

First Universalist Church Board of Trustees
April 20, 2023
Board Packet

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First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 20, 2023; 6:30-9:00
First Universalist Church
Cummins Room & [Zoom](#) (*multiplatform*)

I. Welcome (6:30-6:35)

- a. Call to Order and Agenda Approval
- b. 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.*

II. Executive Session (6:35 ~ 7:00)

- a. Somatic Practice - Grounding
- b. Spiritual Community Building - Rev. Arif

III. Consent Agenda

- a. *Approval* of March meeting minutes
- b. *Monitoring*: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers and trends
- c. *Monitoring*: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes
- d. *Monitoring*: Protection of Assets

IV. Change Team Updates (7:00 ~ 7:10)

- a. Updates from Last Meeting

V. Commitment To Beloved Community (Formerly Covenant Development Team) (7:10 ~ 7:20)

- a. Updates from Last Meeting

VI. Visionary Goals Process (7:20 ~ 7:40)

- a. Updates on Process and Next Steps
- b. May Board Retreat Date

BREAK - 10 mins

V. Fiduciary Responsibilities (7:50 ~ 8:55)

- a. Monthly Financial Review
- b. Fundraising Updates
- c. Draft Operating Budget 23-24 Church Year
- d. 3 Year Financial Plan
- e. Set Congregational Budget Meeting Dates

VII. Gratitudes (8:55-9:00)

VIII. Adjourn - 9:00

Senior Minister Report
Prepared by Rev. Jen Crow
April 18, 2023

Information Items

While the source of the blessing/curse - “May you live in interesting times.” - may be disputed, the experience of it is no doubt unfolding in our lives and here at church. For years, church consultants and cultural observers have been warning that church as it has been for generations is dying, and a new way of connecting and supporting each other spiritually must emerge. Then the Covid-19 pandemic forced change upon us and the racial justice reckonings of 2020 and beyond have demanded that we build more inclusive, equitable, and accessible experiences and communities. Many faith communities around the country are closing their doors (and their websites), and all faith communities are wrestling with the question of what it means to be a congregation now. As we create the roadmap for using our shared resources in the fiscal year ahead, I am paying close attention to what is alive here at First Universalist, as well as the larger congregational trends in America and Unitarian Universalism. Here are a few of the highlights:

Overall church trends 2023, summarized from [Future Church: 8 Church Trends to Watch in 2023 - CareyNieuwhof.com](https://www.careynieuwhof.com/future-church-8-church-trends-to-watch-in-2023)

- In person attendance is lower than pre-pandemic
- Multiplatform ministry is still necessary
- Focusing on relationships is critically important
- Congregational giving is bouncing back, but still decreased
- Many congregations are moving to part-time clergy and more lay leadership
- Gen Z and Millennials returned to church in greater numbers than Boomers post pandemic. Gen Z and Millennials are feeling more connected because they use multiplatform options regularly while Boomers tend to come in person only more than younger folks.
- The younger you are, the more you move between in person and online worlds seamlessly as one world - demand for online experiences is high - robust online presence drives desire for in person presence.

Within Unitarian Universalism

- Many congregations are experiencing an increase in visitors on-line and in-person
- Participation in religious education programming for children and youth has declined precipitously since 2020
- Institutional dis-ease is endemic - most congregations have or are experiencing times of significant conflict - and so is our larger association
- 2022-24 have been/will be challenging financial years for our congregations. Many congregations are anticipating passing deficit budgets for the year ahead and/or are making significant reductions in staff. Pandemic government support has ended. Membership and giving have not fully rebounded. Generational wealth is in flux.

First Universalist

- We continue to offer a vibrant, responsive, and deeply valued program of religious education for children and youth that is experienced as a whole congregation embodiment of our shared vision. Our religious education program for children and youth is the largest in the UUA.
- We are the 5th largest UU congregation in the US.
- Church membership has remained stable
- Overall attendance at Sunday services has decreased since 2020, and averages roughly 350 people/devices in attendance each week.
- Attendance at Community Dinners, social opportunities like the recent Barn Dance, small groups, and identity-based groups is strong.
- Congregants have responded generously to invitations to help bridge the gap financially as we reset with new visionary goals and organizational structures to meet this emerging moment.
- We anticipate ending the current fiscal year with a \$100,000 deficit, decreased from an anticipated \$200,000 deficit in December.

