

**Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church
Annual Congregational Meeting
May 19, 2019**

Call to Order; Rules for Voting and Discussion

GINNA Mashburn, TVUUC President, called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m., and confirmed that a quorum was present. She also announced that a light lunch would be provided during the meeting, prepared by Matthew Blondell, Joy Fels, Cindy Moffett, and Grier Novinger.

Honoring Volunteers

Jayne Raparelli and Nathan Paki were both recognized for their many years of volunteer service to the church. Jayne Raparelli has recently stepped down as Coordinator of the TVUUC Family Promise Program; Nathan Paki was honored for his service coordinating worship services whenever Senior Minister Chris Buice was absent.

GINNA also thanked the following Board Members who are rotating off the TVUUC Board at the end of June:

- Jeff Kovac, Past President
- Atha Bayiates
- Bill Myers (also Chair of the Stewardship Committee)
- Terry Uselton

Introduction of New Staff Member

GINNA then introduced JAMETTA Alston who has been hired as the new Assistant Minister, beginning on July 1, 2019. Since JAMETTA's appointment is for one year, the Personnel Committee will determine by October 1 the procedure for considering an extension of the agreement, one acceptable to both the church and JAMETTA. JAMETTA is an ordained Minister in the United Church of Christ, as well as an attorney. The new position of Assistant Minister will combine the pastoral care duties currently held by Ministerial Intern Pam Johnson, and the membership coordination part of Lauren Hulse's current position.

Report of Nominating Committee and Election of Positions for 2019-20 Year

WIMBERLEY Thompson, the current Chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked the other members of the Nominating Committee:

- Ted Jones (who becomes chair in July)
- Betty Bumgarner
- Barbara Johnson
- Mark Mohundro
- Mary Touchton
- Denise Coleman, TVUUC President-elect (*ex officio*)

Wimberley then presented the full ballot to the congregation, and asked the nominees to stand.

Nominees presented to the congregation for a vote were:

President-elect: Matthew Blondell

Treasurer-Elect: Viren Lalka

Secretary-Clerk to the Board: Wendy Syer

At-Large Board Members (Three-year term): Eddie Chin, and Justina Hyfantis, and Jamie Watts

At-Large Board Member (one-year term completing term of Matthew Blondell): Alice Woody

Endowment Fund Committee Members: Bill Hotz and Andria Yates

Nominating Committee Chair-elect: Laurie Knox

Nominating Committee Members: Roy Kersey and Lance McCold

There was a call for further nominations from the floor, but none were offered. A motion to close the nominations was seconded and approved.

After the Treasurer's Report, paper ballots were marked and collected for counting by Board members. Later in the meeting, it was announced that 90 votes had been cast, with all voting to approve the full slate of nominees. **The President declared that all candidates were elected.**

According to current church bylaws, the **Rising Chair of the Program Council** is not elected by the congregation, but rather appointed by the Board of Directors. A handout given to members stated that The Nominating Committee has nominated Jamey Dobbs for this position. The Board will vote on this appointment at its June meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Robby McMurry, TVUUC Treasurer, gave a financial report for the 2018-19 year and presented the budget for the 2019-20 fiscal year, which begins on July 1.

Highlights of his report included the following:

- The amount raised during the recent Pledge Campaign is more than last year, but still not enough to fund all salaries and programs at the requested levels.
- The budget includes anticipated income of \$11,902 for pledges not yet received.
- While the majority of church revenue comes from pledges, it also includes anticipated income from the rummage sale, auction, gift card sales, and room rental.
- The 2019-20 budget includes the estimated value of a car offered to the church by a member to be sold.
- The budget includes the cost of a new and much-needed telephone system and the one-time cost of purchasing a software program (Basecamp) for the use of the Strategic Planning Committee.
- A new fund has been created to assist with pastoral care duties.
- The cost of grounds maintenance has increased.
- In accordance with UUA policy, the church's contribution to the UUA will increase by 10%. (The alternative would be to contribute 6.75% of the church's operating budget which would have cost more.)

A member asked if the 2019-20 budget will permit any increase in staff salaries. Robby responded that the current budget does not allow for any salary increases. If more than \$11,902 is received in new pledges, the amount will first be allocated to the reserve fund; any excess may be designated for salary increases. [Church policy states that three months' worth of budgeted expenses should be kept in reserve. As the reserve was used last year to retire the mortgage, the reserve fund is now being increased to the three-month level.] Ginna reiterated the great importance of increasing staff salaries, after several years with no increases. "This is not a hollow goal" she stressed.

Robby also reminded members that they can create some additional income to the church by making Amazon purchases through AmazonSmile. [Instructions: Go to <https://smile.amazon.com> and search for Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church. Then proceed with the order. 0.5% of the order will then be donated to TVUUC. Starting at <https://www.amazon.com> will not result in a donation to TVUUC.]

The congregation later voted by paper ballot to approve the budget for 2019-20.

Change in the Church Bylaws

A handout given to members proposed the following changes to the Bylaws. These changes have been approved by the Board, subject to approval by the membership:

- The Board of Directors will have “up to two” youth representatives (changed from “one or two”).
- The Chair-elect of the Program Council will be elected by the membership at the annual congregational meeting (starting in 2020.)
- Program Council “Rising Chair” is changed to “Chair -Elect”.
- Personnel Committee will include the Past Chair of the committee.

The proposed changes in the bylaws were approved by the membership. Other, non-substantive changes in wording may be added without a congregational vote.

Redesignation of TVUCC as an LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation

TVUCC has been designated as a UUA Welcoming Congregation for the last 26 years. As the UUA requirements for this designation have changed, Mark Mohundro has proposed that we apply for re-designation. Under new guidelines, this designation will need to be renewed annually.

