

**Sylvania United Church of Christ**  
**Annual Meeting Minutes**  
**January 30, 2022**

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Jeff Finch, Moderator, at 11:00am. Meeting was held in person and on Zoom.

**Declaration of a Quorum:** Steve Long, Vice Moderator, declared a quorum, on behalf of Vicki Stroll, Clerk.

**Opening Prayer:** Pastor Mary Meadows shared Opening prayer.

**Review of Rules:** Jeff Finch read the By-Laws excerpt regarding Member voting responsibilities and asked all of Zoom to activate their cameras so votes could be conducted by show of hands.

**1. Approval of June 27, 2021, Mid-Year meeting minutes:** Al Compaan made a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes as distributed, seconded by Jane Ransom. Motion carried by majority show of hands.

**2. Introduction and Approval of Agenda:** Jeff Finch thanked all who assisted in creating, assembling, and distributing the Annual Report. He presented the agenda to the congregation.

**3. Introduction of Staff and overview of the 2021 Annual Report:** Jeff Finch reviewed the contents of the Annual Report. He extended his thanks to all our Staff, Board and Committee chairs and members, and the Congregation for all their hard work and perseverance during an unusual year. He encouraged all to read the Annual report, so they are current on everything taking place at the church.

**4. COVID Committee Report:** Jane Ransom presented an overview of the COVID Committee history, thanking Pastor David Andersen for creating this group, two years ago. She then thanked the Committee for all its hard work in creating and compiling recommendations for minimizing the risk of spreading the COVID 19 virus, while maximizing the physical and spiritual care of our congregation. Thank you to the Congregation for all their support.

**5. Audit Report:** Carl Weaver stated that he is currently completing the 2021 Year End Audit. He will present the results at the Mid-Year Meeting in June. At this time, there are no issues or exceptions noted. The 2020 Audit was completed with no issues or exceptions. He will be stepping down as Auditor in June 2022.

**6. Personnel Report:** Renee Long presented, in Gretchen Weston's absence due to COVID precautions. Renee shared that the Personnel Board was involved with the development of the position descriptions, posting, and hiring for the Minister of Faith Formation and the Minister of Connections and Engagement. They have also developed the job description for the Administrative Assistant, with input from Staff and the interim Administrative Assistant. This year they reviewed the salary of the Financial Secretary. The Board members function as liaisons to the staff members. In response to a question raised by the Social Justice Committee, the Personnel Board investigated the cost of providing Health Care benefits to our Staff. Cost analysis was provided to the congregation comparing the cost of health care through the United Church of Christ. This is available to any UCC employee, as is coverage from the Healthcare marketplace. At this time, the Personnel Board recommends that healthcare benefits/contributions not be extended to our Staff due to the costs significantly exceeding our budget, except as outlined in the Senior Pastor Call Agreement. Several questions were asked and were addressed by Renee and Jeff Finch.

**7. Stewardship Report:** Ruthann Finch presented for John Brenner. 2022 Pledge Campaign through 12/31/21 resulted in 106 pledge units totaling \$391,000. This is an 18% improvement over the last year. The Special Christmas Offering raised \$21,170 to assist in retiring our accumulated net deficit. Thanks to our Stewardship Board: John Brenner, Bob Forcht, Carol Jansen, Jim Foote, Al Compaan with assistance from Pastor Vern Swett and Jeff Finch. Thank you to the Congregation of Sylvania UCC for your support and generosity.

**8. Endowment Report:** Jim Cummins reviewed the performance of the Endowment Fund as published in the Annual Report. The income received from the Fund: \$9893.04 was equally distributed to Local Outreach, Church Wider Mission, Trustees and Cabinet, as per the Fund resolution. In support of the Growing Forward in Faith Initiative, the Endowment Fund has gifted \$20,000 of the \$180,000 approved by the Congregation in June 2021, between October 2021 and January 2022. The remaining \$160,000 will be distributed via \$5,000 monthly contributions through September 2024.

