

Minutes of June 13, 2021, Annual Meeting
Please send any comments to secretary@uuwestport.org
The following minutes were presented and approved at the June 12, 2022, Annual Meeting

**MINUTES OF THE 70TH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH IN WESTPORT
JUNE 13, 2021**

Call to Order: Luke Garvey, President of the Board of Trustees (the Board) and Moderator for this meeting, called the 70th Annual Meeting to order at 11:32 AM. This meeting was conducted on a Zoom format. Sincere thanks go to Bruce MacNair and other members of the Tech Team, who managed the technical aspects, and to all others who helped with the meeting.

Opening Reflection: Senior Minister Rev. John Morehouse shared inspirational words and the reading, “Nothing is Static” by Manish Mishra-Marzetti. Our virtual chalice was lit by Beth Cliff.

Quorum Report: Stapley Emberling, Secretary of the Board, confirmed that 95 Members signed in via ZOOM chat. This exceeds the quorum requirement of 62 Members.

Approval of Member Meeting Minutes: Luke Garvey introduced the Minutes from two prior Member Meetings:

- 1) The Minutes from the 69th Annual Meeting on June 14, 2020
- 2) The Minutes from the Member Meeting on September 20, 2020

A motion to approve the Minutes from both meetings was made by Michelle Garvey and seconded by Tom Hearne. A vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Very Fine Lifetime Volunteer Service Award: Board member Catherine Onyemelukwe announced that the winner of the 19th annual Very Fine Lifetime Volunteer Service Award is Mary-Jane Cross. Congregants expressed their joy and heartfelt endorsement, and many sent congratulations to Mary-Jane via Zoom Chat.

Board of Trustees Report: Luke Garvey reviewed the activities of the Board during this past year, noting that the Board has been monitoring progress towards the priority goals (“Ends”) of the Congregation. After the challenges of the pandemic, the Board is looking forward to increased opportunities for engagement and connection within our community. TUCW continues to operate under the leadership model of policy-based governance, which is proving to be an effective method of governance. The full report can be seen in the 2021 Annual Report.

Financial Reports:

2020-2021 Pledge Report: Mary Money, co-chair of the Year-Round Stewardship Committee (along with Sam Somashekar and Elena Rockman-Blake), gave some highlights for the year in Stewardship. Although pledges dropped this year, as expected, primarily due to conditions surrounding the pandemic and the resulting economic uncertainty, participation in pledge and fundraising events has been robust, and many congregants upped their pledges midway through the fiscal year.

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Endowment Committee: Chair Sharon Poole reviewed the income and disbursements from the Endowment, noting that a grant of \$30,000 was made from the Endowment to the Operating Fund, as has been the practice in recent years, and the Endowment Committee has committed another \$30,000 to the Operating Fund for next year. In addition, the Committee has approved making additional grants up to \$40,000 if needed. It is possible that even more than this \$40,000 will be needed and the Committee will work with the Finance Committee and the Board to ensure that the Operating Fund requirements are met in this upcoming transition year. Most of the \$500,000 in matching funds for the Capital Campaign are still being held in the Endowment, keeping the funds invested until they are needed. Details are in the Annual Report.

Through the contribution of the Beth and Gordon Cliff family, a new fund was created this year for the enhancement of Family Faith Formation. This new fund is named for Beth's parents and is the Scouller/Nelson Fund for Family Faith Formation. The Fund is intended to exist in perpetuity, providing income each year for program enhancement. The family has made an initial contribution and has pledged an additional amount in the next calendar year. Additional gifts to the Fund from members of our Congregation are welcome. The Congregation and the entire TUCW community are grateful to Beth and her family for this generous and important gift.

Financial Results & Proposed Budget: Steve Grathwohl, Treasurer, explained the 2020-2021 Profit and Loss (P/L) statement for the year, and presented the proposed Budget and Contingencies for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. From a Balance Sheet perspective, he explained, we are in very good financial shape: strong asset position, no mortgage and almost no liabilities, lots of positive equity, and a healthy endowment. However, from an Annual Operating Budget perspective, 2021-2022 will be a transitional year. We need to "right-size" our operations to reflect changes in the Congregation – some that were caused or accelerated by COVID-19, some caused by life cycle transitions (moves, retirements, passings, etc.). We need to use 2021-2022 to reposition TUCW for 2022-2023 and beyond. There must be a balance between Pledges and Expenses. To have it otherwise, Steve warned, is not sustainable.

He also thanked the Finance Committee for all its time and effort. The full report is in the Annual Report.

Ratification of the 2021-2022 Budget: Chuck Harrington made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 budget. The motion was seconded by Shari Brennan. The motion passed by unanimous vote and the 2021-2022 budget was ratified.

