

Minutes of the 2023 UUCL Fall Congregational Meeting: November 12, 2023

Forum: Hybrid: In-person (50 in attendance) and Zoom (10 in attendance)

Board of Trustees Co-President Steve Jones convened the meeting at 11:51 and lit a chalice. Rev. Patricia Guthmann Haresch gave a reading.

Steve, citing Article 5.4 in the Bylaws and noting that 19 new members had signed the book after the 60-day deadline required for new members to vote, proposed that the 60-day limit be suspended for any voting today. Sussan Lithgoe seconded the motion, and it was passed overwhelmingly by the congregants.

Referring to a topic originally discussed in 2022, Rev. Pat cited the “questionable histories” of some of the historical figures depicted in the sanctuary’s century-old stained glass windows and how some new and existing members have questioned their appropriate presence in a Unitarian Universalist church. In order to gauge congregational opinion, she presented a survey of possible options to address the polarizing issue. Survey options range from doing nothing to placing plaques that offer 21st-century perspectives on the windows’ subjects to removal of the stained glass and replacement with clear glass. Members are asked to return the survey within two weeks.

Members offered many comments. Several want complete removal, citing the white supremacy that some of the window subjects embody. Some asked for further discussion of the issue. Two sources from UUCL members, a book on the windows by Emily Klenin and an article in the *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society* by David Schuyler, were suggested for further information.

Darcy Pollock gave a brief summary of the 2022-2023 year-end financial report. She emphasized that ongoing budgetary deficits, even those relieved by deceased members’ bequests, are not sustainable and cannot be ignored. She announced that the Task Force looking into options for correcting a continuing deficit will launch a supplementary pledge campaign. She noted that if every member gave an additional \$5 per week, the deficit could be erased.

Several UUCL representatives at the 2023 UUA General Assembly in Pittsburgh this past June commented briefly on some of their takeaways. Randy Newswanger cited the “amazing” new UUA president, Sophia Betancourt, and noted the value of the many seminars, such as one he attended on responsible investment. Naomi Levine praised the many educational programs and workshops. George Herr-Riser cited the “intense” job of being a delegate and mentioned the value of seminars on the pending UUCL 8th Principle as well as on mental health CPR. Stephanie Santiago called the BIPOC gathering “sustaining.”

Rev. Pat noted that the 2024 GA will be held virtually, and the 2025 GA will take place in Baltimore. She thanked the Walters Trust for defraying some of the 21023 GA registration costs.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:48.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Chappell, Secretary