

**Chautauqua United Church of Christ Society  
Annual Meeting  
Sunday August 28 2022  
Unapproved minutes to be approved at the August 2023 Annual Meeting**

**Welcome and Call to Order:** John Botti, President  
Approximately 32 persons were in attendance.  
Board members were introduced.

**Opening Prayer** – Rev Peggy O’Connor, Chaplain Administrator for 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the season.

**Service of Remembrance** – Rev Peggy O’Connor  
Peggy led a short time of remembrance and reflection for the season and Chautauqua UCC Society members who had died since we last were together. Deaths Since our annual meeting in 2021 included:

Lucille C. Leamon  
Jim Domer (12/23/2021)  
Sharon Gordon – October 2021 (Wife of Herbert Gordon)  
Mabel McVeigh  
Steve Lipman (July 7, 2022)

**Approval of minutes of 2021 Annual Meeting**

Motion to approve – Peggy O’connor  
Second – Wayne Sautter

**Chaplain Administrator’s reports:** Rev Peggy O’Connor and John Rodgers (in absentia)  
Peggy shared John Rodgers report from the first 5 weeks of the season. John said it was an excellent 1<sup>st</sup> half, offered high praise for the hosts and registrar. All of the staff went far beyond their job descriptions. The first half was marked by the death of Steve Lipman, Grace’s (registrar) husband. John stated we are a strong and supportive Society because of the community created by our Hosts and Grace. John mentioned a variety of issues for the Board to consider (wifi reception on the HQ porch, pillar repair, chapel chair repair, etc). He concluded by saying “it has been a privilege for Susan and me to be on the staff these last few years. We look forward to a year or two off and then coming back if that meets the Society’s needs. Thank you.”

Peggy proceeded to say that her report is similar to Johns in that the staff is exemplary. Peggy mentioned that all of the seasonal residents (or persons present for multi weeks) were not just guests, but saw themselves, in many ways, as an extension of the staff in hospitality, service and it resulted in making the workload lighter in many ways.

There are many things, physically with the buildings, which need attention and Peggy noted the board is aware and attentive to all of them. She looks forward to being the Chaplain Administrator for the first half of the season (weeks 0 through 4) in 2023.

**President's Report: John Botti**

"I began my report last year by stating that the previous 2 years had been like no other, chiefly because of the Covid-19 virus and its impact on the Institution and our Society.

This year we were, thankfully, at somewhere near 75% occupancy and as far as I know, no one staying in any of our facilities contracted Covid while staying with us. I think it's safe to say that we are all grateful for that. But, again, 2022 was a year like no other. On August 12 at approximately 11AM Salman Rushdie was attacked by a man with a knife on our Amphitheater stage. Ralph Henry Reese, who was the moderator of the Rushdie presentation, also suffered injuries to his face but he was released from the hospital the same afternoon. This was the first time anything like that had happened here at CHQ. While we grieve the assault and the aftermath it will no doubt leave behind, we are grateful no one was killed. The Chautauqua community is a resilient community but I suspect that scars will remain for years to come.

That aside, we had a very successful year here at our CUCCS facilities. I want to thank our Chaplain Administrators, Revs. John Rodgers and Peggy O'Connor for their leadership. I also want to thank our hosts, David and Dana Wright, Tom Worley and Nancy Loy, David and Margaret Graves and Evadne and Maura Giannini. All of them worked to serve our guests and to keep our facilities running smoothly. And the CUCCS registrar and gatekeeper, Grace Lipman, lived up to her name..Grace. Everyone knows Grace and we have all grieved with her this summer on the passing of her love, Steve. Thank you, Grace for your dedication to our society and for the love you show every day. I can't say enough about how beautiful our music was this year with Ruth Becker at the keyboard and our volunteer choir. I also want to thank Sue Peterson, our very dedicated VP and soon to be President. Sue was always on top of what needed to be accomplished and often reminded me of things I had forgotten. To say I can't thank her enough would be an understatement. Thank you, Sue! And of course, I thank my wife, Sheila, for her moral support and dedication to our Society. She does a lot of work behind the scenes that make a difference for so many.

This past June, at the suggestion of Peggy O'Connor, we undertook the first of what I hope will be several diversity trainings for our BOD and Staff. It was led by Amit Taneja, VP for diversity at the Institution. It was very well received by those attending and it opened our eyes to ways in which we unknowingly communicate with and think about others, particularly people of color.

We held 4 BOD meetings over the course of the year, and I cannot thank our dedicated BOD members enough for their willingness to serve. We could not do what we do here at CHQ without them so please offer your appreciation when you can.

As we look forward to 2023, I would like to invite each of you to volunteer where you can. We need lots of help on opening and closing weekends to prepare our facilities for guests. As my dear friend, Warren Thomas, always said: "Come when you can and leave when you must."

Last, let me just thank all of our members for giving me the opportunity to serve as your President for the last three years. It has been an honor. Thank you."

#### **Vice President – Sue Peterson**

Sue wore a t-shirt for a reason: it's message is 3 words: there, their, they're. It reminds her of our society: we are similar in that we are welcoming, show hospitality, that we serve and give. But we are different in that we have opinions, we disagree, we are lively in our discussions. The board does not take lightly your opinion. We try to make decisions as best we can.

We have begun thinking about our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The institution will celebrate its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024. We were present on the grounds from the beginning and will celebrate our office anniversary soon after that. She asked for members to offer suggestions for celebrating and memories pertinent to the Society.