Thank you to our whole community and especially to our Music Ministries Listening Team: Ann Kay, Shelley Des Islets, Shelley Thron, Lou Quast, and Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout for their shared work in listening and reflecting back the hopes and dreams, longings and losses, as they relate to our music ministries. Their report can be found in this Board Packet. We are grateful for all of the care and work that went into gathering and compiling this reflection, and we look forward to the next moves that will emerge later this fall.

Monitoring Items

Staff & Volunteer Changes: We welcomed Olu Famule as our new Sunday morning livestreaming technician this winter. He has completed his initial training and is now supporting our Sunday services. There are no other staff or volunteer changes.

Protection of Assets: The church has all relevant insurance policies in place and paid to date. Coverage includes: Crime Coverage, General Liability, Practices Liability, Protection Liability, Commercial Property Coverage, Terrorism (certified acts to general liability and property).

Financial Review - February 2023

As of February 2023, expenses exceeded revenue by \$135,634.31. An improvement of \$9,681.30 in comparison to the end of last month. There are encouraging signs within Revenues despite showing negative variability across all revenue categories. Annual Giving negative variability reduced by \$41,212.78 as we doubled our overall Annual Giving donations this fiscal period compared to last year, and Offering Plate Donations are forecasted to meet if not exceed its annual budget. Hopefully this surge in generosity continues through our current Annual Giving drive and into next year. Expenses continue to track as expected with a few exceptions in our utilities, software, child care and other expense categories. After two

consecutive months of lessening the deficit, the hope and expectation is that our deficit will continue to shrink as we navigate the Annual Giving drive.

Fiduciary Responsibilities

Fundraising Updates, 2023-24 Draft Operating Budget, and 3-year Financial Plan will be shared at the Board Meeting

Congregational Budget Meeting Date: Thursday, May 4th at 7pm multiplatform

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 16, 2023; 6:30-9:00
First Universalist Church
209 & [Zoom](#) (*multiplatform*)

I. Welcome (6:30-6:35)

- a. Call to Order and Agenda Approval
- b. 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.*

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- d. *Monitoring*: Treatment of Staff

Motion to approve the consent agenda (Rebecca) Ben seconded it. All approved

IV. Change Team Updates (7:00 ~ 7:10)

- a. Updates from Last Meeting

No Change Team Updates as they hadn't met since the last Board meeting

Have spent time on the Visionary Goals process

V. Visionary Goals Process (7:10 ~ 7:40)

- a. Congregational Engagement Timeline - Updates

2 Additional sessions have been added and maybe 1 more session for families

Still trying to add more sessions to make sure we have 250 participants. 80 or 90 remaining

- b. Updates on Scripts and Visionary Goal Process - Increase Accessibility

Review Rebecca's additions on accessibility. Excellent changes. We can improve even more.

Make it more of a habit for all of our materials etc.

- c. Feedback on the Observer Role/Process

- i. What has been going well?

Getting to know the congregants. Hearing ideas and feeling the energy.

Nice to only observe and not be responsible

Seeing the Board member was good

- ii. What has been challenging?

Challenging to react or sit with the art project issue. Wanting to engage

Let the facilitators know they are supported

Some congregants have had concern around the questions in the process. Especially around the word "marginalized"

- iii. What are possible comments we should have unified responses to?

- d. April Board Retreat Date

Friday night and all day Saturday. Or, 4 sessions over different days

Laura would present a draft to help us move towards visionary goals. All in one "fell swoop"

Leaning towards May as there may be a better schedule for the collective group.

VI. Commitment To Beloved Community (Formerly Covenant Development Team) (7:40 ~ 7:50)

- a. Updates from Last Meeting

Survey now going out. Gathering trends

Discussed having the info presented to the board and then come up with a covenant/commitments when it makes sense

What could be presented at the Annual Meeting

BREAK - 5 mins

V. Fiduciary Responsibilities (7:55 ~ 8:45)

- a. Draft Operating Budget 23-24 Church Year

(From Jen)

As we begin to prepare our annual budget for 2023-24, I suggest the following assumptions as points of discussion and possible mutual agreement.

