

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
June 20, 2013

Agenda

In the Universalist spirit of love and hope, we give, receive, and grow.
First Universalist Church

Treats provided by Craig Bishop

6:30 Call to Order

-Chalice lighting and centering meditation - Craig Bishop

6:40 Consent Agenda:

-Approve May minutes

-Approve Annual Meeting minutes

-Approve NomCom slate (John Borden)

6:50 Foundation Board Update - Victoria Schanen

7:10 GMT Update

- Approve GPH Update

- Annual Work Plan Template

7:30 Conversation w/Sr. Minister

- Racial Justice Initiative

8:00 FMT Report

- Brief Update

- Approve financial review vendor

8:10 July Activities (Dave Bach)

- Board Meeting / Orientation

8:20 Proposed Executive Session

8:35 Meeting Review / Closing Thoughts and Meditation

8:40 Meeting adjourned

Attachments:

President's Report (Craig)

May 2013 Board Minutes (Dan)

Annual Meeting Minutes (Dan)

GPH Update (Karin via Craig)

1st U Monitoring Schedule (Karin via Craig)

Annual Work Plan Template (Karin via Craig)

GMT June Report (Karin via Craig)

President's Report
June 2013

Dear Board:

I was gratified by the collaborative efforts of the board and Justin that went into the Annual Meeting this month. The level of understanding and transparency provided allowed for a smooth budget approval and a deeper understanding of financial and governance for the congregation. Thanks to all your efforts, particularly Justin and Paul! I was proud to present with the two of you.

Our Foundation Board update, originally planned for May, will occur in June. In our combined effort to build and maintain relationships between the Foundation and the church, newly elected chair Victoria Schanen will provide the board with a recap of the first exchange with the staff and lay team on its plans for funding Faith in Action initiatives. It should be an exciting update and I look forward to it.

Justin has provided you all with an initial business plan for Racial Justice via mail. Our job is to meet Justin halfway and discern whether this information sufficiently closes the gap in our understanding of the program and its implications on the Strategic Plan. Additionally, as an outcome the board will need to determine what level of board involvement will be needed to ensure its success.

The Finance Monitoring Team will provide a very brief update and seek approval to proceed with the Financial Review.

The Governance Monitoring Team had another fruitful meeting that generated a much-desired GPH update, which the board will need to approve.

We will go into Executive Session so that the full board can approve the minutes of last month's session and approve the Sr. Minister Evaluation. .

Finally, I will round out my term with a closing meditation and thoughts.

I look forward to seeing you all.

In Faith,
Craig Bierbaum

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Board of Trustees Meeting

Thursday, May 16, 2013, 6:30 p.m.

Board Members present (absent): David Bach, Dan Berg, Craig Bierbaum, Craig Bishop, David Leppik, Paul Robinson, Pam Vincent, Lark Weller, Karin Wille

Clergy present: Justin Schroeder

Others present:

Agenda Item	Presenter	Discussion	Action, if any
Opening Words/ Meeting Preparation	David Bach	The meeting was called to order at 6:29 p.m. David Bach provided a reading from the Tao Te Ching, with an interpretation by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer (<i>Change Your Thoughts; Change Your Life</i>).	
Consent agenda	Craig Bierbaum	Approve April minutes Approve new members Action: Motion to approve Consent Agenda.	Passed
Conversation with the Senior Minister	Justin Schroeder	<p>Justin began by acknowledging that in the past few months, there have been several hiccups in the administrative life of the church (specifically, going over budget with the Quickbook implementation costs, and some of the challenges experienced both prior and during the administrative staff transitions). Justin shared that as a minister and supervisor, he has learned a great deal in the past few months, that accepts responsibility for going over budget on the Quickbooks implementation, and that he has had multiple conversations with staff regarding distribution of responsibilities and how the staff can most effectively manage the existing work load.. Additionally, Justin reported using a “comprehensive” hiring process for the new Director of Operations: multiple staff and lay leaders were involved in first and second interviews and deeper reference checks were performed. He also reported that he has a great deal of confidence in new Director of Operations, Diane Gavere, who will begin May 30. Justin said that he has engaged with Lily Franz, Office Assistant, during this transition to ensure that the church more effectively capitalizes on her talents and time. Members had questions about Diane’s background. Justin also said that Susan might be available on a contract basis if required to orient Diane to the church finances.</p> <p>Other matters: Ruth MacKenzie passed her Ministerial Fellowship Committee interview, and the waiver allowing her to continue employment at First Universalist following her internship has been approved. She would like this congregation to ordain her, and if the Board approves, this will be put to a vote of the congregation at the annual meeting on June 2. There was discussion about the financial implications of Ruth’s employment as an ordained minister vs. her current status. This was followed by a broader discussion of the practice of hiring ministers on a contract basis, which is the prerogative of the Senior Minister, but which could have long term financial implications. Justin clarified that only he and Jen Crow accrue sabbatical leave.</p> <p>Action: Motion to affirm the ordination of Ruth MacKenzie and authorize the President to include on the Annual Meeting agenda a vote of the Members to approve her ordination.</p> <p>Justin called out the plan for his sabbatical as described in the Board Packet, which will be further refined following feedback from the board’s upcoming evaluation of the Senior Minister.</p>	Passed

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	<p>Paul Robinson spoke in favor of the proposed sabbatical and explained his evolution of position. Craig Bierbaum noted that there is never a perfect time to take a sabbatical and some members suggested that January-March may actually be a good time, assuming staff leadership transitions go smoothly. There was additional discussion and clarification about the October “check-in” with the board. It was finally agreed that this would not be a “green light/red light moment, but an opportunity to re-evaluate the plan for church operations in Justin’s absence, and make changes as necessary.</p> <p>David Bach affirmed the personal and professional development value of a sabbatical. Although there have been questions from some members of the congregation and the board about the timing of the proposed sabbatical, the board should approve and defend the decision as a positive benefit to the church. It was agreed that Justin would provide a monthly report to the board between now and the sabbatical, as part of his Senior Minister’s Report. It was also suggested that a report back to the congregation following the sabbatical would be valuable. Each Board member expressed support for the sabbatical plan, process, and timeline.</p> <p>Action: Motion to approve a three month sabbatical for the Senior Minister in the winter of 2014 (January, February, March).</p> <p>Paul Robinson introduced a topic of concern, shared with members of the board privately, about the racial justice work that the church is beginning and which is not called out explicitly as a priority in the Strategic Plan. He is concerned about the expectation of and need for board participation and enthusiasm, without having had enough information to process and develop this enthusiasm. He pointed out that if it is not a priority in the Strategic Plan, it risks being marginalized as a side project with a greater potential for disappointment or failure. He said that it might be better to frame it as a lens through which we do other things, including Faith in Action, rather than a programmatic priority in itself.</p> <p>Justin responded with a greater explanation of the initiative and clarified that we do not need 100% board <i>participation</i> in the training program; however board support is clearly needed. He argued that the anti-racism initiative is deeply embedded in our fourth strategic goal, and was called out in the retreat notes by Laura Park as a means to the ends of the strategic plan. Although it only has one explicit mention in the strategic plan, it is grounded in much feedback from the congregation. He also said that it needs to be considered a years- if not decades-long effort. The initial steps planned for 2013-14 will inform its evolution in the years ahead. There is already significant support and involvement by 50-60 members of the church, and the announcement of the program has been received with relief and hope. Staff will be involved in this initiative, but the focus is on empowering lay leaders to really own this ministry, and help it come alive in the congregation. .</p> <p>Craig Bierbaum echoed Paul’s concern about the implications of lack of board enthusiasm and participation. A second issue is in finding balance between this initiative and other Faith in Action initiatives.</p> <p>The initiative is not in the current 2013-14 budget draft. Justin explained that some funds were raised through this year’s offering</p>	<p>Passed</p>
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		<p>plates and it might be funded with a grant from the Church Foundation grant. Justin agreed that it should be added to the budget as an expense and suggested that there would be offsetting revenue.</p> <p>Dave Bach explained the way Lutheran Social Services is following this same anti-racism path and that in his experience it takes a lot of organization and managerial commitment. It would be helpful for the board to have the structure more clearly defined in terms of financial and staff implications.</p> <p>Justin assured the board that that there will only be trainings in 2013-14. This is the first step to begin to build the muscles. It is not a full court press.</p> <p>Justin took this opportunity to call out “trust” as an elephant in the room. He believes that he is worthy of our trust and this racial justice commitment is deeply inline with our Mission and Visionary Goals, as well as the Strategic Plan. Karin pointed out that there were mentions of this initiative in the Senior Minister’s report for six months, calling out how important board engagement and commitment will be, but that the Board and Sr. Minister have not had the time for that deeper discussion.</p> <p>It was requested that this racial justice work be added to the Strategic Plan Timeline. The board agreed that this is the kind of context that we need.</p>	
Financial Monitoring Committee Report	Paul Robinson	<p>Paul reported that the Financial Monitoring Committee (FMC) had discussed the budget and feedback received from the congregation at the budget hearing on May 5. The committee proposed a revised budget with bottom line operating deficit of \$19,000. The Habitat contribution and the Greater Good campaign will be added to the budget as offsetting items. \$24,000 in capital expenditures (\$10K for member database, \$4K for financial review and \$10K for roof repair) which had been off-budget (paid out of reserves) in the draft presented to the congregation will be added to the final budget. This will be offset by a \$5,000 favorable adjustment resulting in a net loss of \$19,000. Based on the conversation earlier in this meeting, \$10,000 will be added to the expense and revenue categories to reflect the financial dimensions of this year’s anti-racism initiative.</p> <p>Action: Motion to recommend the budget as revised to the Members for approval.</p> <p>Karin Wille asked for clarification as to whether the commitment to Habitat was a legal obligation. Justin confirmed that it is not.</p> <p>Paul and Justin will develop the budget presentation for congregation at the Annual Meeting.</p> <p>Paul identified three recommendations of the FMC for 2013-14:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The board should decide about its relationship to the UUA and PSD and the appropriate level of support, and commit to a plan to get to that level of giving. 2. The board should address how to handle funding of deferred maintenance and capital issues. 	Passed

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		<p>3. The board should adopt an updated reserve policy, to provide a framework and confidence to the congregation that we are not exhausting all of our reserves.</p> <p>Action: Motion to approve FMC recommendations for 2013-14.</p>	Passed
Governance Committee Report	Karin Wille	<p>Karin Wille reported that she had combined the FMC's monitoring items that she felt needed to come to the Board with the draft schedule prepared by the Governance Committee, and that this was the version included in the Board Packet. There were a few suggested changes that were noted by Karin and will be included in the final version.</p> <p>Action: Motion to approve the integrated First Universalist Church Monitoring Calendar with amendments as discussed.</p>	Passed.
Executive Session		<p>The Board voted to enter a Board-only executive session at 8:24 pm.</p> <p>The purpose of the executive session was (1) to consider evidence of actions being out of compliance with the Senior Minister Limitations as defined in the Governing Policies Handbook (GPH), which were brought to the Board by the Financial Monitoring Committee (FMC) and the Governance Committee (GC), and (2) to discuss and approve the process for evaluation of the Senior Minister as recommended by the GC.</p> <p>The executive session ended at 9:24 pm, and the regular Board meeting resumed.</p>	
Meeting Review/ Wrap Up		<p>There was generally positive feeling about this meeting and its outcome.</p> <p>Dave Bach questioned the appropriateness of an extensive email discussion (specifically the recent exchange about the racial justice initiative) rather than a face-to-face "on the record" conversation of the Board. The advantages and disadvantages of an email exchange in preparation for a meeting were discussed.</p> <p>Paul mentioned the possibility of Board working sessions, perhaps on a quarterly basis. The Board responded positively to that suggestion.</p>	
Adjourn		The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.	

Important Dates:

Annual Meeting: June 2, 2013

Next meeting: June 20, 2013

Treats for Next Meeting: Craig Bishop

Prepared and submitted by Dan Berg, Secretary.

154th Annual Meeting of the Members
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Sunday, June 2, 2013, 11:15 AM

Agenda Item	Presenter	Discussion	Action
Call to Order	Craig Bierbaum, President	The meeting was called to order at 11:34.	
Chalice Lighting /Opening Words	Rev. Justin Schroeder, Sr. Minister	Reverend Schroeder dedicated the meeting to the memory of those who have died in the past year, in celebration of the children who grow into their values and give us hope, and in honor of the new members who have joined our congregation and dedicated themselves to become love's people.	
Appointment of Parliamentarian		Margit Berg was appointed parliamentarian for the meeting.	
Authorization of Trustees to Approve Minutes of this Meeting		Action: Motion to authorize Trustees to approve minutes of this meeting.	Passed.
Senior Minister's Report	Rev. Justin Schroeder	<p>Reverend Schroeder provided a brief report as a summary and supplement to his message in the Annual Report that was distributed at this meeting and posted on the church website. He highlighted the particularly significant accomplishments and transitions of the past year as we live into our Strategic Plan, which was approved at last year's Annual Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong public witness: deeply engaged in marriage equality work. • Deepening shared ministry in worship: relaunched Worship Associates and added Chalice Lighters program. • Deepening shared ministry in music: growth of choir and chamber orchestra. • Diversifying our Small Group ministries: quarterly program guide offers ways to connect, grow and deepen. • Putting our faith into action in focused ways: Housing and Environmental ministries, Day of Service, began our racial justice journey. • Welcoming, protecting and affirming the light in our children's hearts in our Religious Education programming. • Evaluating space needs: appointment of Growing Together Discovery Team. • Giving, receiving and growing into Love's People. <p>Reverend Schroeder concluded his remarks with a big thank you to the First Universalist staff, the board of trustees, and the hundreds of volunteers who make this a dynamic and vibrant faith community.</p>	
President's Report	Craig Bierbaum	<p>President of the Congregation Craig Bierbaum presented a PowerPoint overview of the role of the board of trustees: where we've been, where we are and where we're going.</p> <p>A graphic representation of the board's role showed its fundamental purpose as "the ultimate fiduciary." Craig reviewed of the history of the adoption of Policy Governance at First Universalist, with a</p>	

