

First Universalist Church Board of Trustees

June 20, 2019

Board Packet

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First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Board of Trustees Meeting

June 20, 2019

6:30 p.m. Cummins Room

Agenda

I. Call to Order (6:30).

- Lighting of the Chalice

May this flame that burns before us light our way, informed by the wisdom of leaders gone before, and inspired by the trust that we have been given as stewards of this Church. May we have vision, compassion, and courage as we serve this congregation now and for the generations to come.

- Reading (see SM report)
- Spiritual reflection question (see SM report)

II. Consent Agenda (6:50)

- Approval of minutes from May meeting.
- Approval of minutes from Annual meeting.
- Monitoring: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers
- Monitoring: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes

III. Annual Meeting Conversations About Intersection of Racial Justice and Co-Location (7:00 – 7:45)

Notes from the various small groups will be e-mailed separately from the Board packet.

IV. Co-Minister Evaluations (7:45 – 8:15)

Reverend Schroeder's and Reverend Crow's self-evaluations, as well as their joint evaluation of this year's progress toward the visionary goals and execution on the staff work plan, will be e-mailed separately from the Board packet.

V. Board Self-Evaluation (8:15 – 8:30)

Our self-survey results will also be sent separately from the Board packet.

VI. Adjournment (8:30)

Opening Reading

The Step to Others by Mark Nepo

"We wander and think no one will ever find us. And lifting our sorry head, we are next to each other." Mark Nepo

We imagine that so many conditions are prerequisite to finding love, when all that is required is that, like a man stepping from a boat to a dock, we step over the small gap that exists between us. Often there is nothing to prepare for, nothing to set up in advance – just to step over what separates us and to land in what is before us.

But, giving in to our fears, we widen the gap by creating conditions that must be filled before stepping toward another. This is how we invest in the building of credentials and lifestyles and bank accounts that are often distractions from the simple and essential need to be held. In this way, we move up and down and around, but seldom straight into what will give us love.

To know love we must do more than understand, we must land and enter. Before we step, the gap to others seems like a canyon. But stepping anyway, the separations we move through look so much smaller once crossed. Often the thing feared, once crossed, turns out to be an unexpected bridge from which we can see who we were and who we are becoming.

Nepo's Practices before reflecting with one another:

*Center yourself and bring into focus the gap between you and others.

*As you inhale, bring more of others into that gap.

*As you exhale, extend more of who you are into that gap.

*As you breathe, let the lines of separation blur.

Reflection Question: What does this reflection stir up for you?

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting Summary
May 16, 2019

I. Call to Order

Trustees and Ministers present: Eric Cooperstein, Bryanna French, Lillie Pang, Dick Niemiec, Richard Spratt, Christa Anders, Kristin Siegesmund, Justin Schroeder, Jen Crow, Keven Ambrus, and Cindy Marsh.

II. Consent Agenda

- Approval of minutes from April meeting
- Monitoring: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers
- Monitoring: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes
- Monitoring: Staff survey

APPROVED.

III. Approval of Nominating Committee Slate of Candidates

Motion to approve the slate of candidates for the Board of Trustees, Foundation Board, and Nominating Committee, as presented by the Nominating Committee, for presentation to the congregation at the annual meeting.

APPROVED.

IV. Financial Report and Approval of 2019-2020 budget

Projecting a deficit of \$65,000 which is about \$18,000 more than anticipated. Within the context of a million-dollar budget, this is a small deficit but still disappointing.

Pledges are coming in about \$35,000 less than expected overall. On the expense side, we budgeted \$25,000 for capital campaign expenses but have not used those because of the hold on construction during the co-location conversations. Unrestricted donations came in less than expected, rentals came in less than expected.

Rev. Crow said that some funds will be reclaimed from old checks that were issued but never cleared (after several years) as well as some money from the Don and Mary Carter fund. They have made some reductions in staff hours so only over \$10K. Programming expenses are running higher. The winter was hard, and utilities and snow removal were more expensive than expected. There were some things with the building that also required emergency repairs. There is about \$33,000 in reserves that will be drawn against.

