

First Universalist Church Board of Trustees
April 18, 2024
Board Packet

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First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 18, 2024
6:30 - 9:00 pm
First Universalist Church
[Cummins Room & Google Meet \(multiplatform\)](#)

Start	Duration	Topic	Lead
6:30 PM	5	Call to Order	Jeff
		Lighting the Chalice <i>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.</i>	All
6:35 PM	5	Agenda Approval	Jeff
6:40 PM	20	Executive Session - Somatic Grounding - Spiritual Community Building	? Jen/Arif
7:00 PM	5	Visionary Goals - How do we live into our visionary goals as a board when considering a budget proposal?	
7:05 PM	10	Stewardship - Pledge Drive Update	Emily/Arif
7:15 PM	45	Finance - 2023-24 Budget Status - 2024-25 Budget Proposal	Marc
8:00 PM	10	Break	All
8:10 PM	10	Governance - Updates & approval on proposed committee members	Lou/Sarah All
8:20 PM	30	IDI - Reflections on the unfinished "visibility" discussion in the March meeting. - Small Group Check-ins	All
8:50 PM	10	Board Visibility - Discuss Matt/Emily's List	Emily All
9:00 PM	5	Consent Agenda - Approval of March meeting minutes - Monitoring: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers & trends - Monitoring: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes - Monitoring: Congregant grievances - Monitoring: Staff & Volunteer grievance - Monitoring: Protection of assets	All
9:05 PM	5	Gratitudes	All
9:05 PM		Adjourn	All

Roles, responsibilities, and resources for Board Members

JOB DESCRIPTION: First Universalist Board of Trustees

Church Bylaws

Governing Policies Handbook

2023-24 Monitoring Schedule

Senior Minister Board Report
Prepared by Rev. Jen Crow
April 14, 2024

Spiritual Grounding

Mission:

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

Visionary Goals:

The people of First Universalist practice Beloved Community among and beyond us. To do this we...

- Honor the richness of our Unitarian Universalist faith and embody its love within the walls of our church and beyond.
- Foster our connection with, care for, and action on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life.
- Pursue our individual and collective work for justice, in relationship with those most affected by systems of oppression.
- Widen the opportunities for leadership participation and engagement in the many facets of how our church functions and thrives.
- Provide meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change.

Imagine with us, a thriving church living out this mission, achieving these visionary goals.

What does this church look and feel like 10 years from now?

Who is here?

Who is in leadership?

Who is in the pews?

How do we do things in this future church?

Who are our partners in the community? Who is the church in accountable relationship with?

Are those people here now? Where are they? And what would bring them in and help them develop and be inspired into leadership? Into community here?

What do we need to do now to lay the groundwork for this future church?

What do we need to stop doing, start doing, do differently to bring this thriving future church into being?

Monitoring Items

Attendance and Membership Trends

Please see attached information.

Staff and Volunteer Transitions:

We recently welcomed Paolo Debuque as Choir Director. Paolo's contract includes choral direction and Sunday morning worship support, and we are currently in conversation about a contract for the upcoming year, as well.

Congregant Grievances

There have been no congregant grievances.

Staff & Volunteer Grievances

There have been no staff or volunteer grievances.

Protection of Assets

The Senior Minister and all church staff are in compliance with Section 5.9. of the Governing Policies Handbook, which states:

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:

- 5.9.1. Comply, to a reasonable extent, with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles with regard to all financial transactions and reports.
- 5.9.2. Insure against theft and casualty losses at replacement value less reasonable deductible and/or co-insurance limits.
- 5.9.3. 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.
- 5.9.4. Prevent un-bonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.
- 5.9.5. Properly maintain the Church physical plant and equipment.
- 5.9.6. Solicit at least two competitive bids when making purchases or entering contracts for over \$10,000.
- 5.9.7. Invest foundation and Church capital in accordance with approved investment policies.
- 5.9.8. Protect intellectual property, information, and files from significant damage.
- 5.9.9. Protect the Church's public image, credibility, and non-profit status.
- 5.9.10. Honor documented donor and source restrictions placed on foundation, legacy and restricted funds.

For Board approval:

Information Items

Sunday, April 21 at 1pm - Congregational budget meeting at church

Where You Go I Will Go

Shoshana Jedwab, author of the song, "Where You Go I Will Go," that we sing to close our Sunday services - has publicly rescinded her permission for people who accuse Israel of genocide following the acts of October 7th to sing this song. Jedwab is not against calls for ceasefire or peace, but she does raise her concerns about the use of the word genocide and the ways she believes that it incites antisemitism. As your worship leaders, we are aware of this public statement, and plan to invite a congregational conversation about the writer's request, individual and collective feelings and possible actions, to occur on Sunday, 4/28 after the second service.

Please see the Social Messaging Survey Results, compiled by Rev. Arif Mamdani in the Board packet

Ministerial Internship(s) 2024-25

We've been approached by two potential ministerial interns for the upcoming church year, and have now opened a process for application. We are open to either or both a 2 year part-time and a 1 year full-time internship. While in the last 2 cycles we have focused specifically on providing a ministerial internship for BIPOC candidates, in this cycle we will move to an application process open to all who are interested. Funding for any internship will be supported solely by the Cummins Ministerial Internship Fund. Applications are being accepted until 4/15, and interviews and decisions will be made by May 1.

The First Universalist Church John and Dru Cummins Ministerial Internship Fund is composed of restricted net assets, solicited regularly, and invested to generate temporarily restricted income to support the Ministerial Internship program at First Universalist Church. Stipends and expenses related to ministerial internships in the 2024-25 church year would be paid entirely from this fund, with no impact on our operating budget. **A 5% payout, with a 5% carryover, will total roughly \$27,000 for the next fiscal year.**

Below you'll find the fund's policies for spending and payout.

V. GOALS AND SPENDING (PAYOUT) POLICY The fundraising goal for the initial establishment of the Fund is \$200,000 - with an ultimate goal of \$550,000. Except as provided below, the annual payout shall be a maximum of 5% of the Fund's value, based on a 12 quarter trailing average of the market value of the Fund, with the 12th quarter ending on December 31st of the year prior to the church fiscal year in which the funds will be used. However, during the first five years of the Fund or until the ultimate fundraising goal is achieved, the Trustees may elect a payout of 10% of the contributions received by the Fund during the calendar year prior to the fiscal year in which it will be used, instead of 5% of the Fund's value as described above. Payout amounts that are not used in the fiscal year for which they are intended may be carried forward to the following fiscal year for the purpose stated in Section I of these Policies.

Some notes on staffing, from Jan Gartner, UUA Compensation and Staffing Practices Manager

Congregations are small employers. Needs change and fluctuate. People and positions and structures evolve. Hire good people who, as a team, have the core skills and values you need, and recognize that what needs to be done and who does it will shift over time...and that includes volunteers. You won't find a set of positions/job descriptions "for all time."