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		<p>particular focus on the work that has been done over the last three years to discern and grow into this model of governance. Using the “nested bowls” framework, Craig reviewed our Values, Mission and Visionary Goals.</p> <p>A year ago the Congregation approved a Strategic Plan at the Annual Meeting—the first such comprehensive plan in decades. Over 150 members participated in the process. This past year the Board began to measure progress toward our Visionary Goals and our adherence to the Strategic Plan through a reinvented Congregational Survey.</p> <p>Among the board’s key goals for 2012-13 were to interpret and annualize the Congregational Survey, to conduct a survey of the church staff, to deepen our use and application of Policy Governance and to strengthen our ties to the First Universalist Foundation board. There were challenges encountered throughout the year and the governing policies provided guardrails for our review of compliance as called for in the Governing Policies Handbook. Among many other things, the board has learned that determining compliance is not black and white.</p> <p>Ties with the Foundation board were strengthened through the work of an ad hoc committee composed of board, Foundation board and elders of the congregation. The committee agreed to a shared goal of creating alignment through relationships and improved communication. Toward this end, the Foundation will be on the board’s quarterly agenda and Foundation board members will attend these meetings.</p> <p>Going forward, the board aims to mature its monitoring practices and skills and deepen its shared learning with the staff.</p> <p>Craig concluded his remarks with gratitude for this opportunity to serve the congregation. It has been a personal blessing and has strengthened his love for this community. He said that, in his opinion, the board is the best small group in the church.</p>	
<p>Treasurer’s Report and Presentation of Recommended Budget for 2013-14</p>	<p>Paul Robinson, Treasurer, and Rev. Justin Schroeder</p>	<p>Treasurer Paul Robinson began his presentation with a series of charts and graphs showing the history of the church in terms of membership and attendance over the last 25 years, revenues and expenses over the last five years, and a summary of the budgeted and actual year end results since 2009. This was followed by an analysis of 2012-13 pledges and a graph showing the outcome if members pledged 2, 3 or 5% of their household income to the church.</p> <p>Paul offered a list of financial management goals for the board in 2013-14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refinancing the church mortgage • Funding capital improvement needs • Creating a reserve policy • Establishing monitoring thresholds • Developing a plan for funding Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and Prairie Star District (PSD) dues • Conducting an outside financial review of the church’s books. <p>Reverend Schroeder explained that every budget is a story of hopes</p>	

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	<p>and dreams, lives touched and changed, hearts touched and transformed. Summarizing the presentation in the Annual Report, Rev. Schroeder highlighted several details that are embedded in the recommended budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This budget includes funding for “The House that Love Built,” Youth Cultural Exchange, and our Racial Justice work. Revenues offset expenses for these three programs. • Includes creative thinking about revenue. • No Miracle Sundays. • Maintains our commitment to being a teaching church. • PSD/UUA dues budgeted at the same level as 2012-13. • Cuts imposed across all programming areas and to professional development expenses. • Cuts to scholarship money for General Assembly, PSD. • Sr. Minister salary and professional expenses cut. • Faith in Action staff remains @ 20 hrs a week. • For the 3rd year in a row: no cost of living adjustments for staff. • Salary adjustments are included for the positions with greatest compensation disparities. • Increased the Minister of Worship Arts hours by 4 to address increased workload. • \$2000 for sabbatical coverage (Jan, Feb, March). This will cover pastoral care and occasional guest preaching needs. • The Board’s recommended budget includes an \$18,000 deficit, which will be paid from reserves, for the financial review, roof repair, and the new database system. • The rest of the capital budget is not currently funded. <p>Rev. Schroeder is confident that, beyond the numbers, this budget builds on the ministry that matters most: Service and social justice, a strong and vibrant worship life, faith formation, and deep, meaningful opportunities for intergenerational learning and activities.</p> <p>President Bierbaum entertained a motion to approve the budget.</p> <p>Action: Motion to approve Budget.</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <p>Questions and comments from the members focused on several matters: the decision to cut custodial staff hours, the decision to reduce the Senior Minister’s salary, a suggestion that we need a volunteer coordinator, the minimal focus on peace in our social justice activities, the decision to keep our Faith in Action Director at 20 hours per week, the decision to keep our UUA and PSD dues at the 2013 level (and the suggestion that successful congregations such as ours should provide leadership in support of smaller and less prosperous congregations). There was frustration expressed about the demise of Unity Leadership and the church’s perceived commitment to developing youth leaders. Concerns were expressed about the mortgage assumptions in the proposed budget, and about items not funded, such as the Library.</p> <p>President Bierbaum, Treasurer Robinson and Rev. Schroeder responded and commented on these concerns.</p>	<p>Moved and seconded</p>
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		<p>A member observed that our growth is fantastic (46 new members were welcomed at the service prior to the Annual Meeting), but it appears that our expenses have gotten ahead of revenues. Rev. Schroeder responded that this is normal and strategic—that we have invested in the ministry and programs that have attracted this growth, in the expectation that the growth will translate into further increases in the pledge base.</p> <p>The question was called.</p> <p>Action: Motion to end debate.</p> <p>Action: Motion to approve the budget recommended by the Board of Trustees.</p>	<p>Passed.</p> <p>Passed.</p>
Vote to Ordain Ruth MacKenzie	Craig Bierbaum	Action: Motion to Ordain Ruth MacKenzie, as affirmed and authorized by the Board of Trustees.	Passed.
Report of the Nominating Committee	Ginny McAninch, Incoming Chair Nom. Committee	<p>Election of Officers, First Universalist Church (one year terms): David Bach – President, Karin Wille – Vice President Paul Robinson – Treasurer Pam Vincent – Secretary</p> <p>Action: Motion to elect the slate of Officers as presented.</p> <p>Election of Trustees, First Universalist Church (three year terms): Jill Braithwaite (first term) Cindy Marsh (first term) Dick Niemiec (first term)</p> <p>Action: Motion to elect the slate of first term Trustees as presented.</p> <p>Election of Chair, First Universalist Foundation: Victoria Schanen (one year term)</p> <p>Action: Motion to elect the Chair of the Foundation, as nominated.</p> <p>Election of Directors, First Universalist Foundation: Chris Bremer (first term) Molly Darsow (first term)</p> <p>Action: Motion to elect the slate of first term Directors of the First Universalist Foundation, as presented.</p> <p><i>Note: the slate erroneously omitted John Borden as a second term nominee as a Director of the Foundation. The Board of Trustees addressed this omission at its regular June, 2013 meeting.</i></p> <p>Election of Members, Nominating Committee: David Lauth 2016 (first term) Deborah Talen 2016 (first term) (Chair appointed by Board of Trustees: Ginny McAninch)</p>	<p>Passed.</p> <p>Passed.</p> <p>Passed.</p> <p>Passed.</p>

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Governing Policies Handbook

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

Updated:
November 11, 2011
June, 2013

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First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

Purpose

The guidelines found in this Governing Policy Handbook (hereafter “GPH”) range from broad to specific. They are broad when more specific guidance is found elsewhere or where flexibility is needed. They are specific when this handbook is the primary source for written clarification and there is a need for a more specific interpretation.

The purpose of the GPH is to:

- Describe the Values, Mission and Visionary Goals/Ends that define who the Church is here to serve and in what way.

ChurchChurch

- Describe how governance works.
- Describe the roles, functions, and responsibilities of the board and its interaction with staff and the congregation.
- Describe how to raise concerns and ideas to the staff (Does it do that?) and board.
- Describe the process for enacting changes or implementing ideas. (concerns are often ways to enact change but are also way to keep on track with stated policies and expectations)
- Define the relationship between the board and the Senior Minister.
- Define the expectations the board and Church have for the Senior Minister and the system of checks and balances for maintaining this relationship.
- Define the roles and responsibility of the Standing Committees.
- Establish Community Norms:
 - a. Describe how we communicate and treat each other.
 - b. Describe the community’s expectations and what happens when these are violated.

In the GPH the word “Church” refers to First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, and it specifically includes First Universalist Foundation; and the word “Board” refers to the duly elected or appointed Board of Trustees of First Universalist Church of Minneapolis.

Values, Mission, Visionary Goals*, and Strategic Outcomes

Our values, mission, and visionary goals define who the Church is here to serve and in what ways. It begins foundationally with our deepest core values, which in turn form the basis of our mission statement, which subsequently inform our visionary goals:

*Note: In this Governing Policies Handbook the term Visionary Goals refers to Ends Statements – which is the technical term more directly associated with Policy Governance principles and best practices. This substitution is meant to be reader-friendly only and not as a substitute for a lesser distinction between ends and means or, for that matter, between governance and ministry.

B. Values

In all areas First Universalist Church acts in compliance with the core values of our community. We believe in:

- the Universalist message of love and hope
- the sacredness of each person
- the strength of community
- the value of spiritual practice

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- the transformation of people’s lives in a faith community
- being a radically welcoming community
- committing to service and working for social justice in the world
- the interdependence of all creation
- the power of giving, receiving, and growing.

C. **Mission Statement**

In the Universalist spirit of love and hope, we give, receive, and grow. First Universalist Church

D. **Visionary Goals**

The people of First Universalist Church are committed to the following visionary goals, achieved at a justifiable cost which does not undermine the long term sustainability of First Universalist Church.

1. We, the people of First Universalist Church grow in our UU faith: we are equipped to live out our values and experience worship, spiritual practices, and rituals that challenge, comfort, celebrate, and heal
2. t First Universalist Church, people of all ages find opportunities to engage in an intellectual and spiritual search for deeper meaning and understanding, both as individuals and in community.
NOTE: Dan says need new one – language?
3. First Universalist Church is an intergenerational community of mutual caring and support. We build this community by actively welcoming everyone and encouraging each person to discover, develop and share their gifts.
4. The people of First Universalist Church work to build a just, loving and sustainable world. We are a visible, influential voice, and we act to shape the larger community into a more just and equitable society.

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Governance Process Policies

The policies in this section address how the Board conducts and monitors its own work.

F. **Board Responsibilities**

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The Board has the ultimate fiduciary and policy-making authority for the Church with the exception of calling ministers and approving the annual budget, which are reserved to the congregation. It is the Board’s responsibility to articulate and develop the visionary goals statements, and to

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develop policies and practices that ensure accountability in achieving those ends.

The job of the Board shall be to:

- Actively and deliberately link with its moral ownership (which is determined by the Board to be present and future seekers who are attracted to First Universalist as a spiritual home) so that the hopes and dreams of the congregation can be discerned.
- Attend to the Church's relationships with its stakeholders – current and potential members and friends of all ages; ministers and other staff; programs, committees, and affiliates of the Church; the UUA and our district; and the neighborhood and wider community.
- Prepare for, attend and actively participate in Board and committee meetings.

G. **Governing Style**

The Board will approach its task in accordance with its covenant and with a style that emphasizes strategic leadership more than administrative detail, clear distinction of Board and staff roles, the future rather than the past, and by being proactive rather than reactive.

In this spirit, the Board will:

- Direct and inspire the organization through the careful establishment and management of governance activities, which include the following:
 - a. Strategy - at a high level, leading long-range planning, mission and visionary goals work
 - b. Oversight – establishing a monitoring process through the creation, application and reporting of policies that will hold the Board, the staff, and the congregation accountable for fulfilling the mission and visionary goals
 - c. Discernment – participation with the staff and congregation in an ongoing process to realize the mission and visionary goals
- Monitor and annually evaluate the Board's own process and performance to systematically insure continuity of Board improvements.

H. **Officer's Roles**

The officers are responsible for performing all duties assigned by the Bylaws and are part of the shared ministry of the Church. Additionally, each officer has a particular leadership role to play.

- President

The primary function of the president is to assure that the Board accomplishes its responsibilities according to its own rules and norms and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization. (Is it clear to everyone what the highlighted phrase means?.)

It is the responsibility of the president to:

- Prepare agendas for and preside over official Executive Committee and Board meetings and meetings of the congregation with all of the commonly accepted powers of that position, while observing Robert's Rules of Order except where the Board has suspended them.
- Focus Board discussion on issues that, according to Board policy, are the Board's to decide, not the Senior Minister's.
- Ensure that Board deliberation is timely, fair, orderly and thorough.
- Delegate work as appropriate to different Board Committees, members and/or other individuals or groups.
- Communicate regularly with the membership including an annual report to be delivered at the Annual Meeting.

The president is also authorized to:

- Speak on the Board's behalf and represent the Board at official functions such as new member ceremonies, ordinations, and installations as well as occasional outside gatherings and meetings.
- Make any decision on behalf of the Board that falls within or is consistent with Board policies on governance process and Board – Senior Minister relationship. This

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authorization does not extend to any other type of Board policy. (What does this mean?)

- The president's authority does not extend to supervising, interpreting Board policies to, or otherwise directing staff.

- Vice President

If the president is absent the vice president shall perform all the president's duties and, when so acting, shall have all the president's powers and be subject to the same restrictions.

The vice president may also have other such powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe. (Add chairing GC as a duty?)

- Secretary

The job of the secretary is to assure the integrity of the Board's record. The secretary is responsible for:

- Recording and archiving of the minutes and appended documents of Board meetings and official meetings of the congregation, including a record of executive sessions.
- Maintaining an accurate record and archive of all policies adopted by the Board in addition to the GPH. (I'm thinking of FMT policies and the BOT job description,)
- Maintaining the master copy of this GPH and archiving of older versions.
- Overseeing publication/dissemination of all official Board documents on the Internet and other media as appropriate.
- Public announcement of any official meeting of the congregation and other duties as assigned by the Church bylaws.

- Treasurer

The treasurer leads the trustees' efforts to ensure the integrity of the Church's financial procedures and practices and the health of its financial position. In particular, the treasurer is responsible for the financial monitoring efforts of the Board of trustees and provides expertise and advice, as needed, to Church staff.

To accomplish these purposes the treasurer:

- Organizes and chairs the Finance Committee and ensures that it includes members (staff, Board and non-Board) with the required expertise.
- Reports to the Board any concerns held by the treasurer and/or by the Finance Committee (Do we want to use FMT or FC?) regarding Church financial matters.
- Reports at the Annual Meeting to the membership on the financial status of the Church.

