



State of the Church Meeting

WELCOME!

Agenda

***Opening**

***Purpose of Meeting: Update on Strategic Goals**

***Staff Report**

***Board Report**

***Looking Forward**

***Q and A**

***Closing**

Purpose

To share updates as they relate to fulfilling the Mission/Vision of the Church.

Mission: In the Universalist Spirit of Love and Hope, We Give, Receive, and Grow.

Vision: We welcome, affirm, and protect the light in each human heart. We act boldly for justice outside our walls. We listen deeply to where love is calling us next.

This year, the Focus has been on Stability and Infrastructure



Sr. Leadership Portfolios Re-imagined:

- Rev. Jen Crow moved into Executive Minister role. Portfolio includes pastoral care and monthly preaching, focus on cross training staff, coordination between Program and Operation team, oversight of budget, daily operations, and more.**

This year, the Focus has been on Stability and Infrastructure



Sr. Leadership Portfolios Re-imagined:

- **Rev. Justin Schroeder is now lead on Faithful Action (co-chair of Faithful Action Leadership Council), Stewardship and Development Efforts, preaching, Racial Justice efforts, and public witness.**

Faithful Action Leadership Council (FALC)



- *FALC oversees our Faithful Action work, balancing efforts for systemic change and serving immediate needs.
- *FALC created a partnership application process to clarify how orgs become church partners and what that means (partners announced in early March).
- *FALC has formed an “Advocacy Team” so advocacy work is part of the rhythm of the year.
- *Works with a racial justice lens.

Overview FALC, meeting summaries, and more, are available on the website.

Faithful Action Leadership Council

The Faithful Action Leadership Council, formed in summer 2015, shares in supporting, guiding, and enabling our ministry of faithful action. Together with the Racial Justice Leadership Team, the Board of Trustees, the ministers, and the congregation, the Faithful Action Leadership Council sets the direction of the faithful action ministries of our church, balancing our efforts for systemic change and serving immediate needs. The Faithful Action Leadership Council ensures that our guiding principles of racial justice and faithful action guide all that we do.

Meeting Summaries

The council meets six times a year. Meeting summaries can be found below, after each meeting takes place:

- August 26, 2015
- September 29, 2015
- October 27, 2015

Responsibilities:

- Setting Goals (In one year, we will have begun/completed...)
- Training and toolkit (development, roll-out, support, reflection, and evaluation)
- Budget*
- Partnerships*
- Responding to Immediate Needs or providing Immediate Witness
- Processes
- Communications*
- 5-6 Meetings per year, and subgroup working sessions

FEB 03 Daytime Connections Workshop: Getting Started in Online Genealogy
⌚ 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

FEB 03 Daytime Connections Knitting Group
⌚ 10 a.m. - noon
📍 Room 202

FEB 07 State of the Church Meeting
⌚ 12:30 p.m. - 2 p.m.
📍 Sanctuary

FEB 09 Bde/Mde Maka Ska Community Conversation
⌚ 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

FEB 09 Winter Hiking with First U Seniors
⌚ 10 a.m.

Daytime-Connection...jpg | Green Solar Team.jpg | First Universalist Ch...html | Shawn Moore and Ju...jpg | FALCSept2015-web.jpg | Show all downloads...

6:02 AM 1/28/2016

UU Community Solar Garden

UU Community Solar Gardens



Why join our First Universalist Community Solar Garden (CSG)?

- **Competitive subscriber terms**, including savings on your electricity, low annual “escalator,” and early termination/transfer flexibility terms with lowest risk. No up-front investment required.
- **Vetted by an expert UU solar coalition team** representing five churches, who interviewed the most prominent CSG developers, compared program benefits, and negotiated terms favorable to our UU congregation members.
- **Significant opportunity** for First Universalist racial, economic, and environmental justice objectives through our Faithful Action Leadership Council. Rebates will be awarded to the Church at the time the garden goes into operation based on the number of signups for our garden.

Confused or tempted by other solar garden offerings?

Attend a First Universalist CSG Info Session to learn more about the important subscription components to consider, and why UU has chosen the plan it has. If you are approached with another solar garden offering, make sure to ask about these key items:



UU Community Solar Garden Team

Adult Ministries

Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink, working with staff and congregants, has deepened our Adult Ministries offerings, expanding our Spiritual Practice Groups, Wellspring Groups, Racial Justice Learning Opportunities, Circles, and more.

