

Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting

January 28, 2018

There being a quorum the meeting was called to order by Moderator Carolyn Yocom at 11:35 a.m. and the Rev. Dr. David Lindsey offered an opening prayer.

The first item of business was receipt of reports. Carolyn asked if there were additions to the reports. David Lindsey offered thanks to those who helped during this hectic year from filling in for staff to assisting in the aftermath from the vandalism in April.

Robin Petrusak said while it was not an addition to the Board of Trustees report it warranted mention that it had been raining all night, and we saw no buckets or a blue tarp on the roof. Special thanks to Mike Nagy and Terry Downs for identifying the contractor, negotiating the contract, and following through. She also thanked the anonymous donor who helped kick start the building fund campaign.

Drew Nettinga moved to allow Church Council to review and approve today's minutes; the motion was seconded. The vote was favorable.

Drew Nettinga moved to accept the annual reports; the motion was seconded. The vote was favorable.

Tom Ross, Chair of Nominations & Appointments offered the proposed change in Bylaws wording.

Proposed wording:

Article XII – Committees

Section I: The Nominations and Appointments Committee shall consist of six members elected for a term of two years, three being elected at each Annual Meeting. Members may be re-elected for one additional term.

The motion was seconded; the motion passed.

Next order of business was elections. Tom Ross asked Barbara Allen and Bob Lingo to pass out the ballots. Tom thanked members who served through the year plus newcomers who are stepping up to fill positions. He reviewed numbers of positions for each board and committee and the number that would be filled after this election. A roster of officers and board and committee members will be posted on the web after elections. He moved we accept the ballot as prepared. It was seconded, and the motion passed. Ballots were collected.

While ballots were being counted, Barbara Shepherd and Jan Curtis introduced a branding exercise for our congregation. Barbara Shepherd said the big task for the Communications Committee in the last year and in 2018 is the redesign of our website. The committee selected Sarah Moon & Co. out of Oregon to do the redesign. Barbara asked Jan to talk the congregation through the branding exercise. Jan thanked Big Duck NYC for the branding exercise. One part of branding is a single idea (positioning = head) that we want people to think of and the other is the personality (heart), the tone and style – the overarching feeling you want people to associate with LRUCC. Members were grouped in twos and threes to respond to the exercise's questions which would help lead us to how we want to be seen to the public or on website.

Tom Ross announced the election of entire slate of officers and board and committee members, and he thanked Carolyn Yocom for her service as moderator during a challenging year.

The Rev. Alexis Kassim gave a brief update regarding the Multiracial and Multicultural (M&M) process at Little River. It began in 2006 but has had interruptions along the way. The Board of Social Outreach and Justice (BOSJ) is encouraging the congregation to follow through with the process. It differs from Open and Affirming in that M&M it is not a step-by-step process where there is an ending. Alexis said it was more of a spiritual discernment process to determine how a congregation might be more welcoming to different races and cultures. There have been two listening sessions, one in October and one in November. There was a brief comment from the congregation about leveraging some of our love for jazz and klezmer music.

Next item of business stemmed from a suggestion from the Board of Trustees which was then discussed by Church Council. Article XII, Section 11, of the Constitution and Bylaws allows for the establishment of a special committee. Carolyn spoke about the consultant's work a couple of years ago in which the congregation affirmed that we wanted to continue in this building. The proposed committee is to examine the needs that exist surrounding our building and grounds and how the use and cost reflect our mission. If approved, committee members will be identified through volunteers, as well as by the Pastors and Church Council. Once approved, the Committee will be introduced to the congregation.

Robin Petrusak gave background from Trustees' perspective. There is interior and exterior work that still needs to be done. The state of the parking lot is a big issue. There has been talk of a Building Campaign or Capital Campaign and whether we need one. The Trustees (and Church Council) believe that the issue requires congregational involvement, beginning with a committee from a cross-section of members.

Andrew Hunter moved that the congregation establish a special committee under Article XII, Section 11 of the Constitution and Bylaws to explore options for the use of Little River UCC building and grounds to further its mission and ministry. The committee will be composed of members representing a cross-section of the congregation. Committee members will be identified through volunteers as well as by the Pastors and Church Council. Once approved, the committee will be introduced to the congregation. Discussion followed. Dave Curtis proposed a friendly amendment that the committee be required to report back at the next annual meeting. The amendment was accepted. The motion was passed.

Mary Summers gave the Treasurer's report. She spoke to the purpose of our money which allows us to meet and worship God in this building. We ended 2017 with a positive balance of \$54,508. Our expenses in 2017 were \$723,796.00. Actual expenses by category: 43% staff; 23% operations; 12% benevolences; 10% reserves; 4% programs; 6% unspent. The Endowment Fund has a book value of \$351,277, and the total market value at the end of the year was \$460,001. The average rate of return for investments was 15.8%. 2017 was the first year we dispersed funds from the Endowment Fund. Benevolence disbursements were \$118,130 which included all the special offerings and the monies managed by the Board of Outreach and Social Justice on our behalf. We spent almost \$50,000 on major repair reserve and the fund has a balance of \$10,864. The building fund goal was \$30k, but we exceeded that by 35% for a total of \$40,584. Robin added that about half of the roof payment came out of the major repair reserve. The balance due on the roof has not been paid and will be paid out of the building fund which will leave the balance of the building fund at about \$4,000. Carolyn expressed thanks to Robin and Mary for their faithful witness.