I don't have enough "data points" to say whether administrative/operational positions are being more commonly reduced or eliminated than program positions. Interestingly, I think those divisions themselves are becoming more blurred. For example, I'm aware of some blended positions in smaller congregations, including combined RE/administrator. And as in your case, sometimes to make things work, more administrative work gets taken on by other staff, including ministers and program staff.

How are other congregations managing? I would say some are continually staying in line with their budgets, iterating as they go – including taking the opportunity to do that during times of staff transition. Others tend to hang on for dear life to their current staffing structure until it is

absolutely unsustainable, then make heart-wrenching decisions. And of course variations on these and strategies in between.

We have gone through decades of increasing reliance on staff and there are many great things to be said for that – more professionalization, greater accountability and consistency, etc. But there have been some downsides, not only in terms of economic viability, but also less of a sense of ownership by the members. The pendulum needs to swing back the other direction a bit.

A couple of things I say a lot: Take good care of your staff. Do what you can with the resources you have.

2024-25 Budget Assumptions

Our operating budget is a tangible expression of our values, our vision, and our mission. How we spend our money is one of the most important tools we have as we strive to align our institutional practices, our resources, and our outcomes with our visionary goals. Responsible financial stewardship, caring for our congregation and our community, and progress toward our newly adopted visionary goals guide our planning. We also continue to analyze and review of our current ministry and program offerings and what is needed for the present and the future of our church and Unitarian Universalism.

Mission:

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

Visionary Goals:

The people of First Universalist practice Beloved Community among and beyond us. To do this we...

- Honor the richness of our Unitarian Universalist faith and embody its love within the walls of our church and beyond.
- Foster our connection with, care for, and action on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life.
- Pursue our individual and collective work for justice, in relationship with those most affected by systems of oppression.
- Widen the opportunities for leadership participation and engagement in the many facets of how our church functions and thrives.
- Provide meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change.

As we prepare our annual budget for 2024-25:

- We will present a balanced budget, with a realistic income # based on past performance and planned fundraising efforts
- Meet annual health insurance cost increases and other necessary expense increases impacted by inflation
- Bring staff salaries which are below UUA salary recommendations up to minimum recommendations within 2 years
- Include a 3% cost of living increase for all staff
- Plan for the costs of sabbatical coverage
- Increase giving to the UUA annual fund as possible

Rev. Jen consulted with the Finance Committee to create 3 possible 2024-25 budget scenarios for review.

Worst Case Scenario

- Realistic, planned for projections in fundraising and income -\$1.1 million in annual giving
- Elimination of 2 full-time staff leadership positions
- Continue facilities staffing/hours as is (one position at 32 hrs/wk, one at 20 hrs/wk, one position is benefits eligible)
- No cost of living, merit, or alignment with UUA guidelines salary adjustments
- No increase to UUA Annual Fund giving

- \$3000 for sabbatical coverage

Expected Case Scenario

- Realistic, planned for projections in fundraising and income - 1.3 million in annual giving
- Elimination of 1 full-time staff leadership position
- Partial restoration of facilities staffing and hours (one position at 35 hrs/wk, one at 30 hrs/wk, both benefits eligible)
- 3% cost of living increase for all staff
- 3% increase to UUA Annual Fund giving
- \$5000 for sabbatical coverage

Best Case Scenario

- Realistic, planned for projections in fundraising and income - 1.4 million in annual giving
- Retention of all leadership staff positions
- Full restoration of facilities staffing and hours
- Salaries for all positions meet minimum UUA guidelines
- 3% cost of living increase for all staff
- 10 hrs/wk of administrative support
- Fuller investment in music ministry
- 5% increase to UUA Annual Fund giving
- \$15,000 for sabbatical coverage

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
11 April 2024
3:00-4:30 pm

Members present: Dan Berg, Marc Gorelick, Julie Most
Staff present: Jen Crow, Brad Schmidt
Stewardship liaison present: Janet Merrill

Meeting convened at 3:00 pm

1. Chalice Lighting
2. Minutes from the prior meeting were approved
3. Year to date financials (through February 2024):
 - a. Income running \$163k over budget
 - b. Expenses running approx. \$15k over budget
 - c. YTD surplus of \$91k, vs \$60k deficit budgeted at this point
 - d. No major outstanding unusual expenses foreseen that would affect year end forecast
 - e. There was a discrepancy in travel expense related to Boston youth trip – will ensure that both revenue and expense for this trip are budgeted for next year
4. Stewardship update
 - a. Total estimated pledge income so far is approximately \$970,000: \$670k in received pledges, \$240k in recurring pledges not yet confirmed; \$60k additional forecast from remaining pledges not yet received
 - b. Stewardship team has been doing outreach to people who have pledged in the past but not yet pledged this year – some have reported that they did submit a pledge but it has not been acknowledged
 - c. Brad noted that database conversion in January has created a backlog
 - d. It was also noted that in recent years we have not had a set process for acknowledging pledges received and thanking donors. Janet Merrill will bring back to Stewardship team their taking on that responsibility in future
 - e. There are also efforts by Board to contact those with recurring pledges to request confirmation and consider increases.
 - f. No fundraising event was held this year but there are plans for one in the fall. It was noted that given changes in membership, likely to yield less revenue than some events in the past.
5. Preliminary budget
 - a. Jen and Brad shared drafts of 3 balanced budget scenarios for FY 2024-25 based on projected congregational giving levels:
 - i. Low: \$1.1 million
 - ii. Middle: \$1.3 million
 - iii. High: 1.5 million
 - b. Given where we are now, will likely end up somewhere between the low and middle scenarios

- c. Both of those scenarios would require significant expense reductions with program impacts; details still being worked out and will be shared with the Board on 4/18 and at the congregational meeting on 4/21
6. Foundation investment policy. Dan Berg is preparing to share proposed revisions to the Foundation investment policy at the May meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:28 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Gorelick, Treasurer

Financial Review - February 2024

As of February 2024, revenues exceed expenses by \$91,372.91. An improvement of \$78,829.43 in comparison to January 2024. Annual Giving revenue continued to be favorable to budget by \$97,435, due to the additional donations received at the beginning of the year to close the budget gap. In response to the forecasted annual deficit budget of \$250,000 reported at the conclusion of the second quarter, additional gifts were once again made by members of the congregation to close the budget gap. A number of those gifts were received in February and recorded to the Donations revenue line. As a result, Donations was favorable to budget by \$130,345. Revenues in our earned income categories remained under budget by a total of \$17,475.10. Expenses continued to track near the projected year to date budget in most categories. Much of the negative variability to budget in expenses are due to timing, or an adjustment in allocation from what was budgeted.

