

# Albany UU Annual Meeting



## Annual Meeting Sunday, May 17, 2020

**10:00-11:00 Virtual Service via Zoom**  
**11:00 Virtual Annual Meeting via Zoom**

The Albany UU Annual Meeting will be hosted via Zoom on Sunday, May 17, immediately after the service. In addition to the presentation of reports, the primary business is the presentation and adoption of the 2020-21 budget. Ballots for all elections, both contested and uncontested, will be handled by mail. Active members eligible to vote will receive a ballot by mail, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Since this will be our first Annual Meeting conducted via Zoom, we will host a practice session on the Sunday previous, May 10, also immediately after the service.

### Ballots

The nominating committee will be mailing ballots to eligible voting members via USPS. Ballots will be printed on BOTH sides, the Uncontested on one side and Contested (for nominating committee) on the other. Instructions on how to rank the voting for Contested candidates is on the ballot. Included also, will be a self-addressed stamped envelope so ballots can be returned quickly. Thank you for your understanding and participation in our democratic process.

**Completed ballots must be received on or before 11:00 AM on Friday, May 15.**

### Contested Elections\*\*

#### Nominating Committee

*(2 to be elected for two 3-year terms)*

Elizabeth Berberian, Paul Reese, Todd Thomas  
*(Continuing Nominating Committee members: Sharon Babala, Pat Bailey, Randy Rosette, Kelly Smith)*

### Uncontested Elections

#### Officers to be elected (1-year terms)

President..... Patti Jo Newell  
Vice-President..... Jan McCracken  
Secretary..... Molly Daniels  
Treasurer..... Reese Satin  
Ass't. Treasurer..... Kathy Harris  
Religious Education Chair\*..... Tracie (Tilgner) Brazinski  
Social Responsibilities Chair\*..... Jean Poppei

\*Ex-officio member of Board of Trustees

\*\*The bylaws call for the Nominating Committee to be contested

### Uncontested Elections (continued)

#### Board of Trustees

*(2 to be elected for 3-year terms)*

Geoff Abbas, Heidi Newberg  
*(1 to be elected for 1-year - to fill resigning member's term)*  
Kathy Lloyd  
*(Continuing Board Trustees: Meredith Andrews, Zach Cunningham, Amie Jamieson)*

#### Religious Education Council

*(4 to be elected for 3-year terms)*

Alison Hart, Michael Hornsby, Ashley Keegan, Julie Maresco  
*(Continuing REC Members: Winston Hagborg, Ela Kessel, Mike Myers, Darnell Rohrbaugh)*

#### Social Responsibilities Council

*(1 to be elected to a 3-year term)*

Tanya Hotalen  
*(Continuing SRC Members: Mark Abendroth, Michael Braunstein, Karen Kaufmann, Crystal Papps, Ann von Linden)*

## Albany UU Annual Meeting: Candidates

### 2020-21 elections

#### Officers

##### President: Patti Jo Newell

I would be honored to serve another year as president of the congregation. Albany UU has been central to our family for over two decades. I have learned and benefited most while active in the community, and have had the privilege of doing so in a variety of contexts. From co-chair of the erstwhile Social Events Committee to earlier terms as trustee and vice-president of the Albany UU Board and ad hoc committee work such as Welcoming Congregation, Habitat for Humanity, Inclusivity Team, Covenant Team, Safe Congregation Policy to regular stints in various Religious Education classes, I've been impressed by the strength and vitality of our community. As someone passionate about the vitality of congregational polity, I will continue to work to promote policy and program that would best reflect and serve the breadth of experience and need at Albany UU.



##### Vice President: Jan McCracken

One of my good fortunes was being brought here 60+ years ago where I received the lifelong benefit of this congregation's alternative parenting. It was a healthy complement to my parents' liberal efforts! (Fred & Martha Schroeder) As I enter the aging process more deeply, I feel closer to knowing what gifts I have to offer. Although I'm not excited to gain a title (Vice-President), I am motivated to serve in this way, to keep learning, growing, and contributing. I hope to support the needs of the congregation with respect to the living vision, mission, and covenant we share. Are you willing to support me with your love, and some guidance when I need it?