Proposal to Approve the Anti-Racism Resolution: Kathy Roberts, Chair of the Racial Justice Council, presented the Anti-Racism Resolution to the Congregation. She read the Resolution aloud, with the help of Rainy Broomfield, Cheryl Dixon, Melanie Wyler, and Arnela Ten-Meer. Kathy Roberts explained that passing the Resolution would also mean that TUCW was approving the adoption of the 8th UU Principle, since that Principle is incorporated into the Resolution. Cheryl Dixon read the 8th Principle aloud to the

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Congregation. Kathy further explained that the Resolution, if passed, was meant to be used as a guideline for our social justice work going forward. It is meant as a statement of affirmation, not a contract. Ruth Fontilla made a motion to adopt the Resolution along with the 8th UU Principle, and the motion was seconded by Linda Hudson.

Following procedure, Luke Garvey then asked if there was discussion, and Charles Klein proposed an Amendment to the Resolution. The Amendment would add the words “health” and “disabilities” to the list of considerations in Section 3. Ken Vogel, as Parliamentarian, interjected at this point to explain the procedural process. Passing an amendment now would mean the Resolution would return to the Justice Council for rewriting before it could again be brought to the Congregation for a vote. During discussion, it was noted that the Resolution did reference “ability,” so perhaps specific mention of “disability” was unnecessary. Luke Garvey offered an argument against adopting an amendment at this stage that would add or change one or two words of the Resolution and cause months of delay before another Member Meeting could be assembled. After discussion, Charles Klein agreed that the current wording did address to some extent what his Amendment was attempting, and he graciously withdrew the Amendment. The motion to adopt the Resolution, as it was presented, along with the 8th Principle, was again on the table for consideration. There was no further discussion, and a vote was called. The motion was carried by overwhelming votes and the adoption of the Anti-Racism Resolution and the 8th UU Principle was approved.

Elections: Felicia Keeton and Tom Hearne, Co-Chairs of the Nominating Committee, thanked the members of the committee for their hard work and presented the following slate of nominees for election to office.

- **Board of Trustees**
 - Deb Garskof (1st term to 2024)
 - Luke Garvey (2nd term to 2024)
 - Steve Grathwohl (2nd term to 2024)
 - Wendy Levy (completing 1st term to 2022)
 - Ravi Sankar (completing 1st term to 2023)
- **Endowment Committee**
 - Tom Comer (completing term to 2022)
 - Cindy Potter (term to 2026)
- **Committee on Ministries**
 - Chuck Colletti (term to 2025)
 - Monica Garrison (term to 2025)
 - Shahan Islam (term to 2026)
 - Shrutika Sankar (term to 2026)
- **Nominating Committee**
 - Jim Cooper (term to 2023)
 - Joann Coviello (term to 2023)

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Kristine Oulman (term to 2023)

A motion to approve the slate of nominees was made by Charles Harrington and seconded by Beth Cliff. The vote to approve was unanimous. The slate of nominees was approved.

Installation of New Board & Elected Committee Members: Board member Catherine Onyemelukwe welcomed the newly elected Board and other Elected Committee members, charging them to serve the Congregation to the best of their abilities, and charging their fellow committee members and the Congregation to support them in the work they are taking on.

The entire Board also takes this opportunity to thank Bob Trefry, who exits the Board this June after 6 years of service, for his energy, hard work, and wise counsel. Bob has been a pleasure to work with and he was always quick to offer a strong hand of support to help incoming Board members become acclimated. His presence at our Board meetings will be missed.

#MeToo Resolution and Gender Equity Report: Cheryl Dixon, co-chair (with Sudha Sankar) of the Gender Equity Team (GET), reported on TUCW's progress to date on the directives of the 2018 Congregational #MeToo Resolution, and noted highlights of the work done by the GET this past year. The GET also acts as a resource to educate other TUCW groups and committees in broadening their perspectives and awakening awareness and responsiveness to minority voices and sensibilities in our community and beyond that may have been previously ignored. This work has been meaningful in the lives of individual women in the Congregation and powerful in inspiring leaders to rethink the words they use and the ways TUCW can be more inclusive and welcoming. The full report is in the 2021 Annual Report.

Committee on Ministries (COM) Report: Randy Burnham, chair of the COM, reflected on the COM's role in support of the Ministry this past year and mentioned highlights of the work that has been done. He thanked the committee for all its hard work. The full report is in the Annual Report.

New Business: There was no new business.

Adjournment: Randy Burnham made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Andy Gundell, and unanimously passed. The meeting was adjourned at 1:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stapley Emberling,
Secretary for the Board of Trustees
June 13, 2021