Keven suggested that in the future we identify risks and opportunities. He suggested that we start doing forecasts so we can see where we are and start thinking about the offsets. Most of our budget is salary, which does not vary much, but we could do more to control.

We traditionally budget to the bone and so that lack of padding means that there is not money to move around at the end of the year. We tend to end the year with small deficits rather than surpluses.

Proposed 2019-2020 Budget

Income:

- Annual giving set at \$1,165,000
- Unrestricted donations reduced to \$50,000
- Fundraising set at \$15,000
- Rental income increased by \$8,000
- Capital Campaign release of \$18,000 for staff hour related to capitol campaign work

Expenses:

- UUA dues increased by 3%
- Stay with current health insurance plan
- Some salary adjustments but two still out of range
- Racial Justice programming set at \$10,000
- Sabbatical support of \$4,000
- Staffing reductions in facilities and support positions
- $\frac{3}{4}$ time Director of Membership and Adult Ministries
- $\frac{1}{4}$ time Adjunct Minister

Budget values include making commitments to Racial Justice, to being a fair and responsible employer and commitment to the UUA. Current pledges for 2019-20 are well over one million and Brad is comfortable with \$1,165,000. We are looking for a commercial realtor or an attorney who could help us with negotiating an additional year of the lease with our school tenant.

Rev. Schroeder is very heartened by the conversations he is having with congregants many of whom are stretching and giving so generously.

The Board thanked Jen for making the adjustments necessary to present a balanced budget to the Board and to the congregation and appreciates that it involved hard choices. Cindy encouraged us to keep trying to get salaries in line as well as move toward the UUA health plan. It is important to treat our staff as well as fairly and well as possible.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE BUDGET AS PRESENTED. APPROVED.

V. Co-Location

A. Congregant feedback from listening sessions.

Cindy walked us through the summary from the Information and Listening Sessions re Congregant Feedback Sessions on Proposed Co-Location.

The Racial Justice Education Team (RJET), The Faithful Action Council (FAC), and participants from Beloved Conversations also had a listening session on May 14. There were a few recommendations from the groups.

People have been appreciative of the opportunity to learn and share. There are people who are excited and people who don't like change.

Richard and Bryana shared concerns from the POCI caucus. Some themes of their conversations included large issues around racial justice, and the actual vision; that there are too many questions without clear direction; the possibility that the time that we spend on co-location means that that time is not available for racial justice work; concerns that learning about a Jewish congregation takes away from racial justice; whether co-location may be social justice but is not racial justice; focusing on anti-blackness not just anti-Semitism; whether this is this a case of who you know and reinforcing white supremacy; and how we ensure that the third entity is not grounded in white supremacy. People are willing to take risks for the right cause and there is a concern that this might not be the right cause. So, the heart of it is, does this further our mission of racial justice?

We have to be able to hold as true that although we struggle to make our budget we are also a very privileged and wealthy congregation.

Reverend Schroeder added that there is a very complicated and nuanced conversation about the "whiteness" of Shir Tikvah. They are certainly elements of white supremacy in operation at Shir Tikvah but also, white nationalists are targeting Jewish people.

There is concern that co-location will divert energy from our racial justice work. It will take a lot of internal energy to figure out the processes. We will need to work hard to do more.

We need to answer the questions and have them available. Steering Committee will need to answer the questions and the Board will have to answer questions.

How do we get at these huge issues? We need to address the logistical and practical issues first but now we have to address the big questions raised about our racial justice mission and the impact of co-location on our mission.

There are lots of statements made but not a lot of commitments. What can our church commit to in terms of preserving our focus on racial justice? What can we promise? What are the non-negotiables? We need to give the congregation a sense of where we are going and get the big issues right.

How do we use this to learn more about whiteness? How do we lean into the places where real solidarity can happen?

VI. Healthy Congregation Task Force

We will take some time to discuss the development of a congregational covenant, policies for addressing congregant disputes, and related issues that might be appropriate for Board-designated task force.

