

**Annual Meeting of the Members and Friends of
Lake Fellowship of Unitarians and Universalists
Sunday May 7, 2023**

Present:

Board Members -- Laurie Gauer, Karen Wendt, Dan Larson, Marnie Karger, Curtis Siller

Members -- Sharon Dana, Scott Gauer, Kipp Knutson, Maia Larson, Vicki Larson, Helene Mann, Terry McGlynn, Peggy Muehlberg, Don Penn, John Rasmussen, Roberta Rott, Patsy Siller, Matthew Tift, Marilyn Vialle, Tim Wendt

Note: In order to protect the health and safety of our members and friends, this year's meeting was held both in person and over Zoom. Materials were sent via email and shown as slides during the meeting.

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Laurie Gauer at 10:38 a.m. with a quorum of members present.

II. Accept the Agenda: Curtis made a motion to accept the agenda. Terry seconded. The motion passed.

III. Welcome New Members: Laurie welcomed two new members to Lake Fellowship: John Rasmussen and Helene Mann.

IV. Minutes: Laurie gave everyone a chance to look over last year's Annual Meeting minutes, which were sent earlier via email, and shared onscreen during the meeting. Tim Wendt made a motion, seconded by Curtis, to accept the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes. Motion passed.

V. Report of Board Chair: Laurie shared her takeaways from the past year.

- a. The 2022-23 Fellowship year marked the official start of our hybrid programs, after two years of social distancing and Zoom-only programs.
- b. While the low attendance in the fall was concerning, in-person attendance has been getting better as the year progressed.
- c. We celebrated the life of Les Kraus in September, and dedicated an engraving in a bench along the path to all former members who have passed. Speaking of celebrations, we need a chair and volunteers to fill the Celebrations committee because, as Les would say, "It's all about community."

- d. Laurie heard from many that this was the best programming year ever. We covered lots of important and timely topics with special guest speakers, and great discussions. Overall, we learned a lot, and challenged ourselves to learn and do more.
- e. While we are financially sound, contributions and fundraising totals were down this year. Our major expense this year was for mouse control, and the next major expense will likely be landscaping.
- f. The Board had a few extra meetings this year to cover issues related to building usage and we all worked hard to complete the necessary tasks.

VI. Treasurer's Report: Dan reported that it has been a good year overall, financially speaking. There were not a ton of expenses, but we paid a lot for snow removal during this exceptionally snowy winter. In his review of the year, Dan pointed out the purchase of the new sign and sandwich board to advertise our location. This year's report also included a budget for next year. This is an estimate based on averages from the past 5 years. He noted that currently, there is nothing budgeted for children's religious education. We spent a bit more on programming this year, and that increase will likely continue to trend upward, to secure good outside speakers. We will also re-subscribe to Soul Matters as we make good use of their offerings for Sunday programs. Supplies' expenses include our annual QuickBooks subscription. New equipment and electronics purchased for hybrid program capabilities are shown as an expense, but those were covered by the grant that Kristin Fulkerson secured the year before.

- a. Revenue: Our intake is trending downward in contributions, fundraising amounts, and in the number of contributors. Auction revenue is a big missing piece, since we haven't had an auction in a few years. Our balance is hovering in the \$40K range, but we could be doing better. Kipp asked if there were other types of contributions or sources of revenue collected in the past that we don't see now, and Dan said that he did not know of any such contributions, but that, over the last few years, we have lost some of the more stalwart contributors. Dan also noted that \$10K+ inheritance from Les's estate was not on the report, so the negative amount for the 2022 balance should only be \$2.68.
- b. Investments: Because we have money that tends to just sit in the current checking account and doesn't earn much interest, Dan has been looking into investments that would give us more of a return on our deposits. Karen has been helping with this as well. Dan assured everyone that we would reserve an adequate amount of funds to remain liquid in the current account. He is also looking at other accounts that don't penalize as much for not meeting balance minimum requirements.

