

# UUCC CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

## APRIL 25, 2010

### NOTES

The Board Moderator Eric Gee called the meeting to order at 12:25 pm. A quorum was reached, with 53 members attending. As Brian Stevens lit the chalice, Eric gave a reading.

Eric outlined the agenda: a refresher course of the process we've gone through; a summary of the proposal; discussion, using the proposed procedures; making the decision.

Deena Ferguson gave a quick summary of the canvass results to date, asking that all pledge cards be turned in this week.

#### THE PROCESS WE'VE GONE THROUGH

Michele Matthews presented the Decision-Making team's review of the process we've gone through to get to this point.

- Why we embarked on this process
- What items aren't changing in this recommended process
- What will be different
- The proposed procedure

Eric acknowledged and recognized the committee who has worked on this challenge: Rita Beasley, Colin Ferguson, Michele Matthews, Brian Stevens, and Kathy Wimett.

He reviewed the courtesy guidelines, making sure everyone had the packet. Katie Wheeler asked that we change the language of our agreement to state that we will make our best efforts to be informed prior to meetings. We would not want anyone to feel they could not attend any meeting covering a topic for which he/she was unable to be informed in advance. The wording should be changed from "I will be informed" to "I will make every effort to be informed".

#### SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL

Eric summarized the proposal in front of us, which would change our decision-making process from a "consensus" form to a "concordance" model. He pointed out the key implications of this change.

If the change is made, it would go into effect immediately, so we would use it at our Annual Meeting in June.

He differentiated between which bylaw changes would be made, and what will be adjustments to the process made by the Board without bylaw change.

Committees would continue to use the consensus form of decision-making.

#### DISCUSSION

- Peter deFur: Would the Board continue to use consensus? [*Response: Yes*] We haven't used "quorum calls" in this church -- will we under this plan? [*Response: The sign-in list will continue to be the quorum measure to start the meeting, but will not be needed as the meeting continues because of the way the voting system works.*]
- Carille Greenburg-Ribley: Who tracks the number of members at the meeting? [*Response: The Board Secretary*]
- John Schuiteman: For the minister call, we'll still use the 95%, but use the new methodology, right? [*Response: Yes, we'd still use the new tools and processes to come to the decision. In the current procedure, we used consensus for the decision, followed by a vote. In the proposed procedure, we would still vote, but wouldn't do the consensus step.*] John added that when we call a new minister, we'll be in a more positive situation if we don't operate by consensus.
- Katie Wheeler: Since committees will still use consensus, we'll need to train new people on the consensus process.
- Robin Allman: Are we voting with these cards? [*Response: No*] Leaving early may not mean a "no" vote, so she would like to be able to leave a vote behind if it was necessary to leave early. [*Response: Setting the meeting time limit is hoped to deal with keeping people here for the vote. We feel it's important for everyone to hear each other before voting.*]
- Deb Downing: So we need 80% of the number of votes cast? [*Response: Yes*]
- Sharon deFur: Sees some value in Robin's idea of leaving a vote behind.
- Dan Bickford: We also need to consider including those who come to the early church service.
- Wayne Barbee: The quorum at 25% is pretty low in the business world, so we need to stress that people come to the meetings. He agrees with the proposal. [*Response: Actually, the quorum for most UU's is 10%, so we may want to review that some time in the future.*]
- Brian Linvill: For clarification, the quorum is 25% of the members? [*Response: Yes*]
- Wray West: Maybe we could have just one service on the Sundays of a congregational meeting.

- Anne Walpole: On the point about leaving a vote -- we could have made other changes before the actual vote, and the person who left wouldn't have heard those changes.
- Kandy Fielo: How can Friends participate? [*Response*: As they do now, they can participate in the discussion. They can also be part of the straw poll. But they won't be counted in the quorum, and they can't vote.]
- Lisa Poe: Expressed her thanks to the committee. Suggested we could teach consensus as well as concordance model in the new to UU classes.
- Mattie Coll: This is an extremely positive step forward. It's appealing for people to be able to participate.
- Bob Hoover: He has nostalgia for the old process, but is happy to support the new, because we can always change it again if we see the need.
- Carille Greenburg-Ribley: Is proud to be among this group. Suggested we record and document the process the team has gone through. [*Response*: Done] Also suggested the meeting moderator should announce the actual number needed to pass a vote in the meeting.

Eric pointed out that the primary Congregational meeting is the June Annual meeting, which is during our one-service period. We could have a one-service Sunday on the day we call a minister.

#### MAKING THE DECISION

Eric conducted a straw poll, and found that everyone was ready to made a decision. After a few minutes of reflection, he asked the group for agreement. Consensus was reached to accept the proposal.

Eric gave a reading, and closed the meeting at 1:25 pm.

*Submitted by  
Montana Higgins, Board Secretary*