The membership voted by paper ballot to approve the proposal to reapply for the LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation designation.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting was made, seconded and approved by voice vote.

Review of Board Activities

GINNA Mashburn called attention to the handout listing the goals and activities of the TVUUC Board over the past year. They include:

- Greater visibility of Board activities:
 - ✓ The President has contributed regular articles to the Church newsletter summarizing Board activities.
 - ✓ We added the “Fireside Chat” after each Sunday service, an opportunity to chat with a Board Member.
 - ✓ Board Members have been attending staff meetings and Religious Education programs.
- Greater involvement in the Stewardship Campaign:
 - ✓ A Board member was appointed to head the Stewardship Committee. This facilitated the communication between the Board and the Stewardship Committee.
 - ✓ Board members volunteered to assist with the stewardship campaign.
 - ✓ An attempt will be made to emphasize the need for donations throughout the year.

- Creation of a larger, active, and diverse Worship Committee:
 - ✓ The Worship committee was reformed with Elnora Williams as Chair and several additional members.
 - ✓ Worship Assistants have been chosen to help with services when the Senior Minister is absent; Pam Johnson designed and conducted a training program for the Worship Assistants.
- Renewed emphasis on strategic planning:
 - ✓ The Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by Denise Coleman, has met regularly over the year and created goals for the future of the church.
- Senior Minister evaluation:
 - ✓ The Board conducted an internal evaluation of the Senior Minister, and he responded. The 2019-20 Board will continue this process.
- Other: The Board has
 - ✓ stayed informed of Program Council work.
 - ✓ worked with the Personnel Committee in hiring a new Assistant Minister.
 - ✓ worked within the guidelines of policy governance and the spirit of the church covenant.

Report of the Endowment Committee

Committee Chair Ken Stephenson gave a report from the Endowment Committee. The current balance in the Endowment Fund is approximately \$420,000. During fiscal year 2018-19, approximately \$5000 in gifts has been received, and the fund has generated about \$9500 in interest. Ken stressed the importance of a healthy endowment for the long-term future of TVUUC.

Work continues on the two Endowment projects approved for 2018 and 2019:

- Plans have been made to create an outdoor patio behind the Fellowship Hall, using concrete pavers; construction is scheduled to begin in June of this year.
- A Welcoming Garden is being created in front of the church, near Kingston Pike; a number of native plants have already been planted.

The Committee expects to start accepting proposals for new projects in October of this year.

The Committee also plans to move funds from the UUA Common Ground Fund to a Vanguard Account in anticipation of higher returns from investments.

Members of the Endowment Fund this year have been:

- Ken Stephenson, Chair
- Bill Cherry
- Betty Coleman
- Don Dougall
- Sherry Kasper
- Lillian Mashburn
- Grier Novinger

Share-the-Plate Program

Terry Uselton, Chair of the Share-the-Plate Task Force, reported that nominations will now be accepted for the 2019-20 Share-the-Plate Program. He reminded us that the format for this program changed a year ago, enabling six long-time church-related programs to participate in the Share-the-Plate program without competing with nominated programs. We will use the same model for the coming year, choosing twelve other programs to be chosen by congregational vote from the nominated programs. Each of the twelve programs will receive a share of the collection during two Sundays. Six additional

Sundays during the year are reserved for programs or organizations to be chosen by the Minister. Terry encouraged everyone to consider nominating a program, and then to vote, either on paper or on-line. He feels that this program not only makes a difference to the recipients of the funds, but also makes a statement about who we are as a church.

The six programs to be guaranteed funding from Sunday collections are:

- Family Promise
- FISH
- Lonsdale Mentoring Program
- TVUUC Community Gardens
- Volunteer Ministry Center Meals
- TVUUC Advancing Equality Fund

A question was then raised about how the six programs were chosen for the automatic or “guaranteed” funding. How can a new program, such as the TVUUC Diversity Library, be added to this category? Terry and Claudia Pressley explained that, for the coming year, the Senior Minister could choose the Library for one of the six undesignated Sundays. The Board may want to discuss other options for future years, such as giving the Library automatic inclusion (like the six programs listed above). Another member stated that he felt it is unfortunate that programs with close connections to the church must rely on Sunday collections rather than being included in the annual operating budget of the church. The Board could consider building support of long-standing programs into the regular church budget.

A question was also raised about how much money is contributed to Share-the-Plate programs. Claudia Pressley stated, that she did not have exact figures immediately available but she estimated that \$500 to \$1000 is usually raised during a Share-the-Plate Sunday.

Ginna Mashburn also reported that the TVUUC Diversity Library had a booth at the recent Children’s Festival of Reading at the World’s Fair Site, generating interest in TVUUC itself.

Concluding Comments

Ginna Mashburn expressed her gratitude to Church Administrator Claudia Pressley and the rest of the TVUUC staff for all their work. Claudia, in turn, acknowledged the help she has received from many people in the congregation, especially during the absence this year of Senior Minister Chris Buice.

Ginna then introduced Denise Coleman who will become President in July of this year. Denise stated that it is an honor to serve as President and she looks forward to the coming year. She hopes, in particular, to find new ways to “fund what we love,” exploring ways to find new donors. She thanked Ginna Mashburn and Jeff Kovac for the mentoring they have given her, and Robby McMurry and Wendy Syer for remaining one more year as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. She looks forward to working with President-elect Matthew Blondell.

The meeting was then adjourned.

*Submitted by Wendy Syer
Secretary-Clerk
6/13/2019*