- c. Rental Income: Roberta asked about the Building Usage income with regards to the budget. Dan clarified that we have increased the charge for the Men's Group that meets here on Thursdays, to cover additional cleaning expenses.
- d. Speaker Fees: Terry mentioned that the higher program costs this year include some charity efforts. When speakers represent non-profits, and defer their speaking fee to the charities themselves, we have sometimes given more for an increased impact.
- e. Pest Control Budget: Peggy asked about pest control costs to include in the budget. The company we recently hired, BOGO, covers their work for the next 2 years, but Dan conceded that we could add something in the budget to cover pest control appliances (traps, etc.) that we would buy and maintain ourselves.
- f. Financial Advisor: Sharon asked how we are paying the financial advisor. Dan responded that the financial advisor is charging \$70 a year, which is a discounted amount for churches. Peggy advised us to avoid stocks, bonds, foreign currency with the investments.
- g. Terry made a motion to approve the 2023 Treasurer's Report, and this was seconded by Curtis. The motion passed and the report was approved.

VII. Committee Reports - Committee Chairs were asked to report anything noteworthy, to share thoughts about future work in their committee, and finally, to state if those committee members will continue in their role.

- a. Programs (Dan, Marnie, Laurie): Dan reported that a \$3K budget should be sufficient for a while. He iterated that the virtual option lets us bring in lots of speakers who might not otherwise be able to travel to us, and has helped create a more diverse year of programming. The Program Planning Committee has been working really well so far. As always, he welcomed program ideas, leads for speakers to invite, and constructive feedback. Everyone will continue in this committee.
- b. Children's Religious Ed. (Maia Larson): Maia stated that we currently have no kids to educate, so there's not much to report. Liz Maddy offered to teach her own kids, and has taken home a variety of teaching materials, including some from Soul Matters, to do so. Maia is planning to put together some lessons about our UU principles on the off-chance that some kids do attend, so that there are some readily available RE plans. Helene Mann asked if we have ever held RE for adults, and Laurie responded that we have not. Marnie reminded the group about Building Your Own Theology, a small discussion group that used to meet fairly regularly, and asked for people to reach out if they're interested in rekindling that group. Laurie also shared that our new marketing efforts include reaching out specifically to families with young kids.

- c. Music (Marilyn Vialle): Marilyn, stating that Maia has had more to do with music this year, handed it over to her. Maia said she's looking into bringing more music back into Sunday programs. She asked if there was interest in pre-program music (as people are entering the building), music during the program, or other ideas. Karen stated that we still have yet to problem-solve sharing live music on Zoom, and this has kept us from having more live music programs this year. Perhaps, she wondered, if we cannot solve the Zoom issues with this, those types of programs would be in-person only. She and Don will speak more with Matthew and Beatriz about working through this Zoom limitation, and she invites other expertise and info to remedy this. Peggy said that some of the yoga classes she's taken on Zoom have had poor music quality, and she hopes Lake Fellowship can do better.
- d. Sunshine (Marilyn): Marilyn thanked Patsy and Curtis for their help this year in this committee. Marilyn has visited Jo Hermann, and sent out cards and flowers to those in need of some cheer. Laurie asked Marilyn to turn in her receipts to determine, at the very least, how much she has spent to help with future budgeting. Tim Wendt thanked Marilyn for her work, and encouraged all to inform her about someone in need of some sunshine.
- e. Membership (Marilyn): Marilyn has been doing follow-up calls with new visitors. Vicki said that the committee members would like everyone to think more about what the role of the membership committee should be, and if it includes welcoming as well. She also shared that she is always open to having more people on this committee. Roberta suggested the committee has a conversation with the board about committee roles, and Laurie responded that this is something the board hopes to approach with all committees. Tim Wendt applauded the work of the greeters this year, and appreciated being welcomed back each Sunday as well. Sharon, in going through the archives, has found no historical record of memberships and she would like to do better going forward. She suggested collecting more data to add a "Member Since" column in the member database. She also recommended having a "Membership manual" that informs people about what it means to be a member as well as offer committee information. Laurie mentioned that a lot of this info is on the web site already, and suggests we keep that sort of info online rather than work on something physical. John asked about posting somewhere a suggested member contribution amount. Dan said that many members give through their volunteering, so it's difficult to put a dollar amount on what each member *should* contribute. Tim Wendt said that a few years ago, they looked at that issue and found that \$400 a person per year would be adequate to support the financial needs of the fellowship.