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Balance Sheet

	Actual As of <u>01/31/2024</u>
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$121,381.94
Investments	\$3,193,718.83
Other Current Assets	\$9,721.76
Total Current Assets	<u>\$3,324,822.53</u>
Non-Current Assets	
Fixed Assets	\$5,676,570.35
Total Non- Current Assets	<u>\$5,676,570.35</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$9,001,392.88</u></u>
Liabilities and Fund Balance	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$108,698.15
Benefits Payable	\$28,579.83
Other Current Liabilities	\$16,375.85
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$153,653.83</u>
Long Term Liabilities	
Loan Payable	\$1,493,795.47
Interfund Transfer	\$0.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>\$1,493,795.47</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$1,647,449.30</u>
Fund Balance	
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$4,175,710.29
Donor Restricted Net Assets	\$3,178,233.29
Total Fund Balance	<u>\$7,353,943.58</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	<u><u>\$9,001,392.88</u></u>

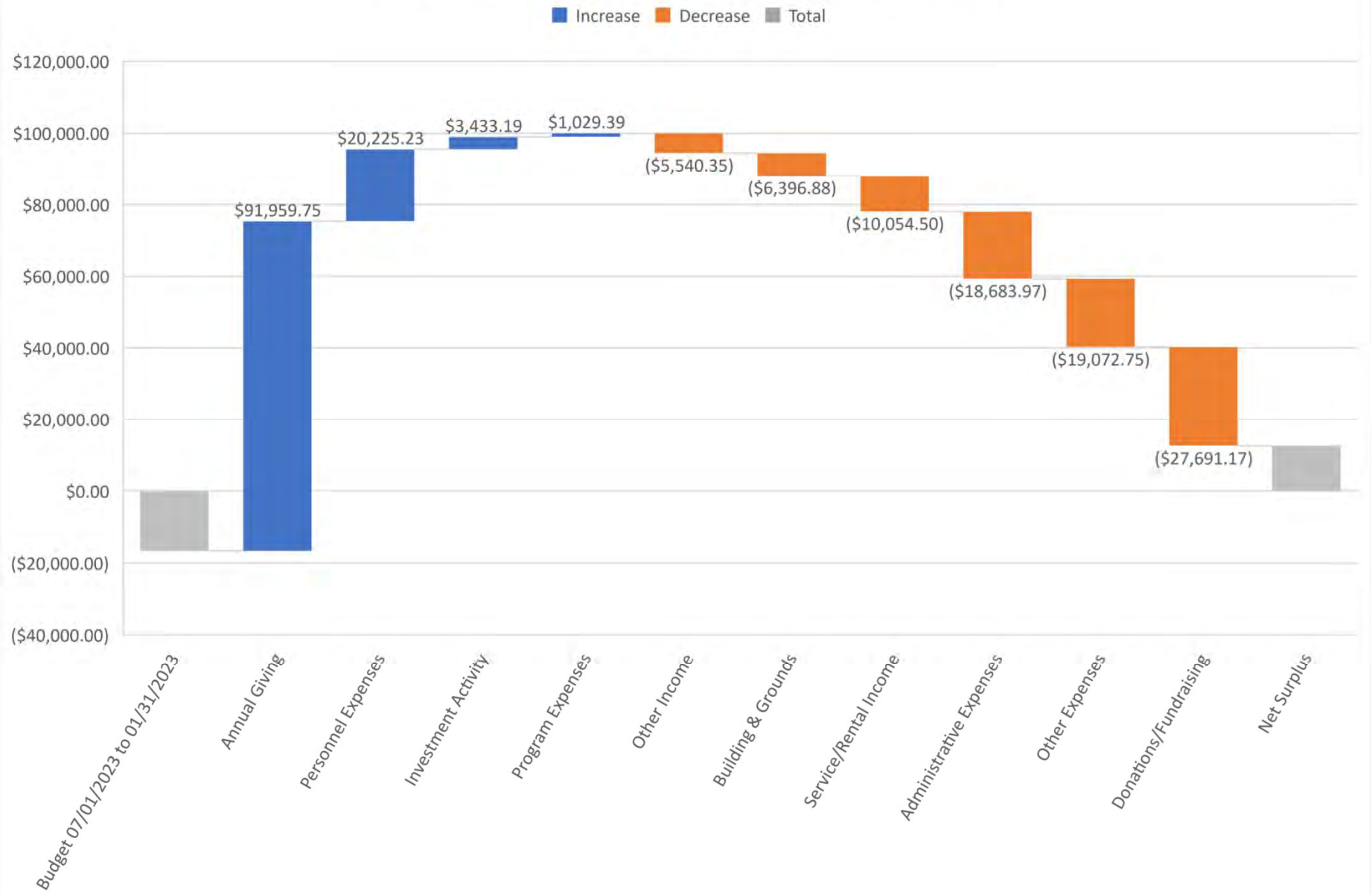
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

Building & Capital Reserve Budget

	Actual 07/01/2023 to 01/31/2024	Budget 07/01/2023 to 01/31/2024	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2023 to 06/30/2024
Revenues				
Support				
Donations/Fundraising	\$13,355.00	\$90,708.31	(\$77,353.31)	\$155,500.00
Total Support	\$13,355.00	\$90,708.31	(\$77,353.31)	\$155,500.00
Total Revenues	\$13,355.00	\$90,708.31	(\$77,353.31)	\$155,500.00
Expenses				
Administrative Expenses	\$3.40	\$0.00	(\$3.40)	\$0.00
Building & Grounds	\$111,822.41	\$90,708.22	(\$21,114.19)	\$155,500.00
Total Expenses	\$111,825.81	\$90,708.22	(\$21,117.59)	\$155,500.00
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(\$98,470.81)	\$0.09	(\$98,470.90)	\$0.00

2023-2024 Year to Date Net Income Actual vs Budget



First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Balance Sheet

	Actual As of <u>02/29/2024</u>
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$118,110.62
Investments	\$3,270,790.55
Other Current Assets	\$23,892.16
Total Current Assets	<u>\$3,412,793.33</u>
Non-Current Assets	
Fixed Assets	\$5,676,570.35
Total Non- Current Assets	<u>\$5,676,570.35</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$9,089,363.68</u></u>
Liabilities and Fund Balance	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$70,602.58
Benefits Payable	\$17,309.13
Other Current Liabilities	\$13,963.94
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$101,875.65</u>
Long Term Liabilities	
Loan Payable	\$1,487,713.09
Interfund Transfer	\$0.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>\$1,487,713.09</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$1,589,588.74</u>
Fund Balance	
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$4,243,319.83
Donor Restricted Net Assets	\$3,256,455.11
Total Fund Balance	<u>\$7,499,774.94</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	<u><u>\$9,089,363.68</u></u>

