

**Metropolitan Association New York Conference Fall Meeting Minutes**  
**Saturday November 22, 2025 10:00 am via Zoom**

**Welcome/Call to Order**

President Yvette Wynn called the meeting to order and welcomed all. Secretary Charlene Apsel assisted by taking attendance.

**Establish a Quorum**

Charlene Apsel - 31 churches represented.

**Yvette Wynn**

Appointed Sandra Tullock as parliamentarian. Sandra is a member of St. Albans and a certified parliamentarian, helpful given Bylaws vote during the meeting.

**Approval of Agenda**

Yvette Wynn

President asked to approve agenda by consensus. Chris Punaraj noted two corrections to the agenda. Disaffiliation, that is CSI, Jubilee, and Sacred Fellowship, not CTK. And the next spring meeting, Saturday, April 18, 2026.

**Acceptance of Minutes May 31, 2025 Meeting**

Charlene Apsel – Motion to approve the minutes from Association meeting on 5/31/25. Poll for voting opened after Secretary moved to accept the minutes and Deborah Dee Brayton seconded the motion.

Questions or corrections

Fred Weidman – provided correction to Yvette Wynn's name.

Yes 52

Abstain 25

Passed

**President's Report**

Yvette Wynn

So I will keep this short. My report was in the list of reports that you received, and I spoke to it a bit in my meditation today, but my focus as president has very much been on getting out to see our churches. Stewardship of our resources is also one of the points that I have, and this meeting today reflects that. We're going to hear from some of our UCC financial ministries, and, you know, many of our churches need that kind of advice

**Church World Service**

Mary Catherine Hinds could not attend.

Yvette – provided overview of her Kenya, Africa visit in September 2026 hosted by Church World Service (CWS), a long time UCC partner. Reverend Karen Georgia Thompson, our General Minister and President, serves on the Church World Service Board. The bulk of their work has been refugee resettlement and is now addressing hunger, fresh water and schools in underserved areas.

**Phil Salmon Budget**

Walked attendees through his PowerPoint presentation of the budget. The association's main source of income is the fellowship dues that we collect from the churches. And then we plan withdrawals from our endowment. The endowment is a pool of money that's set aside where it's invested, and then we take a percentage each year. As of November we've collected \$28,000 in the fellowship dues, which was dedicated for this fiscal year, which represents just about 50%, of our goal of \$50,000. As of the end of October we had about 1.3 million between the investments and the cash.

Charlene Apsel moved to approve the budget as presented.

Elice Higginbotham seconded

97% yes

3% no

Approved

Break 10 Minutes

### **Committee Reports**

Bylaws Rev Reginald Brantley

Committee chair provided general overview and committee objective to streamline the document. We went through the document, article by article. Some things have not changed, but that doesn't mean we didn't talk about it and discuss it. Social justice provided revised language which was read. The Bylaws committee did not add grammar edits to the document so that multiple versions did not circulate.

It was stated that the updated committee sizes would occur by attrition over 5 years. No board members or committee members have been asked to resign.

### **Vote To amend Article 9 (see below revised language)**

#### **ARTICLE IX. ADDITIONAL NON-STANDING COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES**

A. The Association or the Board of Directors may establish additional committees or task forces as needed to do the work of the Association.

A.1. There shall be a Social Justice Committee whose responsibility shall be to assist the Association and its congregations to voice and respond to social justice concerns and needs, whether local, national or international, as expressed by Association congregations and their communities, or by the wider United Church of Christ.

A.2. Task forces shall report to the Board or Association and shall be dissolved upon completion of their assigned tasks. If a task force remains active for more than two years, it must be reauthorized.

There were questions and answers.

### **Vote on the Amended By laws**

Reginald Brantley I move the bylaws as amended be accepted and approved by this association.

Lennox Grant seconded

89% yes

3% no

9% Abstain

Approved

### **Metropolitan Association Standing and Development Committee**

Vote

Disaffiliation - CSI Jubilee Memorial Church and Scared Fellowship Ministries

Bill Nye We recognize that they have taken action on their own to disaffiliate with the United Church of Christ.

So we have a motion before us merely to recognize in accordance with the revised Manual on Church.