- f. Audio/Video (Don Penn): Don shared that we have had a good year from a tech standpoint. He gave thanks again to Kristin for getting the grant to pay for the equipment that allows us to run hybrid programs. And he thanked Marnie for her help getting things running each Sunday. This year, Don donated a high-speed gaming router to give us higher speed connectivity to avoid lagging on our Zoom calls. Don stated that he has received several comments from outside speakers that they were impressed with the flexibility and capabilities of our audio-visual system. Sharon donated another pair of Yamaha speakers and it is still to be determined where to place them. To a question about if the speakers have to be used in pairs, or if they can be split, Don confirmed that we could split them to potentially place one downstairs, and one outside on the deck.
- g. Sangha (Peggy Muehlberg): This weekly meditation group has been totally inactive for a number of years. It has historically been pretty small, and included some light yoga before meditation. She may try to resurrect this in the fall, if there is any interest. She encouraged anyone interested to reach out to her.
- h. Transportation (Peggy): Nothing to report here, and there have been no requests for transportation recently. Sharon asked if anyone had an update about longtime member Cody Edwards, and if he's willing to come to fellowship if he got a ride. Marilyn said that she's been to visit him, but he's in a locked ward facility (in St. Louis Park), and she doubts that Cody is allowed to leave. She can talk to his sister to get more information. Sharon also asked for clarification about the role of this committee. Tim Wendt responded that, originally, it was to bring members to fellowship for programs and events, but that it could grow to encompass more transportation needs if there's interest and help.
- i. Supplies (Peggy): Peggy says there is nothing to report here. She hasn't bought any supplies the whole year. She mentioned that we keep some paper products in the loft and she checks on them every once in a while.
- j. Building Usage (Peggy): Besides the Men's Group, we had one other renter during the year, a homeschool group called Wildlife Learners. That group purchased a set amount of time to use the building, and once they used up their time, they haven't been back. Peggy suspects it was too expensive for them to continue. We had a few other inquiries (wedding, funeral, etc.), but no one has followed up. Peggy reminded us that LFUU is currently tapping a well for drinking water, and that we have the opportunity to hook up to city water. Laurie stated that we can look into how old our well is for some longevity estimates moving forward. Peggy made clear that we cannot use the building if the water doesn't work, and that this becomes more of an issue if we rent the building out and make promises to others about the facilities. She suggests we pay for the work to add a connection to the city water line soon, and then hook up when the well

fails. Dan asked to table this topic for a future board meeting. Peggy would like to resign from her position as the Building Usage Coordinator, so this role will need new representation.

- k. Maintenance/Grounds (Kipp Knutson, Tim McGlynn): Kipp ran through a list of current issues.
 - i. Pest control: Terry shared a quick summary of what BOGO has done so far, as well as Tim McGlynn's efforts to help. Tim has been regularly checking the mouse traps, and has only found one dead mouse. And, this past week, there has been no evidence (droppings, chewed items) of mice at all. BOGO's work is guaranteed for 2 years.
 - ii. Roof leak: During the first program in September of last year, we noticed a small amount of water coming from the roof, dripping inside, near the center of the room. Sela, the company who most recently installed new shingles, came out to inspect. On that day, it was actually raining outside, and Kipp saw no drip or evidence of a leak. Since then, Kipp has tried to look closer with a camera on a long pole, especially for nail penetrations, but he didn't see anything. He also admitted that even if they do find something, it may be difficult to tell what, if anything, was caused by the recent roofing job. Kipp will meet a Sela representative at the A-Frame for another meeting soon to get a closer look at the roof.
 - iii. Deck guardrails: Kipp will fix those this month (May), and will paint the deck sometime this summer.
 - iv. Front stairs: Kipp has noticed that the steps leading to the small deck and front door need the support timbers replaced (they're rotting out and causing tipping/movement).
 - v. Siding: Some of the siding on the building is starting to decay and should be addressed this summer. Dan asked for an estimate sometime for this and all other work to be done, and Kipp will get that to him later.
 - vi. Spring clean-up will need to be done at some point soon, including leaf raking/blowing, weeding and an overall tidying up of the building's exterior and surrounding property.
 - vii. Lawn Mowing: Tim McGlynn won't be able to mow anymore, so we'll need some people to step up and/or hire someone to do this job.
 - viii. Landscaping Working Group: Once the new plants are in place, we will need help with their upkeep, especially regular watering and weeding. Kipp hopes that responsibilities are carried out by the working group itself.
 - ix. Other: Helene asked if the fellowship has a rain barrel or compost bin. We do not.

