

Unity Church of Raleigh
2022 Annual Membership Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2022

Approved at the June, 2023 Annual Meeting with no changes

Opening Prayer

The meeting began with an opening prayer by our minister, Rev. Ellen Barron, at 12:20 p.m.

Call to Order / Welcome

Board President Andy Anderson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. There were 32 members present.

Introduction of Board Members

Andy introduced the board members and their current roles: Betty Sari (Vice-President); Mary Butler (Secretary), Laura Dearth (Treasurer), Clara Davis and McCale Penven-Crew (Members-at-large), and Rev. Ellen Barron, Ex-Officio Member.

Andy noted the purpose of the meeting is to look back over the UCR fiscal year (May 31, 2021 to May 31, 2022), report on activities, and look forward to what's ahead in the coming year.

Andy explained that everyone should have received today's meeting agenda when they signed in on the Membership Sign-In Roster, and this meeting includes an election of two board members, the Nominating Committee for 2022-23, State of the Ministry Report which includes a financial report, team reports, and Q&A. He further stated that eligible members were requested to vote, sign-date and return the 2022 Elections Form by regular mail, e-mail, or drop off at the church.

Presentation of the 2021 Minutes

Secretary Mary Butler requested that everyone take a few minutes to review the minutes from last year and invited members to ask questions or make comments. There were no other questions or comments. A motion was made by Nancy Davison to accept the minutes and was seconded by Al Henderson. The minutes were approved with a verbal vote: All in favor with no one opposed.

Board Member Requirements

Andy then called upon Betty Sari, Vice President, to read the portion of our Bylaws (Article 6 – Section 2a and Section 10c) regarding elections, qualifications and voting.

Board Elections

Betty stated that there are two open board slots with a 3-year term: 1) Mary Butler's slot and Clara Davis' slot – both terms ended May 31, 2022. Existing member Clara Davis has completed the remaining term of Shamil Zah who left the Board last September. Clara has stated that she desires to serve a three-year term. This year's slate of candidates consists of Nitia Steward and Clara Davis, both of whom are members in good standing.

As per Robert's Rules of Order, Betty invited nominations from the floor. There were none.

She then called for a motion to accept the slate of candidates. A motion was made by Melanie Raskin and seconded by Greg Bockover to accept nominees Clara Davis and Nitia Steward. Betty called for a vote by asking for a show of hands from the membership. The two nominees were elected unanimously. No one opposed.

Nominating Committee Elections

Laura Dearth, Chairperson, announced the incoming 2023 Nominating Committee members, who will recruit and interview the Board Member candidates. They are Nancy Davison and Elaine Caldwell. Laura explained that Elaine is an alternate and will serve if Nancy is not available. A motion was made by Louise Smythe to accept the slate for nominating committee. Dianne Evans seconded. The motion was approved by a verbal vote. Laura then thanked the outgoing Nominating Committee members Rev. Ellen, Sharon Shehdan, and Peggy King.

State of the Ministry Report and Minister's Report

Rev. Ellen combined these two reports and reported on accomplishments during the past year, as follows:

- ❖ The Homecoming dinner event last evening was excellent – great food, music, and over 50 people attended. There were lots of new faces and former UCR members who were on hand to greet our guests Rev. Jim and Nancy Rosemergy. She was very pleased that we could celebrate in person this year.
- ❖ LUT Al Henderson will lead a new class on Tuesdays based on the foundation of Unity teachings. Wednesday evening classes are continuing as well.
- ❖ Technology continues to have a wide footprint on the way we operate with Zoom video recording, live streaming of the Sunday Services, and social media. Members Melanie, Sharon, Mary, Nancy S. and Rev. Ellen attended Unity Worldwide Ministries' first 3-day virtual Technology Conference in April; we benefitted from this training, connected with other Unity tech leaders, and we've started implementing an action plan for improvements. Last year, UCR applied for and received \$5,000 from the Rev. Ida Bowles Technology Grant Project (Unity of Hempstead and Long Island, NY) for Unity Ministries to begin improving our ability to provide online ministry. This grant helped purchase two widescreen televisions here in the Sanctuary; a laptop computer for Zoom operation, digital camera, mixer, and surround-sound microphone.
- ❖ We recently hired Morgan Alonso, a part-time Social Media Coordinator to help with our online digital presence -- Meetup, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. She works 2-3 hours a week to maintain UCR and UHWC's social media accounts.
- ❖ Because our ministry is founded on Prayer, our Prayer Chaplain training focus continues with monthly prayer sessions, and we provide bi-monthly pastoral care calls to our church community.
- ❖ Virtual classes have been very successful via Zoom—including Brene' Brown's Atlas of the Heart book; webinar by Leona Evans on Spiritual Activism; and a SEE class series on Self-Awareness with two book authors "Living in the Flow of Abundance" by Eric Butterworth, and "Conscious Living" by Gay Hendricks. "Living Room Conversations" training was completed by Peggy King, Clara Davis and Rev. Annie Nelson using Unity principles in learning to hear/listen from both sides without judgement; and how to be the counterpoint to negativity by speaking and affirming truth.
- ❖ The Unity Holistic Wellness Center launched in January with Saturday workshops on a

variety of health and wellness topics, along with a weekly Yoga class – all of which are led by local health practitioners from UCR and the Triangle. By being in existence, UHWC brings Unity principles and connects with other spiritual seekers through social media who are not necessarily desiring a Sunday church experience. As an alternative ministry, UHWC is separate from UCR, but provides financial support with monthly tithing and rental payments.