George Leonard, Chair of the Endowment Fund Committee, spoke to the distribution of Endowment Fund in 2017 which was \$12k. The Endowment Fund has policies which determine distribution of available money.¹\$14,000 is available in 2018. BOSJ has requested \$5,600 for 2018, and they will determine how it is spent. The Communications Committee has requested \$4,200 for this year for the web redesign project. Twenty percent of the Endowment Fund is available for the operating fund; \$2800 has been requested by the Board of Trustees for that purpose. Last, \$1,400 will be put toward accumulating \$10,000 for an endowed scholarship at Howard University. The Endowment Fund continues to grow, particularly through contributions and provides an opportunity to support the mission of Little River UCC in perpetuity.

Carolyn called on Robin to present the 2018 operating budget. Carolyn advised that the congregation will vote on the 2018 budget and the Endowment Fund distribution at the same time after the budget presentation and discussion.

Robin Petrusak advised that the total pledge income is figured at \$597,708, which includes automatic donations for which we have not received pledge card. The Endowment Fund transfer is \$2800, non-pledge income \$37,000, plate offering \$5,700, miscellaneous \$650, building use \$23,500, interest \$1800, for a total of \$669,153² and with carryover from 2017 budget, the total income for 2018 is projected at \$723,653.00. Proposal is \$72,000 for benevolences. It is up to BOSJ to determine how much to send to OCWM and Potomac Association.

Proposed compensation for compensation for Senior Pastor. The total is \$130,322.00 which reflects a 1% increase. David Lindsey has requested a housing allowance of \$52,000 for 2018, and, in accordance with that request, the budget proposal provides that the breakdown in his overall annual compensation be \$52,000 for housing and the balance for salary.

Compensation for Alexis Kassim also reflects a 1 percent increase. She has requested a housing allowance that is one-third of her total compensation, and the budget proposal provides for that breakdown of one-third housing allowance and two-thirds salary in her compensation. Total compensation for ministers is \$241,763, including \$750 for supply ministers.

Proposed budget for non-pastoral staff is \$140,663 which includes salaries, FICA, and staff training and appreciation. This is a one percent increase in salary for the Director of Music, the Youth Choirs Director and for child care providers. The communications coordinator and the sexton will receive an increase to \$23.00 an hour.

Robin and David have identified a strong candidate for office administrator, but they have not made an offer yet. They are proposing \$22 an hour for a 30-hour work week.

The proposed programs budget is \$35,700, excluding salaries.

Operations & building maintenance includes \$48,500 for two part-time bookkeepers working twenty hours a week at \$35 an hour. They are contractors, not employees of Little River. We are also receiving

¹ See website under Policies.

² Robin's fears were realized when someone pointed out that the PowerPoint slide contained an error and read \$699,153. She said we should think of it as a Navajo rug and that only God is perfect.

support from Your Part-time Controller which has increased to \$140 an hour. Trustees believe this is unsustainable. Goal in 2018 is to reduce YPTC. We do not currently have a loan, but the incoming Board of Trustees will address the issue of any loan. Building & grounds maintenance includes the maintenance and inspection for HVAC system. The first phase of our security system will be installed next week and is included. The total for operations & building is \$211,500.

Transfer to reserves is \$22,000. The transfer to major repair is \$13,500. The camera security system is about half paid for and the \$4,000 will pay for the balance; \$900 is for organ repair reserve, and \$3,600 is for the website upgrade reserve. In 2017, an extra \$100 was put into organ repair reserve and an extra \$400 was put into the website upgrade reserve. Rather than back those amounts out, we are correcting this year by reducing the amounts for the appropriate funds.

Robin moved to accept the proposed budget for 2018 and the proposed distributions of the Endowment Fund. The motion was seconded. Brief discussion. The motion passed.

Mike Nagy shared his interest in having the American flag displayed somewhere on the grounds of Little River UCC. He noted that in past churches where he has worshiped that the flag was displayed. He stated that he will be working with the lay leadership at Little River to put some information out about displaying the American flag and hoped that this will be considered as a formal motion at a future congregational meeting.

Carolyn Yocom introduced the new moderator, John Mingus who advised his wife, Carolyn, that there would not be a ban on discussion of church business at home. John stated that there are a lot of projects for the coming year, and he is looking forward to working with everyone and advised people to use the email moderator@lrucc.org to contact him.

George Leonard stated that David had said the year had been hectic, but from George's perspective in the pew, it's been a good year. We have a complete pastoral staff, we have a surplus, we have a new roof, and we have been active in spreading the Good News to the community. He said the congregation should thank itself and its leaders.

David closed the meeting with a prayer at 1:14 p.m.

Submitted by

Jean Wheelock, Church Clerk