- We will present a balanced budget, with a realistic income # based on past performance and enhanced fundraising efforts
- Development of a capital pledging/reserve development process that will pay for the costs of debt service on the building, repairs, improvements, and capital acquisitions
- Adjust salary ranges to match new UUA Salary Recommendations and process
- Bring staff salaries below UUA salary recommendations up to minimum recommendations within 2 years
- Pool of 3% for salary increases for staff already within salary recommendations
- Meet annual health insurance cost increase
- 5% Increase to UUA annual fund
- Increase in utilities, supplies, office & building expenses to meet the need of a more open building - recognizing savings for solar and watershed reductions
- Consulting funds to support Hope for Us consulting from the UUA
<https://www.uua.org/offices/staff/congregational-life/hope-for-us>
- Consulting funds to support resources for multi-racial, multicultural, intergenerational worship, community building, and faith development

Need to schedule the congregational budget meetings (2 of them with some board members present)

- b. 3 Year Financial Plan
- c. Investment Policy Updates (Rebecca)
- d. Fundraising Updates

Annual Giving campaign launched on March 12. Will run for 4 weeks.

Week of March 20, person to person meetings will start. Aiming to have 100-150 conversations building towards 250 to 300 conversations every year. About 30% of the congregation every year. About 15 people have said yes to do the calling (members of the congregation).

VI. Nominating Committee (8:45 ~ 8:55)

- a. Request Board Liaison

Looking for someone on the Board to connect with the nominating committee. Asked if anyone is interested. Jeff Snyder has volunteered. Jeff will update us at the April board meeting.

- b. Future Thinking: In regards to term fulfillment, are the bylaws about terms adaptive enough to meet the reality of people's lives?

Finding that in the last few years, board members are leaving before the end of their 3-year terms. Making sure we set expectations with future candidates. Can we be more explicit if what is happening that the work of the Board can be more than expected.

Could someone start a draft of what we believe is the full extent of a board member's responsibility to share with the board.

VII. **Gratitudes (8:55-9:00)**

VIII. **Adjourn - 9:00**

March Attendance

	2023					2022					
Adults	Sun. 9a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Webinar	YouTube Views	Totals	Wed. 7p	Sun. 9a	Sun. 11a	Sun. 11a Webinar	YouTube	Total
1st week	97	135	57	134	423	28	79	92	130	167	496
2nd week	66	110	61	141	317	18	101	216	95	145	575
3rd week	88	137	58	122	405	24	90	111	96	106	427
4th week	93	107	62	157	357	29	71	152	74	134	460
5th week						21					
Monthly Total	344	489	238	554	1502	120	341	571	395	552	1958
Average for March	86	122	60	139	376	24	85	143	99	138	490
RE					9 & 11 RE						
1st week					147						
2nd week					159						
3rd week					147						
4th week					55						
5th week											
Monthly Total					508						
Average for March					127						
Combined Average					503						

2023 YouTube views recorded April 5, 2023 at 12 p.m.

Statistical Report for March 2023

Board Meeting April 20, 2023

MEMORIAL SERVICES: 0

MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT: 0

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL: 8

Marilea Browne

Sonya Ewert

Kim Doyle

Bekah Padilla

Stephanie Paquin

Steve Paquin

Tassi Bisers

Julia Eagles

MEMBERS REINSTATED: 0

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL: 2

Rev. Sara Smalley

Blue Lonergan

CHILDREN DEDICATED: 0

Total members as of the last meeting: 1053

To be added: 8

To be removed: 2

TOTAL MEMBERS: 1059

End of Year Totals

Fiscal Year	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
New Members Joined	15	18	21	81	66
Total Membership	1060	1058	1061	1058	1049