I. **Board Members' Code of Conduct**

While carrying out its duties, the Board commits itself and its members to ethical, professional and lawful conduct, proper use of authority and appropriate decorum.

Conflicts of Interest

A "conflict of interest" may arise at any time this Board is taking action on an issue, and that issue involves in any way another entity with which a Board member or a member of his or her immediate family is associated.

Hypothetical situations under which there could be a conflict of interest would include cases where a Board member or a member of his or her immediate family:

Serves as an elected or appointed official or as an employee of a federal, state, or local governmental entity; or

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Serves as an officer or director or as an employee with another nonprofit or community organization; or

Is employed or affiliated with a business organization, AND

That organization or entity has some financial business dealing with First Universalist, or common issues affecting the goals and mission of the Church.

It shall be the policy of First Universalist that where there is a conflict of interest, or where the potential for a conflict of interest may exist, each Trustee shall be expected to:

Disclose, at the earliest practicable opportunity, to the other members of the Board that a conflict of interest may exist and the nature of the conflict; and

Abstain from voting on any matters for which there is or may be a conflict unless the other Board members present when a vote is being taken unanimously agree to waive the conflict and authorize the Board member to vote notwithstanding the conflict.

The secretary will record in the minutes the disclosure of a conflict by any Board member, and whether or not a Board member then abstains from voting.

Authority

Individual trustees may not attempt to exercise authority over the Church. The Board will speak with one voice through its adopted policies.

Trustees' interaction with the Senior Minister or staff must recognize the lack of authority in any individual trustee or subgroup (e.g., committee or task force) of trustees.

Trustees' interaction with the public, media or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the similar inability of any trustee, except the president, to speak for the Board.

Trustees are encouraged to continually self-monitor their individual performance as trustees against policies, against the qualifications listed in the current trustee position description, and against any other current Board evaluation tools.

Trustees are encouraged to participate as individuals in volunteer committees, teams or task forces, but all authority and accountability of such groups, as far as the Board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Senior Minister.

Board Covenant

Seeking to embody our religious principles and to create a culture in which all are encouraged to participate fully, we as Board members covenant to:

Promote and maintain a trusting, safe and fun environment in which we all are empowered to utilize our strengths and speak our truths, including hard truths, in the service of the congregation's mission and end statements.

Seek out, encourage, celebrate and welcome diversity among Board members.

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Welcome and build relationships with all Board members, actively including all new Board members.

Actively participate in the Board's and congregation's decision making process, respecting the outcome when appropriate process has been followed.

Communicate Board decisions with *one voice* once a decision has been made, maintaining appropriate confidentiality regarding individual positions and comments on issues. NOTE: Does this make sense since individual positions are reflected in the public minutes?)

Follow all appropriate policies and procedures when in disagreement with a decision of the Board.

Remain in community through conflict and the work towards resolution.

Hold ourselves and each other accountable to our commitments.

Express genuine appreciation to all Board members for their commitment of time, energy and effort.

Be supportive of Board members' needs for self-care and step up, when possible, to take on responsibilities to balance the load.

Be open to new ideas and to new ways of doing things, including a commitment to change our position on issues.

Be knowledgeable about the congregation's bylaws, policies and procedures and actively seek means to align the congregation's governance with its mission and visionary goals.

Remember, always, that no one is perfect, that everyone makes mistakes.

Honor the sacred nature of our time together, our covenant and our shared purpose by illuminating and promoting the hopeful, helpful and enjoyable ways we can engage in the work of this Church together.

J. **Board Committee Principles**

The Board may establish standing or temporary committees to help carry out its responsibilities.

This policy applies only to committees that are formed by Board action, whether or not the committees include non-Board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Senior Minister.

- Purposes

Committees will assist the Board chiefly by preparing and/or assessing policy alternatives, recommendations, implications and outcomes for Board deliberation.

Committees will be used only when other methods have been deemed inadequate so as to minimally interfere with or confuse the wholeness of the Board's job.

- Authority

Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Such authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Senior Minister.

- Staff Relationship

Board committees are to help the Board do its job, not to interfere with the staff doing its job.

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Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff and, in keeping with the Board's focus on the future, Board committees generally will not have direct dealings with current staff operations.

Further, the Board will not impede its direct delegation to the Senior Minister by requiring approval of a Board committee before a Senior Minister action. The Senior Minister works for the Board, never for a Board committee or officer. This does not prevent the Board from requiring a recommendation from a Board committee before taking action as a Board.

K. Grievance Policy

It is the intent of the Board to be responsive to staff and the congregation, but (except as set forth in GPH IV. C. 4)), it is not the function of the Board to resolve complaints or grievances that are not directly related to the Board's policy-making and policy-monitoring functions.

Congregational Complaints: When individual Board members receive complaints from members of the congregation, the following guidelines will be followed.

- **Complaints about Board Policies**

Complaints and inquiries concerning GPH or other Board policies shall be handled in accordance with the Church's mission and visionary goals, which encourages direct and open communications. Such matters brought to the Board's attention will be the welcomed basis for on-going revisions to these policies.

If a request for Board action is received, the complaint or inquiry will be communicated to both Board members **and the Senior Minister**. After discussion with the **Senior Minister**, the Board will determine if a policy change is required. If not, the Senior Minister will resolve the matter directly with the initiator. **Why would a complaint about Board policies be kicked to the SM for resolution?**

If a policy change is required, the Board will make the required change and communicate the resolution to the initiator.

- **Complaints about Violations of Policy**

If a staff member believes that there has been a violation of a GPH or other Board (?) policy s/he may bring it to the attention of the Senior Minister. **If the issue is not resolved, the next step is to follow the employee complaint/grievance procedure outlined in the Employee Handbook**

(NOTE: Does this make sense here?)

If a congregant believes a policy is being violated by staff or the Senior Minister, s/he should first discuss it directly with the appropriate staff or Senior Minister. If this is not possible or if the issue is not resolved through direct conversation, it may be brought to the president or vice president for consideration by the Board. The Board may consider clarifying the policy or treating the issue as disciplinary.

NOTE: The Grievance policy needs review for clarity and congruency.

IV. Board-Senior Minister Relationship Policies

The policies in this section address how authority is delegated to the Senior Minister and how the Board and Senior Minister should work together.

A. Delegation to the Senior Minister

The Board's job is generally confined to establishing topmost policies, leaving implementation and subsidiary policy development to the Senior Minister.

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All Board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Senior Minister, so that all authority and accountability of staff can be phrased, insofar as the Board is concerned, as authority and accountability of the Senior Minister. The Senior Minister reports to the Board on behalf of the staff for overall achievement of the Church mission and visionary goals.

1. The Senior Minister is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions and develop all activities that are true to the Board's policies. The Board may, by extending its policies, "undelegate" areas of the Senior Minister's authority but will respect the Senior Minister's choices so long as the delegation continues.
2. No individual trustee, officer, or Board committee has authority over the Senior Minister or staff. Information may be requested by any individual trustee, officer, or committee, but if such request in the Senior Minister's judgment requires a material amount of staff time, it may be refused with explanation.
3. The Senior Minister may not perform, allow, or cause to be performed any act that is contrary to explicit Board constraints on Senior Minister authority.
4. Should the Senior Minister become aware of a violation of Board policy, he or she shall inform the Board president or vice president. Informing is simply to guarantee no violation is intentionally kept from the Board, not to request approval. Trustee response, either approving or disapproving, does not exempt the Senior Minister from subsequent Board judgment of the action nor does it impede any decision.
5. The Senior Minister's authority does not extend to supervising or otherwise directing individual trustees or Board subgroups regarding Board policy or interpreting Board policy to such individuals or subgroups. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with mutual interaction about individual understanding of policies.

B. Senior Minister Responsibilities

As the Board's official link to the operating organization, the Senior Minister is accountable for all organizational performance and exercises all authority delegated by the Board's governing policies.

The Senior Minister's job contributions can be stated as performance in these areas:

1. Accomplishment of Visionary Goals as stated in Board policies.
2. Organization operation within the boundaries established by the Senior Minister Limitations policies.
3. Appropriate use and delegation of power.
4. Ongoing engagement with the Board on issues that overlap or fall between staff means and Board ends/visionary goals (e.g. the "middle layer" between governance and ministry)

C. Monitoring Senior Minister Performance

The standard of evaluation shall be whether the Senior Minister has made reasonable progress toward achieving the visionary goals, while remaining within the boundaries of the established Board policies.

The Board will make the final determination as to whether the Senior Minister's interpretations of the visionary goals are reasonable and whether reasonable progress is being made toward their achievement.

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A. **Disciplinary Policy**

The Board will pursue the following process in the event that it determines a policy violation has occurred **and** it judges the degree and seriousness of the violation warrants initiating a disciplinary process:

1. Verbal warning (noted as such in writing to establish appropriate documentation of said step). The Senior Minister will present to the Board at the next Board meeting (via the Board packet prior to the meeting) his or her plan to remediate the violated policy. The Board may institute more frequent monitoring of the violated policy as it deems necessary.
2. First written warning. This step will be taken if there is no noticeable improvement in the Senior Minister's willingness and/or ability to refrain from any policy violation following a reasonable period of time for the Senior Minister to implement changes and for the Board to monitor them.
3. Second written warning. This step will be taken if policy violations continue. The Board at this point may also determine whether to notify the congregation, the means of doing so, and the content of the communication.
4. If policy violations continue, the Board will:
 - a. Make known to the congregation the nature of the ongoing policy violations as well as the ongoing efforts to address the issue at every point. The Board will also call a meeting of the congregation in compliance with Church bylaws regarding selection/removal of the minister, and/or
 - b. Recommend termination of the called minister for continued policy violation. The Board will meet with the minister to determine how to address his or her departure.

D. **Ministerial Compensation**

1. Ministerial compensation consists of salary (including housing allowance) and benefits. Professional expenses are not considered part of the minister's compensation.
 2. The Board will annually review only the senior minister's salary and benefits and may adjust as appropriate to current financial conditions.
 3. Compensation increases may include:
 - a. A cost of living adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) estimate for the current year, and/or.
 - b. A performance based merit increase as appropriate depending upon current financial conditions. The Board will use the Senior Minister's annual performance evaluation to determine such merit increase.
 4. The Board will maintain records of the Senior Minister's salary and benefit changes and will review this policy annually. **(NOTE: Are we doing this?)**
-

V. **Senior Minister Limitations Policies**

The policies in this section address constraints on the Senior Minister's authority.

General Constraint (I didn't mean to change the headings, but can't fix it)

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The Senior Minister shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is illegal, imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not fail to establish policies and procedures to prevent misconduct and dishonesty that meets accepted business practices. (NOTE: What do the highlighted words mean?)

For purposes of this policy, misconduct and dishonesty shall include but not be limited to:

1. Theft or other misappropriation of assets, including assets of the church or any entity with whom First Universalist Church has a business relationship.
2. Misstatements and other irregularities in church records, including the intentional misstatement of the results of operations.
3. Forgery or other alteration of documents.
4. Fraud or other unlawful acts.

First Universalist Church specifically prohibits these and other illegal activities in the actions of the Senior Minister, all employees, and all others responsible for carrying out its activities.

L. *Integration of Volunteers*

Much of the work of First Universalist Church is accomplished by and through volunteer committees, task forces and other groups. It is central to the vitality of the Church that members participate in its ministry, one aspect of which is working collaboratively with paid staff and other volunteers.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not fail to:

1. Ensure Church staff operates in ways that are faithful to the Church's mission, visionary goals, and policies.
2. Establish such committees or teams as the Senior Minister deems necessary and appropriate to accomplish the visionary goals.
3. Ensure that committees or teams understand their roles, objectives and lines of authority and have the necessary resources, financial and otherwise, to accomplish their tasks.
4. Take into consideration the need for diversity, to the extent feasible.
5. Coordinate the work of compensated staff and Church committees or teams to facilitate communications, efficiency and effectiveness.
6. Integrate members and friends into Church leadership and service.
7. Maintain a Church committee member handbook that clarifies the lines of authority and support within the Church; general committee member expectations; communication policies and procedures; and how committees and individual volunteers should relate with staff.
8. Instill in Church committees or teams and their members a sense of empowerment, encouragement, and the value their work has to the Church.
9. Ensure that the work of Church committees or teams is fully consistent with First Universalist's legal and contractual obligations.

M. *Treatment of Staff and Volunteers*

With regard to treatment of paid staff and volunteers, the Senior Minister may not cause or allow conditions which are inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not:

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1. Illegally discriminate (as defined by city, state and federal governments) among existing or potential staff or volunteers.
 2. Subject staff or volunteers to unsafe or unhealthy work conditions.
 3. Withhold from staff or volunteers a due-process grievance procedure, able to be used without bias.
 4. Prevent staff or volunteers from grieving to the Board when:
 - a. Internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and
 - b. **The individual alleges either that Board policy has been violated to his/her detriment or Board policy does not adequately protect his/her human rights.**
- Provide an inappropriate level of direction and support of the church staff and volunteers. (
5. **Fail to ensure that staff are provided and comply with up to dated employment policies.**

N. Communication to the Board and Congregation

The Senior Minister shall insure that the Board and congregation are fully informed concerning important issues, and that the Board is, to the degree possible, supported in its work.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not fail to:

1. Inform the Board in a timely manner of any relevant trends, issues, or events affecting the health of the organization.
2. Submit monitoring information required by the Board in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion.
3. Gather as many staff and external points of view, issues and options as needed for fully informed Board decisions.
4. Develop and maintain a calendar for the Church year that is publicly accessible.
5. Advise the Board of any deviations from established policy or to recommend changes in such policies whenever the need for revision comes to their attention within 30 days.
6. Ensure that a complete and current set of all Church operating policies is readily accessible to all Church members at all times.

O. Public Statements

The Senior Minister shall not make public statements about the official position of the congregation or Board on controversial social, political, and/or congregational issues beyond what the members or Board has formally and explicitly adopted as positions of record.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe upon the fundamental principle of "freedom of the pulpit."