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

Operating Budget

	Actual 07/01/2023 to 02/29/2024	Budget 07/01/2023 to 02/29/2024	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2023 to 06/30/2024
Revenues				
Support				
Annual Giving	\$810,675.68	\$713,240.64	\$97,435.04	\$1,049,750.00
Donations/Fundraising	\$278,863.85	\$195,023.20	\$83,840.65	\$293,750.00
Total Support	\$1,089,539.53	\$908,263.84	\$181,275.69	\$1,343,500.00
Earned Revenue				
Service/Rental Income	\$57,430.94	\$68,666.60	(\$11,235.66)	\$103,000.00
Investment Income	\$3.46	\$0.00	\$3.46	\$0.00
Other Income	\$1,090.42	\$7,333.32	(\$6,242.90)	\$11,000.00
Total Earned Revenue	\$58,524.82	\$75,999.92	(\$17,475.10)	\$114,000.00
Total Revenues	\$1,148,064.35	\$984,263.76	\$163,800.59	\$1,457,500.00
Expenses				
Personnel Expenses	\$787,463.12	\$807,330.61	\$19,867.49	\$1,205,464.00
Administrative Expenses	\$111,438.97	\$97,266.44	(\$14,172.53)	\$145,900.00
Program Expenses	\$49,322.29	\$53,333.08	\$4,010.79	\$80,000.00
Building & Grounds	\$81,865.70	\$80,481.65	(\$1,384.05)	\$116,800.00
Other Expenses	\$30,112.43	\$6,333.28	(\$23,779.15)	\$9,500.00
Total Expenses	\$1,060,202.51	\$1,044,745.06	(\$15,457.45)	\$1,557,664.00
Investment Activity				
Realized Losses	(\$148.23)	\$0.00	(\$148.23)	\$0.00
Unrealized Losses	(\$2,845.50)	\$0.00	(\$2,845.50)	\$0.00
Dividends & Interest	\$1,160.68	\$0.00	\$1,160.68	\$0.00
Realized Gains	\$63.89	\$0.00	\$63.89	\$0.00
Unrealized Gains	\$5,280.23	\$0.00	\$5,280.23	\$0.00

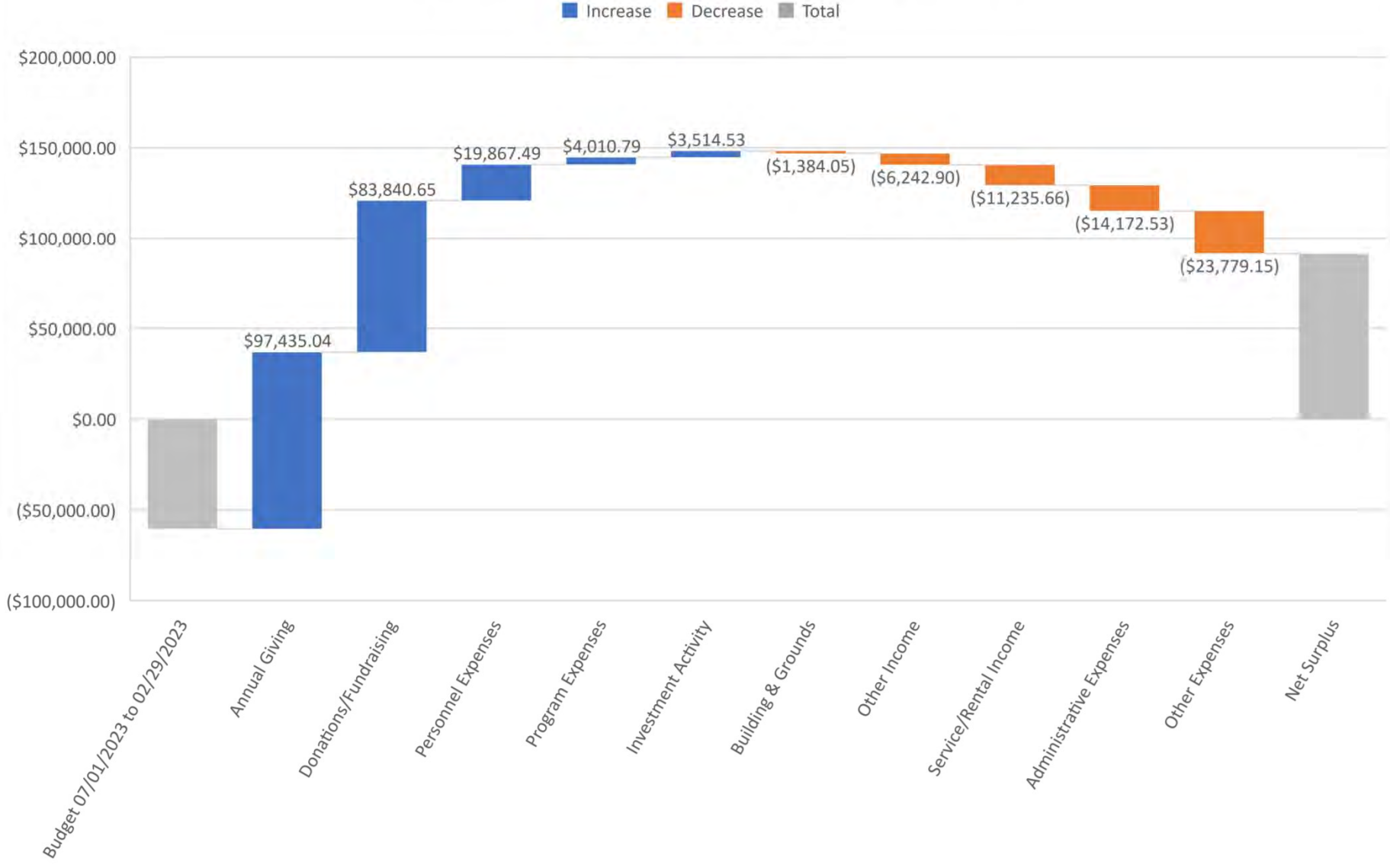
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

Operating Budget

	Actual 07/01/2023 to 02/29/2024	Budget 07/01/2023 to 02/29/2024	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2023 to 06/30/2024
Total Investment Activity	<u>\$3,511.07</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$3,511.07</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	<u>\$91,372.91</u>	<u>(\$60,481.30)</u>	<u>\$151,854.21</u>	<u>(\$100,164.00)</u>

2023-2024 Year to Date Net Income Actual vs Budget



First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

Building & Capital Reserve Budget

	Actual 07/01/2023 to 02/29/2024	Budget 07/01/2023 to 02/29/2024	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2023 to 06/30/2024
Revenues				
Support				
Donations/Fundraising	\$13,805.00	\$103,666.64	(\$89,861.64)	\$155,500.00
Total Support	\$13,805.00	\$103,666.64	(\$89,861.64)	\$155,500.00
Total Revenues	\$13,805.00	\$103,666.64	(\$89,861.64)	\$155,500.00
Expenses				
Administrative Expenses	\$3.40	\$0.00	(\$3.40)	\$0.00
Building & Grounds	\$121,101.54	\$103,666.56	(\$17,434.98)	\$155,500.00
Total Expenses	\$121,104.94	\$103,666.56	(\$17,438.38)	\$155,500.00
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(\$107,299.94)	\$0.08	(\$107,300.02)	\$0.00