Rev. Ellen closed her remarks by thanking the congregation, stating that UCR needs their continuing support to be the difference in the world. This support enables the church to provide donations/outreach to local charities; financial support to Unity Worldwide Ministries and the Southeast Unity Association; and needed support to national and international organizations.

Finance Report

Board Treasurer Laura Dearth presented the Finance Report for the period June 2021 through May 2022. This report was included in the Annual Meeting handout to all voting members of the congregation. Laura encouraged members to enroll in our 3G Program because it allows the church to better plan monthly finances; plus, it is paperless when you enroll with your bank designating a specific amount for an automatic debit from your account. Laura then responded to questions from members Doug Walters and Renate Carreras: 1) 3G Program and how it works (Giving Green with Grace); 2) HOA fee – what does it cover: outside building maintenance—roofing repairs, all grounds, trees and landscaping; and 3) Communications – how does congregation communicate ideas: suggestions can be submitted to Board of Trustees by using the confidential Suggestion Box located on the back table.

Nancy Davison made the motion to accept the Finance Report; and Bob Barron seconded. The motion was approved by a verbal vote.

Team Reports

- **Fundraising Team:** Betty Sari reported that the team held one fundraising event since last June – our Annual Yard Sale – which raised over \$3,700. There were a couple Zoom Bingo events this past year with prizes, and all had lots of fun. The team also supported and planned this year's Homecoming event which was free; there were over 50 guests. Husband Ken's band played as a gift to the church. We raised over \$300 by selling raffle tickets for three items: 1) Kids' Basket; 2) Spa Basket; and 3) Picnic Cooler. Betty thanked volunteers Nancy, Sharon, Lin, Melanie, Pat, Andy, Elaine, Brian, Kathleen, Mary, Brandon, Bonnie and Ken for making this a great event. Betty looks forward to having more fundraising events and invited members to join the team.
- **Prayer Ministry:** Melanie Raskin stated this group (co-led with Betty Sari) has 25 team members who hold sacred space at home and in meditation and prayer for the church and all prayer requests. Since January, a total of 118 requests were received and prayed on for 30 days (they are also sent to Silent Unity for 30 days). This year, Rev. Ellen started prayer chaplain training sessions that are held via Zoom the first Thursday of each month. We have eight (8) callers who placed 105 Pastoral Care calls this year. We call our congregants on a bi-monthly basis to just check in, and to offer

prayer support, if needed. Melanie thanked Nitia, Clara, Nancy, and Peggy for leading Sunday Morning Meditations. Melanie also thanked the **Welcoming Team** (Ushers Ruth, Andy, Elaine, and Malcolm) who greet visitors outside the front entry, make introductions, share church information, and escort guests into the Sanctuary, and pass Offering bag during services. Melanie noted that the **Hospitality Team** supports special events and provides Coffee & Conversation snacks after Sunday Services; the **Caring Hearts Team** continues to send cards, condolences and celebratory wishes; and **Platform Leaders** along with our **Community Voice** speakers have performed fantastically during Sunday Services.

- **Sound-Music-Video Team:** Gregg Bockover reported that the Music team has continued to participate in Sunday Services with two musical selections. He gave special thanks to Sharon Shehdan for live-streaming and production of Sunday Services, adding that volunteers continue to step up to assist with slide projections, camera operation, and sound. Greg thanked Louise, Sadie, Bob B., Emily, Kat, Anne, Mary, Melanie, and Bob C.
- **CORE Team:** In Nancy Smith's absence, Sharon Shehdan reported on the team's activities. Despite COVID, since last June the CORE (Community Outreach) Team and congregation collected/delivered school supplies to children living at the Salvation Army shelter; delivered supplies/food to the Ronald McDonald House and to the VA Food Bank in Durham; signed/delivered hundreds of cards to the USO Holiday Cards for Heros program at the airport; sent much needed funds to orphaned and disabled children living on Rusinga Island in Kenya; delivered a generous mix of food, bedding materials, and other pet accessories to Saving Grace and Safe Haven for Cats animal shelters; donated Loose Change to Saving Grace and Safe Haven for Cats, as well as to the Kentucky tornado victims and the victims in Ukraine, AND provided over 100 lbs. PB&J to the Food Bank's Summer Lunch program for children. Due to the shortage of change, the Loose Change for Change program has been discontinued for now. Sharon thanked Nancy, Andy, Mary, Becky, Melanie, Laura, Al, Lynn Dave and Rebecca, Rev. Ellen, Louise and all of you for generously supporting UCR's outreach ministry.
- **Building & Grounds Team:** Andy did not have a report; however, he thanked Lin and Sharon, along with Mary for their diligent efforts in planting and maintaining our flower beds and containers.

Question and Answer Time

There were none.

Adjournment

In closing, Rev. Ellen thanked everyone for their faith, love, and support as well as sharing their time, talent, and treasures -- all of which serves as the spiritual nourishment for our church community. Rev. Ellen then gave the Closing Prayer, and the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Butler

Board Secretary