P. Compensation and Benefits

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers and volunteers, the Senior Minister may not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image of the Church.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister may not:

1. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.
2. Establish current compensation and benefits that:
 - a. Deviate materially from the nonprofit or geographic market for the skills employed.
 - b. Create obligations over a term longer than revenues can be safely projected, in no event longer than one year and in all events subject to losses of revenue.
 - c. Fail to align compensation with accurate measures of employee performance.
3. Establish deferred or long term compensation and benefits that:
 - a. Cause unfunded liabilities to occur or in any way commit the organization to benefits that incur unpredictable future costs.
 - b. Provide less than some basic level of benefits to all full-time employees.
 - c. Allow any employee to lose benefits already accrued from any forgoing plan.

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Q. *Annual Budgeting and Long-term Financial Planning*

Careful, transparent budgeting and financial planning are critical to the programmatic and fiscal integrity of the Church.

1. ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURES BUDGET

Regarding the annual operating budget and the capital expenditures budget, the Senior Minister shall not fail to:

- Develop annual operating and capital (FMT change) budgets guided by the Church's policies, priorities, current strategic plan, and resources.
- Ensure that the Church Board of trustees has sufficient time and information to review and approve the annual operating and any proposed capital expenditure budgets.
- Present the draft annual operating budget and capital expenditure budget to the Finance Committee for review and comment no later than 9 (FMT change) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
- Provide the Church membership with an opportunity to discuss the proposed budgets with the Church leadership prior to the Board's approval of it.
- Provide notice to the Church members of at least one meeting for the purposes of discussing the draft annual operating budget and capital expenditure budget with Church leadership no later than 7 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, with such meeting(s) to be concluded no later than 3 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
- Present the draft annual operating budget and capital expenditure budget to the Board of trustees for its approval no later than 2 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
- Present the budget and any proposed capital expenditures to the Church membership for its approval at the Annual Meeting.
- Insure that the annual operating and capital expenditure budgets:
 - Contain sufficient detail to support a reasonably accurate projection of revenues and expenses, and
 - Distinguish operational and capital items; and
 - Describe the planning assumptions used – including the results of long-term strategic and financial planning; and
 - Align with Board-stated priorities and requirements (see visionary goals) in its allocation among competing fiscal needs.

2. LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING

Regarding long-term financial planning, the Senior Minister shall not fail to engage in long-term strategic planning on a regular basis, including annually revised estimated operating budget and capital expenditure projections for each remaining year covered in the plan. (FMT changes)

R. *Financial Condition*

With respect to the actual, ongoing condition of the organizations financial health, the Senior Minister may not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy, loss of allocation integrity, or a material deviation of actual expenditures from Board priorities established in visionary goals.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not fail to:

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- Ensure that cash remains at or above the amount needed to settle payroll and debts as scheduled.
- Expend Legacy or restricted funds only for the purposes determined at time of receipt or designation.
- Ensure that expenditures do not deviate materially from the approved annual operating budget or capital expenditure budget.
- Provide cash reconciliations and completed financial reports on at least a quarterly basis to the Board in writing
- Provide reasonable access to financial records by the Board, its committees, and authorized outside advisors.
- Perform the following only with the explicit prior approval of the Board of Trustees:
 - Borrow funds
 - Make unbudgeted transfers or “loans” between the general funds and the Legacy funds
 - Solicit funds for non-budgeted purposes

S. *Asset Protection*

The Senior Minister shall not allow the assets of the Church to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not fail to:

- Comply, to a reasonable extent, with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles with regard to all financial transactions and reports.
- Insure against theft and casualty losses at replacement value less reasonable deductible and/or co-insurance limits.
- Insure against corporate liability and personal liability of Board members and staff, taking into account pertinent statutory provisions for indemnification and exemptions applicable to Minnesota non-profit organizations.
- Prevent un-bonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.
- Properly maintain the Church physical plant and equipment.
- Solicit at least two competitive bids when making purchases or entering contracts for over \$10,000.
- Invest foundation and Church capital in accordance with approved investment policies. (FMT Changes)
- Protect intellectual property, information, and files from significant damage.
- Protect the Church’s public image, credibility, and non-profit status.
- Honor documented donor and source restrictions placed on foundation, legacy and restricted funds.

T. *Emergency Succession*

In order to protect the Church from sudden loss of the Senior Minister’s services, the Senior Minister may not:

1. Have fewer than two other staff members familiar with Board issues and processes.
2. Fail to have a plan in place for the continuation of full ministerial services in the event of the Senior Minister’s absence.

VI. Standing Committee Charges

The policies in this section specify the guiding principles and charges for standing Board committees.

U. *Finance Committee (same problem with letter headings)*

This committee shall monitor all financial governing policies established by the

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Board of Trustees, review and propose needed revisions to those policies from time to time, advise the trustees and staff regarding financial matters, and regularly (at a minimum of every third year) engage a qualified professional auditor and stipulate the scope of work to be completed.

The Finance Committee will create annually a monitoring schedule to detail the activities it will undertake to accomplish its monitoring and other purposes, and to inform staff and other parties regarding its documentary and other needs of them. The Committee's monitoring schedule is attached as Appendix A.

The Board delegates to the Finance Committee responsibility for monitoring compliance with the Board approved policies in the areas of annual budgeting and long-term financial planning, financial condition and activities, and asset protection.

NOTE: The GPH still refers to the FMT as the Finance Committee. What names do we want to use for both committees?

V. Governance Committee

This committee shall monitor all non-financial governing policies established by the Board of Trustees and review and propose needed revisions to those policies on an annual basis.

Additionally, the Governance Committee will create annually a monitoring schedule to detail the activities it will undertake to accomplish its monitoring, and to inform staff and other parties regarding its documentary and other needs of them. The Integrated Monitoring Schedule (incorporating elements of the Finance Committee's monitoring schedule) is attached as Appendix B.

VII. Community Norms

W. Disruptive Behavior Policy

While openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the prime values held by our congregation and expressed in our denomination's purpose and principles, we affirm the belief that our congregation must maintain a secure atmosphere where such openness can exist. When any person's physical and/or emotional well-being or freedom to safely express his or her beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly, even if this ultimately requires the expulsion of the offending person or persons.

There have been times when the disruptive behavior of an individual within the Church building has led members to voice their concerns about one or more of the following:

1. Perceived threats to the safety of any adult or child;
2. The disruption of Church activities;
3. Diminishment of the appeal of the Church to its potential and existing membership.

The following shall be the policy of the Church in dealing with these issues:

1. If an immediate response is required, this will be undertaken by the Minister(s), if available, and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the offending person or persons to leave, or suspending the meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed. If further assistance is required, the Police may be called. Any time any of these actions are undertaken without the Minister(s) present, the Minister(s) must be notified. A follow-up letter detailing what steps must be taken before returning to the activities involved will be sent by the Minister(s) to the offending party or parties.
2. Situations not requiring an immediate response will be referred to an ad hoc committee appointed by the Board of trustees. The committee will respond in terms of their own judgment observing the following:
 - a. The committee will respond to problems as they arise. There will be no attempt to define "acceptable" behavior in advance.
 - b. Persons exhibiting disruptive behavior will be dealt with as individuals; stereotypes will be avoided.

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- c. The committee will collect all necessary information.
- d. To aid in evaluating the problem, the following points will be considered:
 - i. DANGEROUSNESS - Is the individual a source of a threat or perceived threat to persons or property?
 - ii. DISRUPTIVENESS - How much interference with the Church functions is going on?
 - iii. OFFENSIVENESS - How likely is it that prospective or existing members will be driven away?
- e. To determine the necessary response, the following points will be considered:
 - i. CAUSES - Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the Church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
 - ii. HISTORY - What is the frequency and degree of disruption caused by this person in the past?
 - iii. PROBABILITY OF CHANGE - How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
- f. The committee will decide on the necessary response on a case-by-case basis. However, the following three levels of response are recommended:
 - i. LEVEL ONE - The committee shall inform the Minister of the problem and either the minister(s) or a member of the committee shall meet with the offending individual to communicate the concern.
 - ii. LEVEL TWO - The offending individual is excluded from the Church and/or specific Church activities for a limited period of time, with reasons and the conditions of return made clear.
 - iii. LEVEL THREE - The offending individual is permanently excluded from the Church premises and all Church activities. Before this is carried out, the committee will consult with the Board of trustees and minister (s). If it is decided that expulsion will take place, a letter will be sent by the Minister (s) explaining the expulsion and the individual's rights and possible recourse..
- g. Any action taken under item f. (above) may be appealed to the Executive Committee of the Board of trustees and/or the Minister(s).

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions and life experiences. However, concern for the safety and well-being of the congregation as a whole must be given priority over the privileges and inclusion of the individual. To the degree the disruptive behavior compromises the health of this congregation, our actions as people of faith must reflect this emphasis on security.

NOTE: Anybody know what the source of this policy is? It seems very complicated and cumbersome. Do we want it in the GPH?

X. *How We Work Together*

Board/Staff/Volunteer Interaction: A Commitment to Leadership at First Universalist

As lay and staff leaders of First Universalist Church, we seek to work together in ways that exemplify our spiritual values as we carry out the work of the congregation. We honor Unitarian Universalist principles, abide by the policies of the Church, and maintain a community of safety, security and trust. Recognizing that each of us has strengths and weaknesses, we seek to work together in ways that help all leaders to be successful and to contribute to our common vision. As we work together to better accomplish our common objectives, we honor both the value of constancy and the need for change.

Respect We work together to clarify and understand our own roles and to respect the roles and responsibilities of others. We treat one another with respect, even in times of confusion, misunderstanding or disagreement.

Listening We actively listen to one another and to congregants with openness and a desire for genuine understanding. We listen with the desire and intention to recognize and accept good ideas and to change our perspectives accordingly.

Communicating We communicate kindly and effectively, offering generous thanks and

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encouragement and thoughtful criticism and constructive options, when appropriate. We share our own views with candor and tact. We speak directly to others when we have concerns. We freely share information relevant to the life of the congregation except when precluded by legitimate bounds of confidentiality. We avoid gossiping. To the best of our ability, we deal with the issues that arise -- including those that are complex, awkward or difficult to resolve.

Decision Making In making decisions, we seek out reliable information, use critical thinking, consider alternative viewpoints, contemplate intended and unintended consequences, and apply our Unitarian Universalist principles. We honor the democratic process and the decisions of the group.

Leadership When we accept a leadership role we do so with a commitment to doing high quality and timely work. As we work together, we appreciate each other's contributions and recognize that each of us will sometimes fall short, failing to do and be all that we would wish. We support each other and come together as a team when one of us encounters difficulties meeting these commitments. We ask for help when we need it. Through living our values we come together as an evolving, vibrant and caring learning community in which we work together to achieve our congregation's common vision.

MONTH	POLICY	METHOD	FREQUENCY
July	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Ends outcomes	Internal	Quarterly
	<i>Note: The Board/GMT needs to orient new Board members in July. Is that a "monitoring" issue?</i>		
August	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Financial plan (fourth quarter financials) (FMT)	Internal	Quarterly
	Annual work plan (GMT)	Internal	Semiannual
September	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Prior year financial condition;review/audit (FMT)	Internal	Annual
	Staff and volunteer treatment (GMT)	Direct inspection	Annual
	Staff grievance procedure (GMT)	Direct inspection	Annual
October	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Ends outcomes	Internal	Quarterly
	Ministerial succession planning	Internal	Annual
	Protection of assets (note FMT monitoring schedule is annual only) (FMT)	Direct inspection	Semiannual
	Investment and financial policies (FMT)	Direct inspection	Annual
November	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Financial plan (first quarter financials) (FMT)	Internal	Quarterly
	Staff-volunteer grievances (GMT)	Internal	Semiannual
December	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
January	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Ends outcomes	Internal	Quarterly
	Review physical plant for capital improvements (FMT)	Direct inspection	Annual
	RFP for audit/review (FMT)	External	Annual
February	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Financial plan(second quarter financials) (FMT)	Internal	Quarterly
	Review of annual workplan (GMT)	Internal	Semiannual
	Membership and attendance trends	Internal	Semiannual
	Staff compensation/benefits (GMT)	Internal	Annual
	Staff survey (GMT)	Internal	Annual
March	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	3-year financial plan/budget (FMT- NEW)	Direct inspection	Annual

	Annual budget (FMT)	Internal	Annual
April	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Ends outcomes	Internal	Quarterly
	Protection of assets (note FMT monitoring schedule is annual only)	Direct inspection	Semiannual
	Financial review (audit/review)	Internal	Annual
	Congregational survey	Internal	Annual
May	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
	Financial plan (third quarter financials) (FMT)	Internal	Quarterly
	Staff-volunteer grievances (GMT)	Internal	Semiannual
	Membership and attendance trends	Internal	Semiannual
	Ends outcomes review	Internal	Annual
	<i>Note: The Board needs to approve budget in May. Is that a "monitoring" issue?</i>		
June	Financial condition	Internal	Monthly
	Attendance and membership numbers	Internal	Monthly
	Staff and significant volunteer changes	Internal	Monthly
Other	Other policies monitored	As appropriate	Semiannual
Notes:			
	Financial condition = treasurer's report balance sheet		
	Staff and significant volunteer changes = additions, eliminations, or changes (including staff changes in hours, duties, compensation and/or benefits)		
	Ends outcomes = progress toward Ends		
	Financial plan = budget status/quarterly financials		
	Annual work plan = integrated work plan for church year		
	Membership = increase or decrease in membership		
	Staff and volunteer treatment = personnel and volunteer manuals; written grievance procedures		
	Grievance = number of filed grievances by staff or volunteers		
	Protection of physical and legal assets = review of all insurance policies, intellectual property, corporate status, etc..		
	Staff compensation and benefits = review of actual and goals		
	Three-year budget = three-year plan for income and expenditures		
	Audit/review = prepared by outside professional auditors		
	Other policies = policy document in total reviewed, board evaluation, etc.		
		Approved date	

Meeting Summary	
1 st Universalist Board of Trustees—Governance Committee	
Location: 1 st Universalist Bride's Room	Date: Tuesday, June 4, 2013 Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Attendees:	
Karin Wille (Chair)	
David Leppik	
Lark Weller (Notetaker)	

Congregational Survey Outcomes: The committee discussed how the survey results should be used: as part of Senior Minister evaluation (for Board President to discern how to use), and for board edification. We looked at responses that saw a “significant” change from 2012 and determine whether it’s something to be concerned about, etc. (Considered a 5% difference between years for any particular response to be a significant change.) For many items, seeing huge change from year to year isn’t necessary—it may be preferable to see changes at a more incremental rate. The committee referred to Senior Minister’s interpretation of First Visionary Goal (December 2012) that identified survey response percentages as suggested metric for assessing performance. The board approved Justin’s interpretation at that time, but not the metrics (although board minutes suggest that the interpretation was accepted). David has no reason to believe that demographic representation of survey respondents do not reflect the church community in general. Committee discussed ways to generate additional participation in future years (Facebook, marketing approach, contest/drawing associated). David noted there’s no info about CyberCoffeehour on the church website, so is not sure how newcomers would learn about that communication tool.