##### Secretary: Molly Daniels

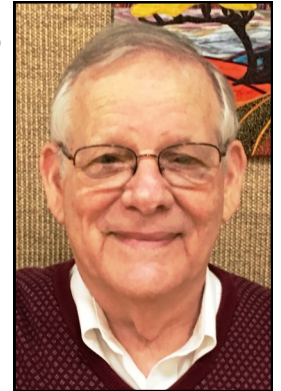
I am excited for the opportunity for continuing service to Albany UU as Secretary on the Board of Trustees. I have been in this role for one year, as a Trustee the two



years prior and on the Governance Working Group so I am familiar with the current initiatives. Prior to that I was Youth Advisor, on the Nominating Committee, Personnel Committee, Chair of the Religious Education Council, RE Volunteer and RE Council member. I was born and raised Unitarian Universalist and have attended several different congregations before settling with my family in Albany. My husband Mark and I joined this congregation in 2001.

##### Treasurer: Reese Satin

I've been at Albany UU since 1989 and served in many elected and unelected leadership roles as well as performed those non-leadership functions that hold our community together. My financial work at Albany UU has been as Treasurer, Chair of the Finance Committee and the Endowment Trust, and playing a leading role in arranging and developing the financing of the building expansion. I am also Treasurer for UU Weekend at Silver Bay.



Outside Albany UU, I am Treasurer for the Walden Fields Homeowners Association and was Treasurer for Vanguard — Albany Symphony Orchestra.

I believe an organization's true values are expressed in how it uses its financial resources. I believe our budget presents a different picture than our Mission Statement. If elected Treasurer, I will work to conserve and use Albany UU's resources more effectively, consistent with the office of Treasurer and the Society's mission.

##### Assistant Treasurer: Kathy Harris

I served as Albany UU's Treasurer for three years and then transitioned to the Assistant Treasurer role in July 2019. I have really enjoyed doing this important work, which spans all income generated for the operations of AUU. In this interesting time of COVID-19, I note the drop in rental income, due to the closure of the building, thus the vital importance of our members' pledges and other financial support, such as the virtual passing of the plate during the Sunday services. As a long-time member of the Finance Committee, I have participated in the development of the annual budgets. The current budget concentrates our financial



resources to maintaining our staff support to ensure their support of our on-line and other activities. I am looking forward to the 20-21 AUU year, hopeful of a reopening of our building and the chance for us to be together again in-person!

## **Trustees:**

### **Geoff Abbas**

I am originally from Webster, NY and attended Hope College in Holland, MI, where he met my wife, Kristen in the college choir. I have worked in theater production as a designing and building artist since 1999, spending 12 years at The Wooster Group in New York City and now 9 years at EMPAC at RPI. I was raised in the Presbyterian Church (USA), and have spent many years participating in other congregations, including Catholic and Methodist. I am a strong believer in the worth and dignity of every person, especially children, and have been active in youth leadership and religious education. Kristen and I have two children, Ben (17) and Gideon (12). I enjoy riding bicycle to and from work and for fun, as well as playing guitar, singing, and hanging out with friends and family.



### **Heidi Newberg**



I have been a member of Albany UU since 1999. I am a past member of the Committee on Professional Ministry, the Architectural Committee for Community Hall, and the Board. I am married to Lee Newberg and have four children who have gone through the RE program. By day, I am a professor of physics and astronomy at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

### **Kathy Lloyd**

I have called Albany home for 18 years, after living in Europe, Washington, D.C., California, New Jersey, Maryland and Buffalo where I obtained my degree in Public Communication. As a lapsed and belligerent Catholic, I was exploring a spiritual path that was open to accepting differing points of view and in the inherent



worth of every human. Albany UU fit the bill in so many ways, and I am grateful to have been a member of the congregation for four years.

I am now retired (yay!) after careers in law and marketing. I have enjoyed participating at Albany UU as an usher, greeter, member of the Caring Network, Auction Committee, Holiday Bazaar, All Sides Considered and Meaning Matters and am looking forward to continuing to contribute.

