

The Community Church of Chapel Hill

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

106 Purefoy Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514 • 919-942-2050 • c3huu.org

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

February 18, 2018

Call to order (12:15pm)

Jenny Warnasch, President of the Board of Trustees (BoT), called the meeting to order. She introduced herself as President of the BoT and then introduced the BoT members who joined the BoT in January 2018, noted the presence of the other current BoT members, and thanked the BoT members whose terms expired in December 2017 for their service. Polly Johnson was recognized as serving as Parliamentarian for the meeting. J. Warnasch announced that a quorum was present and also provided an overview of the agenda of the meeting.

Member and proxy check-in

94 members checked-in

39 members marked as proxy

41 proxy sheets submitted at the vote

2 marked as proxy were not submitted

3 marked as present had proxies submitted

1 not checked-in had proxy submitted

1 proxy submitted by a non-member

unknown number of members not checked-in who voted

unknown number of non-members who voted

Chalice Lighting, Opening Words, and Congregational Covenant (12:21pm)

Margaret Hennessey opened the meeting with a reading, while the Rev. Thom Belote lit the chalice. Ruth Gibson led the congregation in reading the Congregational Covenant, as shown on the Powerpoint presentation.

Sanctuary is a... (12:22pm)

Mary Hulett, as the next speaker, explained the reasons for forming a Sanctuary Team, (Sanctuary and Immigrant Support Committee). She shared from the Powerpoint presentation their vision and definition of sanctuary. She then introduced Team Member Barb Chapman, who provided a personal story about an immigrant at risk under the new immigration policies. M. Hulett thanked B. Chapman for sharing and then introduced Team Member Anna Reine.

Motion (12:30pm)

A. Reine read a statement on behalf of the Sanctuary Team as a preface to offering a motion from the Sanctuary Team to the congregation that the Community Church of

Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist (C3HUU) become a sanctuary church. After reading the statement, she read the Preamble and the Motion.

J. Warnasch acknowledged that a motion was on the table and asked if there was a second to the motion. Marni Goldshlag seconded the motion. J. Warnasch asked if there were any comments.

Question: Current C3HUU commitments, such as cooking at the shelter, are having a hard time finding volunteers. Should we be extending ourselves into another volunteer commitment?

Follow-up question: How many people are signed up to help with the sanctuary church and how much money will this cost.

Answer: Forty-one people have signed up for 1/2 hour shifts. We have been told by others that they are waiting to see if this moves forward before signing up.

Comment: Taking a stand will energize the church and make us “bigger”.

Comment: This is the right thing to do. We should be on the front line, not be followers.

Follow-up answer: The need for volunteers to cook wasn't known.

Comment: There are too many things calling us to help. It was the same in the times of Charlie Jones. There may be 100 things to do but focusing on 1 means at least something is getting done.

Question: Can the Manse provide sanctuary?

Answer: There is no special legal protection for a church providing sanctuary, but ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] procedure is to not enter church property, except in exceptional circumstances. ICE does not usually violate safe spaces, though they are not legally restricted from doing so. A UNC law professor says that the parking lot is probably not considered a safe space since it is rented to the public. ICE has violated their normal protocol by taking immigrants from hospitals and schools.

Vote (12:49pm)

J. Warnasch asked if there were any more comments. There being none, she called for a vote by ballot.

Question: Why are we voting by ballot?

Answer: We are trying to avoid intimidating anyone not voting in favor or wanting to abstain.

While the votes were being counted, R. Gibson addressed the congregation. She said that if people were wondering what they could do, there would be a need for volunteers to be

a constant presence 24/7. Volunteers could complete sign-up forms now or they could sign-up to volunteer at the Church of Reconciliation, a sanctuary church with a guest in residence. There are many tasks to be done, such as shopping and running errands. She said that the Team's website had more information and that a workday at the Manse had been scheduled.

J. Warnasch informed the congregation that there were 140 votes for the motion, 4 votes against the motion, and 8 abstentions. Therefore, the motion carried.

Closing and Extinguishing the Chalice (12:51pm)

M. Hulett announced that there was a volunteer sign-up sheet at the exit.

J. Warnasch led the congregation in the words to extinguish the chalice. She then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The members present offered the motion and seconded. J. Warnasch called for a vote and all members present approved the motion, with none opposing or abstaining. She then adjourned the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

Welcome (provided by M. Hulett)

Slides from the Congregational Meeting

Motion (provided by A. Reine)

Welcome from the Sanctuary and Immigrant Support Ministry. Our Ministry was formed last spring and we now have over 30 members. For many of us this was a response to raids, detentions, deportations, and the criminalization of immigrants – immigrants who are our neighbors.

Since we formed we have done a great deal of work to educate ourselves and this congregation. We have held 3 informational meetings, Thom arranged for a sermon by Paul Davis, a minister of a congregation who has had 2 Sanctuary guests, we have written a number of informational pieces, started a web page, answered lots of questions and tabled every Sunday for the last 2 months.

