded; passed by voice vote.

Because snowfall might cause people to leave early, Sterling Lloyd **moved** that the “agenda be reordered such that items requiring a congregational vote will be first;” seconded; approved by voice without opposition.

Question from the floor: Will there be a discussion of the budget before members vote on it? Answer: Yes.

Motion to approve minutes of the December 2, 2012 Annual Meeting. Seconded; passed by voice vote.

Financial report and 2014 budget – Cheryl Gray, Treasurer, and Katie Loughary, Executive Director:

Revenue: We’re \$160,000 behind on core donations for 2013. Annual giving has placed a big demand on the congregation because a lot of money is being given to the renovation fund. On the plus side, stock market investments have done well, increasing transfers from the endowment; income from rentals and fundraisers is up slightly.

Expenses: A shift of custodians from contractors to church staff has decreased building expenses. While All Souls has paid its full share to the Joseph Priestley District, it is \$30,000 short in payments to the Unitarian Universalist Association (and plans to contribute 25 percent

less than its “fair share” in 2014). It is anticipated that the church will end the year with a \$50,000 deficit – the first deficit in quite a few years – and will have to draw on reserves accumulated from past surpluses.

2014 Budget: Expected pledge income has been reduced from the 2013 goal, although a lot of effort has gone into encouraging members to increase their pledges. \$1 million has been pledged so far. Rental income will be way down because of the renovation. It is hoped that the Jane and Paul Pfeiffer bequest will start flowing, providing \$80,000 for the year. We won't be doing fundraisers. Grants and transfers are looking good; the endowment has done well. Personnel costs are going up, partly because of a full year for on-staff custodians. Health costs are rising. There is no built-in increase for staff salaries except for the lowest-paid. The social justice minister's position becomes full time. Religious education will be fully staffed. Rob has been talking to the Board about a 25 percent reduction in payment to the UUA. In two to three years, with fulfillment of CAPT pledges, there should be an increase in annual member pledges. We're going through a tight time and trying to get through it. We are hoping to break even next year – that's ambitious but we're being careful and frugal in trying to project a break-even budget. We will have an audit in 2014.

Questions and comments: Carrie Davidson asked about holding off on additional staff. A: The social justice minister becomes full time immediately, but the new program executive is not due to start until the summer. The RE positions support an absolutely core program.

Generally the church draws about 5 percent annually from endowment accounts. Do investment and business philosophies align with the mission of the church? A: The institutions that manage the funds have socially conscious policies. A reduction in maintenance is expected during the renovation. Once construction is completed, a charter school or other school will be sought as a major tenant.

Chuck Wooldridge, who is active in denominational affairs, commented that while he understood the current financial constraints, a reduction in payment to the UUA has an impact – for instance, in support to congregations in crisis. He hoped a letter would be sent stating All Souls' aim of resuming full payment in a year or two.

A committee is being formed to explore the role and responsibility of the planned program executive.

There is no current plan to buy new hymnals.

On the Pfeiffer bequest, All Souls is due the largest portion of the income; the UUA takes the position that 5 percent a year can be drawn from the fund provided there is sufficient income.

Motion by Jim Heltman, seconded by Tom Fox, to approve the budget. No discussion, passed by voice vote.

Sterling Lloyd assumed the chair to preside over the introduction of Trustee and Officer nominees and votes.

Mark Clark, co-chair of the Nominating Committee, explained the process of choosing a slate of candidates instead of a competitive election. The committee met with the Church Council, held a happy hour, and placed notices in church bulletins. Members conducted outreach. The committee interviewed all candidates. Finding people who were willing and had the time to serve was a challenge.

Susan Crim, co-chair, outlined the committee's efforts to develop a pipeline of future church leaders, working with the Church Council to identify, support, and train them. Erika Landberg, Claudia Liebler, the Rev. Cathy Rion Starr, and Kelly Young contributed. Activities included a discussion featuring four groups within the church and a class on multi-cultural and multi-cultural awareness and emotional intelligence.

Board Nominees' Statements:

Fred Tipson, running to complete an unexpired term, feels a responsibility to stick with work of the Board that is still in process.

Kysseline Jean-Mary Chérestal, though raised Catholic in Haiti, feels she was "born Unitarian." Attending since 2003, during which time she became a wife, stepmother, and mother, she has found strength and comfort at All Souls. After her cousin passed away, Rob's sermon seemed to be "speaking only to us." Trained as a lawyer, she advocates for marginalized communities in the Global South. She has a commitment to diversity and to encouraging more families to join.

Cledwyn Jones, a member of the choir and regular attendee for two years, was raised in rural Georgia and now, for the first time, feels part of a community that speaks to his values. He's been heavily involved in Vespers services and Young Souls. There are a lot of others we can bring in if we reach out. Proper procedure (in church governance) allows an approach where all voices can be heard.

Vickie Lindsey has been coming for 2½ years, drawn at first when she attended a Washington Interfaith Network rally at which Allison Forbes spoke. She hit the ground running and found people passionate about what they do. She has participated in the Nominating Committee, which she left once she became a candidate, and Young Souls. "I just love it here," but there's a lot to learn.

Sterling Lloyd asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

Motion to approve the Board of Trustees slate; seconded; passed without opposition by voice vote.