**First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Proposed Operating Budget, 2024-2025**

	<u>2023-24</u> <u>Operating Budget</u>	<u>2023-24</u> <u>Year-End Projections</u>	<u>2024-2025</u> <u>Proposed Budget</u>
Revenues			
Support			
Annual Giving	\$ 1,049,750.00	\$ 975,000.00	\$ 1,235,000.00
Donations/Fundraising	\$ 293,750.00	\$ 144,300.00	\$ 200,000.00
Building/Capital Fund	\$ 155,500.00	\$ 155,500.00	\$ 155,500.00
Revenue Released from Restriction	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Support	\$ 1,499,000.00	\$ 1,274,800.00	\$ 1,590,500.00
Earned Revenue			
Service/Rental Income	\$ 103,000.00	\$ 92,450.00	\$ 103,000.00
Investment Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Income	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 2,000.00
Total Earned Revenue	\$ 114,000.00	\$ 93,200.00	\$ 105,000.00
Total Revenues	\$ 1,613,000.00	\$ 1,368,000.00	\$ 1,695,500.00
Expenses			
Personnel Expenses	\$ 1,205,500.00	\$ 1,199,950.00	\$ 1,214,200.00
Administrative Expenses	\$ 145,600.00	\$ 153,535.00	\$ 124,570.00
Program Expenses	\$ 84,500.00	\$ 101,540.00	\$ 82,900.00
Building & Grounds	\$ 139,300.00	\$ 132,185.00	\$ 139,300.00
Construction Loan	\$ 133,000.00	\$ 133,000.00	\$ 133,000.00
Other Expenses	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 1,500.00
Total Expenses	\$ 1,712,900.00	\$ 1,721,760.00	\$ 1,695,470.00
Investment Activity			
Realized Losses			\$ -
Unrealized Losses			\$ -
Dividends & Interest			\$ -
Unrealized Gains			\$ -
Total Investment Activity			\$ -
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$ (99,900.00)	\$ (353,760.00)	\$ 30.00

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 21, 2024
6:30 - 9:00 pm
First Universalist Church
[Cummins Room & Google Meet \(multiplatform\)](#)

Start	Duration	Topic	Lead
6:30 PM	5	Call to Order	Jeff
		Lighting the Chalice <i>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.</i>	All
6:35 PM	5	Agenda Approval. Approved	Jeff
6:40 PM	20	Executive Session Somatic Grounding Spiritual Community Building	Matt Jen/Arif
7:00 PM	5	Consent Agenda. Approved minus the Family Leave Provision- Approval of February meeting minutes - Approval of policy change to align family leave provisions for all staff (not just ministers) to be 3 months of paid leave. Jen will include notes on this in the senior minister report. This policy change was taken off of the Consent Agenda to clarify. It was clarified that the proposed Family Leave Provision will apply to all staff. Approved - Monitoring: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers & trends - Monitoring: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes - Monitoring: Congregant grievances - Monitoring: Staff & Volunteer grievances - Monitoring: Exit interviews	All
7:05 PM	30	Finance - Investment Status. No red flags. Performance slightly below market. About \$3M in the portfolio - 2023-24 Budget Status. Through the end of January a surplus of \$12,000. Annual giving is ahead by \$92,000. Personnel expenses still slightly below. Donations and fund raising is down somewhat. Year-end projection of -\$125,000. - 2024-25 Budget. - Updated Budget Priorities & Assumptions Policy overview from Marc. Discussion around having a minimum of 20% invested in socially responsible companies. Should 20% be higher? Historically, socially responsible companies perform somewhat less than other companies. Can we build in fossil-free investing? That could be hard. We could do an annual investment strategy review to help address our investment mix. Should the annual review be built into the policy? The finance committee would be monitored by the Board to review and direct investment strategies. Have our investment person review the impact of not having fossil fuel investing. The policy changes were approved with one abstention. See complete policy review in the Board packet.	Marc
7:35 PM	10	Stewardship - Pledge Drive Update. 132 Pledges for \$500,000. We have 268 sustained give	Emily/Will
7:45 PM	10	IDI - Small Group Check-ins. All groups shared their meetings.	All
7:55 PM	5	Break	All
8:00 PM	30	Governance - Discussion on possible approaches to reaching a common congregational understanding of governance. - What are reasonable YE goals for the Governance Committee? Discussion around the topic is less about governance rather looking at how the church has changed and continues to change and bring the congregation along with that. We need to stay more visible, transparent and active. Also discussed how the last Board did so much work in so many areas and was not recognized for it. It was noted that the last Board was perceived as combative and not effective when in reality so much was completed and accomplished. Institutional racism was highlighted as a driving force behind these perceptions. A very real dynamic for us to address at First U.	All
8:30 PM	10	Board Visibility - Feedback from Matt & Emily B. Will move this to April Board meeting.	Matt/Emily All

8:40 PM	15	Visionary Goals - What's next? - How do we live into our visionary goals as individuals & as a board? Will move to April Board meeting	Arif/All
8:55 PM	5	Gratitudes	All
9:00 PM		Adjourn	All

Roles, responsibilities, and resources for Board Members

JOB DESCRIPTION: First Universalist Board of Trustees

Church Bylaws

Governing Policies Handbook

2023-24 Monitoring Schedule

Statistical Report for March 2024

Board Meeting April 18, 2024

MEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICES: 0

MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT: 0

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL: 6

Bob Cargill

Susan Dempsey

Caroline Royce

Cameron Smither

Carrie Still

Shane Weinand

MEMBERS REINSTATED: 1

Jess Lyons

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL: 3

George Dow

Bonnie Hill

Nancy Heck

CHILDREN DEDICATED: 0

Total members as of the last meeting: 989

To be added: 7

To be removed: 3

TOTAL MEMBERS: 993

March Attendance

	2024					2023				
Adults	Sun. 9a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Webinar	YouTube Views	Totals	Sun. 9a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Webinar	YouTube Views	Totals
1st week	108	173	33	180	494	97	135	57	134	423
2nd week	151	174	35	159	484	66	110	61	141	317
3rd week	117	140	43	152	452	88	137	58	122	405
4th week	107	100	51	100	307	93	107	62	157	357
5th week	81	123	26	79	309					
Monthly Total	564	710	188	670	2046	344	489	238	554	1502
Average for March	113	142	38	134	409	86	122	60	139	376
RE					9 & 11 RE					9 & 11 RE
1st week					135					199
2nd week					138					192
3rd week					166					187
4th week					143					55
5th week					8					
Monthly Total					590					633
Average for March					118					158.25
Combined Average					527					534

YouTube views recorded April 8 at 3:30 p.m.

