February 21, 2024
UCM Board Meeting Agenda *and Notes*

People present: Rev. Joan; UCM Board Officers Claudia Clark (President), Ansel Ploof (Vice-President), Fran Dodd (Financial Officer), Brenda Bean (Secretary); and At-large Board Members Steve Gold, Hugo Liepmann, Jen Matthews.

4:00 Check In – What's On Our Minds? *Failure of electrical appliance(s); Lingering injuries (small-ball massage releases tension and pain!) Wonderful weekend with family; Walks outdoors in the sun; Missing materials for this meeting; Son's upcoming school graduation; NOFA, forest use, and planning for planting; Flood watch in Burbank, CA!*

4:05 Chalice Lighting and Reading – *Ansel led us in a short breathing meditation.*

4:15 Approve Board Minutes February 7, 2024 – *Steve moved and Hugo seconded* ***to approve these minutes; the Board agreed***.

4:20 Discussion [of Delegation for GA] - *In the past the Executive Team (ET) announced to the congregation the opportunity (and financial support) to serve as a delegate representing UCM at the UUA's annual General Assembly (GA), and the ET informed the Board who was interested.*

This year Steve Finner proposed to the Board a more formal process of delegation (see Board Selection of Delegates to UUA). ***The Board*** *did not consider the role of the ET vs. the Board in this matter but* ***quickly decided against*** **forming another group/task force/committee.** ***The Board then agreed to submit an open invitation to the congregation via an article in the Weekly Announcements, through which we will seek a diversity of delegates who are UCM members.*** *Because the GA business will be focused on revising the UUA's Article II, the delegates must be willing to study and vote on the proposed revisions. Therefore,* ***we decided it makes sense to also reach out to the people who have been attending the workshop which Rev. Joan has been leading about those revisions.***

The Board began to discuss Steve Finner's proposal that the delegates be ratified by the congregation at the Annual Meeting. We considered some of the range of business to be conducted at the Annual Meeting, including the election of new Board members. This led to conversation about the intentions of the current Board members:
- *Hugo's 2-year term is ending; he will not seek re-election.*
- *Fran's 2-year term is ending; she is undecided about seeking re-election.*
- *Jen's 1-year term is ending; she will seek re-election.*
- *The terms of the rest of us end in June, 2025.*

It is now the duty of the Secretary to let the congregation know that there will be at least one vacant position on the Board so people can nominate themselves by April 15 (as *directed by Section 5.6 of the Bylaws).* ***We agreed to discuss all of this further at the next meeting.***

4:35 UCM Climate Resiliency – *We referenced the hot-linked memo (*Update) *and then reflected together on possible next steps. Joan agreed the UUA might have guidance for us because there are congregations already responding to climate disasters (wildfires, hurricanes).*

We agreed to keep this topic alive by small steps (such as weekly tabling in the Vestry) so it organically becomes what we and the congregation are thinking about; only later will we bring the ideas together. The Board could offer more structured opportunities (in small groups?) for conversation as early as possible (late spring? next fall?) and then afterwards choose options for in-depth research. We acknowledged that each option is comprised of many steps and further choices, each one uncertain in outcome. There is danger in seeking simple solutions.

4:50 Annual Pledge Drive Update – *Ansel asked the Board to pledge early and join the Steward's Zoom call on Saturday; the start of the Annual Pledge Drive is this Sunday, Feb. 25.*

5:00 Minister's Report – *Joan highlighted the "Member Outreach" part of her monthly report, with certification attached to the UUA of UCM's 2024 membership. Two years of not meeting in person during Covid - and perhaps disruption from the flood – has affected the membership. Attendance itself has changed since virtual participation became possible/habitual.*

In the "Prophetic Outreach" part of her monthly report, Joan wondered if ***the UCM Governing Board would like – so Steve moved and Brenda seconded - to endorse the Poor People's Campaign rally scheduled in Montpelier for March 2.*** *The Racial Justice Group of UCM has already done so and is helping with the logistics. After talking about the goals of the national and Vermont campaigns and UCM's aspirations,* ***the Board approved the motion.*** *We noted a need to raise with the congregation (perhaps during the Annual Meeting?) the issue of whether/when the Board can speak for the congregation.*

5:10 EL-5 Asset Protection Monitoring Report - *We discussed the report (*EL-5 Review), *noting the current lack of Flood Insurance, which the ET is investigating (it might cost a little over $11,000 a year). We suggested saying in the report that Church Mutual let us down during the past year by changing its flood coverage without telling us.*

We supported the idea that extra "riders" could be added to UCM's insurance policy to cover the piano, organ, and AV equipment. The ET (perhaps with help from the Finance Committee) will explore this.

We also encouraged the ET to add to the report its own role in making sure the financial reporting is timely and accurate; that is an important part of Asset Protection.

5:20 Proposed First Draft of FY25 Budget (which will include discussion of EL- 4 but discussion of EL-3 and BE-3 is postponed) – *The financial report for this fiscal year (FY24) showed that, as of December 16, 2023, UCM's budget was in the black. We may have smaller expenses than budgeted due to vacancy savings but smaller income from rentals, too.*

We reviewed that the UCM Bylaws and Financial Policies allow use of up to 5% of the Long-Term Invested Funds (LTIF) per year to help pay for church expenses. The Board supports the more recent history of using 4% of the LTIF for the Capital Fund Budget to ensure regular maintenance of the building. The Board said it prefers using no more than 1% of the LTIF for the General Fund budget because doing so leads to unsustainable operations.

The first draft of the budget considered by the ET for next fiscal year (FY25: July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025) assumes UCM will fulfill the 5% increase in pledges set as a goal for the Annual Pledge Drive; however, it projects a deficit. After reviewing possible additions/deletions to the expenses and income, ***the Board asked that the ET present to it a <u>balanced budget</u> (e.g., no gain or loss/deficit) while continuing to assume the full pledge goal is raised.*** *We can then present to the congregation what would be possible if more funds are raised.*

6:20 We adjourned.