**9. Proposed Change to Endowment Fund Resolution:** Jim Cummins presented a proposal to clarify the Endowment Fund resolution removing the statement: "**...All principal amounts will be retained and only the dividend and interest income expended.**" It was recommended it be replaced by "**...When a financial need arises that matches the purpose of the Endowment Fund (to enhance the mission and**

*ministry of the Sylvania United Church of Christ), a request may be presented to the Cabinet for use of Endowment principal monies. Upon Cabinet approval, the request shall be forwarded to the Endowment Committee to evaluate. After Endowment Committee approval, the final request shall be presented to the Congregation for approval."* A motion to adopt the change was made by Jim Cummins, seconded by Renee Long. Motion was approved, by show of hands, by more than the required 2/3 majority. Following the vote, several questions were addressed and follow up with one member, post meeting, was offered.

**10. Trustee Report:** Chris Durand reviewed the successful projects of the year, highlighting Grubby Sunday. He committed that 2022 will bring a finalization of a proposal for a Capital Campaign to address several areas of our campus. He announced that Stepping Stones Preschool, which has operated from of our building for 30 years, will be closing at the end of this school year. After discussions between Ms. Tammy Graves and Church Leadership it is recommended that the church continue to support a preschool as a landlord only. Thank you to Stepping Stones Preschool for everything. A question was asked and answered regarding the function of the bipolar air ionization system installed this year.

**11. By-Laws Review Committee:** Jeff Finch stated that the By-Laws require a bi-annual review. If anyone member of the congregation would like to serve on this committee, please contact Jeff Finch or the Church office.

**12. Nomination Committee Slate:** Dave Walker thanked the outgoing members of the Nominating Committee, Al Compaan and Tracy Strasser. The new 2022 slate presented for approval is: Ruthann Finch, Chair, Dave Walker, Pastor Vern Swett, Peggy Meisner, Mark Stender, Kathy Tashima, Wendy Danzeisen, Jeanne Brockmyer. Dave Walker made a motion to accept the presented slate, seconded by Al Compaan. Motion approved by majority via show of hands.

**13. Treasurer's Report for 2021:** Jason Strasser, Treasurer reported that 2021 giving was a "wonderful blessing" enabling the church to finish 2021 with a much smaller than anticipated Operating budget shortfall of (\$9,700), which is manageable. Due to the smaller budget shortfall and higher than usual prepayments of 2022 pledges in 2021, we ended 2021 in a slight accumulated surplus position (cash on hand minus designated fund commitments). Jason noted that the \$35,000 PPP loan was fully forgiven during 2021. He also reported the good news that over \$48,000 was given to our various Outreach partners during 2021, representing 102% of the budgeted amount!

**14. Presentation of 2022 Operating Budget:** Jason presented the 2022 Operating budget, pointing out that this is a full 12-month budget vs. the two six-month budgets used in 2021. The budget currently reflects an anticipated shortfall of (\$6,300). Budgeted income is \$104,000 higher than 2021 due to increased pledges and the Endowment gift to support Growing Forward in Faith (GFF). Jason confirmed that the “All for One/Unified” 2022 pledge allocation is 87% Operating, 10% Outreach, 3% Music. He also confirmed that the budget contains a 3% cost of living increase for the non GFF positions and that the Outreach budget contains an additional \$1,000 to support Social Justice Group anticipated spending. Jason answered a few questions. Steve Long moved that the 2022 Operating budget be approved. Warren Henry seconded. The motion passed by majority vote via show of hands.

**15. Other Business:** Jeff Finch asked if there was any new or other business to be brought before the Congregation. The following individuals offered comments for consideration – Todd Masman, Jennifer Vasquez, Janet Hildebrandt, Nancy Larson, and Chris Durand. Comments included a request for increased diversity and inclusion, new programs being offered during Lent, a request to display the “God is still speaking” outdoor banner to replace the prior one, which was stolen, and more focus on children and young family programs and engagement.

**16. Adjournment:** Nancy Wellman made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Steve Long. Meeting adjourned 12:09pm

**Closing Prayer:** Deacon Jennifer Vasquez shared a closing prayer.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Ruthann Finch, on behalf of Vicki Stroll, Clerk.