In other UU churches, the congregation takes responsibility for correcting counterproductive or destructive behavior. Should not be solely part of the ministers or the board's responsibility. It may be helpful to have a task force to work on this. The focus is on the future and the expectations we have about how we work together.

Jen and Justin have a process for dealing with domestic violence between congregants. We will talk further about whether there should be a more formal policy.

VII. Co-Senior Minister Evaluation Process

The latest draft of the congregational survey is in the Board packet. Staff will send out. We will meet in June to talk about them. Jen and Justin have turned in self-evaluation surveys.

Christa will send out BOT self-survey.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Board Chair around 9:30.

May Attendance										
				2019					2018	
Adults	9:30 AM	10:00	11:15			9:30 AM	10:00	11:15		
1st week	248		165	413		252		180	432	
2nd week	272		181	453		285		210	495	
3rd week	199		272	471		230		236	466	
4th week		210		210			205		205	
5th week										
Monthly Total	719	210	618	1547		767	205	626	1598	
Average for May	240	210	206	387		256	205	209	400	
RE										
1st week	182		89	271		176		83	259	
2nd week	102		55	157		107		50	157	
3rd week	68		58	126		96		55	151	*
4th week		39		39			38		38	*
5th week										
Monthly Total	352	39	202	593		379	38	188	605	
Average for May	117	39	67	148		126	38	63	151	
Combined Average	357	249	273	534		382	243	271	551	
Notes										

* Youth Sunday; no RE for 6th-12th gr.

*Memorial Day weekend

**2019 Statistical Report
May 2019
Board Meeting June 20, 2019**

MEMORIAL SERVICES: 1

Chris Vdakes, husband of Member Lena Vdakes - May 3

MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT: 0

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL:

MEMBERS REINSTATED:

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL:

Gene Sylvestre, deceased
Heidi Ludeking, moved away
Paige Winebarger

CHILDREN DEDICATED: 0

	To Date	End of Year Totals			
MEMBERS	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
(Fiscal Year)	81	66	109	54	58
TOTAL MEMBERS:	1078*	1049	1,011	934	920

Total members as of the last meeting: **1078 revised to match ACS system**

To be added:

To be removed :

TOTAL MEMBERS:

160th Annual Meeting of the Members
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Sunday, June 2, 2019

Minutes

I. Call to Order

President of the Church, Eric Cooperstein, called the church to order at 12:39 p.m.¹

II. Chalice Lighting and Opening Words

Reverend Justin Schroeder lit the chalice and shared opening words. He thanked Rev. Elaine for all she has given to the church.

III. Authorization of Board of Trustees to Approve the Minutes of the Meeting

MOTION: Authorization to have the Board of Trustees approve the minutes of this meeting at a subsequent Board meeting.

SECONDED. APPROVED.

IV. Ministry Team Report

Reverends Schroeder talked about the highlights of the past year:

- Co-ministry has been so successful. They feel so much joy and respect for each other and are grateful for the opportunity to work together.
- Reverend Karen Hutt came on board and has been fabulous.
- Focused on changing the culture of worship to help people connect more deeply with worship.
- Religious education -one of the largest RE education programs in the country. Shout out to Lauren Wyeth!! And the other folks who help with RE. The RE program is focused on supporting children and youth, especially as they cross thresholds.
- Adult programming – offered a variety of circles in which hundreds of people participated.
- Three groups engaged in the UUA’s “Beloved Conversations” curriculum.
- People of Color Caucus, staff work on dismantling white supremacy, RE accessibility and Inclusion Team.
- Faithful Action Ministry – alive and vibrant! Moral witness at immigration court, sponsoring an asylum seeker, supporting Village Financial Cooperative, Bde Maka Ska conversations, Environmental Justice panel with Congressperson Ilhan Omar.

¹ NOTE: We had four sign-in sheets for congregants and due to the large turnout and the celebration for Rev. Elaine, that was not adequate and there were long lines. May wish to consider having six or more sign-in sheets for next year.