In February, about 40 congregants in the church were part of a small experiment with “text church” - small groups in which a leader shared a chalice lighting and reading every morning for the month of February. There were many successes as well as things that we would consider doing differently in the future.

Flowing from that experiment, we sent out a survey to folks in the congregation to get more information on their use of what we called “social messaging” tools in an effort to better understand how folks in the church use tools for messaging groups as part of your communication habits and practices. We deliberately did not include email because we already have a lot of information about how the congregation uses email via the communications surveys conducted earlier in the year by the team working to redesign the church website.

Below are the responses to our “social messaging” survey.

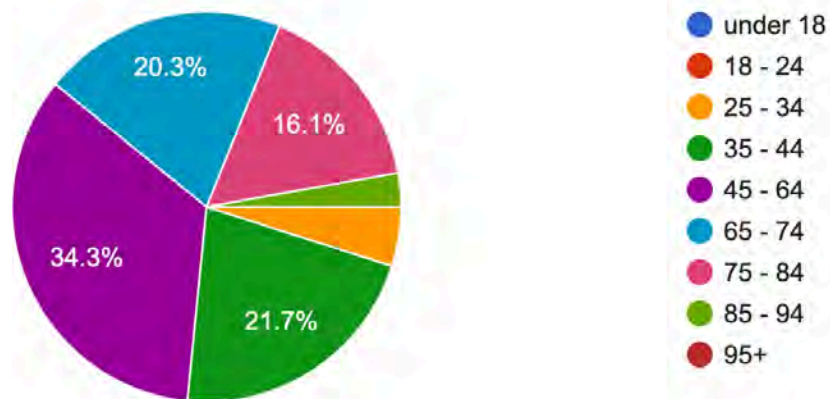
Please note that this should NOT be interpreted with anything approaching a “scientific” paradigm. The survey was intended to give us a snapshot of perspectives, feelings, and what folks are using, and we believe it did that quite well.

Of particular interest in the responses are the markedly different cultures represented both through patterns of use as well as narrative comments at the end. In “social messaging” tools, as in so many other things, we are an increasingly diverse church and this survey points us yet again at the importance of understanding this diversity and building ways to embody this as a feature of our strength, not a problem to be “solved.”

Survey results:

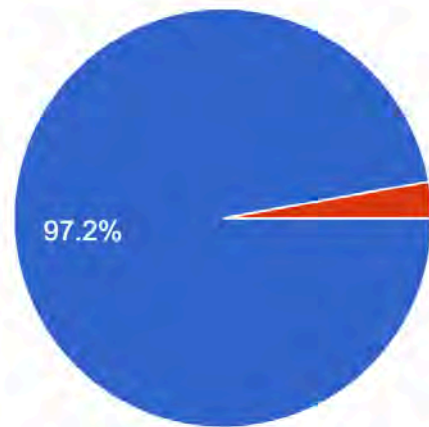
Which age group are you in:

143 responses



My phone is a "smart" phone:

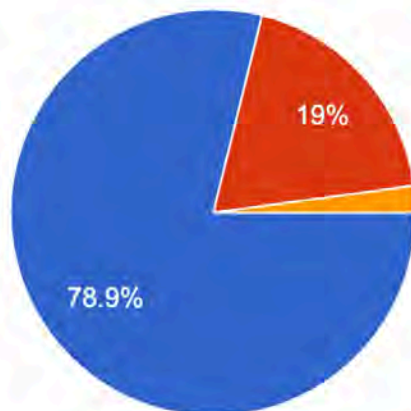
143 responses



- Yes
- No

My phone is:

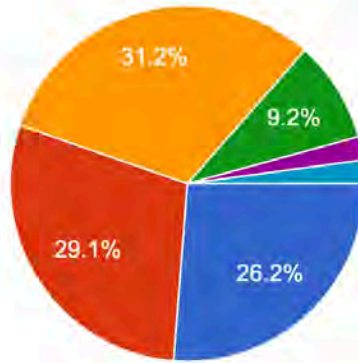
142 responses



- iPhone
- Android
- I'm not sure/something else

I send and receive text messages:

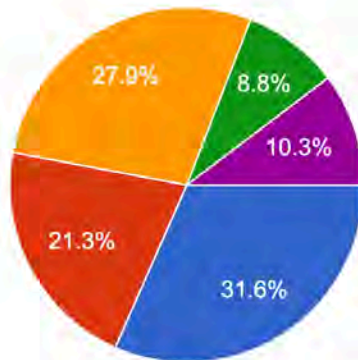
141 responses



- tbh, it's the main way I communicate with people
- I text a lot
- I text a few times a day
- I text a few times a week
- I text a few times a month
- I don't really text beyond what's necessary for banking and things like that

Group Chats?

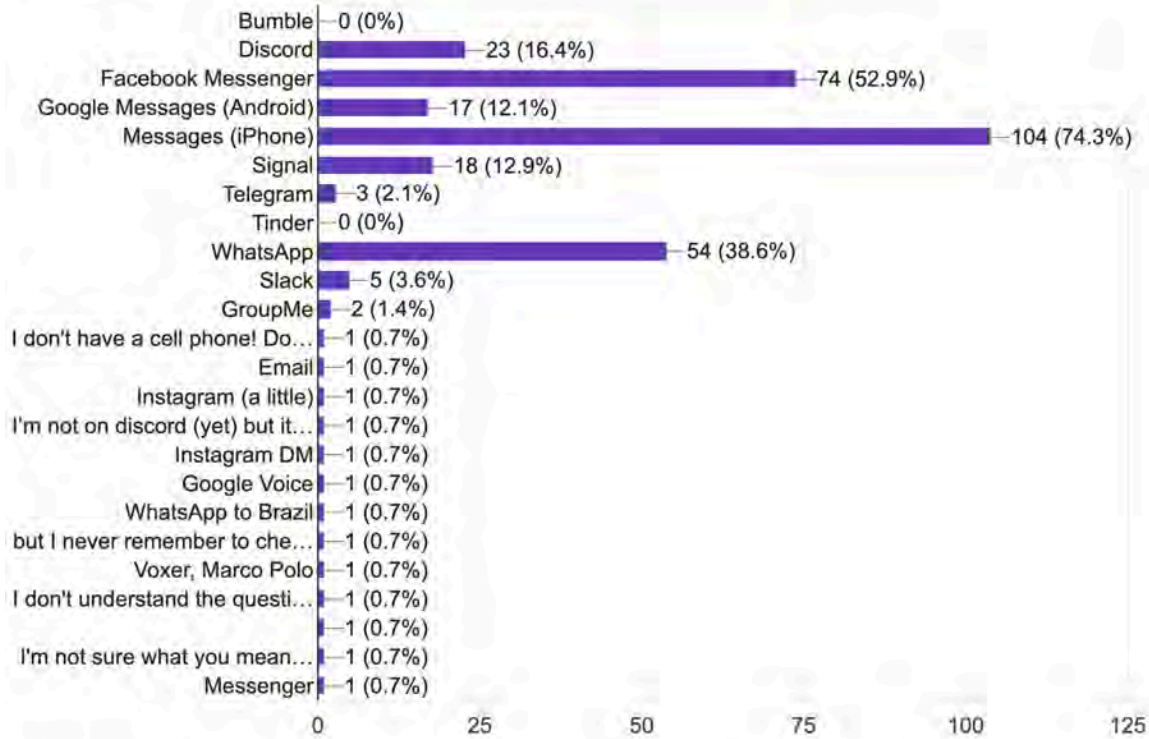
136 responses



- Love them! I have several going and they are a deep source of grounding and support for me. Snark too...
- I do group chats, but sometimes they get confusing for me
- I don't really group chat
- I don't really know what group chats are
- I really dislike group chats