95% yes

5% Abstain

Vote

Reaffiliation Mt Vernon Heights UCC

Bill Nye moved that we, readmit to membership in the association the the Vernon Heights Congregational Church, also known as the Mount Vernon Heights Congregational Church.

Came for Committee and did not need to be seconded

97% Yes

3% No

### **Presentations on services provided by these UCC ministries.**

Church Building and Loan Fund Rev Drew Terry

United Church Fund Rev. Charles Buck

## **Committee on Ministry Rev. Emily Brown**

### Introduction of New Clergy

Since our last meeting, the Committee on Ministry has received into the Metropolitan Association the following ministers by transfer from other associations or conferences. We received Reverend Peter Cook. Reverend Prabhu Sigamani, a familiar face, he's back with us, serving at Bethany. Reverend Ron Cosgrove, and Reverend Leah Fowler just had to sign off to run a youth retreat just, like, a couple minutes ago. And additionally, we ordained, and installed the Reverend Mark Davies. Five new clergy to Metro Association, we're delighted to welcome them.

## **Personnel Committee Rev. Dr. Ronald Wells**

### Introduction of the new Registrar

Unfortunately, Juliet is not on the zoom, but we do have a new registrar, Juliet Owuor she started last month.

## **Scholarship Committee Deborah Dee Brayton**

Referenced submitted report. Thanked former co-chair, Dalton Haskins for his faithful work and contributions. Grant received from Janine Heller Foundation, and we're very grateful for the \$25,000 for the Cynthia Jackson Scholarship.

## **Wider Church**

### **UCCB Deborah Dee Brayton**

Report advised of her service as UCCB director and chair of the Finance and Budget Committee, which she stated is totally out of her comfort zone. The learning has been helpful and the chair role includes membership on the Executive Committee of the UCCB. It is a great honor to be able to serve on the national setting.

### **New York Conference Rev. Dr. Marsha Williams**

Conference Minister gave greetings and lifted up Clergy, mental health, and wellness as a focus over the next few years. A couple of sessions have been held already virtually and some in Metro have likely attended. Clergy have asked to continue with focus on addressing the issues that pertain to our clergy of color. Everyone is encouraged to find places to engage. Metro most diverse Association, people who haven't participated asked to do so.

### **Yvette Wynn**

Congregational Church of South Hempstead.

So, beloved siblings in Christ, I want to briefly speak to the upcoming church-sponsored celebration for Reverend Conrad Tillard. As a reminder, in UCC Polity, an installation is an act of the Association. The congregation, in the freedom of local church autonomy, may hold the service in whatever form or name they choose. However, it does not constitute an Installation from an Association standpoint. It is our sincere hope that we will be able to celebrate an installation with Reverend Hillard once the authorization process is complete.

I want to just affirm here that the Metropolitan Association supports the Congregational Church of South Hempstead and wishes them and Reverend Hillard well as they step into this next chapter of ministry. We are praying for their life, witness, and impact in the community. At the same time, our Association has a covenantal process for ministerial authorization. That process includes specific requirements and timelines that must be met in order for someone to be recognized as an authorized clergy in good standing. And for the Association to participate formally in services such as Installations. As we know from experience that our best opportunity to influence this process in a positive way is at this stage, while there is a shared interest in completing the remaining steps.

When we set aside the process or make exceptions in order to participate in an event, the immediate pressure is relieved, and too often the remaining steps never get closed out. That does not serve the pastor, congregation, or the wider church. So, in summary, we bless the support, we bless and support the congregation, and we wish them well at their church-sponsored service.

Neither the Metropolitan Association nor the New York Conference will participate formally in that service. We remain committed to walking with the congregation and Reverend Tillard as the ministerial authorization process continues,

and we sincerely hope to bring that process to full completion. Thank you for your understanding, for your prayers, and for your continued commitment to covenantal life in the Metropolitan Association. I thank you.

The nominating committee may be reaching out to folks about possibly serving on committees, and so I ask you to take their call and have a conversation. If you have any concerns or questions about anything that we've discussed here today, just be in touch with me or Charlaine, she'll get to me.

We will send out something on the Bylaws in terms of the timeline to get them instituted. We talked about that today, but we'll put that in writing. And just know that letters for the churches that we affiliated and disaffiliated will also go out.

Adjournment