- I. Cleaning (Vicki Larson): Vicki connected Dan with a person who has been cleaning for us. Vicki also wondered if this still needs to be a committee, or if it could be absorbed by another committee or just be within the general purview of the board. Dan agreed that it does not need to be a committee anymore. The cleaner has been doing a great job. She sends an email after she has cleaned and Dan and Terry send her a check for her work. Kipp asked if the Men's Group has been cleaning up after themselves. Dan responded that, for the most part, they have. There was one week that the cleaning didn't get done, and it was discovered later that the guy who typically manages the clean-up wasn't there to guide folks that week. Dan invited any other concerns with this group's activity at any time.
- m. Small Dinners (Vicki): Vicki shared that two small group dinners have been held so far this year, and there are still some planned and yet to come. There will be more to come after the summer break.
- n. Celebrations (Vacant): There have been no social gatherings or parties recently, and Laurie shared that we are currently looking for someone to fill this role. After the meeting, Helene, John, and Maia all volunteered to be on this committee.
- o. Fundraising/Auction (Tim Wendt): Tim shared that the auction committee will meet today after the annual meeting. He also talked recently with Mike (Bru) Eye, who will be helping. He is looking to hold the next auction sometime this fall.
- p. Social Action (Tim W.)
 - i. Les Kraus Charitable Outreach/LKCOC: This group meets about every 6 months, and has been directing donations primarily to The Food Group. The money given comes through as donations specifically designated for the Les Kraus Charitable Outreach Fund. Tim reported that the group recently contributed \$800. When the group meets, they review how much money there is to donate, and which groups to which they should give this donation. They currently have over \$1K in the fund. Tim noted that they do not contribute from this fund to WeCAN. Donating to WeCAN is a separate effort through LFUU, and also includes more in-person volunteering.
 - ii. WeCAN recently requested help picking up and organizing food donations. Sara McGlynn offered to help, and Tim McGlynn (no relation) is the backup helper. Tim has reached out to WeCAN recently about other group volunteering opportunities. They haven't had a job for us yet, but they're working on it, and, in the meantime, there are some other events and activities in which we may participate to help. Tim also tries to keep everyone abreast of these events. Finally, he shared a letter from The Food Group thanking us for our donations.

- q. Archives (Sharon Dana): Sharon said that we still need some file cabinets to house the physical archives. There is no rush to get them, and she would prefer two, 2-drawer, lateral cabinets for putting downstairs at Lake Fellowship. She requested a volunteer to help collect current items that will become history, such as Board Meeting minutes, invitations to and programs from special events, and photos. She also invited more people to take photos at special events and such, to add to the archives.
- r. Directory (Sharon): Our directory went digital during Covid, and has continued in a digital format since then. She intends to print paper copies, but changes keep occurring, so it's been difficult to stay current. She encourages everyone to send changes (members and friends, addresses, committee assignments, etc.) to her by the end of the calendar year, and she'll create a new version at the start of the next year. This can then be an annual review and renewal process.
- s. Design (Sharon): Nothing to report here regarding the interior space of the A-Frame. The secretary notes that Sharon donated her design skills to the creation of our new sandwich board advertising sign, and that it looks great!
- t. Bookkeeping (Terry McGlynn): Terry shared there's not much to report, other than she's grateful for Ruth Rustad's previous work with bookkeeping, and that she's trying to keep up with it on a more regular basis.
- u. Database & Emailing (Marnie): Marnie shared that while there is not an up-to-date database anywhere at this time, Sharon has current contact information for use in creating the directory, and every newsletter subscriber's email is stored on the website. While there's still an occasional bump along the way, emailing the subscribers list has been easy and effective so far, either through the website or through WebMail.
- v. Website (Matthew Tift): Matthew shared that the website is continuing to function well. We still have free hosting and free email through Dreamhost. All of the software our website uses, including the newsletter software, is free and open-source. He reminded us that he promoted our approach at the UUA General Assembly last June, and he has also reached out to other fellowships about this topic, though he hasn't received much feedback. There are some newer video recordings of programs available on the website. He and Marnie have been able to upload these to the site, directly through the LFUU laptop. Finally, Matthew asked anyone to send photos to him as well that he might add to the website.
- w. Marketing & Social Media (Laurie): Laurie shared that because there is concern for membership and attendance, we purchased the new sandwich board. Dan Larson has been setting this out on County Road 19, and bringing it back, each Sunday. Liz took on the new role of Social Media committee chair this year. If you

think of ideas for her, or want to help, please connect with Liz. Laurie also encouraged all to engage more with the social media posts, as this increases their promotion. Vicki mentioned that there's a funny UU joke page on Facebook that gets people engaged, and asked if maybe we could put more general posts similar to these jokes and memes, to get people more engaged with our public Facebook page.