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Balance Sheet

	Actual As of <u>02/28/2023</u>
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$72,161.35
Investments	\$3,538,438.59
Accounts Receivable	\$8,225.80
Other Current Assets	\$43,289.69
Total Current Assets	<u>\$3,662,115.43</u>
Non-Current Assets	
Fixed Assets	\$5,520,757.47
Total Non- Current Assets	<u>\$5,520,757.47</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$9,182,872.90</u></u>
 Liabilities and Fund Balance	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$83,938.70
Benefits Payable	\$44,563.78
Other Current Liabilities	\$17,846.94
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$146,349.42</u>
Long Term Liabilities	
Loan Payable	\$1,606,994.59
Interfund Transfer	\$0.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>\$1,606,994.59</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$1,753,344.01</u>
 Fund Balance	
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$5,744,554.82
Donor Restricted Net Assets	\$1,684,974.07
Total Fund Balance	<u>\$7,429,528.89</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	<u><u>\$9,182,872.90</u></u>

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - Capital Campaign
February 2023

	Project to Date Actual	Total Budget	Project to Date Variance
Revenues			
Revenues			
Donations	\$ 4,870,511.24	\$ 5,158,077.07	\$ (287,565.83)
Construction Loan	\$ 1,606,994.59	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ (393,005.41)
Total Revenues	\$ 6,477,505.83	\$ 7,158,077.07	\$ (680,571.24)
Expenses			
Initial Launch/Fundraising			
Architectural Pre-Work	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
Consultants	\$ 229,030.00	\$ 230,000.00	\$ 970.00
Launch Event	\$ 52,689.09	\$ 30,000.00	\$ (22,689.09)
Printing/Supplies	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ -
Total Initial Launch/Fundraising Expenses	\$ 291,719.09	\$ 295,000.00	\$ 3,280.91
Miscellaneous Projects			
Architect Fee	\$ 166,795.87	\$ 166,795.87	\$ -
Debt Retirement	\$ 649,151.38	\$ 649,151.38	\$ -
Merchant Services	\$ 4,108.96	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 891.04
Misc. Capital Expenditures	\$ 104,839.17	\$ 79,555.75	\$ (25,283.42)
Staff Salaries	\$ 54,100.43	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 40,899.57
Tuckpointing	\$ 122,000.00	\$ 122,000.00	\$ -
Loan Principal	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 2,000,000.00
Loan Interest	\$ 54,268.16	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 65,731.84
Contingency	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Miscellaneous Projects Expenses	\$ 1,155,263.97	\$ 3,237,503.00	\$ 2,082,239.03
Phase 1			
Architect Fee	\$ 134,872.70	\$ 134,372.00	\$ (500.70)
Flannery	\$ 1,459,726.11	\$ 1,521,669.00	\$ 61,942.89
Flannery Permits	\$ 19,614.13	\$ 19,614.00	\$ (0.13)
Misc. Consultants	\$ 44,012.00	\$ 14,381.00	\$ (29,631.00)
Misc. Construction	\$ 11,628.50	\$ 53,559.00	\$ 41,930.50
Owners Representative	\$ 87,654.10	\$ 87,654.00	\$ (0.10)
Owner Supplied Systems	\$ 151,936.45	\$ 97,248.00	\$ (54,688.45)
Total Phase 1 Project Expenses	\$ 1,909,443.99	\$ 1,928,497.00	\$ 19,053.01
Phase 2			
Architect Fee	\$ 134,775.04	\$ -	\$ (134,775.04)
Flannery	\$ 1,688,869.37	\$ 1,750,000.00	\$ 61,130.63
Flannery Permits	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Misc. Construction	\$ 55,871.45	\$ -	\$ (55,871.45)
Misc. Consultants	\$ 43,938.75	\$ 265,000.00	\$ 221,061.25
Owner Representative	\$ 94,630.00	\$ -	\$ (94,630.00)
Owner Supplied Systems	\$ 277,549.80	\$ 140,000.00	\$ (137,549.80)
Solar Panels	\$ 44,500.00	\$ 105,000.00	\$ 60,500.00
Contingency	\$ -	\$ 240,000.00	\$ 240,000.00
Total Phase 2 Project Expenses	\$ 2,340,134.41	\$ 2,500,000.00	\$ 159,865.59
Total Expenses	\$ 5,696,561.46	\$ 7,961,000.00	\$ 2,264,438.54
Net Total	\$ 780,944.37	\$ (802,922.93)	