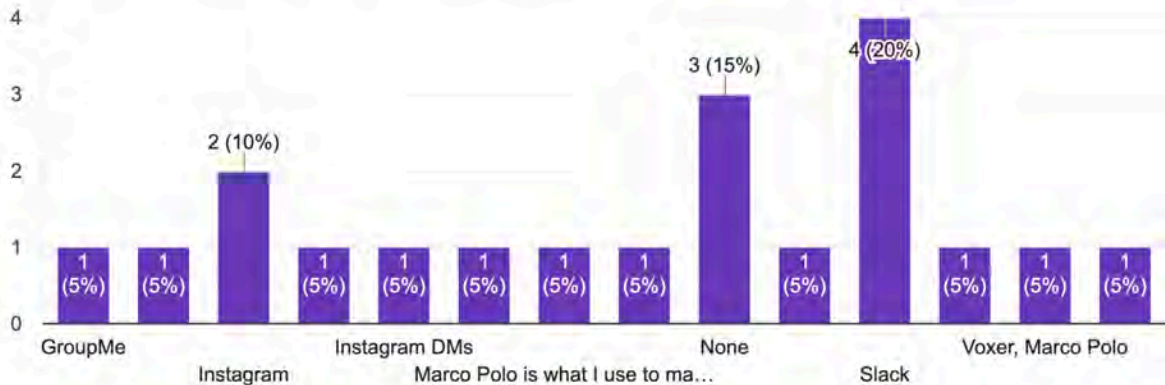
I use the following apps for messaging:

140 responses



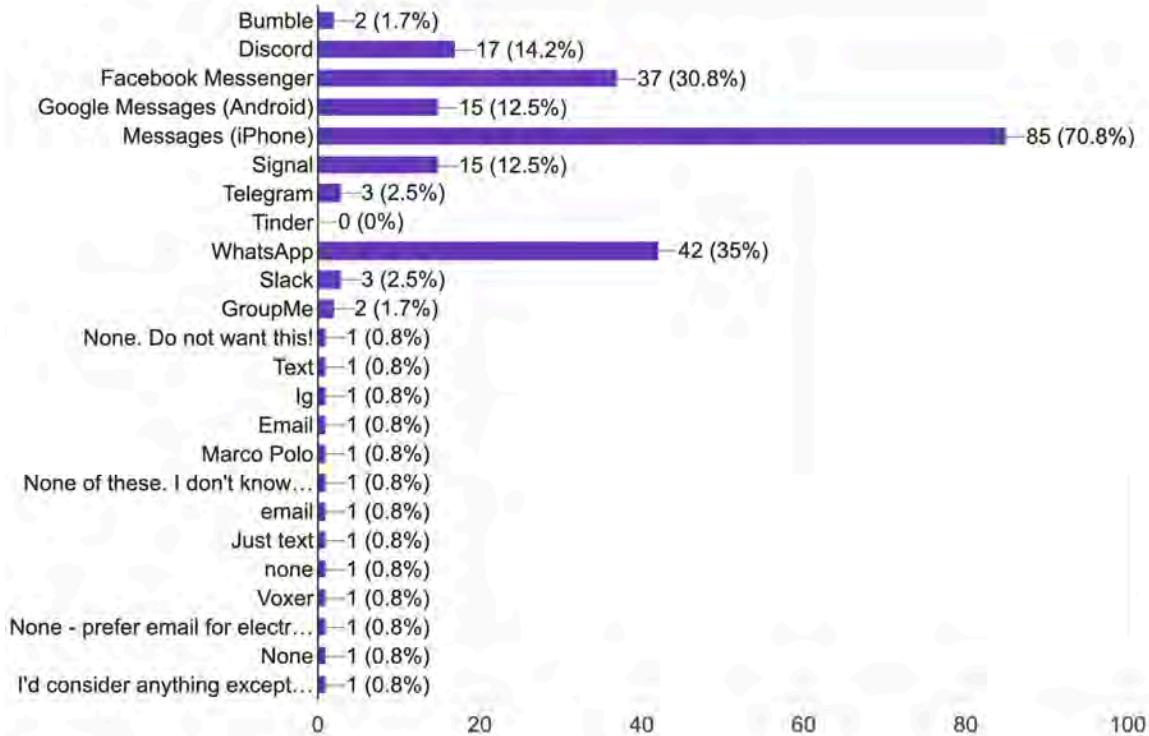
if other - which apps do you regularly use for messaging?

20 responses



I could imagine using the following apps for messaging related to church and folks in the congregation:

120 responses



Anything else you want us to know about your use of "social" messaging apps?

Short messages agreeable. Not long strings of text.

It's not that I get confused by group chats, it's that sometimes they're annoying.

I don't know what most of the things you mentioned are! I think email is fine.

I am relatively disinterested in being on the phone any more than I already am. 🙏

Like instagram messages and comments. Used to use Twitter DMs till Twitter became a cesspool. Will likely use Bluesky DMs when they add that feature. Would be happy to have church in my messages.

I prefer not to use any direct messaging for church. I prefer in person for any spiritual community. With all of the research demonstrating the mental health benefits of in person community, I hope digital does not ever replace resources dedicated to building in person church related activities. For example, I would rather see the music program of the church built up again with any resources available, or building up the capacity of the ministerial team, small groups, activities for children....

I'm not on any social media

If there is a video component, I appreciate captions, as sometimes I want to watch but not disturb others around me.

I would only want to receive texts if something is time urgent, if something I signed up for is happening today.

Oh, my goodness, this feels so alien to me!

I get more and more junk in my message apps. If it is a purposeful group for messaging I pay attention, otherwise promotions, political messages, etc. I delete without reading. I've used WhatsApp, but don't currently use it. The group I was in messaged constantly, so I turned off notifications and don't visit it often enough to check the box that I use it. I don't mind it, but it becomes a lot to keep up with.

I find that communication on these apps can be unproductive and get out of control so I avoid them

I don't log in to Facebook often enough for that to be a good option.