Committee recommends that board and Senior Minister read full survey and comments.

Action Items:

- David will send his preliminary analysis to entire board, which highlights the issues for follow-up, along with the full survey response packet.

Work Plan Template: Committee reviewed the draft work plan template distributed by Pam and agreed it's probably a good start to give Senior Minister for direction—we’re looking for Senior Minister to account for what new initiatives take to pull off. We noted a table like this doesn’t include room for existing, ongoing items (like Sunday activities).

Committee recommends that board recommend that the Sr. Minister utilize this amended

table for monitoring the Annual Work Plan.

Monitoring Schedule: Committee discussed definition of “significant volunteer changes” as it pertains to our monthly monitoring of those changes and what information it is interested in receiving and why. Committee recommends that the Senior Minister provide board members, via board binders, with complete name of committees and chairs in org chart format (i.e., committees under the responsible staff person) at the beginning of each church year, so that the board understands what groups are helping to accomplish church activities, staff responsibilities associated with these groups, etc. Further, Committee agrees that if a new committee or team is formed mid-year, it’s reasonable for the Board to be made aware of its formation and leadership. Committee supports Craig Lindahl-Urben’s request for Committee Descriptions for all committees for inclusion on website. Ministerial Succession Planning will be added to Monitoring Schedule as an annual item in October.

Evaluation Update: Committee discussed and concurs with the Senior Minister evaluation process that has been developed and is being administered by the board President. Senior Minister will be asked to do flipped version of covenant survey, to assess how board performed this year; he was asked to respond to four questions provided by UUA and used in board review last church year. Committee feels it’s appropriate for these assessments to be given as overall board average score, rather than providing individual board member’s assessments. The board will receive a finished Senior Minister evaluation at the June board meeting.

GPH Revisions: Committee reviewed revisions that have been made throughout the current church year and agreed to a few additional “clean up” revisions. Karin will make and provide these to Craig Bierbaum. He can decide how to proceed with giving those to the full board for feedback and, hopefully, eventual adoption. Following discussion, the Committee decided to withdraw its recommendations of October, 2012 that Sr. Minister Limitation Policies B. Integration of Volunteers and Section 5) of C. Treatment of Staff and Volunteers be deleted from the GPH. Since those recommendations were never approved by the Board, no Board action is required.

Personnel Committee: Committee discussed the possibility of creating a Personnel Subcommittee, staff liaison, etc. It would have to be clear what the purpose of this would be—to monitor functions, or to serve as a staff liaison/resource? Could be a subcommittee of the GC (with additional non-board involvement), or could just be an individual liaison. For now, the Committee feels it would be appropriate for this to begin as a subcommittee of the GC, assuming that this group would be primarily to help monitor achievement of church activities. Development of its tasks would go from there.

Meeting assignments, next steps:

- Next meeting: Tuesday, July 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
 - Lark cannot attend, so another note taker will be needed.
- Lark will draft a Governance Committee position description.
- Future meetings scheduling issues: Lark will have Tuesday evening conflicts throughout September and October.

Item	Themes	Related Survey Question(s)	Related Survey Comments
1	Need for intergenerational engagement, particularly between the older generation and children	14 - In the past 12 months, at church or a church sponsored event, I interacted with...	<p>Question 10 Comment 43 - "The wisdom of the elders in our congregation (about 1/3 of our members) is not being sought nor valued. Great support could come to young families if they were connected to our experienced members -- even in casual ways."</p> <p>Question 10 Comment 45 - "With so many new families and individuals becoming members, we are also witnessing the aging UU's of our congregation. The two need more opportunities to connect and share what has been, what is now, what could be."</p> <p>Question 18, Comment - 46 - "I would love to see an elder paired with an RE student."</p>
2	Ongoing angst between the decentralized lay-lead and centralized staff lead structure	18. If you have any additional thoughts related to the Visionary Goal #3 please feel free to provide them here	<p>Question 18, Comment 30 - "I grew up in a church that actively encouraged me to develop my gifts for participating in leading worship. This church has moved to the service having a very professional feel, and lay participation is essentially non-existent."</p> <p>Question 18 comment 50 - "We'd like to see more lay involvement in the services, both in music and in readings and announcements. It's the single best way for members to meet the leaders of the congregation and be reminded of the need to serve to make it all happen."</p>
3	Congregants (new and existing) orientation - needing help accessing core church services		
4	Racial Diversity - a desire to increase it	<p>14 In the past 12 months, at church or a church sponsored event, I interacted with...</p> <p>34. Demographic - we are 95.9% Euro-American/Caucasian</p>	<p>Question 16 Comment 4 "I invited an African American friend to FU because she was church shopping and looking for diversity. She was planning to bring her mother on Mothers Day but decided not to because there very few black members. She said her family would not be comfortable."</p> <p>Question 16 Comment 5 "the diversity of our congregation is fairly limited...Even in developing relationships with people of different faiths, different backgrounds, and people of color it all comes down to the competency to be in right relationship with others that allows me to recognize my own growing edges. I would like to see our congregation be more intentional in this kind of relationship building."</p> <p>Question 16 Comment 10 "Justin's sermon about the history of Memorial Day was so affirming to me as a black woman (like a "godsend")...I saw no other black folks in the congregation from where I sat; nor afterwards in the social hall. Justin's recognition of the importance and relevance of the matter (and willing to put it out there to a congregation that has such a smattering of people of color) was enough to keep me from feeling isolated around so many non-people of color. Yet, the church needs to discuss spreading the word of our existence in communities of color!!"</p>
5	Plenty of interest in Adult Education	9. I understand what it means to be UU - over 90% agree or strongly agree with this statement	<p>Q10 Comment 4 - "We really need a stronger, vital adult education program. I know that finding a time and topics that draw audience is tough, but this shouldn't preclude a continuing effort."</p> <p>Q10 Comment7 "I would like to know a lot more about UU history, and also more about some of the basic tenets of non-Christian world religions."</p>
6	A small minority of respondents (8.4%) are not engaged in helping someone in our 1st U community	12. In the past 12 months, I took an opportunity to comfort or help someone who is part of the First Universalist community. (Not including family members)	
7	n/a	<p>19. In the past 12 months, I have been more active in improving the world because First Universalist has given me the courage, inspiration, or opportunity.</p> <p>30% neither agree nor disagree 7.4% disagree</p>	
8		22. If you have any additional thoughts related to the Visionary Goal #4 please feel free to provide them here	<p>Q22. I have felt 'invited' by staff to take my passion for the environment elsewhere and I have done so. I may soon take my faith practice elsewhere as well.</p> <p>Question 18 Comment 21 "I am part of the dismissed EcoMinds group who has struggled to be 'onboard' as it switched to director lead (meaning all the decisions were made/not made in the hands of staff leadership that was not communicative and ineffective.) This has been unwelcoming, painful and in my opinion amoral as we face a critical time for human justice, health and survival unless we stem global warming."</p>
9	For Follow Up...		Q16 #4 "I did have some serious depression this past year (for the first time ever, it really caught me off guard!) but because I'm a friend (who pledges) and NOT an official member of 1stU, I didn't seek any pastoral care. I don't really know how that works for non-members. Do non-members have access to clergy/pastoral care?"
10		16 There is someone I would like to invite to First Universalist but he/she would feel unwelcome.	Q 16 #4 "I felt much more welcome at several other churches I have attended in recent months. From FUC when I was to be inducted as a new member, I only received an impersonal email at the last minute, saying Congratulations! That was disappointing. That started me thinking differently about the church, even though superficially were "nice" and "friendly" it was mostly superficial. Three women did go out of their way to invite me to have lunch with me, and I did do that. but I want more than a social relationship from a church; I want spiritual sustenance and especially in light of my husband's death a year ago."
	Spiritual Practices - some opportunities around what constitutes one, but also where to go beyond SBSG and Sunday worship		

Strengths

4 - In the past 12 months, First Universalist has helped me to live out my values

1st U 2012 Congregational Survey Notes			
Does the Strategic Plan Address this? If so, where?	Sr. Minister Evaluation	Related Policy	Board Comment / Recommendation / Question
2.2.1 Expand worshipping together as a full intergenerational community with children and youth attending entire church services more frequently. 2.2.2 Provide opportunities for children, youth and adults to participate together in faith formation activities.			The SP does not specifically target older generations and youth together
3.1.1 Implement a volunteer and lay leadership development program with an annual cycle and documented processes.	I think there is an appetite for more involvement by congregants. It would be good to find new ways to channel this interest. There is great need for diplomacy as we seek to focus on some priorities and diminish our institutional commitment to others	Sr. Min Limit C. Integration of Volunteers #8 - 8) Instill in church committees and their members a sense of empowerment, encouragement, and the value their work has to the church.	How do we effectively balance this? Is it possible to identify alternative ways for congregants to live out their values if the central programs do not provide a perfect fit? Can we be less binary?
1.3.4 Build online resources and services for members, friends, and seekers including online spiritual resources—e.g., daily meditation, resources for times of transition. 3.6 Develop a robust communications plan (print and digital) that makes it easy for people to learn about us, that welcomes newcomers, informs current members, and engages all in the activities and resources of the church.	Longer term members in particular have some discomfort with changes and still struggle to understand their role.	The policies in section D. (Communication to the Board and Congregation) # 6) "Ensure that a complete and current set of all church operating policies is readily accessible to all church members at all times".	The SP does not specifically address improving traditional access channels, mostly online technology improvements
3.4.1 Create a task force to research and define our goals concerning diversity at First Universalist Church and develop a path to meet those goals.	n/a	None	To the board and Justin - what priority would you place on Item 3.4.1 within the SP?
2.1.1 Implement a spiritual deepening program for adults. 2.1.2 Offer a wider variety of adult education opportunities, including pilgrimages, UU history, and identity formation activities, so members are inspired, grounded, and held by our living tradition.	there is still room for growth in adult education.		
			Are we comfortable with this number? Granted, a certain % of people may be "receiving" and may not have the capacity to "give"
			The fact that almost 38% are not active in improving the world was noted by the Gov Cmte
4.5.2 Provide more avenues for congregants to engage in Faith in Action issues and activities. 4.2.3 Encourage new ideas and inspire enthusiasm among congregants. 4.1.1 Develop a variety of ways for staff and congregants, including youth, to enhance our visibility and inRfluence (media and online presence, partnerships, activism).		Sr. Min Limit C. Integration of Volunteers	Question for Justin - do you feel the EcoMinds Green Sanctuary fences have been mended at this point?
n/a	n/a		Please have Congregational Care reach out
n/a	n/a		Please have Congregational Life / Membership reach out
	but broaden the definition to be more inclusive and more flexible.		

Sr. Min Response	Follow Up Actions/Comments:
<p>This is on the staff's radar. Under the leadership of Lauren Wyeth and the Program Team, we are planning a number of intergenerational activities, this fall, including Faith in Action and Faith Formation opportunities for people of all ages. In addition to Youth Sunday in the Spring, we are also considering an "Elder Sunday," a chance to hear the words and wisdom of the church's elders. In our worship services, we are continuing to explore ways to bring the generations together in meaningful and significant ways.</p>	<p>Church Program Guide will address specific offerings. Program Team in place, creating programs for intergenerational activities. Need to be aware especially of elders and opportunities for involvement.</p>
<p>The survey comments captured here are related to worship, but I recognize that this issue reaches beyond worship. Regarding worship, we are recreating the Worship Associates program, which will launch sometime in late Winter/Early Spring. Regarding overall lay leadership involvement, we now have a clear set of guard rails in place (Mission, Visionary Goals, and Strategic) to help the staff and congregants determine if a new project or initiative fits with the mission and direction of the church. These guardrails are brand new, but they can help everyone get on the same page. As a small example, there is interest in building a Lending Library on the church grounds. This request recently came to staff, but staff is at capacity right now, so we turned this project back over to congregants, with a clear directive (which is exactly what staff would have done, had we taken this project on): "How does this fit with the Mission/Visionary Goals/Strategic Plan? What objectives will it help us fulfill? Assuming it fits within those guardrails, then who else do you need to inform, so you have the buy in you need?" After these key questions have been answered, and shared with staff to demonstrate alignment, the project can move forward. This is a perfect example of how Policy Governance can work best. The "gatekeeper" in this case is not the staff, or a particular individual - it is the mission/visionary goals/strategic plan. Assuming the project or initiative fits within those guardrails, then it can most likely move forward. Finally, I think it is important to help congregants understand the changing nature of staff and congregant roles in a large church (see Susan Beaumont's size chart.) Lay leadership is critical, but it takes on a different shape than in a church of 300 to 500.</p>	<p>Develop communication plan for congregants to understand process; need to ensure full understanding of process and priorities by Board before communicating to congregants. Action: need interpretation of policies; focus on key congregants as initial effort, hold forum or meeting to discuss and outline process. also reference need for 'official church policy handbook' reference B7 in GPH</p>
<p>One of our high level goals for 2012-2013 is to create a strong and transparent "Faith Formation and Member Engagement Continuum," so that new comers, new members, and long time members all have positive points of contact, and clear next steps, at whatever point they are in their faith journey. This means strengthening the membership pathway, but also helping our long time members understand how to connect, and what next steps are open to them. The entire program team is working on this effort (and this will be demonstrated in the program guide, in words of welcome, the website, etc.)</p>	<p>Complete work on church policies and make available to congregants</p>
<p>This is a high priority. We believe that staff, Board, and congregants are ready to move into this work, to move toward becoming a more diverse and racially justice focused congregation. To that end, this will be a focus of the next year.</p>	<p>Additional information forthcoming to board from Just and staff on plans for 2012-13 church year</p>
<p>We will be launching the "Wellspring" program this fall. Although only 10 people will participate, each of the participants will be asked to lead or co-lead a Wellspring group next year, so potentially we could have a number of groups. Wellspring is a spiritually deepening program for adults, blending UU history, spiritual practice, spiritual direction, social justice work, and more. The program team is hard at work creating a program guide that will offer a number of "faith formation" opportunities for adults. An intentional pilgrimage program will most likely begin in 2013-2014. (As an aside, I much prefer the term "faith formation" to adult education.)</p>	
<p>I suspect this is par for the course, as far as the rhythms and cycles of people's lives. We'll have more information by this time next year, after another set of results from the survey.</p>	
<p>Again, I suspect this is par for the course. It's something to pay attention to, and it's important to note that people come to church for a variety of reasons, with a variety of needs. The survey question asks if people have been "more active," so there's a possibility that people were active in improving the world, just not more active.</p>	
<p>Mostly. That being said, there is probably still some closure/communication work to do regarding the EcoMinds group. The challenge was that EcoMinds essentially set its own agenda, independent of the needs of the church, and often in a way that wasn't easy for newcomers to access; furthermore, there was confusion between EcoMind's relationship to MUUSJA and First Universalist. Clearly, Environmental Justice is important to First Universalist, and this ministry will continue (it's one of our Faith in Action focus areas.)</p>	
<p>This is part of a bigger goal ("removing barriers") that the staff has identified and is already working on. We are scanning every area of church life to identify potential barriers (i.e., is it clear how one gets pastoral care; is it clear what pastoral care is? Is it clear what you can expect as a non-member and a member? Is it clear how you make a pledge, and that you renew it every year? Etc. etc.</p>	<p>one congregant was identified in survey as possibly needing pastoral care follow up. David to send contact info to Justin</p>
<p>See above.</p>	