- Living into our visionary goals!

V. Special Recognition of Outgoing Volunteers

Recognition of Outgoing Nominating Committee Members

- Suzanne Wilhite
- Marcia Watson

Outgoing Foundation Directors – Suzan Klein

- Chris Bremer
- Channing McKinley
- Dennis Haskin

Outgoing Church Trustees – Eric Cooperstein

- Cindy Marsh
- Dick Niemic
- Lillie Pang

VI. President's Report

Outgoing Board President Eric Cooperstein talked about shared leadership and thanked the congregation for the opportunity to be president. He is so excited about incoming President Bryana French and the gifts she will bring to our Church.

VII. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Recommended Budget for 2019- 2020

Reverend Crow talked about how this budget represents our living into our values. The current year was challenging unexpected repairs and cold weather, extensive use of the building, inability to use capital campaign budget to offset staff hours because we had a hold on the capital campaign and the loss of a large pledge.

We are coming in with a \$65,000 deficit which is about \$18,000 more than anticipated. It will get paid out of reserves. Next year is looking a bit better. We are prioritizing racial justice, UUA commitments and fair salaries. Current pledges are in at \$1,091,000 and budget is set at \$1,165,000.

Expenses include Karen Hutt as adjunct minister and new minister, Arif Mandami, as Director of Membership and Adult ministry. Increased racial justice programming. UUA

dues increased by 3%. Sabbatical support of \$4,000. Reductions in facilities and support positions.

Treasurer Dick Niemic thanked Reverend Crow for all her hard work and her integrity and transparency. He is very excited that Keven Ambrus will be the new treasurer. He cautions that we can handle deficits and that we need to build more cushions into budgets to increase reserves and guard against future deficits.

Q: Sara Hedge – On behalf of the Racial Justice Change Team, moved to amend the budget to give the POCI (People of Color and Indigenous People) caucus the authority to spend half of the Racial Justice Team amount (\$5,000). Several members of RJET, the Racial Justice Education Team, spoke in favor of this amendment. Karin Wille, on behalf of the Change Team, also spoke in favor. Reverend Schroder said the staff would work in consultation with the POCI Caucus.

MOTION: To amend the budget to allow the POCI Caucus to spend at least half of the \$10,000 line item for racial justice as they determine appropriate and center the needs of people of color and indigenous folk.

APPROVED.

Questions and Answers regarding the Budget:

Q: Laura Cooper had a question about the youth services which was answered.

Q: Ann Kay had a question about the assets and the liabilities listed which was answered.

Q: What percentage of congregants are sustainers?

A: Reverend Schroeder estimates closing in on 60% of congregants who are choosing to be sustainers. This will be really helpful in future stewardship campaigns.

Q: Christina Nicolson had some questions about deferred maintenance.

A: Reverend Crow explained some of the budget issues related to deferred to maintenance. Many of the deferred maintenance items will get covered in the capital campaign. The Board approves expenditures from the capital campaign and so they could release some funds.

Q: Dan Berg with a question about miscellaneous capital campaign expenses.

Q: Velma Wagner, former chair of planned giving, what percentage and dollar amount are being used?

A: The Board can take between 5 and 7% of legacy funds. Board has elected to take 7% for the coming year. Anticipating \$55,000 for the coming year.

Q: Alan Steinhauer with questions about program expenses. Where is music within program expenses? Thinks it would be helpful to see separate line item for music. Some committees have done fundraising. Is there a way for them to have money re-seed programs?

A: The May Board packet, which is on line, has all this level of detail. It is available online and was also distributed at all the budget meetings.

Q: How does the retirement of the mortgage play in?

A: It was around a \$70,000 item (interest and principal) that we will not pay this year or next year.

Q: Investments and are there ethical considerations that consider like not investing in fossil fuels?

A: Ross Levin, former member of this church, includes some socially responsible investing in our portfolio. Eric Cooperstein said that the board will return to this after the capital campaign.

MOTION: To present the 2019- 2020 Budget for approval.

SECONDED.