Daytime Connections' vision is that First U is known in the community as a place to journey with others as you consciously age.



Adult Ministries

This year, through social media, we're expanding our ministry outside our walls.



Denise Konen

20 hrs · 🌐

Dear Facebook Friends, Please share this post with others who might be interested in joining us as we explore ways to support children on their journey toward more love and connection and find clear ways to talk to kids about a complicated topic! This groups starts on Tuesday Feb. 2 and is free and open to the public.



Bianca Zick

January 26 at 10:48am · 🌐

Hello local FB friends. I am facilitating a no-cost (open to all) circle at First Universalist Church for parents of kids who are struggling during their middle and high school years.

This is a supportive, confidential circle, focusing on the importance of parents tending our own spirits as we face parenting challenges. By sharing our stories, without judgment, we can find peace, perspective and wisdom. The circle starts next week. Please have anyone who is interested contact me directly. Thanks.

Stewardship/Development

Thanks to generous donors, this year we've been able to work with Development Consultant, Liz Loeb, who has helped us:

- Un-silo our Development and Stewardship efforts (ie, better coordination between the Pledge Team and Planned Giving Team)
- Develop new ways to appreciate and recognize all who support the mission and ministry of the church (thank you calls to every church member)
- Build a shared narrative about why we invest in this faith community

Public Witness

Downtown Minneapolis Senior Clergy

The Rev. Dr. Carla J. Bailey
Senior Minister
Plymouth Congregational Church

Fr. John Bauer
Rector
The Basilica of Saint Mary

Rev. Phil Boelter
Vicar
Gethsemane Episcopal Church

Rev. Dr. David Breeden
Senior Minister
First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis

Rev. Dr. Dan Collison
Senior Pastor
First Covenant Church

Imam Makram Nu'Man El-Amin
Masjid An-Nur (Mosque of the Light)

Imam Dr. Hamdy El-Sawaf
Islamic Community Center of Minnesota
Masjid Al-Iman (Mosque of Faith)

The Rev. Dr. Timothy Hart-Andersen
Senior Pastor
Westminster Presbyterian Church

Rev. Patrick Kennedy
Saint Olaf Catholic Church

Fr. Dale Korog
Pastor
Church of the Ascension

The Very Rev. Paul Lebens-Englund
Dean
Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral

Pastor Peter Nycklemoe
Senior Pastor
Central Lutheran Church

Rev. Michael J. O'Connell, Ret.

Rev. Laurie Pound-Feille
Senior Pastor
First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

Rev. Justin Schroeder
Senior Minister
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Rev. Judith K. Zabel
Senior Pastor
Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church

Rabbi Marcia A. Zimmerman
Alvin & June Perlman
Senior Rabbinic Chair
Temple Israel

A Call for Compassion

As senior leaders of faith communities in Minneapolis, we abhor and condemn violence perpetrated in the name of religion. No faith tradition, including Islam, condones hatred and injury toward others, except as distorted by extremists.

The recent terror visited upon fellow citizens is no excuse for the increasing unchecked animosity and demeaning rhetoric directed toward Muslims in our country. Freedom to exercise one's religion without intimidation and respect for the dignity of each individual are the bedrock of American democracy. Those rights are inalienable, yet they are under attack today.

We are compelled to stand up and speak out. For decades we and our predecessors in our faith communities have met monthly to share a meal and conversation. We have become friends.

Our theological differences are real, yet they are not cause for distrust or disrespect. On the contrary, by building relationships with one another we have developed deep esteem for the various traditions we represent. People of differing faith traditions and goodwill can live together in harmony.

Our Muslim friends report they have been subject to harassment in recent days. Their children are frightened and tell of increased bullying at school. Muslim-owned businesses have been vandalized. Their families and communities fear being in public places.

Much of the current vitriol comes from anxiety about the unknown and fear of the other. Targeting groups is not the answer. Our various religious traditions teach that it is precisely in the stranger that we find our common humanity. We all long for justice and peace in our communities.

Interfaith dialogue is the antidote to religious violence.

In this season, when our homes and streets and sanctuaries are filling with light in the growing winter darkness, let us commit ourselves anew to love one another. Let us not succumb to the temptation to vilify others or denigrate them because they do not believe as we do. Let us learn to listen and to reach out to those outside our own circle. **The future vitality and safety of our communities depend on being able to see ourselves in the other.**



2015 Thanksgiving Day Interfaith Worship, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis (Photo by Tom Northenski)

Rev. Justin Schroeder joined other Sr. Clergy of Downtown Minneapolis faith communities in “a call for compassion.”