Background: Like so many other communities of faith, we are aware of racism and the harm it has done to our country, our faith communities, and to our very humanity. As Unitarian Universalists, we believe racism fundamentally undermines our faith as it divides our community, creates fear of the other and systematically ensures an imbalance of power and justice.

As Unitarians, we believe that all of humanity (all of creation, really) springs from a common source, that there is an underlying unity to things. As Universalists, we believe that we are held by a Love that will not let us go; we believe in the inherent worth of each and every person, and that we are all “saved” by a Love beyond any particular belief.

Giving, receiving, and growing into Love’s people means that we’re called to this work because we yearn for the beloved community made real in the here and now.

While we are just beginning this racial justice journey, what is clear is that, 1) this work will ultimately inform everything we do as a church, including our social justice work, and 2) this is deeply spiritual work, central to our faith. It is a reclamation project of sorts, a way to reclaim our full humanity, and the humanity of others, and a way to commit to be partners in dismantling the devastating impact of racism.

Finally, while the programming of Unity Center for Youth Leadership has ended, it’s commitment to racial justice lives on, as we begin to seek to embed racial justice principles into the whole of who we are as a community of faith.

In faith,

Justin Schroeder

P.S. Thank you for reading and reviewing this packet prior to the Board meeting. It will ensure that we have a meaningful discussion at the Board meeting.

Points to cover at the Board meeting:

- 1) Catch Board of Trustees up to speed on the journey we've been on this year, and where we're headed (please read "Racial Justice Update for Board June 2013" document; located on page 3 and the "Position Description for the Racial Justice Team May 2013." document; located on page 4. Both of these documents provide helpful background.) Please note that this racial justice work is not an "Umbrella Project," or short term initiative. As we have engaged with the congregation, what we have heard is a deep desire to incorporate a racial justice identify into the fabric of the church, that this faith community might be a place where people can bring their whole selves (this sentiment was expressed in the 2012 annual survey; please see "2012 Survey with notes that relate to racial justice" for additional background info; page 5); see also, page 9 outlining the sermons that have dealt with racial justice: "Sermons related to racial justice work and journey June 2013"). We believe that this racial justice commitment links directly with key elements of Strategic Plan, just as the Marriage Equality work did, though it wasn't called out explicitly (please see "Strategic Plan with Racial Justice Lens" document with key sections highlighted in orange and notes added; page 10).
- 2) Clarify expectations around Board involvement and support of racial justice work, cost of Racial Justice work, and impact on staff.
 - a. Involvement: I do not expect the entire Board to participate in the Racial Justice Trainings in the fall of 2013 or later in 2014. We will invite several Board members to participate in these trainings, along with several members of the Nom Com, and as well as various other leaders from the church. Over the coming months and years, we will continue to invite Board members to participate in this work.
 - b. Support of this work: It is my hope that the Board will support this racial justice work, by engaging in workshops, trainings, and conversations in the coming months and years. As we move forward with this work, I would hope that the Board would amend its job description to call out this expectation explicitly.
 - c. Costs: All costs for racial justice work this year (2013-2014), will be covered by Sunday morning offerings in 13-14 (we already raised about \$4200 in FY 12-13), and by potential grants from the Foundation. Future costs would be supported by plate offerings, grants, and a line item in the operating budget.
 - d. While I don't dismiss the impact of this work on staff, a significant part of this work is to empower and equip congregants to help lead this work. Over the next year, working with the racial justice team, we'll host monthly meetings as well as ongoing movies/discussions with the congregation. We'll also hold the Racial Justice Trainings, led by Heather Hackman. Key program staff will participate in the Racial Justice Trainings. Justin Schroeder is the point person for this work, with support from Debra Rodgers. Time commitment: three trainings (24 hrs), monthly meetings of the team, with homework between meetings (3-4 hours per month), and participation in August retreat and August learning table (5 hours, and 6 hours respectively). Total for the year (9 months): 70-100 hrs. I view this as one of my "major rocks" for the upcoming year.
- 3) Identify additional questions or concerns that Board has. (@ June Board meeting)
- 4) Consider amending Strategic Plan to explicitly call out racial justice work. When? By August Board meeting? September?
- 5) Interpret Visionary Goal #4; this Visionary Goal has a clear link to our Racial Justice work, and an interpretation would call that out. (Fall sometime?)

6) What else?

Racial Justice Update (shared with Foundation at May 16, 2013)

May 1, 2013

- Dr. Heather Hackman (a well-regarded racial justice educator in the Twin Cities <http://www.hackmanconsultinggroup.org/about/>) was selected as our primary consultant for the racial justice journey we will begin in the fall of 2013. The contract is currently under negotiation.
- Debra Rodgers conducted extensive research on how churches move into, deepen and sustain racial justice work. Books, articles, websites, phone conversations and meetings enabled her to gather a significant amount of information and understanding of the process and what proves successful.
- Four Listening Sessions were held from October – January that engaged congregants in initial conversations about becoming a church committed to racial justice. Justin, Ruth, Laura and Debra facilitated with over 60 congregants in participation.
- Introductory programming for the congregation has included the viewing of “Race: Power of an Illusion”, “Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible,” and “Cracking the Codes: the System of Racial Inequality”. A total of approximately 80 people attended these gatherings. Laura and Debra developed and facilitated reflection activities.
- The Liberal has contained several articles on racial justice and the opportunities to become involved. A page on the website dedicated to racial justice that will include updates, resources, pictures, stories, etc. is under development.
- Racial justice is a frequent topic of staff meetings. We are showing staff “Race: Power of an Illusion” during lunch hours as well.
- Currently, Justin, Jen, Laura, Ruth and Debra make up the Racial Justice Leadership Team at the church. After dialogue with Heather Hackman, we are inviting five congregants to join this leadership team (one year term; this is an ad-hoc team). In an effort to establish some common language and a common racial justice framework we are reading “Becoming an Anti-Racist Church” by Joseph Barndt and several articles by Beverly Daniel Tatum, Peggy McIntosh, etc. The Racial Justice Leadership Team will begin meeting monthly.
- In August, members and staff from White Bear Unitarian, Unity Unitarian, and First Universalist, will meet for a day to create a “learning table” in regards to our respective racial justice initiatives. The goal is to share learnings, resources, and deepen our congregational connections with one another. Heather Hackman will facilitate.
- On September 29th, Dr. Heather Hackman and Justin will be leading a dialogue sermon about race, faith, and why this work matters for us as a faith community. Following the service, at 1pm, Heather Hackman will lead a workshop, so we can introduce her to the congregation.
- In the Fall of 2013, we’ll be offering a Racial Justice Training for 40 people, led by Heather Hackman. This initial group of people will be most likely be staff, Board Members, and other key lay leaders. We’re holding this training on Saturday, Oct. 5, Saturday, Nov. 2, and Saturday, Nov 23 (8:30 to 4pm each day). In the winter, on Sat. January 25th, February 8, and March 1, 2014, we’ll be offering a “Training for Trainers” in Racial Justice work, in an effort to build our internal capacity to continue and deepen this work.

First Universalist Church Ad-hoc Racial Justice Leadership Team Position Description (DRAFT)

The Racial Justice Leadership Team is appointed by the Staff Management Team, and is comprised of the Minister of Worship Arts, the Director of Faith in Action, the Senior Minister, the Minister of Program Life, and 5-6 members of the church, who represent diverse ages, racial identities, experience and tenure in the church. Team members serve a one year term.

Racial Justice Team members must be:

- ◆ Voting members of First Universalist Church. (This does not apply to staff.) Exceptions may be made by the Management Team.
- ◆ Committed to the Mission and Visionary Goals of First Universalist Church, as demonstrated through a strong record of leadership and service to the church.
- ◆ Committed to work for racial justice, understanding how and why systems of inequity exist and how they are sustained.

The responsibilities of the Racial Justice Leadership Team are:

- ◆ To help develop our commitment to being a racial justice church; to ground this work in our faith and religious practices; to engage the congregation in this learning, as we talk about race, racism, power, and privilege; to help embed racial justice policies, practices and identity throughout the church; and to shift our social justice work accordingly.
- ◆ To identify and engage church members and friends who can help lead and deepen our commitment to racial justice.
- ◆ To keep an open heart and mind, as we engage in learning and conversations that aren't always easy or comfortable.
- ◆ To know we will make mistakes, and upset one another, and that we are always at different places in this work.
- ◆ To listen to the congregation.
- ◆ To navigate and negotiate the power dynamics that will emerge as we transform the congregation into one fully committed to racial justice.
- ◆ To read and review material, books, articles, movies, etc., between meetings to build common learning, language and shared experiences.

The rewards of serving on the Racial Justice Leadership Team are:

- ◆ A deeper connection to the life and work of the church.
- ◆ Numerous opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.
- ◆ Conversations about issues that really matter.
- ◆ A profound sense of being linked to our common humanity.

Time Requirements:

- ◆ Monthly meetings, starting in June. No July meeting. No regular meeting in August, but two retreats in August: Aug 10th leadership team retreat, 9-2pm. Saturday, Aug 24, learning table/retreat with other Twin Cities UU churches and staff who are engaged in Racial Justice work. Learning table facilitated by Heather Hackman.
- ◆ Attend Racial Justice Trainings at First Universalist, led by Heather Hackman on Saturday, Oct 5, Nov 2, and Nov 23, from 8:30 to 4 pm.
- ◆ Consider becoming a trainer of Racial Justice Trainings, and attend training offered at First Universalist, Jan 25, Feb 8, and March 1, 2014, from 8:30 to 4pm.

See Excel File Insert

Sermons related to racial justice work and journey, as of June, 2013

October 21, 2012: "The Power of an Illusion." Sermon link:

<http://firstuniv.podbean.com/2012/10/23/2012-10-21-rev-justin-schroederthe-power-of-an-illusion/>

Justin's Comment: Following this sermon, we began to have regular gatherings ("listening sessions") for those interested in becoming a racial justice church, and interested in learning more about race and racism, and the role that we, as a faith community, might play in this work.

November 4, 2012: "Stories Bigger than the Moment." Sermon link:

<http://firstuniv.podbean.com/2012/11/06/2012-11-04-rev-justin-schroederstories-bigger-than-the-moment/>

January 6, 2013: "Courageous Conversations." I speak briefly about our racial justice journey and that it's not just a one year initiative. Sermon link: <http://firstuniv.podbean.com/2013/01/10/2013-01-06-rev-justin-schroedercourageous-conversations/>

January 20, 2013: "Re-Examine Everything." Ruth MacKenzie. Sermon link:

<http://firstuniv.podbean.com/2013/01/24/2013-01-20-ruth-mackenziere-examine-everything/>

May 12, 2013: "Beyond Hallmark." I talk briefly about racial disparities in the state of MN. Sermon link:

<http://firstuniv.podbean.com/2013/05/13/2013-may-12-beyond-hallmark-by-rev-justin-schroeder/>



First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Strategic Plan: 2012-2017

We must do three things: get religion, grow leaders, and cross borders.

~the Reverend Peter Morales, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Strategic Plan: 2012-2017

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Our mission . . .

In the Universalist spirit of love and hope, we give, receive, and grow. First Universalist Church.

. . . informed our Visionary Goals

1. *We, the people of First Universalist Church, grow in our UU faith: we are equipped to live out our values and experience worship, spiritual practices, and rituals that challenge, comfort, celebrate, and heal.*
2. *First Universalist Church is a home for ageless wisdom. People of all ages find opportunities to engage in an intellectual and spiritual search for deeper meaning and understanding in the UU tradition, both as individuals and in community. We know our roots, find our wings, and apply our knowledge and wisdom to all our endeavors.*
3. *First Universalist Church is an intergenerational community of mutual caring and support. We build this community by actively welcoming all and encouraging each to discover, develop and share their gifts.*
4. *The people of First Universalist Church work to build a just, loving and sustainable world. We are a visible, influential voice, and we act to shape the larger community into a more just and equitable society.*

Note: The racial disparities in MN (around education, incarceration, and employment) are some of the worst in the country. As we begin to move into this work, we will develop the internal capacity and knowledge base to become a legitimate faith partner in working toward racial equity in our community.