My current information exchange with the church seems adequate. I read the Liberal and pay attention to church email. That's enough for me. I use my other apps for family and friends and don't really want the church in that sphere.

My communication with church is adequate to my needs. I have plenty of support.

I don't do FB or snap or tiktok or Twitter or mastodon or any of those.

Not interested.

Text for alerts only: Daylight Savings Times begins, heads up road closings due to TC Marathon, switching to summer hours one service at 10AM.

I like website and email general church info. Wouldn't want church news via text messages.

Basically, I avoid it when I can. It doesn't add to quality of life. Nor promote joy, IMHO

I'm not a big texter and would prefer not to get church info that way.

Its probably my age, but I have never used social media -- except a couple of times with What's App when traveling internationally

I really only use for coordinating schedules and appointments

I dislike texting and prefer not to have church social media contacting me.

I'm overwhelmed by all that comes at me through email and text. I delete most of it simply because it's too much.

I don't want to support big money apps that do not monitor content or hate speech

I'm not sure I want any of the apps that interrupt me for church news. I prefer ones that I have to go look at.

Discord isn't something to be afraid of—private servers are in fact awesome! Probably the best for this sort of thing. I try to stay off Facebook these days.

Not much of a social apps user

I have a discord, but rarely check it.

I don't want to use anything that involves Facebook

The signal-to-noise ratio and timing is really important. Texts let me stay connected to friends, family, and school; especially with brief or time-sensitive information. Which is to say, their primary characteristic is disruption: less so than a phone call, and often welcome when well-timed. They can be distracting during a meeting or when I am driving, so it's hard for me to imagine them having a spiritually positive effect for me.

Not a big fan of giant social media companies

Unmoderated group messaging spaces of large size (dozens of people+) are typically disastrous and I wouldn't imagine our church would be any different.

This was amusing, hence I included telegram as a choice. Figured someone else was also having fun with this. Email and the Liberal are fine for me , though I text as needed with the Ministers and staff. If essential I would consider one additional communication method.

The question "Group Chats?" is a bit challenging to answer using the options provided. I'd say I generally appreciate the connections that can be made via group chats. But I wouldn't say I love them. Maybe that's what was meant by "snark too" ? They can be both a forum for connection but also frustration and intrusion...much the same as most apps. Our devices constantly divert our attention and to me that can become toxic to our wellbeing. Proceed with caution if you plan to enter this space. It's hard to harness it in a meaningful way that moves past the unhealthy relationships we seem to have with our devices.

I'm on Facebook throughout the day, so I see FB messages pretty quickly. However, I also belong to both the official and the unofficial First U Facebook groups, and neither of them ever appear in my feed. Never! I have to go searching for them, which I seldom do. So it would be far better for you to push important info at me via FB messaging than assume that I'll see a regular post. Straightforward text messaging through my iPhone app is actually the best for me—most readable and easiest to respond to—but group messages often display only phone numbers if the people aren't in my Contacts list, which gets very confusing.

I do read text messages every day but do not read Facebook every day.

There must be useful reason for the communication. Without it, there is no point.

I selected that I dislike group chats- but only because there wasn't an answer like "I use them and I don't love them". They aren't confusing, but it's annoying when people reply late at night or your phone blows up when other people are having a group back and forth when you're working, etc.

I often find social messaging apps distracting, but helpful if sharing time sensitive information. Helpful to have opt in features that are easy to navigate and update.

I don't really use apps.

I use messaging with friends and family and confirming appts but really dislike most other uses

Regarding group chats. While there is value in them, they tend to get overstimulating and overwhelming. It makes my skin crawl when I get pinged 20 times in a matter of minutes because of a discussion in the group chat. Might be my neurospicy brain.

I would like to install the new Church app, if it is available. I had trouble using the on screen "whatever you call it" for giving on Sundays. It came up, but wouldn't accept the gift. Probably I just didn't do it correctly. I was used to the old apps. Also, I was never able to put correct contact information. I miss the directory.

No

i lose my phone often

I mostly text or group chat with family. Honestly, not sure I love the idea of church chatting or other social media related to church. Feels more like secular clutter and not what I value about church (deeper, preferably in-person connection and community).

I am 83 and recently out of the hospital so my brain doesn't process this question!

I text somewhere between "a few times a day" and "a lot." Not on Facebook, almost nothing Google-related seems easy to use, I'm fine with Group chats(not confused by them) but don't "Love them!" I'm concerned that unwanted texts are fast becoming as annoying as unwanted phone calls and e-mails.

I intentionally do not use social media and it would not be a way for me to connect to others.

For multiple reasons, I intentionally quit using Facebook a few years ago and would not want to use Facebook Messenger as a source of church connections

The email you sent me about this sure did appear to be spam, so I ignored it.

They have become an essential way to communicate with family and close friends. I don't want to expand my use of messaging.

I'm a reluctant user to an extent... but know it's kind of required in this day and age. E-mail is preferred but the explosion of junk there is more than I'd like to deal with. Not sure I'd like another torrent of communications to deal with.

I'm not a huge fan of communicating with people via texting or message apps because they seem to come with an urgency that email does not. I am very selective as to who I allow to have that type of access to me and my time (e.g. family, close friends, neighbors). I suggest that for those folks who do want to communicate this way, you have a convo about social norms/expectations, expected response time if any etc.

I try to avoid to do a high volume/frequency of social media/texting on a daily basis. I feel it fragments my presence/attentiveness so I try to relegate it to certain times when I can focus on it.

I generally try to not be on my phone too much, and therefore don't use a lot of apps for communication

I really liked the daily texting group experiment!

I *only* do group chats via WhatsApp and one family chat on messenger. I far prefer WhatsApp because I have more control over when I engage in the group. WhatsApp also offers a "community" feature which is a bit different from a group chat and has a lot more features around engagement. I can see engaging in regular connection through WhatsApp, reflection or practice groups. It would be a more authentic way for me to connect, facilitating more connection as I am rarely able to carve out 1 hour of synchronous time to be on a group call -- and also that kind of communication/community is exhausting.

<p>I like the current system of emailing the weekly Liberal. I don't need any other kinds of messaging. Thank you</p>
<p>I don't generally use them. Email or phone is best. I don't like to feel like I have to be always "on call". I don't know how to text and don't care.</p>
<p>I recommend something that people can leave whenever they want. Though I otherwise like MMS (text message) groups for their generalizability, one's inability to easily quit such a group when desired is a down-side.</p>
<p>To answer the question about group text chats, I use them but mostly for scheduling in person events. Once in a while my friends and I share something like a book or TV show.</p>
<p>I like that with slack there can be a general announcements channel and then individual committee channels. My choir uses this for communication and it's very effective.</p>
<p>I never use social media other than e-mail and texting and do not intend to use them in the future.</p>
<p>I enjoyed being a part of this group and would be glad to connect further providing my experience</p>
<p>Actively dislike and don't use Facebook messaging</p>