Public Witness



In September, Rev. Justin Schroeder, along with Pastor Stephen Cornils from Mount Olivet, chatted with WCCO radio host Jearlyn Steele about what churches are doing to stay relevant and how they're welcoming more people into their communities.

Public Witness



In December, First Universalist was recognized on a local television program for the racial justice work being done by our community.

RACIAL JUSTICE AND OUR UU FAITH

- *Three plus years into this journey.
- *Racism is incompatible with our faith claim that each person has inherent worth and dignity.
- *We are wrestling, growing, struggling, uncomfortable and learning.
- *Monthly opportunities to learn, deepen, and grow.
- *We are becoming known as a racial justice church – racial justice isn't all we do, it's the lens through which we do our ministry.

Board Update

Cindy Marsh, President of the
Congregation

BOARD OF TRUSTEE FOCUS YEAR TO DATE

- Enhance working relationship as a Board
- Live into our Racial Justice Resolution
 - Implement Choice Points model for decision-making
 - Recruit leaders from congregant pool who have completed RJ training
- Perform “monitoring” duties – finances, staffing policies, staff work plan
- Tabled Congregant Covenant for this year

BOARD OF TRUSTEES LOOKING FORWARD

“Refresh” our visionary goals (developed in 2011-12)

- Goal is to recommit and take to next level
- We are evaluating the right process to seek Congregant input
- Look for more information this spring

Moving Toward a comprehensive stewardship campaign

- To help fulfill our ministry goals
- Will engage congregation in inclusive process to quantify and prioritize needs
- Will align our visionary goals and strategic plan
- Will begin in fall of 2016

CURRENT 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.

CHURCH FINANCES

WHERE WE ARE NOW

- We closed the 2014-15 fiscal year with a smaller deficit than expected. The approved budget included a \$35,000 deficit, we closed the year with a \$15,000 deficit. Pledge income came in roughly \$70,000 under budget. Expenses were trimmed to meet income.
- As recommended by the Finance Committee and our previous financial review, we moved to a modified cash basis of accounting for the start of the 2015-16 fiscal year. This has resulted in simpler and more transparent financial statements.
- We continue to work with MAP for Nonprofits – they provide support with monthly, quarterly and annual financial reconciliations and coaching.
- We are currently completing our 2nd Quarter review for the 2015-16 fiscal year – this report will be available as part of the February Board Packet. There are no major surprises this year – we are on track with both income and expenses.

SNAPSHOT

Year	# of Members	# of Pledges	Average Pledge	Median Pledge	Total Budget
2015-16	931	636	\$1785	\$900	\$1,542,000
2014-15	931	625	\$1758	\$1000	\$1,395,000
2013-14	1033	613	\$1652	\$900	\$1,485,000

A **mean** is the average of numbers in a data set, while a **median** is the middle value of a set.

2016-17 BUDGET TIMELINE

- January Board Meeting – Staff presented draft assumptions
- February Board Meeting – budget assumptions finalized
- Pledge Drive, February 21-March 20, “The Road We Walk Together”
- March 9th - Pledge Day
- March – Staff presents draft budget to Finance Committee
- Budget Meetings with the Congregation, May 1st & TBA
- May – Board approves budget
- Annual Meeting, June 5th – Congregation approves budget

2016-17 BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

We anticipate another year of extremely lean budgeting ahead. An \$80,000 increase in our pledge base, as well as continuing to have a large tenant will allow us to maintain, and hopefully increase slightly, our current level of program, staff and building support. We anticipate that the pinch of a large, non-mission aligned tenant will need to continue until we can retire the mortgage. This year, we hope to continue on the path we've started to walk:

- by continuing the elimination of RE fees and reducing expected donations for essential religious education experiences
- by continuing to support a Racial Justice programming line item
- by making strides toward fair and competitive compensation for all staff
- by continuing to increase our support of the MidAmerica Region and UUA
- by continuing to present and live within a balanced budget

Q and A

Please write down your question, and we'll collect the questions, group them thematically, and respond as we're able.

Closing

“If we have any hope of transforming the world and
changing ourselves,
We must be bold enough to step into our
discomfort,
brave enough to be clumsy there,
loving enough to forgive ourselves and
others.

May we, as a people of faith, be granted the
strength to be so bold, so brave, and so
loving.

- Rev. Joseph Cherry

Closing Hymn - #6