. . . which inspired our overarching strategic vision:

- 1.1 Preserve and enrich diversity in worship practices
- 1.2 Accommodate growth in worship and religious education
- 1.3 Expand access to worship beyond our doors

- 2.1 Inspire and deepen faith formation for all ages
- 2.2 Engage children and youth as an integral part of First Universalist faith formation activities
- 2.3 Embrace work for the common good as a central faith formation experience and increase engagement with communities outside our walls

- 3.1 Deepen congregant engagement in the life and ministry of the church
- 3.2 Build on and expand the definition of small group experiences
- 3.3 Ensure pastoral care needs are met
- 3.4 Deepen our capacity for diversity

Note: Engaging in racial justice work is one way to do this. We're not engaging in racial justice work to bring more people of color into the church; rather, this work helps us better understand race, racism, and privilege. It also will allow us to better serve and recognize the realities of our families of color and our children of color.

- 3.5 Strengthen our UU ties locally and nationally

Note: In August, members and staff from White Bear Unitarian, Unity Unitarian, and First Universalist, will meet for a day to create a “learning table” in regards to our respective racial justice initiatives. The goal is to share learnings, resources, and deepen our congregational connections with one another. Heather Hackman will facilitate.

3.6 Develop a robust, welcoming communication plan (print and digital) that makes it easy for people to learn about us, that welcomes newcomers, informs current members, and engages all in the activities and resources of the church

4.1 Be an effective, loving force for Faith in Action work

4.2 Create a renewed culture of Faith in Action

4.3 Strengthen and Expand the Umbrella Pilot Project

4.4 Enhance Faith in Action effectiveness through partnerships with mission-aligned organizations

4.5 Increase staff support of Faith in Action work

4.6 Grow our generosity as a community

5.1 Ensure our space is welcoming, beautiful, and meets the needs of the church

5.2 Ensure human resources meet the needs of the church

5.3 Ensure financial resources meet the needs of the church

Introduction

In the fall of 2011 the Board of Trustees appointed a Strategic Planning Team and directed it to create a set of specific, actionable long-term strategic goals for First Universalist Church. The basic question was *who are we called to be?* How will the Universalist spirit of love and hope be transformative at First Universalist Church in the next five years? Why are we here, and what are we called to do?

The seeds of this work were planted in 2008 with the search process for a new senior minister. The congregation was polled and an impressive packet of material gathered. Key findings included our yearning for a senior minister who was *motivating, compelling and inspiring, who could provide vision and spiritual leadership, who had a strong presence in the pulpit and in the community, who built relationships with congregants and who demonstrated warmth and humor in our daily encounters.* Sunday morning worship and a deepening spirituality emerged as overarching desires—and we called the Reverend Justin Schroeder. We have been blessed with his visionary leadership, strong presence in the pulpit, new energy in all areas of church life, and a growing membership.

In the fall of 2010 we began the Mission Possible process to re-imagine the church’s mission and, based on that work, to create Visionary Goals. The process involved congregants at many levels, took our temperature after a year of new leadership, and created a new mission statement that is a clear touchstone for all that we do: *In the Universalist spirit of love and hope, we give, receive, and grow. First*

Universalist Church. The Visionary Goals approved by the Board of Trustees grew out of the mission statement and formed the basis for our work on *First Universalist 2012-2017*, this strategic plan.

In January of 2012 more than 175 of us participated in working sessions to answer these core questions for the next five years: Who are we called to be? What are we called to do? How will we become the church we want to be?

Several overarching themes emerged from the Working Group sessions and the Strategic Planning Team discussions:

- We are a religious community with spiritual growth, personal transformation, mutual support, and connection to each other at the center of all that we do.
- We value the strength, beauty, and depth of Sunday worship services, while also desiring a wider range of worship opportunities.
- We want to be a more diverse community and know there is much deep work we must do to make this happen.

NOTE: See survey comments shared with me from the Board from fall of 2012. At the time, I wrote, "This (racial justice work) is a high priority. We believe that staff, Board, and congregants are ready to move into this work, to move toward becoming a more diverse and racially justice focused congregation. To that end, this will be a focus of the next year."

- We know we can't be all things to all people, but are confident that we can open our doors wider.
- We want to engage all ages in spiritual practice, faith in action, and supportive community.
- We want youth to be fully integrated into the life and ministry of the church.
- Our mission extends to the community and to the world. We want to be visible and influential in our work for peace and justice and to be in respectful and effective partnership with others in the community as we serve needs greater than our own.

NOTE: The racial disparities in MN (around education, incarceration, and employment) are some of the worst in the country. As we begin to move into this work, we will develop the internal capacity and knowledge base to become a legitimate faith partner in working toward racial equity in our community.

- We believe that with our Universalist message of love and hope, we will continue to grow.
- We must attend to our infrastructure to become the church we are called to be. We will increase staffing and lay leadership, invest in best practices in technology and communication. We want to develop a strong digital ministry.
- We have untapped capacity to fund our calling; we believe in a culture of abundance not scarcity, and know that together we can be a force for good.

We have listened deeply to the congregation, the staff, and lay leaders and incorporated what we heard into a strategic plan for the next five years. It is our hope that the plan captures the essence of our dreams and maps a path to make those dreams a reality.

First Universalist Strategic Planning Team

David Bach, (Chair), Jill Braithwaite, Chris Bremer, Phil Burke, Kathy Coskran, Sharon Ramirez, Jennifer Schuster Jaeger, the Reverend Justin Schroeder

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The detailed Strategic Plan begins on page 8. What follows is a summary of the key findings and goals, as well as selected highlights.

1. Worship

Worship is core to what we do together—it is the joyful heart at the center of who we are. We want to continue our growth as a transformational religious community, and we support expanding the offerings to accommodate growth in Sunday morning attendance. We also seek to increase the diversity of worship experiences. In order to preserve, enrich, and expand the worship arts programming—visual and musical—we recommend increasing opportunities for congregants to participate in and contribute to the creation of transformative worship services. In addition, we recommend the following additions, as growth necessitates: an additional worship service; in summer, a second service including religious education; expanded opportunities for children and youth in worship services; an additional and alternative worship experience. We recommend that we expand our ministry beyond our walls with live-streaming of Sunday morning services and other online resources for spiritual development.

2. Faith Formation

First Universalist Church is a vibrant, growing congregation, with spiritual development at its center. Congregants yearn for a deeper connection to our Unitarian Universalist faith and seek increased opportunities for faith formation for all ages. We recommend increasing opportunities for the creative, inspired engagement of children and youth in all aspects of First Universalist life and offering varied, collaborative adult religious education as well. We recommend making a commitment to serving needs greater than our own, as we increase our engagement with communities outside our walls; doing this is a central faith formation experience. We also recommend increased support for the development of Unitarian Universalist rituals and practices.

3. Supportive Community

First Universalist congregants celebrate our connections with each other, knowing that the experience

of friendship and community enriches us all. We want to preserve and expand our abilities to care for each other in times of need and recognize that children and youth as well as adults are in need of support. In order to be more fully a welcoming faith community, grounded in care and support, we recommend that we build on and diversify our small-group ministries, making it possible for every member and friend to participate in some kind of smaller community within First Universalist. To that end, we recommend the development of a robust communications plan (print and digital) that effectively welcomes newcomers, informs current members and friends, and provides the means for all to engage in the activities of the church. We recommend a volunteer and lay leadership development program be implemented. We also recommend dedicating increased staff resources to supporting membership development, volunteer coordination, and lay leadership training so the ministry gifts of congregants can be unleashed inside First Universalist and beyond.

4. Faith in Action

First Universalist congregants are deeply committed to putting our faith in action.

As a church committed to racial, social, cultural, economic and environmental justice, and to working for peace, we aspire to be an effective force for positive change in the community and in the world. We recommend that we continue the Umbrella Pilot Project of three Faith in Action focus areas with the possibility of adding additional focus areas in the coming years; that we learn from UU values and principles related to social justice; that we develop strategic partnerships with local nonprofits and churches; and that we engage congregants in intergenerational work in support of these goals. We also recommend that we give away 100% of the Sunday morning offering to UU organizations, community partners, and other mission-aligned organizations.

5. Resources and Infrastructure

As a vibrant, growing church, we need our facility to support our mission, and we need the financial resources to accomplish our goals. We recommend establishing a task force to evaluate space usage and needs. We must ensure that our human resources, both staff and congregant, are sufficient to meet the needs of the church, and that these resources are used effectively. To meet our financial needs, we recommend the development of an on-going, five-year budget plan that is annually evaluated and that we explore untapped financial resources. We also recommend the development of the technical infrastructure to support our communication needs.

The Strategic Plan

1. Worship

With 'faith' as a verb, an action, it means faith is not something we either have or don't. Instead, it is a step, a leap we take over and over again, a trust and loyalty that grows over time. ~the Reverend Justin Schroeder

We have a vibrant, powerful worship experience every Sunday. We want to preserve and enrich the diversity of spiritual and theological sources and celebrate the spectrum of belief and spiritual practice within our congregation. First Universalist congregants value the freedom of the pulpit and the pew, cherish the thinking of a range of poets, thinkers, and prophets, and support expanding the worship services we offer. There is also strong interest in finding meaningful and appropriate ways for children, youth, and lay leaders to share their gifts in worship services. Our current spaces have a capacity of approximately 400 adults and 175 children and youth at one time. As our congregation continues to grow, we may need to add additional services to accommodate growth and also to offer greater diversity of worship experiences and meaningful lay participation. We also seek to significantly expand our digital ministry.

Goal 1.1 Preserve and enrich our diversity in worship practices.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1.1 Expand range and diversity of the arts (music, dance, drama, poetry, etc.) in worship.1.1.2 Expand worship arts opportunities for congregants of all ages.1.1.3 Expand staff and lay resources to strengthen and support the worship life of the church. |
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Goal 1.2 Accommodate growth in worship and religious education.
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.2.1 Add third worship service and religious education if needed.1.2.2 Add second service, as well as greater religious education opportunities during the summer.1.2.3 Add a different style of worship service to appeal to a broader constituency. |
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Goal 1.3 Expand access to worship beyond our doors.
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- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.3.1 Develop information technology infrastructure strategy to support digital ministry best practices.1.3.2 Install quality camera(s) and audio recording equipment in the sanctuary.1.3.3 Live-stream Sunday morning services.1.3.4 Build online resources and services for members, friends, and seekers including online spiritual resources—e.g., daily meditation, resources for times of transition. |
|---|

2. Faith Formation

Everything we do as a congregation is religious education. Whether it occurs in the sanctuary, the board room, or the classroom, all that the congregation and the minister does and does not do educates us about what it means to be religious as individuals and as a community. ~the Reverend Jen Crow

Faith formation for children, youth, and adults is central to our large and growing congregation. Small groups of all kinds are building blocks for faith formation. In addition, we find that congregants want increased opportunities for multigenerational faith formation, including opportunities for fellowship and deeper integration of children and youth in all aspects of church life. There is particular interest in deepening our connection to Unitarian Universalist history and identity.

2.1 Inspire and deepen faith formation for all ages.

2.1.1 Implement a spiritual deepening program for adults.

2.1.2 Offer a wider variety of adult education opportunities, including pilgrimages, UU history, and identity formation activities, so members are inspired, grounded, and held by our living tradition.

2.1.3 Offer spiritually engaging activities, such as retreats.

2.2 Engage children and youth as an integral part of First Universalist faith formation activities.

2.2.1 Expand worshipping together as a full intergenerational community with children and youth attending entire church services more frequently.

2.2.2 Provide opportunities for children, youth and adults to participate together in faith formation activities.

2.2.3 Develop a documented set of Unitarian Universalist rituals and practices for families to use at home.

2.2.4 Beginning with Coming of Age classes, create programming that develops a Unitarian Universalist identity for youth and a clear pathway to membership.

2.2.5 For youth who go elsewhere for college or employment, facilitate connections to nearby Unitarian Universalist congregations.

2.3 Embrace work for the common good as a central faith formation experience and increase engagement with communities outside our walls

2.3.1 Provide opportunities for group reflection (youth and adult) on the spiritual meaning of faith in action work.

2.3.2 Work with Unity Center to develop curricula linking faith in action work with faith formation for all ages.

NOTE: Although Unity Center has effectively ended, one of the key components of Unity Center was its racial justice focus. This is one of the key elements of Unity Center that we're focusing on incorporating into the church.

2.3.3 Increase church's effectiveness as a center for youth development and faith in action.

3. Supportive Community

We are a community of faith drawn together not by doctrine, but by our desire to be a people of open minds, open hearts, and open hands. We seek to live lives of integrity, in grateful relationship with one another and with that sustaining, transforming power many call God and we often call Love. ~the Reverend Kate Tucker

Being connected is one of the most important aspects of life in religious community. As the congregation grows, we continue to seek ways that people can belong to smaller communities within the congregation and feel connected to one another; we want to provide an infrastructure that nurtures a culture of connection. Our structures and processes must foster access to these communities. We want to ensure that the pastoral care needs of the congregation are met. **We seek to be a tapestry of seekers, with diversity in our congregation that is more reflective of the diverse world around us.** We also seek to expand our digital ministry to increase access to our ministries and resources. We actively welcome all who share our values, and encourage each to discover, develop, and share their gifts. We want to communicate effectively with and among members and friends. As part of the Unitarian Universalist Association, we share the values, hopes, dreams, and influence of UUs around the world. Together we are stronger.

3.1 Deepen congregant engagement in the life and ministry of the church.

- 3.1.1 Implement a volunteer and lay leadership development program with an annual cycle and documented processes.
- 3.1.2 Increase staff resources devoted to membership development, volunteer coordination, and leadership training and development.
- 3.1.3 Clarify pathways to participation in smaller communities of congregants.

3.2 Build on and expand the definition of small group experiences.

- 3.2.1 Continue to develop and support small groups based on interests, life stages, spiritual practices, and common affinities both inside and outside the formal activities of the church.
- 3.2.2 Aim for 100% connection in a smaller community.