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

	Actual 07/01/2022 to 02/28/2023	Budget 07/01/2022 to 02/28/2023	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2022 to 06/30/2023
Revenues				
Support				
Annual Giving	\$778,081.99	\$871,380.00	(\$93,298.01)	\$1,282,500.00
Donations/Fundraising	\$120,523.23	\$160,821.92	(\$40,298.69)	\$230,800.00
Total Support	\$898,605.22	\$1,032,201.92	(\$133,596.70)	\$1,513,300.00
Earned Revenue				
Service/Rental Income	\$55,839.06	\$77,999.92	(\$22,160.86)	\$117,000.00
Other Income	\$4,173.17	\$7,666.64	(\$3,493.47)	\$11,500.00
Total Earned Revenue	\$60,012.23	\$85,666.56	(\$25,654.33)	\$128,500.00
Total Revenues	\$958,617.45	\$1,117,868.48	(\$159,251.03)	\$1,641,800.00
Expenses				
Personnel Expenses	\$834,186.06	\$849,819.43	\$15,633.37	\$1,274,730.00
Administrative Expenses	\$84,613.12	\$85,864.24	\$1,251.12	\$128,696.77
Program Expenses	\$34,529.73	\$55,499.76	\$20,970.03	\$82,500.00
Building & Grounds	\$80,636.20	\$87,407.90	\$6,771.70	\$123,350.00
Other Expenses	\$68,301.12	\$5,000.00	(\$63,301.12)	\$7,500.00
Total Expenses	\$1,102,266.23	\$1,083,591.33	(\$18,674.90)	\$1,616,776.77
Investment Activity				
Unrealized Losses	(\$906.67)	(\$17,666.68)	\$16,760.01	(\$26,500.00)
Dividends & Interest	\$1,205.57	\$1,666.64	(\$461.07)	\$2,500.00
Realized Gains	(\$291.46)	\$0.00	(\$291.46)	\$0.00
Unrealized Gains	\$8,007.03	\$0.00	\$8,007.03	\$0.00
Total Investment Activity	\$8,014.47	(\$16,000.04)	\$24,014.51	(\$24,000.00)

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

	Actual 07/01/2022 to 02/28/2023	Budget 07/01/2022 to 02/28/2023	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2022 to 06/30/2023
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(\$135,634.31)	\$18,277.11	(\$153,911.42)	\$1,023.23



The Future of Music at First Universalist

Listening Session-Survey Summary, April 2023
First Universalist Church Of Minneapolis

THANK YOU, DEAR COMMUNITY. You invested in First Universalist’s music ministries with your insight and your voice. You were candid, expressive, reflective, and earnest. You welcomed the newest among us into dear memories and beautiful stories. And together, we journeyed with possibility and emerged with hope refreshed. In total, 130 of you (about 13% of our congregation) showed up in-person and online, through surveys and snowstorms to dream about our music ministries’ future.

The organizing team for our listening sessions worked to treat all that you shared with respect and grace. We consciously made time for deeper, honest conversations in the planning process. We made space to go further than our first impressions. We approached this process with intention and moved at the speed of consensus.

The resulting document captures the imaginings of the community. It represents some of the dreams for our music ministries as they are. For some of you, this was a chance to lift up musical experiences here that we loved and imagine their return. Many of you imagined all kinds of possibilities our community’s never seen!

Our conversation about First Universalist’s music ministries is a shared and ongoing one. Your collected insights will be one of the key documents to inform our music leadership—along with the church’s Visionary Goals, the principles of our faith, and our music leaders’ ongoing discernment.



The reflections represented here will help to shape our community’s vision for vibrant music ministries as the next chapter unfolds. Still, only your participation, your willingness to be a part of what we build will bring any of this to life. Music ministry at its heart is people-powered!

