

**Sierra Foothills Unitarian Universalists**

**Board of Trustees**

May 19, 2021

**Meeting Minutes**

Those in attendance: Maureen Bauman (President), Marsha von Dessonneck (Vice President), Geoff Smith (Financial Officer), Rick Marshall (Secretary), Suzanne Borth, John Bohland, Rick Ross, AJ van Tine (ex-officio), Gary Koerner (Treasurer, ex-officio)

Maureen provided a reading for the lighting of the chalice. All those present checked in.

**1. Finance**

Gary provided a review of the financial reports for April. Pledge income was the lowest of the year, during that month. Many members paid their pledges early. We currently anticipate pledge income reaching \$160,000 for the year, down from \$165,000 budgeted. Gary will soon be sending out a reminder for everyone to complete payment of their pledges for the year. It was noted that the recent Stewardship event was the lowest expense ever for conducting a fundraising event. Expenses are all running under budget.

The Board reviewed the proposed Budget for FY 2021-22. There will be a Budget Forum on Sunday, May 23. Jim Robison will present the proposed Budget for the Finance Committee. The budget will be uploaded to the website, and members will be notified through the e-Beacon of its availability. The bottom line of the proposed budget is an \$11,000 deficit for the year. We will be using part of the current year surplus, which accrued primarily from the Federal COVID relief funding, to cover this amount. Proposed expenses reflect the following:

- Cost-of-living adjustment for staff salaries
- Committee budgets remain the same as the current year
- New minister costs for salary, housing, benefits, moving expenses
- Worship costs for speakers, musicians, licensing fees and audio/visual equipment

*Marsha moved, Geoff seconded, to approve the proposed Budget as presented. Passed unanimously.*

The Board discussed recent communication from Bob Niblack for the Buildings & Grounds Committee. It was concluded that Bob and the Committee can proceed on needed repairs within the current budget and continuing into next year within the proposed budget. Priority should be given to the plumbing repairs needed in the RE space. The roof work will need a separate capital campaign.

**MARSHA WILL CONVEY THIS DIRECTION TO BOB NIBLACK FOR THE BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE.**

## 2. Minutes

The Board reviewed the draft Minutes from the April 21 meeting.

*Marsha moved, Suzanne seconded, to approve the April 21 Minutes as presented. Passed unanimously.*

## 3. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Wednesday, June 16 at 6:00 p.m. Rick M. will provide opening words.

## 4. Thank You Notes

The Board will send Thank-You notes to Tricia Caspers, Hank Florence, Stevie Rae and Vicky Jungers for their work on the recent Story Slam fundraising event.

**MARSHA WILL SEND NOTES TO TRICIA AND VICKY; MAUREEN WILL SEND TO HANK AND STEVIE.**

Those who helped with the Auction (which is at this time still ongoing) include Cindy Stubblebine, Mary Piette, Marsha von Dessonneck and Joan Lactis, and the Board will plan to acknowledge their work next month.

## 5. Commission on Institutional Change Report

The Board continued its review of the report, "Widening the Circle of Concern," specifically the section on Restoration and Reparations. Discussion points included:

- Recommendation that "promising practices" be made available as models
- Recommendation for regional-level support for congregations
- It is a difficult question – how to make up for actions so long ago, especially when there is so much in the present that needs to be fixed
- There is difficult work ahead
- Research to determine the economic impact
- What is the UUA responsibility, at what level?
- What would SFUU learn about its past, as the Massachusetts congregation did in the example in the reading?
- Placerville has recently been through similar discussions, having finally agreed to remove the noose from its City logo – there were definitely enslaved people in this area
- A congregation on the north coast pays a "voluntary tax" to the local indigenous tribe, in recognition that land in the area of its property was stolen from them many years ago – this is something that might also apply to SFUU and its property

## 6. Ministerial Contract

The Board considered the proposed contract which had been negotiated with the Rev. Alex da Silva Souto, whom the Search Committee has recommended be retained as the Contract Minister for SFUU. It was prepared using a template provided by the UUA, and is very similar to our existing agreement with Rev. AJ. The Committee reviewed it with Rev. Alex in detail and they are quite excited to be joining us. It includes a provision related to the process of entering Ministerial Fellowship with the UUA, which provision was cleared with UUA staff. The specific

requirements to pursue this will depend on how much “credit” is granted for Rev. Alex’s previous work experience.

*Suzanne moved, Marsha seconded, to approve the Contract as presented. Passed unanimously.*

## **7. Annual Congregational Meeting**

Rick M. presented a proposed Agenda for the upcoming Annual Congregational Meeting, to be held June 13. The Board agreed to add a President’s Report, which will be an opportunity to discuss the situation with regard to reopening from the pandemic, as well as the specific timing of Rev. Alex coming on board.

The Board also reviewed the proposed Leadership Slate, which had been recommended by the Nominating Committee. It was agreed that incumbents will contact their successors to “welcome” them into their new positions.

The Board discussed a concern that recent Sunday attendance has been falling and is somewhat near the level which will be required to establish a quorum for the meeting. The need for attendance will be stressed in the Meeting Notice.