3.3 Ensure pastoral care needs are met.

- 3.3.1 Regularly evaluate pastoral care capacity and determine need for a full or part-time pastoral care minister.
- 3.3.2 Ensure that youth have access to ministers for pastoral care needs.

3.4 Deepen the capacity for diversity.

- 3.4.1 **Create a task force to research and define our goals concerning diversity at First Universalist Church and develop a path to meet those goals.**
NOTE: As I indicated last fall in my comments on the congregational survey, this has been a focus

area of the year. Initially, this “task force” was comprised of staff members, and we held “listening sessions,” watched movies, and offered programming around race, racism, privilege, and the intersection of faith and racial justice work. After a number of months of this work, it was clear that there was a deep hunger for more of this work, and that we needed to create a team (i.e., “taskforce 2.0”) to help guide this work forward in the next year, and discern next steps. It was also clear to us that bringing in a trainer (Heather Hackman) was an important next step to help us build the internal capacity to move this work forward. In the spring of 2013, we created a Racial Justice Leadership Team (one year terms) to help us take the next steps.

Here’s the position description for that team:

First Universalist Church Ad-hoc Racial Justice Leadership Team Position Description (DRAFT)

The Racial Justice Leadership Team is appointed by the Staff Management Team, and is comprised of the Minister of Worship Arts, the Director of Faith in Action, the Senior Minister, the Minister of Program Life, and 5-6 members of the church, who represent diverse ages, racial identities, experience and tenure in the church. **Team members serve a one year term.**

Racial Justice Team members must be:

- ◆ Voting members of First Universalist Church. (This does not apply to staff.)
- ◆ Committed to the Mission and Visionary Goals of First Universalist Church, as demonstrated through a strong record of leadership and service to the church.
- ◆ Committed to work for racial justice, understanding how and why systems of inequity exist and how they are sustained.

The responsibilities of the Racial Justice Leadership Team are:

- ◆ To help develop our commitment to being a racial justice church; to ground this work in our faith and religious practices; to engage the congregation in this learning; to begin, as a congregation, to talk about race, racism, power, and privilege; to help embed racial justice policies, practices and identity throughout the church; and to shift our justice work accordingly.
- ◆ To identify and engage church members and friends who can help lead and deepen our commitment to racial justice.
- ◆ To keep an open heart and mind, as we engage in learning and conversations that aren’t always easy or comfortable.
- ◆ To listen to the congregation.
- ◆ To navigate and negotiate the power dynamics that will emerge as we transform the congregation into one fully committed to racial justice.
- ◆ To read and review material, books, articles, movies, etc., between meetings to build common learning, language and shared experiences.

The rewards of serving on the Racial Justice Leadership Team are:

- ◆ A deeper connection to the life and work of the church.
- ◆ Numerous opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.
- ◆ Conversations about issues that really matter.
- ◆ A profound sense of being linked to our common humanity.

Time Requirements:

- ◆ Monthly meetings, starting in June. No July meeting. No regular meeting in August, but two retreats in August: Aug 10th leadership team retreat, 9-2pm. Saturday, Aug 24, learning table/retreat with other Twin Cities UU churches and staff who are engaged in Racial Justice work. Learning table facilitated by Heather Hackman.
- ◆ Attend Racial Justice Trainings at First Universalist, led by Heather Hackman on Saturday, Oct 5, Nov 2, and Nov 23, from 8:30 to 4 pm.
- ◆ Consider becoming a trainer of Racial Justice Trainings, and attend training offered at First Universalist, Jan 25, Feb 8, and March 1, 2014, from 8:30 to 4pm.

3.5 Strengthen our UU ties locally and nationally.

3.5.1 Create a multi-year plan to pay our fair share of UUA and District dues.

3.5.2 As we build our digital capacity, explore partnering with other metro UU congregations to develop resources and create content.

3.5.3 Provide leadership for collaboration with other UU congregations.

3.6 Develop a robust communications plan (print and digital) that makes it easy for people to learn about us, that welcomes newcomers, informs current members, and engages all in the activities and resources of the church.

3.6.1 Create user-friendly paths to resources and participation.

3.6.2 Develop beautiful, accessible program guides for the life of the church that clearly communicate what we're about in a coherent narrative that links our values, mission, and goals and describe the depth and variety of church programs.

3.6.3 Create a robust online resource center of spiritual development resources.

3.6.4 Create information system to support membership development, tracking of members and friends, and their interests, skills, and leadership training.

4. Faith in Action

I believe that we are called to stand on the side of love. Love strains to know the other, not shut the other out. Love opens its eyes to a larger vision, struggling not for victory, but for justice. May these sheltering walls be strong, to keep hate out and hold love in.

~The Reverend William Sinkford

Our faith in action work is grounded in spiritual depth and humility, and in our Unitarian Universalist principles. We are committed to working for peace, civil and human rights, stewardship of the earth,

and democratic principles in our community and in the wider world. First Universalist congregants are energized, hopeful, and committed to a wide variety of faith in action focus areas. We want the church to be a more visible, influential leader in the community. We understand that in order to achieve influence and visibility we must concentrate our efforts in key areas while acknowledging a variety of interests and activities. We care deeply about human rights issues and will continue to be proactive around specific issues. In these areas we are informed by organizations such as the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance. **We also want to better understand our own life experiences and how to build authentic relationships with people whose race, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic background are different than our own.**

NOTE: This was reflected in the survey results, and corroborated by 100 plus people who participated in the listening sessions and movie discussion around race.

<p>4.1 Be an effective, loving force for faith in action work.</p> <p>4.1.1 Develop a variety of ways for staff and congregants, including youth, to enhance our visibility and influence (media and online presence, partnerships, activism).</p> <p>4.1.2 Develop a variety of ways for staff and congregants, including youth, to build new skills and assume leadership roles.</p> <p>4.1.3 Align Unity Center more closely with the church.</p> <p>NOTE: Specifically, the racial justice components of the program.</p> <p>4.1.4 Be attentive to issues in current affairs that demand the organized, faith-based action of Unitarian Universalists of conscience.</p> <p>NOTE: The racial disparities in MN (around education, incarceration, and employment) are some of the worst in the country. As we begin to move into this work, we will develop the internal capacity and knowledge base to become a legitimate faith partner in working toward racial equity in our community.</p>

<p>4.2 Create a renewed culture of Faith in Action.</p> <p>4.2.1 Provide easy access points for newcomers and members.</p> <p>4.2.2 Strive for greater accountability.</p> <p>4.2.3 Encourage new ideas and inspire enthusiasm among congregants.</p>
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<p>4.3 Strengthen and expand Umbrella Pilot Project.¹</p> <p>4.3.1 Add more focus areas as appropriate.</p>

¹ Under the Umbrella Pilot Project launched in December 2011 our focus areas are housing/homelessness, environment/sustainability, and immigration.

4.3.2 Establish program of yearly service trips for youth and adults, tied to an Umbrella focus area, in which participants have learning and serving experiences around the Twin Cities and elsewhere.

4.4 Enhance Faith in Action effectiveness through partnerships with mission-aligned organizations.

4.4.1 Create synergy by coordinating and amplifying social justice initiatives and campaigns with partner organizations

4.4.2 Enhance connection with Unity Center by Including partnerships with one or more Unity Center partners.

4.5 Increase staff support of Faith in Action work.

4.5.1 Increase staff support dedicated to Faith in Action work.

4.5.2 Provide more avenues for congregants to engage in Faith in Action issues and activities.

4.5.3 Establish a task force of the Board of Trustees to work with the First Universalist Foundation board to align the goals of the Church and the Foundation to increase the social justice effectiveness of both.

4.6 Grow our generosity as a community.

4.6.1 Give away 100% of the Sunday offering to UU organizations, community partners and other mission-aligned organizations.

4.6.2 Enhance our spiritual practice of giving, through initiatives such as the Greater Good Project.²

5. Resources and Capacity

We need for our facility to support our mission and goals, and we also need the financial, human, and technological resources to implement them. There is a dynamic tension between a culture of abundance—we have enough and can do what we are called to do—and responsible stewardship—we have been entrusted with a great legacy and must honor that trust and plan well and responsibly. We believe in proactively addressing future financial needs and goals and seek to reap our financial resources in a variety of ways.

5.1 Ensure our space is welcoming and beautiful, and meets the needs of the church.

² The Greater Good Project was started by the Rochester, MN, church. “. . . an all-church community endeavor, to bring the meaning back to the holidays and tap into the strength and power of the spirit of the season. Each of us is asked to tally what we spend on the holiday season, cut it in half, and contribute that to a project at the Church – a gift to the Greater Good.

- 5.1.1 Establish a task force to evaluate space usage and needs and to make recommendations.
- 5.1.2 In the interim, plan smaller aesthetic improvements at 3400 Dupont Avenue such as creating spaces that meet the needs of our program life.
- 5.1.3 Explore ways to continue to share space with other faith communities.
- 5.1.4 Explore overflow space for youth and/or community programming.
- 5.1.5 Examine ways to move beyond our space to provide programming in other locations and through digital media.

5.2 Ensure human resources meet the needs of the church.

- 5.2.1 Expand lay participation, development, and training.
- 5.2.2 Provide competitive compensation to attract and retain staff.

5.3 Ensure financial resources meet the needs of the church.

- 5.3.1 Develop a five-year budget that is annually evaluated.
- 5.3.2 Research and develop unexplored financial opportunities (such as grants, additional fundraisers, a capital campaign, online fundraisers, rentals, and sales).

This document articulates specific, accountable goals that are important to First Universalist Church members and friends, that create a powerful, possible vision for 2012-2017, and that are within the capacity of the church. It is a living, flexible document that will be evaluated annually by the Board of Trustees and the Senior Minister, with input that will incorporate the varied perspectives of the church’s many stakeholders. Data will be collected utilizing multiple methodologies that may include online surveys, personal interviews, focus groups, written surveys, review of church documents, and other approaches as deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees and Senior Minister.

First Universalist Church, Spring 2017

(This is one possible vision of how things might look as this plan unfolds.)

Our several worship services are authentic, transformative, inspiring, and deeply relevant. We are a welcoming community, with more racial and economic diversity than ever before in our congregants, staff, and ministerial team. Our choir has grown significantly; we have two additional choirs, as well as a youth choir. Our other music and arts groups are even more varied and diverse than they were in 2012 and, along with the choirs, frequently perform in the community. Members and friends of the church experience deep joy and meaning as they give, receive, and grow in their spiritual and creative lives.

In the fall of 2013 we added a third Sunday worship service to address the overcrowding in Religious Education classes. In the summer of 2014 we had two worship services as well as religious education for children and youth. In the fall of 2015 we added an alternative service with a multi-generational component that attracted a new demographic to the church.

Here in 2017, nearly 600 people care for each other in our small group program, which has expanded both in number and varieties of focus. **We have small groups for elders, parents of teens, new parents, single parents, small business owners, people of color, GBLT parents, multi-racial families, young professionals, and more.** We have groups based on particular interests, life stages, and spiritual practices. Because of our deep commitment to small groups and the relationships created through them, we are showing up in the world in different ways. We are more present to each other, are better able to listen, and are grounded in deep compassion. In community and individually we are growing in our UU identity and in our spiritual practice.

In 2013 our staff expanded to serve our growing membership, the variety of services, our aspirations, and our commitment to ministries deeply shared by all. We now have a Membership/Development staff position to ensure that members make real connections with each other, that members are able to share their gifts and find their place in the First Universalist community. We also have a part-time Minister of Congregational Care to work with the Congregational Care Team in ensuring that the pastoral care needs of the church are met.

Over the last five years Unity Center has been woven deeply into the life of the religious education program. As a result Unity Center's relationship to First Universalist was deepened and clarified, and it was pulled into tighter alignment with the church's programming. As Unity Center's national reputation grew, it became recognized by both the Board of Trustees and the First Universalist Foundation as the 21st century equivalent of Unity Settlement House—an affiliate organization with strong involvement of First Universalist youth and adults and with significant outreach in the community.

The Wellspring Program has also become an integral part of First Universalist. It has created a new generation of deeply grounded, UU leaders who, after participating in the spiritual development program, Wellspring, have gone on to lead pilgrimages, serve on the Board of Trustees, and offer significant lay leadership in a many aspects of church life.

Between 2012 and 2017 the church established partnerships with several community organizations. We continue to focus our faith in action work as organized under the umbrellas of Homelessness, the Environment, and Immigration. The partnership with Habitat for Humanity continued to flourish. In addition partnerships with organizations working in our umbrella areas, with community programs in core urban communities, with agencies working with Unity Center, and other congregations were explored and solidified. The processes for participating in social justice activities are clear and inviting for members and friends.

Service and pilgrimage trips for both youth and adults began in 2014 and by 2017 were a regular feature of First Universalist life. Faith and action are seamlessly woven together in every dimension of church life; activities such as the Day of Service are an annual reminder of the many ways we express our faith.

In the fall of 2014 the board empowered a task force to evaluate our space use and needs and to make recommendations ranging from a significant renovation or addition at 3400 Dupont to the feasibility of acquiring a second site. The idea of church beyond the building is no longer unique. Not only is our sanctuary equipped with video screens which allow us to project hymn lyrics, readings and videos, but these elements are woven seamlessly into the worship experience. We have a vibrant online community: we live-stream services, have high quality digital video recordings of each service posted on YouTube, provide online spiritual practice resources, and resources for families. Our growth has focused on our future—young families—and in 2017 we have nine hundred to a thousand adults in worship and over five hundred children and youth in religious education each week.

In all of this there is an emerging understanding that if one truly engages in the First Universalist community, one will be shaped and changed. First Universalist is known as a place to deepen one's spiritual life, whether through our small groups, the Wellspring program, spiritual practice activities, or other classes. Members of the church are supported and cared for during life changes and transitions. Congregational care and deep hospitality is woven into every area of church life. This welcoming is supported by staff and congregants, and is driven by the Spirit of Life moving in and among this community, calling us to our best selves. People come to First Universalist to be changed: to learn to give in gratitude, to receive with an open heart, and to grow into love's people, as we serve one another and the wider community.