APPROVED with a few dissents and one abstention.

Vote on Designation as a Water Protection Congregation Resolution and In Support of an Equal Rights Amendment Resolution.

Stan Sattinger, head of the Environmental Justice committee, introduced the amendment and the intent to become a member of the Water Protection Congregation Initiative, with periodic reports from a Co-Senior Minister to the Board of Trustees regarding actions taken pursuant to this resolution. He talked about the work with the LaPointe family, Line Three, and the Mini Ki Wakan Decade of Water Summit.

MOTION to be become a member of the Water Protection Congregation Initiative.

Seconded.

APPROVED with one dissent.

VIII. Resolution in Support of the Equal Rights Amendment

Introduced by Suzanne Willhite. Vote on Resolution in Support of an Equal Rights Amendment that calls on the congregants of First Universalist Church of Minneapolis to call on the Minnesota Senate and House to pass a bill for an act proposing an amendment to the

Minnesota Constitution, known as the Equal Rights Amendment, providing for gender equality under the law. Looking to this for equal pay, freedom from violence and women's health care.

Note: Suzanne and others will be holding a meeting on June 25 if people want to learn more. The amendment would protect nonbinary individuals.

Motion to Support a Resolution in Support of an Equal Rights Amendment.

Seconded.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IX. Report of the Nominating Committee

Suzann Willhite, Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of candidates for the Board.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NEW:

- Daryn Woodson
- Benjamin Miles
- Dan Moriarty

CONTINUING:

- Richard Spratt
- Eric Cooperstein
- Bryana French
- Christa Anders
- Keven Ambrus
- Kristin Siegesmund

-Nominated for Board of Trustees Officers:

- Bryana French, President
- Kristin Siegesmund, Vice President
- Keven Ambrus, Treasurer

-Christa Anders, Secretary

APPROVED

FOUNDATION BOARD:

-Suzan Klein, Chair

NEW:

Leila Ambrus

Jared Cruz

Roberta Haskin

CONTINUING:

Suzan Klein

Anne McBean

Jill Anderson

John Bringewatt

Ginny Halloran

Rochelle Hammer

APPROVED

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

NEW:

Janet Avery

Cathy Manning

CONTINUING:

Jim Ramnaraine

Greg Hoelzer

Sharon Ramirez

Pat Gottschalk

APPROVED

2019 UU GENERAL ASSEMBLY (in Spokane, Washington):

-Martha Easter-Wells

-Janell Hill

-Ralph Wyman

Nominated from the Floor: None.

APPROVED

MOTION: To authorize the Board of Trustees to authorize additional delegates or Senior Co-Ministers.

APPROVED.

X. Co-Location – Where Are We Now??

Reverend Crow talked through the co-location issues.

- This has been a year of discernment with options and no final decisions have been made
- This summer the Board will work with the POCI Caucus and Change Team and consider key questions of co-location and mission alignment/support/detraction
- Fall – continue legal and financial conversations

Why are we considering this?

- Environmental stewardship
- Financial stability
- Healing Justice Impact
- Create a model for cross-cultural, interfaith collaboration and mutual support
- Additional possibilities with the third floor for the RE Wing

There are advantages and disadvantages to remaining on our own as well as co-location. Cindy Marsh then talked about the listening sessions that have been held to date. Over 150 congregants participated in workshops which allowed all voices to be heard. All of the feedback was recorded and is available on the website under co-location. Congregants were encouraged to go to the website to review these documents. Cindy summarized the congregants' excitement and joy as well as their concerns.

The congregation then broke into small groups to talk about co-location listening sessions

Small Group Discussion on Racial Justice

1. What did you hear about co-location and racial justice?
2. Where did you resonate with what you heard?
3. What did you feel challenged about?
4. What is our commitment to RJ/POCI that we cannot lose?
5. What do you see as the implications for the questions that were raised?

XI. Closing Words

Reverend Crow thanked the over 200 people in attendance.

PRAYER FOR LIVING IN TENSION by Joseph M. Cherry

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.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25.