**RICK M WILL GET THE MEETING NOTICE, MEETING AGENDA AND LEADERSHIP SLATE TO VICKY JUNGERS FOR DISTRIBUTION TO THE CONGREGATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BYLAWS.**

**GEOFF WILL CONTACT ANN DENISON (FINANCE OFFICER NOMINEE), RICK M WILL CONTACT SUZANNE (SECRETARY NOMINEE) AND JOHN WILL CONTACT HANK (TRUSTEE NOMINEE) TO WELCOME THEM INTO THEIR NEW POSITIONS.**

**MARSHA WILL CONTACT MARY PIETTE TO OBTAIN THE CURRENT LIST/COUNT OF MEMBERS. MARSHA WILL PROVIDE THE LIST TO SUZANNE, WHO WILL PERFORM THE QUORUM CHECK AT THE MEETING.**

## **8. Pandemic Recovery Task Force**

The Board reviewed the most-recent activity reported by the Task Force. The potential timing of resuming in-person worship services at this point would be this Fall, at the soonest, and it would be appropriate to include the new minister in planning for this. There was concern expressed about this being too heavy a burden on them to be a priority immediately on arrival. It was noted that a Contract Minister has a different level of responsibility than a Called Minister in terms of the overall governance of the church. The Board will need to exercise a greater amount of authority in working out how we move forward.

With regard to church activities conducted outdoors, it is the Task Force’s recommendation that these are already permitted within the existing guidance, and they did not recommend any change to the prior-adopted document.

Two factors are key in the Task Force recommendations:

1. The State’s “tier” system, which is used as the primary criteria for when activities are permitted in the SFUU guidance, is ending June 15. In addition, it is expected that Placer County will be moving into the Orange (Moderate) Tier as early as May 25. So,

all individual and small group activities will be permissible very soon, without any further change to the SFUU guidance document.

2. The recent changed guidance from the CDC, regarding the wearing of face coverings, applies only to those who have been vaccinated. While the congregation reports a very high percentage of survey respondents have been vaccinated, we have been trying to develop policies which will apply to all potential members/friends/visitors/participants in any SFUU-sponsored events.

The Board also received a status report from the newly-created Audio-Visual Task Force. Needed equipment has been ordered. The first pilot “live streaming” worship service will be Sunday, May 30. Ian Duncan, Amy Evans, Vicky Jungers and Suzanne will be in the sanctuary and the service will be presented from there (no “audience” will be present). Questions still needing to be resolved include:

- We will need to review the question (again) of one service vs. two
- If there are two services on a Sunday, will both be live-streamed or only one of them?
  - The work would involve the same number of volunteers either way
- Services will still need to involve some pre-recorded elements for streaming, even when some of the congregation is present in the sanctuary.
  - Example – hymns will need to be done this way, due to sound quality limitations of live streaming
- The church HVAC system likely needs replacement within a couple years. Repairs are becoming difficult as parts needed are becoming less available. Current air filtration requirements can be included when the replacement occurs. In the meantime, opening the windows and doors is what will best accomplish the needs of COVID requirements, according to research that Bob Niblack has done. This may limit our ability to use the air conditioning system. Some of the windows may need some work to be able to open.

## 9. Denominational Connections

### a. Pacific Central District

There is a District meeting on June 12 at 2:00 p.m., no charge for attending. No Board members indicated they are planning to attend.

### b. General Assembly

Our congregation has three spots for voting delegates. Registration is \$200 for access to all elements of GA programming. It is possible that someone could be a delegate without registering for GA, as voting online will occur earlier in June.

*Rick M moved, Suzanne seconded, to empower a subcommittee of Maureen, Marsha and Suzanne to finalize the SFUU slate of GA delegates. Maureen and Marsha will definitely be delegates, and possibilities for the third slot include Suzanne, Stevie Rae and Jeanine Meunier. The subcommittee will report its actions to the Board at the June meeting.*

**MARSHA WILL CONTACT JEANINE MEUNIER TO CONFIRM HER INTEREST IN SERVING AS A VOTING DELEGATE FOR SFUU AT GA.**

## 10. Ministerial Transition

Rev. AJ reported that current members of the Committee on Ministry Jeff Chamberlain, Ken Evans and Carol Koons have agreed to continue in this role working with the new minister on arrival. Rev. Alex can add other members as they get to know the congregation later.

## 11. Minister's Report

The Board discussed the need to provide a "supervisor" point-of-contact for the month of July, following Rev. AJ's departure but before Rev. Alex's arrival. It was agreed that Maureen will serve in this role. It is most likely that the main need will be for a weekly "check in" with Vicky regarding e-Beacon and similar ongoing communications.

*Suzanne moved, Marsha seconded, to designate Maureen as the administrative lead in charge of staff for the month of July, 2021. Passed unanimously.*

The Board reviewed **ACTION ITEMS**, Right Relations for this meeting, and extinguished the chalice.

MINUTES PREPARED BY RICK MARSHALL, SECRETARY