## **Religious Education Council Chair**

### **Tracie (Tilgner) Brazinski**

Thank you for considering me for RE Council Chair. I have worked with children for much of my adult life. I hold a BA in Education from Russell Sage College and have completed many hours of graduate work in Educational Theory and Practice at SUNY Albany.



After graduating, I was a lead daycare teacher in a pre-k classroom for several years, and then taught high school foreign language until the birth of my first daughter, Samantha. I now home school both Sammie and my younger daughter, Chloe. I first came to Albany UU over ten years ago. After a year of attending services, I enrolled my children in RE and began volunteering as a teacher.

I have served on the RE Council, and am certified as an OWL facilitator for both the K-1 and 4-6 curricula. I look forward to continuing to work with Leah and the RE Council to ensure that all our children are able to explore what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist in a warm and nurturing environment.

## **Religious Education Council Members**

### **Alison Hart**

I joined Albany UU last year with my wife, Liz Richards Hart, and our 3-year-old daughter, Octavia. I have enjoyed getting to know the Religious Education program, and the dedicated staff and volunteers who animate it. I am excited to be considered for the church's Religious Education Council, and eager for the opportunity to serve.





### Michael Hornsby

I was born in St. Louis, Mo and I spent my boyhood going to an African Methodist Episcopal Church. I became



interested in Catholicism at Fontbonne College, where I graduated with a B.A. in English literature. I then did graduate studies in comparative literature at Washington University in St. Louis and, following a stint in Peace Corps, I eventually moved to NYC where I earned a graduate degree in social work from Columbia University.

My ex-wife and I moved to Albany in 2006, and we found Albany UU as a way to get our daughter Luchia a liberal religious education. Along the way I found the religion that I had been searching for so long.

I've been a member of this congregation for about 12 years. In that time I served as a member of the Board of Trustees, a founding member of the Inclusion Team, and a cofacilitator of three Beloved Conversations workshops. I've also been a teacher for the 5th - 6th grade RE class, and the 7th - 8th grade OWL class.

I believe wholeheartedly in Unitarian Universalism as a religion that challenges its members to follow their hearts and to develop strong consciences in accordance with UU values. Our RE program is positioned to set our children and youth on the path of personal growth, community service and social justice. If elected to the RE Council I would work cooperatively with the director, administration, council members, and families to guide the children in their journeys of self discovery.

### Ashley Keegan

I have taught 12th grade social studies at Chatham High School for the past nine years. Before that, I taught 7th grade at Chatham Middle School for two years. I hold two Master's degrees from the University of Albany and my undergraduate degree from SUNY Cortland. I am involved in various leadership positions in my school district and with my local teachers union.

I have lived in East Greenbush for the past 11 years and love being close to my family. I have four sisters, four nephews and one niece (including a set of twins born at the end of March). I love to read, go for walks and do puzzles. I am currently working on keeping my first house plant alive -- so far, successfully.



### Julie Maresco

I am from Kinderhook New York where I currently live with my family and fiancé, Lucas Johnson. However, I found out about Unitarian Universalism while earning my master's degree in Public History and Museum Studies in Nashville Tennessee, where I attended the Frist Unitarian Universalist Church there.



I have interests in museums, historic sites, live theatre, traveling, and music. I am a member of the Albany UU choir and am eager to get more involved with the congregation since becoming a member in 2019.

### Social Responsibilities Council Chair

#### Jean Poppei

I am a second-generation Unitarian Universalist. My mother first attended a Unitarian church in Arlington, VA when my family lived briefly in the Washington DC area. As a young person, I experienced Unitarian churches in Staten Island, in Norfolk, Va, and in Harrisburg PA (where I was a member of the Liberal Religious Youth (LRY) and, according to friends at my 50th high school reunion, was a strong advocate for Unitarianism— maybe a little too strong in my bible belt community. With my mother setting a shining example,



I learned early to be concerned for social justice, remembering vividly when her organization, the WILPF, brought Hiroshima survivors to Harrisburg to talk about their experiences and their hopes for world peace. This advocacy for social responsibility was further reinforced at Oberlin College where I majored in psychology and participated in the Poor People's campaign in my senior year. At Albany UU, I have served previously as Chair of SRC and currently, I am a member of SRC as well as on the Inclusivity Team. Some of you may know that I'm also the facilitator of the Sanctuary Task Force here and work with the Albany Coalition of Sanctuary Congregations in support and advocacy for our immigrant neighbors, so many of whom live in fear for their lives. I participate in the Community Breakfast and look forward to when we will be able to greet our neighbors in person again.