Mark Clark introduced the slate of officer nominees. Three are incumbents: Treasurer Cheryl Gray; Assistant Treasurer Uta Allers; and Secretary Mark Matthews.

Ann Steinecke, nominee for assistant secretary, came to All Souls through social justice and anti-war action. Among other activities, she has participated in meal programs at Christ House and the Shrine of the Sacred Heart, and served as an usher.

Anne Bradley, nominee for Membership Secretary nominee, could not attend. Mark Clark said she "really wowed us with her passion for our cause and Unitarianism" when she met with the

Nominating Committee. A lifelong Unitarian originally from Tulsa, Okla., she has co-chaired the annual giving campaign for two years. While a member of All Souls Church in Manhattan, she served as church treasurer, annual giving chair and President of the Board of Trustees, among other positions. She also served as the chair of the Heart & Soul Auction, which raises money separately from the church budget to fund community outreach programs.

Sterling Lloyd asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

Motion to accept nominations for the officers slate; seconded; approved without opposition by voice vote.

Erika Landberg, as Chair of the Church Council, presented the slate of candidates for the Nominating Committee: Elizabeth Coit, George Reid, and Marlana Valdez were nominated to serve two-year terms; Morgan Duncan, Paula Shoecraft, Tony Volpe, Thomas Gremillion, and Tony Valdez were nominated to serve three years.

Mark Clark, Holly Reckord, Kelly Young, and Susan Riker were previously elected and will serve one more year.

Janine Chambers and Susan Crim, also previously elected, will continue for two more years.

Motion to approve the Nominating Committee slate; seconded; passed without opposition by voice vote.

Erika Landberg thanked several people who helped prepare and conduct the meeting: Gary Penn; Mark Clark; Victor Branham; and Steven Stichter. She also thanked the Board of Trustees.

The Senior Minister's Report for 2013 was dropped from the agenda to save time.

Sterling Lloyd reported on a "great year" for the Board of Trustees. Accomplishments included monitoring of progress toward Visioning Goals; updates on the church renovation at virtually every meeting; approval of a pre-construction contract and schematic design; a special congregational meeting April 7; approval of a general contractor; an updated charge for the Comprehensive Assets Planning Team (CAPT); and approval of a preferred lender to finance the renovation and an auditing firm. The board also received monthly reports on income and spending, monitored church management; approved new policies on acceptance of gifts and conflict resolution, and adopted a self-monitoring procedure.

Uta Allers, standing in for Membership Secretary Grant Smith, who could not attend, presented his report: Church membership stands at 1344, up 14 from a year ago, continuing a growth trend since 2005. Of the total, 967 are voting members. During the year, 109 joined, 94 left, and 8 died.

Erika Landberg,Carolynn Fowler Smith, Fred Tipson – Church Council Steering Committee: Three meetings this past year each drew 40-60 lay leaders. The coming renovation is

seen as an opportunity to scout new places to meet, brainstorm, and work with the Board. The council seeks to be inclusive in getting the congregation to coalesce around Visioning Goals. In the coming year, it aims to make measurement rubrics more reflective of progress. Carrie Davidson is now lay coordinator of pastoral care.

Discussion: No one seems to be in charge of increasing attendance (from the church's immediate neighborhood). John Tambornino didn't recognize the final statement of the Council's report as having come from the visioning process. ". . . All Souls Church cultivates and celebrates . . . a welcoming and accessible building. . ." A: The statement was added to reflect the congregation's intent when it voted for the renovation.

Tom Fox, CAPT Co-Chair: Asks other CAPT to stand, and praises support received from the Kerns Group, architects, and Forrester Construction. A closer examination of the church envelope reveals that windows are in better shape than was thought but there is a serious problem with the gutters – requiring significantly more money for repairs than anticipated – as well as electrical issues that need to be corrected. The permitting process is underway. CAPT faces a serious challenge in developing a final plan that fits what the congregation wants within the \$9.5 million approved budget. Forrester should receive bids from subcontractors by the end of January. A town hall meeting will be held similar to one in October, 2013, after which CAPT will make a recommendation to the Board.

Discussion: Will a timeline indicate parts of the building to be closed? Yes. Where will activities take place? Pierce Hall will be available through much of the renovation period.

Laurie Lester and Taryn Null, Co-Chairs, Third Century Challenge: Laurie leads applause for departing Board members. Reports a median pledge of \$5,650 and an average of \$13,200. The amount received so far is 43 percent of the goal. However, 145 pledgers have given less than 15 percent of their pledges.

John Strongman, Investment Committee Chair – financing update: The committee considered proposals from four banks -- First Virginia Community Bank; BB&T; Bank of the West; and Industrial Bank – and recommended First Virginia. It offered the best financial terms, was most flexible on the church's expected needs, has a good reputation in the community, and its senior management takes an interest. A \$5.5 million shortterm loan will convert to a longterm loan with an interest rate calculated as the rate on a 10-year Treasury bill plus 1.75 percent (4.5 percent based on current rates). Phyllis Caldwell led the work on financing and did a fabulous job. Endowment: It is now over \$6 million and is managed by the UU investment fund and TIAA-CREF investment services to nonprofits. The Investment Committee will soon have one or two vacancies.

Sterling Lloyd led applause for Erika Landberg, who in turn asked for applause for shared ministry.

Closing Prayer -- the Rev. Susan Newman.

The meeting ended at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Matthews, Secretary