What is Sanctuary? It is a strategy – it allows us the opportunity to fight individual cases of deportation, to advocate for an end to mass detention and deportation and to put a face on what we are doing as a country. We do this work with a vision of what our world could be - a world that affirms the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Sanctuary is a moral imperative rooted in our faith tradition.

Sanctuary is not charity – we are not “helping” the immigrant. We are acting for ourselves because we must resist systematic injustice. We are not the leaders in this movement – those in Sanctuary are the leaders. They are the ones with the courage and faith to come out of the shadows to say “we are undocumented and we are unafraid”. They are putting everything on the line and are often risking a great deal, staying in hiding might be far safer. They must be involved in every aspect of what we do: their leadership, their voices, their opinions and wisdom must be respected and prioritized.

I would now like to introduce Barb Chapman who will help us put a face on this terrible problem.

Thank you Barb. I would now like to introduce Anna Reine who is a member of our Ministry and was selected by our Discernment group to make the motion:

Congregational Meeting

February 18, 2018

Congregational Covenant

We, the members and friends of the Community Church of Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist, affirm the following:

We will communicate with and about each other openly, kindly and respectfully.

We will seek peaceful and constructive resolutions when conflicts arise.

We will value diversity of thought, belief and culture within our community.

We will work together to build the common good.

SANCTUARY

IS A...

RESPONSE

to raids,
detentions,
deportations,
and the
criminalization
of immigrants

STRATEGY

to fight
individual cases
of deportation

to advocate
for an end to
mass detention
and deportation

to amplify
the voices of
immigrants

VISION

for what our
communities
and world
can be

MORAL IMPERATIVE

to take
prophetic
action,

of radical
hospitality,

rooted in the
ancient
traditions
of our faith
communities

Glenda with John Chapman



Preamble

Inspired by our Unitarian Universalist principles to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of each person and to promote justice, equality, and compassion in human relations, we oppose government policy that discriminates against marginalized communities and that aims to unjustly deport millions of immigrants. We will commit our energy and abilities to the tasks of creating sanctuary in our church and throughout our community for those targeted by hate and will seek to provide safety for all who are caught in the fray. We will work alongside friends, families and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people.

Motion

Therefore, be it resolved that we, the members of The Community Church of Chapel Hill, Unitarian Universalist, publicly declare our intent to be a Sanctuary Church. Before officially hosting someone in our space, we will seek to build a relationship with the sanctuary guest so that each party feels comfortable that this would be a fruitful and safe undertaking, respecting the needs and boundaries of both the individual and the congregation. Further, we dedicate ourselves to educate and activate our congregation and community, to amplify and respond to the voices of immigrant leaders, and to speak out against discrimination towards marginalized people. The Sanctuary and Immigrant Support Ministry, with and through the Minister, will provide periodic reports to the Board of Trustees regarding actions taken pursuant

You Can Help

- Workday at the Manse has been scheduled for 9:00 am on [February 24](#).
- Volunteer signup sheets are available at the end of the meeting (as you exit) as well as online at the *Sanctuary and Immigrant Support Ministry* page, accessible from the Church's *Justice and Service* web page.

"Hi, I'm Anna Reine, and I'm a member of the Sanctuary and Immigrant Support Committee. On behalf of this committee, I'm introducing a motion that the Community Church of Chapel Hill commit ourselves to becoming a sanctuary congregation. In a political and cultural moment where immigrant populations are being increasingly targeted, we feel it is particularly important to take a moral stand and to offer tangible support for our immigrant neighbors. Our nation's current policies towards immigrants and refugees do harm to countless people. Yancarlos Mendez, who acts as caretaker and sole financial provider for a six-year old paraplegic boy, was denied his request for a stay of removal this January. Gilles Bikindou, who had lived in Cary for years after fleeing political persecution in the Republic of the Congo, was recently taken into custody by ICE during a routine check-in and has been sent to a detention center, where there are concerns that his medical needs will not be met. An article in the New Yorker titled "When Immigration is a Death Sentence" describes the work of the Global Migration Project to track the stories of deportees who died or were victims of violence as a result of being deported. They find that many of these people knew of the danger that they were in and warned US officials of the harm that would likely come to them if they were forced to leave. But even in cases less extreme than these, the actions taken by our country so often refuse to recognize the humanity of immigrants.

As a sanctuary congregation, Community Church would prepare to host an immigrant guest in immediate danger of deportation within our church. In doing so, we would begin to face the injustices done to immigrants and refugees on a level that is personal and human while also treating these issue on a broader scale. As people of conscience, we have a moral responsibility to live out our vision of a just and compassionate community. In a time where it can be so easy to feel powerless in the face of widespread injustice and discrimination, here is an opportunity for us to counteract some of the atrocities being committed in our name. Here is a place where we can engage more deeply with the wider community to work towards justice. Here is a step we can take to create the world that we want to live in."