#### **Registrar – Grace Lipman**

We achieved 80% occupancy and no Covid cases within our buildings. We had our family suites occupied several times. All guests were fully vaccinated. Week 6 we had 6 teenagers in the building. Since we weren't full as the season approached, the board lifted the 4-week limit on guest stays, and as a result we had 8 seasonal guests. Week 3 we gifted a room to a home boy. 3 new life members. The elevator broke down one week which resulted in a couple having to leave. They couldn't manage the stairs at all. That highlighted an important factor that every guest must be capable of using the stairs.

In closure, Grace stated much appreciation for the support and love for her and Steve when he died. She said she would not have wanted to be anywhere else.

#### **Treasurer – Rachel Barnard**

Balance sheet: in cash at present about \$198,000 (\$19,000 of that is committed to the carpet fund). Bill Libby has offered a \$25,000 matching gift. The gift will mature at the end of 2022. The remaining amount would be enough to see us through an entire season without revenue, should that occur.

In 2022 we have been budgeted for about 90% occupancy. We hit 80% which was great compared to last year when we restricted occupancy to no more than 50%. Generous gifts have come in from members and staff which enabled us not to take money from the endowment for expenses.

Budget for 2023 is based on 90% occupancy. Money from the endowment (\$25,000) is in the budget but is not expected to be needed. Some expenses have gone up in 2022, mainly insurance cost and cleaning costs. Without the endowment grant in the budget, we are at a \$6000 deficit. We are hoping to make that \$6000 up with extra donations.

The room gift does not pay for the cost of managing our buildings. It is the generosity of our members that allows us to keep our facilities affordable. We are not expecting to raise the room gift cost at present.

Motion to accept the budget: Meredith Townsend. Second David Graves.  
Unanimous

**Endowment Trustees:** Rachel Barnard in Curt Ackley's absence

Endowment stands at \$828,000, about 5% less than in August 2021. That is just market fluctuation. It is invested in Socially Responsible Funds.

Meetings took place each week inviting members to join the Living Legacy Circle. They were hosted by Nancy and Curt Ackley. We stand at 23 charter members. We discovered that many members had already provided contributions to our Society in their Estate plans. A plaque will be made to honor those charter members.

**Committee Reports:**

**Governance:** Carol Ludemann

To be approved by the members:

New Board member: Julie Turnley

Renewing Board Members: Sue Peterson, Welling Hall, Clare Kralovec

Executive Board in 2023

Sue Peterson – President

Ruth Becker – Vice President

Carol Ludemann – Secretary

Rachel Barnard – Treasurer

Endowment Trustees:

John Rodgers, Nancy Ackley

Motion to approve the board members and slate of officers:

Sheila Gossett  
Second – Sue Peterson

Unanimous

**Personnel:** Shannon Washington

Shannon expressed thankfulness for the existing staff. She introduced Revs' Laura and Bill Hoglund as new Chaplain Administrators for 2023.

Hosts recognized earlier in the season as they completed their host duties:

Nancy Loy and Tom Worley  
Dana and David Wright

New hosts in 2023 were announced:

Sheila Gossett and John Botti RCH 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2023 season  
Maureen O'Brian and Fred Childers RCH 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 2023 season

David and Margaret Graves Mayflower 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 2023 season  
Evadne and Maura Giannini Mayflower 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 2023 season

**Promotions:** Welling Hall

Welling was not present. John Botti gave her report.

We can track the number of visitors to our website. Interesting is that there are more nonmembers who visit our website than our members. They are, no doubt, looking for accommodation and look at us briefly before moving on to check other choices. The website is "hit" significantly after the newsletters go out.

The biggest challenge has been to figure out why there are a sizeable number of people who have not been receiving the newsletter. We use Constant Contact. To track this problem and to try to fix it will be to send out postcards to all persons on the Constant Contact list, informing them of the recent newsletter and asking them to contact Welling if they did not receive it.

Welling suggests we find ways to use the UCC "God Is Still Speaking" slogan. An idea might be to change our Thursday evening "Vespers" to "God Is Still Speaking".

**Facilities:** John Forristal (was en route from home to the meeting)

Reminder of the carpet challenge of \$25,000.

Wayne Sautter (committee member) offered insights on facilities work

There is nothing major with all three buildings. They are aware the windows need painting, flashing on the bottoms of the doors to rooms at the Mayflower need redoing and doors need

scraping and painting. To replace the doors would cost about \$1000 for inferior doors. Our doors are very good.

Question has been raised about winterizing one of our houses. The Institution is creating and promoting more off-season events. A few of the denominational houses are winterized and are hosting events throughout the off season. It is an income producer. A feasibility study will begin.

The facilities committee is watching the crack in the basement of the RCH. It does not seem critical at this point. The columns on the Headquarters porch need attention. The committee is quite confident that the columns are not rotted, just the bottom framing need replacing.

Gardening – The committee may contact the Dirt Divas to have spring pruning done. The committee is aware we need help – perhaps with a garden coordinator.

Terry Horner was introduced. He has volunteered to check on the buildings over the winter.

### **Recognition**

Thanks to John Botti for his service as President.

Curt Ackley resigning from serving as Endowment Trustees Chair and going off the committee

Nancy Loy and Tom Worley – completed 5 years as hosts

Dana and David Wright – resigned from being hosts

A plea was made for volunteers to become ad hoc committee members for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our presence on the grounds.

**Closing Prayer:** Rev Peggy O'Connor

**Adjourned: 1:53 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted

Ruth Becker, secretary

Chautauqua United Church of Christ