## Social Responsibilities Council

### **Tanya Hotalen**

I have been an Albany UU member for 3 years, since moving to Rennselaer county. I grew up near Reading, Pa., with Degrees from Mansfield State College, Pa, and Plattsburgh, NY, in Home Economics. I have a Nursing degree from Columbia Memorial Hospital School of Nursing. I have lived in Columbia county 48 years and worked as floor nurse at Barnwell Nursing Home, and in the office of a general practitioner. My interests are in music - singing and playing recorders, gardening, nutrition, reading, Pilates; recently sewing facemasks! I also enjoy travelling.



## Endowment Trust

### **Jeff English**

Two years ago you put your trust in me to fill out the remaining term of an Endowment Trust member who left the position early. Now those two years have passed and I am asking for your support once again to continue in the role for a full five-year term. Over the last two years I have brought a perspective that meshes well with the others on the ET, and I have managed the calculation of the ET's annual granting capacity. In the last year we have established the new Operations Trust which I supported from the time we were asked to consider it; in the long term this will help support the everyday operations of Albany UU and keep liberal religion vital in our community.



## Nominating Committee

### **Elizabeth Berberian**

Greetings! I am an 8-year member of UU Albany. I have had the pleasure of participating on the membership, personnel, auction, sanctuary and Silver Bay Weekend committees and to be an assistant in the Religious Education Program. I just retired after 38.5 years of directing public health programs; my work included se-



lecting and interviewing candidates for leadership positions.

Serving on the Nominating Committee would appeal to me because I recognize, through my own committee work, the positive value of service and strong leadership. I am committed to enticing both newer, as well as seasoned, members of the congregation to seek leadership positions. This will help to ensure that the broadest range of viewpoints are taken into account when determining future courses of action.

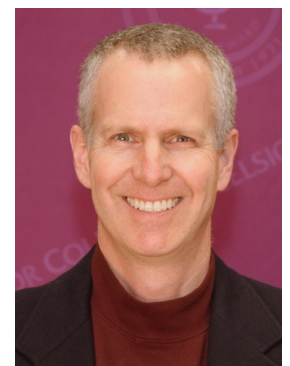
Thank you very much for your consideration of my candidacy.

### **Paul Reese**

I've been with Albany UU as a member since October 2014. I began attending in May 2014. I go to Silver Bay every year volunteering to chauffeur folks around on the golf cart and hosting the Saturday night bon fire. I have an affinity for social issues pertaining to the criminal justice system; I'm a Democrat and vote that way. I believe every person has a constitutional inalienable right to the pursuit of freedom and justice regardless whether one is male, female, transgender, sexual orientation or religious belief. I love all animals, especially dogs and Guinea pigs. Ones political affiliation is their business as long as they don't push their beliefs upon another person.

### **Todd Thomas**

I have been a member of Albany UU since 1993, when Jennifer and I moved to the Albany area. I presently serve Albany UU as the Caring Network Coordinator. Prior to that I served as member and then chair our Endowment Trust. Earlier in my time at Albany UU, I have contributed as a member of the Finance Committee, the Readiness Leadership Team and as the chair of the Personnel Committee. Prior to retiring a few years ago, I ran the Budgeting Office for Excelsior College. In that role and in my roles at Albany UU, it has been particularly important to communicate openly and clearly with a wide range of constituents. I believe I do that effectively, listening more than speaking, in order to understand a diversity of ideas and perspectives before acting.



My personal style and range of experiences prepare me well for the work of the Nominating Committee and I hope to have the opportunity to serve Albany UU in this position.