VIII. Board Elections

- a. Election for two (2) 2-year board positions (Marnie Karger has completed 2, back-to-back, 2-year terms, and Curtis Siller has completed 1, 2-year term and wishes not to renew)
 - i. Don Penn and Helene Mann are candidates for the open positions.
 - ii. There were no other nominees from the floor.
 - iii. Motion by Marilyn, seconded by Scott to elect Don and Helene to the board as a slate. Motion passed.

IX. Old Business

- a. Plans for current funds: Dan covered above in the Treasurer's report (item VI, b).
 - i. Upcoming capital improvements
 - ii. Moving some funds to higher-interest accounts
- b. Land Acknowledgement Status: We agreed to put off doing this with the understanding that we will continue to try to learn more first.
- c. Memorial Committee Status: Laurie spoke to this in her Chair report (item V, c). Thus completed, this committee has been disbanded.
 - i. Memorial for Les Kraus
 - ii. Physical Memorializing
 1. Bench
 2. Memory Book -- Sharon mentioned that no one has added to the memory book yet, and she invited people to do this if they want. She also reminded people that the book is available to peruse, on the table near the entrance at the A-Frame. Finally, Sharon wondered if we might do a slideshow of members who have passed (sort of like the Oscars) at one point (perhaps during the Annual Meeting or the last program of the year) each year.
- d. Suggestion to add covering to deck to expand capacity: The board did not discuss this topic, and it may be moot now that we are no longer as concerned with social distancing, as we were during the Covid-19 pandemic.

X. New Business

- a. Presentation of Wildlife Habitat Certification: Laurie introduced Helen Strand to speak with us about this. Helen shared some background info about the National Wildlife Federation, including that there are over 200K certified areas across the

country. Each one features sustainable, native plants, conserves water, and provides good habitat for native animals. Our fellowship property meets all of those requirements. Helen brought some wildflower seeds with her to scatter in the woods, as well as a framed certificate, dedicated to Les Kraus, that we will display inside somewhere. There's also a matching metal sign posted by the trail.

- b. Landscaping Working Group Report: Karen began by sharing some background about this project. Last year, the board hired Master Gardener Kate Netwall to create a landscaping plan for the areas of the property between the A-frame and Glen Road. The board handed the project over to a new working group of volunteers who are determining how best to implement parts of this plan. In general, the group is hoping for low cost, low maintenance, and a more natural/indigenous, less "manicured" look.
- c. By-laws Review: Laurie stated that the current board requests that the new board take into discussion a review of the by-laws including some protocol on how and when to review them.
- d. Website Content Update: Marnie said that she will be spearheading an effort to review, correct, and update content on the website, beginning this summer or next fall. Though she will be reaching out to committee chairs individually, she invited anyone to send her items to take into consideration, and mentioned that she may be seeking volunteers to help her with this process.
- e. The 8th Principle: Vote: Laurie gave a quick update to clarify some information about this vote, and gave us time to reread the wording of the principle. On anonymous ballots, we voted "Yes," "No," or "Undecided." Terry compiled the responses. For next year, Laurie plans to do a couple more programs on this and the rewrite of Article II of the UUA Bylaws where the principles are held, with the goal of creating compassionate conversations, rather than trying to divide people. The results of the vote were: 9 votes "No," 5 votes "Yes," and 5 votes "Undecided."

XI. Other Business:

- a. Other: There was no other business.

XII. Upcoming Events:

- a. Small Dinner Gatherings: Vicki fully covered this in her committee report (item VII, m), and she will also talk more with Sharon about possibly gathering a group to take a tour of indigenous sites around the area.
- b. Canoe Trip: Before the meeting, Laurie gathered responses to her inquiry about possible summer dates for this fun, annual event. Today, she announced that the date for the canoe trip will be Saturday, July 15.
- c. Auction: Tim Wendt covered this in his committee report (item VII, o).

XIII. Adjournment: Sharon made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and this was seconded by Terry. No vote was needed, and the meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m.