

## **UCC Annual Meeting Minutes - February 25, 2024**

Participants in the Annual Meeting were welcomed into the small chapel at Congregation Beth Shalom, where all were seated for the Annual Meeting. An approximate count of participants was 27 UCC members; Lydia Muar and Alicia Addeo had volunteered to serve as our Recording Secretaries.

Officers of our Board of Directors whose terms would have been fulfilled last year at this time graciously stayed in place an extra year at the request of the membership at last year's Annual Meeting in order to serve our congregation consistently through this year of change. Trina Anderson had asked to be released in January in order to focus on caring for her father; former Board Member, Ed Marinacci, accepted the Board's appointment to fulfill Trina's term. Present today were Co-Presidents of Leadership and Community Development, Don Simon and Deb Larkin (reachable by phone during the meeting); President of Prosperity, Pat Warren; President of Communications, Grant Dansby; President of Service, Ed Marinacci; President of Hospitality, Sam Dererra; Financial Manager, Maria DeRee and Ministry Team: The Reverends Sue Riley, Rob Hammock, Cynthia Mackey, Mary MacKenzie, and Leddy Hammock.

The meeting is called to order about 12:15 pm by Co-President of Leadership Development, Don Simon, introducing himself and welcoming all to the 2024 Annual Meeting of the not for profit corporation, Unity-Clearwater, Inc., also known as Unity Church of Clearwater; he stated that, although only voting members could participate in this meeting, all would be welcome to attend. He then invited our Sr. Minister, Leddy Hammock, to welcome us with an opening prayer.

Don Simon called upon Grant Dansby, Ed Marinacci, and Sam Derrera to read aloud our Church Mission Statement and our Church Vision Statement, in turn, followed by a brief Spiritual Baptism blessing by our Ministry Team. Don Simon then called upon our Sr. Minister to announce UCC's intention of ordering two especially engraved bricks for our Prayer Walk in honor of retiring Board Members, himself and Deb Larkin, when the time comes to construct our envisioned Prayer Path: DON SIMON 2020-2024 - DEB LARKIN 2020-2024 - BOARD OF DIRECTORS - UNITY OF CLEARWATER

Don Simon entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting. The motion to accept last year's minutes as read was made by Sam Dererra and seconded by Grant Dansby. The motion carried unanimously. Then Don Simon called upon Pat Warren, our President of Prosperity (Treasurer) to share a summary report of UCC finances during 2022-2023. She asked whether there were any questions about the report; there were none. Pat Warren noted that the Board of Directors is empowered to call for a review of the Church accounts by a Certified Public Accountant as they may deem necessary and welcomed interested and experienced members to volunteer to serve on the Accounting Review Team that assists our Financial Manager. The present A.R.T. Team is comprised of Maria DeRee, Pat Warren, Deb Frisch, and C.P.A., Steven Regier. Don Simon asked for a motion to accept the financial report for filing for review; so moved by Rob Hammock, seconded by Gail Johnson, to file the financial report for review; the motion carried unanimously.

It is here noted that Section 5, Article IV of the UCC Bylaws regarding the election of Board members, appeared in our weekly enews since Feb. 6, and copies had been made available for reference at the Annual Meeting, therefore there was no need to read the section.

Don Simon called upon Gail Johnson, Chair of this past year's Nominating Committee, to state the names of the two candidates for election to the Board who have been selected by the Committee this year (which includes Pat Warren, representing the Board, and Sherri Wallace, representing the UCC membership); the candidates stood as called upon: Nancy Simmons (and Maryan Westmark in thought).

Don Simon noted that since no other nominations were received as of ninety days prior to this meeting, as provided by our Bylaws, he would entertain a motion to record a unanimous acceptance of both of these candidates to the Board of Directors; so moved by Grant Dansby, seconded by Regina Bennett, and unanimously affirmed by a show of hands. Don Simon welcomed Nancy Simmons and Ed Marinacci (and Mary Ann Westmark in thought) to join the Board at the front of the gathering and noted that the March meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled as an emeeting, through email to each Board Member. Congratulations and applause followed. Our new Board Members joined the other Board members at the front of the gathering. He further encouraged voting members to express to our Nominating Committee their interest in serving on the Board this autumn.

Don Simon asked for a motion to elect a representative of the membership to this year's Nominating Committee. Gail Johnson nominated Nancy Peterson, who accepted the nomination. Regina Bennett seconded the motion. Don Simon entertained a motion to close the nominations; so moved by Cynthia Mackey and seconded by Regina Bennett and carried unanimously by a show of hands.

Don Simon noted that we look for a Board Member to volunteer to represent the Board of Directors on the Nominating Committee. Sylvia Alvarez noted that these two members would be called upon later in the year to appoint a third active voting member to serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee to select two new candidates for the Board in the autumn of the year.

Don Simon invited our Sr. Minister to share a brief message with the congregation on this forty-third anniversary of Leddy's 1981 election to serve the ministry of UCC. Leddy Hammock greeted the congregation and shared an installation blessing for our new Board Members, followed by reading a loving letter by Deb Larkin: *"Dear UCC, When I stood before you in February, 2020, as I was sworn in, we were in a transition of selling our property and building our new Church. We hit a few speed bumps; however, we still are on that mission. It was an honor and privilege to have served on our Board. I walk away with an enriched life from seeing our Unity teachings firsthand through the highs and lows of these past four years. Above all, God is our Source and I learned just how wise, strong, fearless and tireless our leaders are at Unity. With Leddy's tenacity, Russ' patience, along with Spirit's light and love, our goals are close to fruition. I walk away feeling blessed and lucky to have had a place in this journey and will gladly watch as our new Church rises, and serve with you. Thank you! Thank you! With love and light, Deb Larkin."*

Leddy Hammock shared a brief message of encouragement, including updates on the status of construction plans for the new Church home being built for us. Discovery School is very supportive and we look forward to the approval of the site plan by the City. We gratefully affirm that our Church is more than a building; it is a spiritual consciousness. God is our instant, constant, abundant Source!

There being no further business for this year's Annual Meeting, Don Simon asked our Sr. Minister to conclude the meeting with a prayer about 12:45 pm. Leddy Hammock thanked the congregation on behalf of our Ministry Team and Board of Directors for their loving kindness, constant generosity, and faithful service as we go forth in peace, making peace, living gently, loving mightily, ever grateful for the unlimited blessings of the Most High, leading all present in this affirmation: *"In our Unity of purpose, we are guided by infinite wisdom, renewed by abundant life and prospered by divine Love and so it is and so we let it be. Peace be with us all. Amen."*

Submitted with blessings by Recording Secretaries,

Lydia Muar

and

Alicia Addeo