We offer this reflection back to you, now: we asked you to imagine, and this is what you told us. Journey with care through this work of yours. You’ll hear our hearts, our history, and our hope calling in the data. They are asking us how we plan to help the community we love realize its life-giving dreams.

Peace,

Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout, Director of Worship Arts Ministries

and the Listening Session-Survey organizing team,

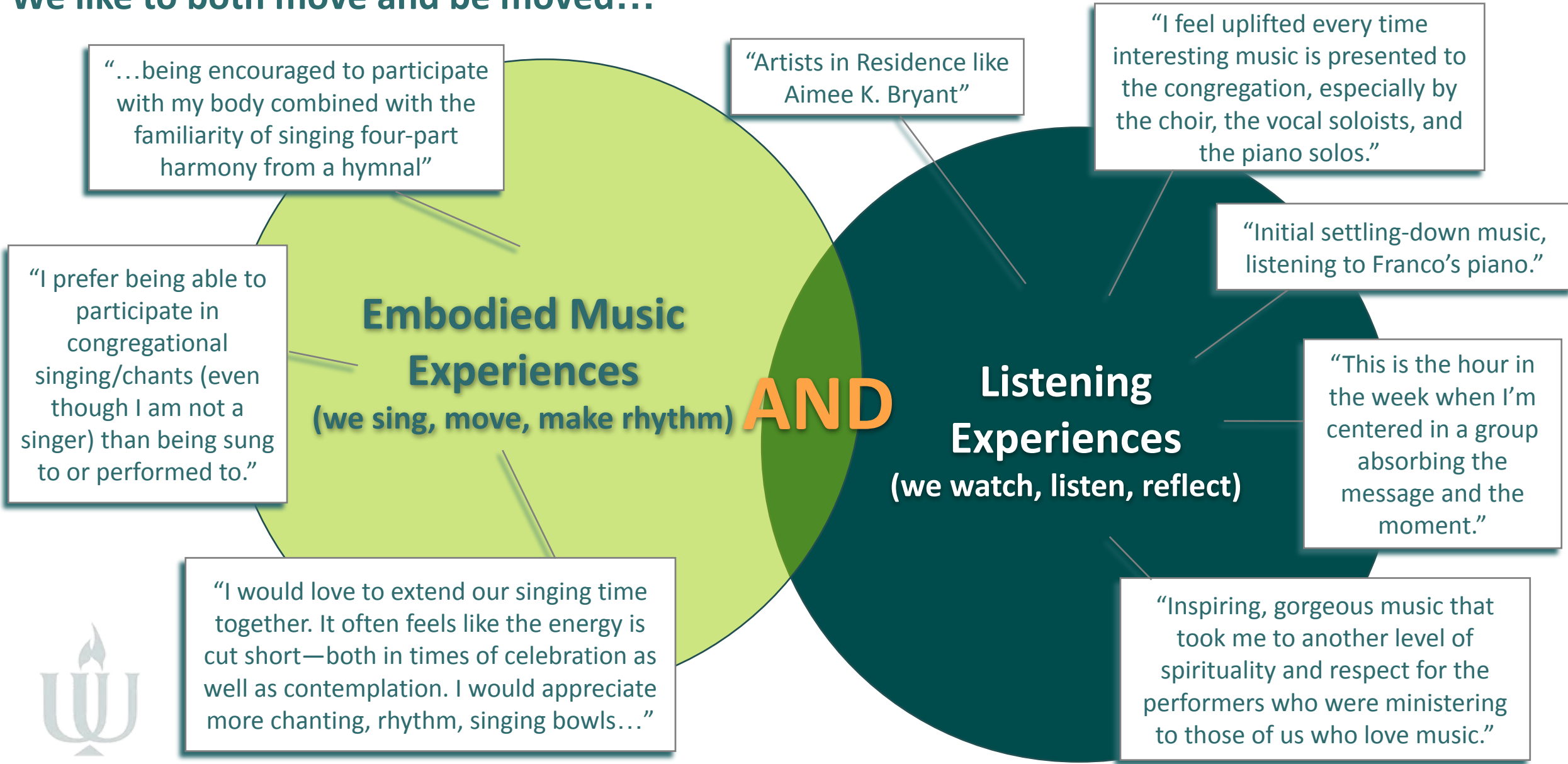
Shelley des Islets

Ann Kay

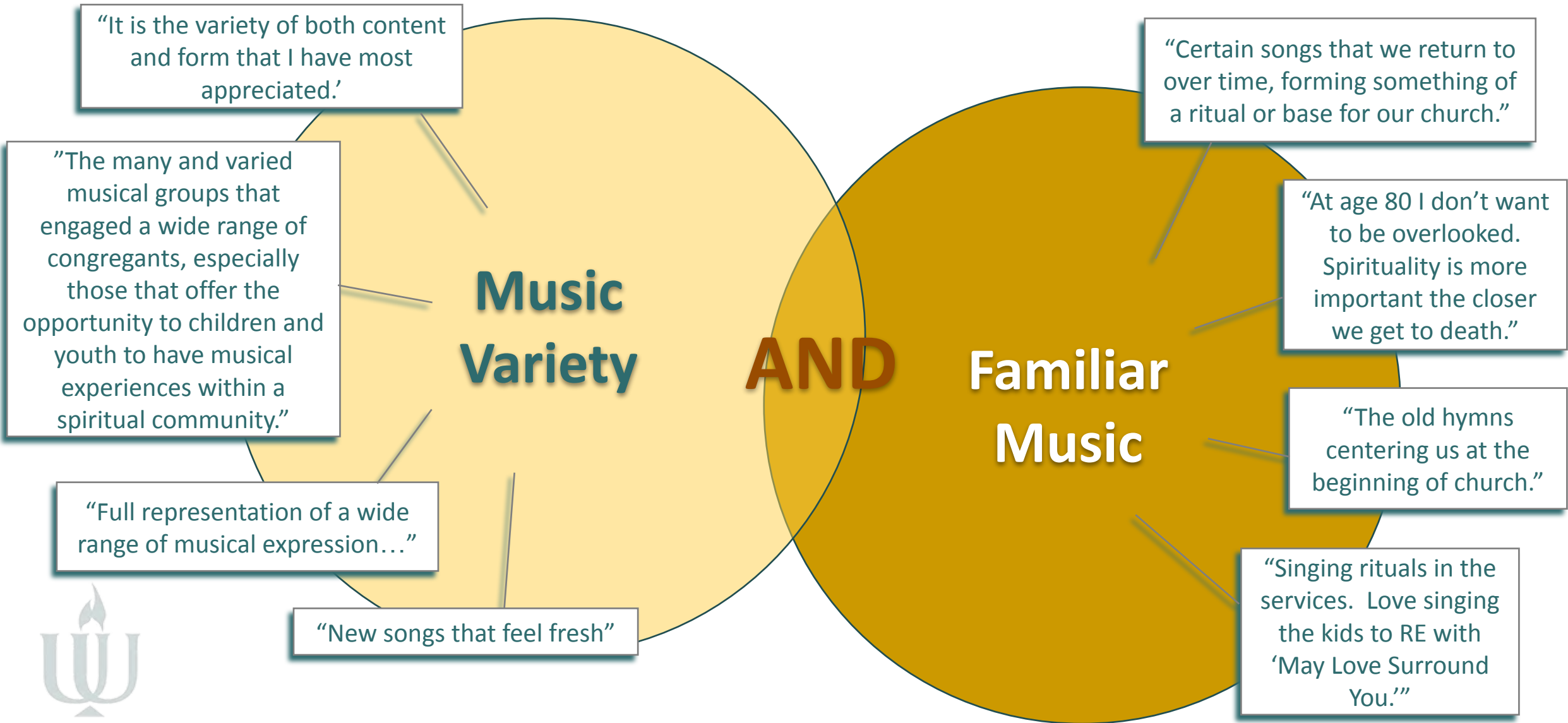
Shelley Thron

Lou Quast

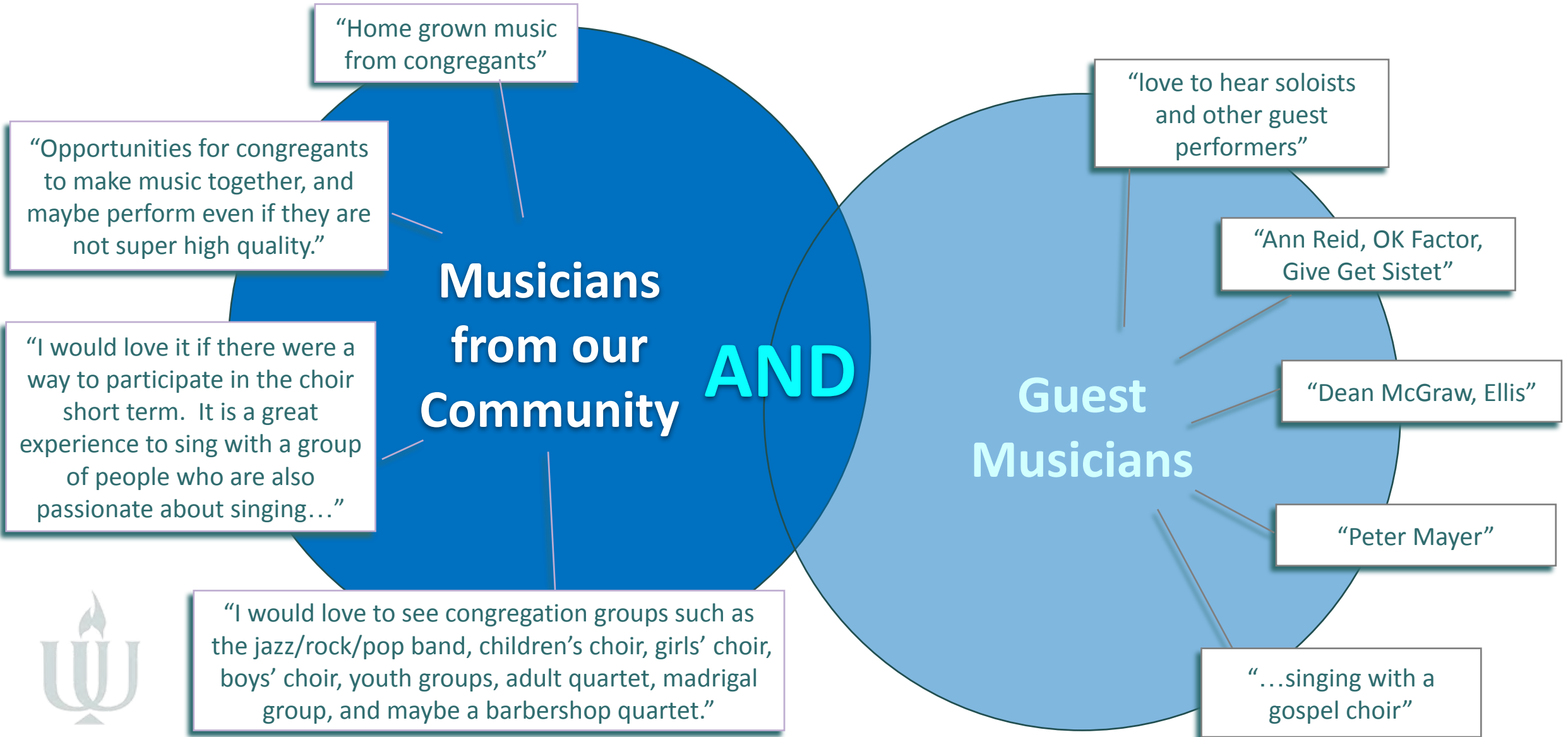
We like to both move and be moved...



We like a variety of music experiences and enjoy the familiar...



We want to see and hear musicians from within and beyond our church community...



We appreciate special services, integrated experiences, and cultural diversity.

“Sunday evening services of meditation, poetry, and music.”



“The Solstice service with puppets, music, singing, silence, and drumming.”

“[I appreciate] having a unifying theme to the worship services with the music and readings and rituals”



“When it felt like the choir, visual arts, and other music were integrated”

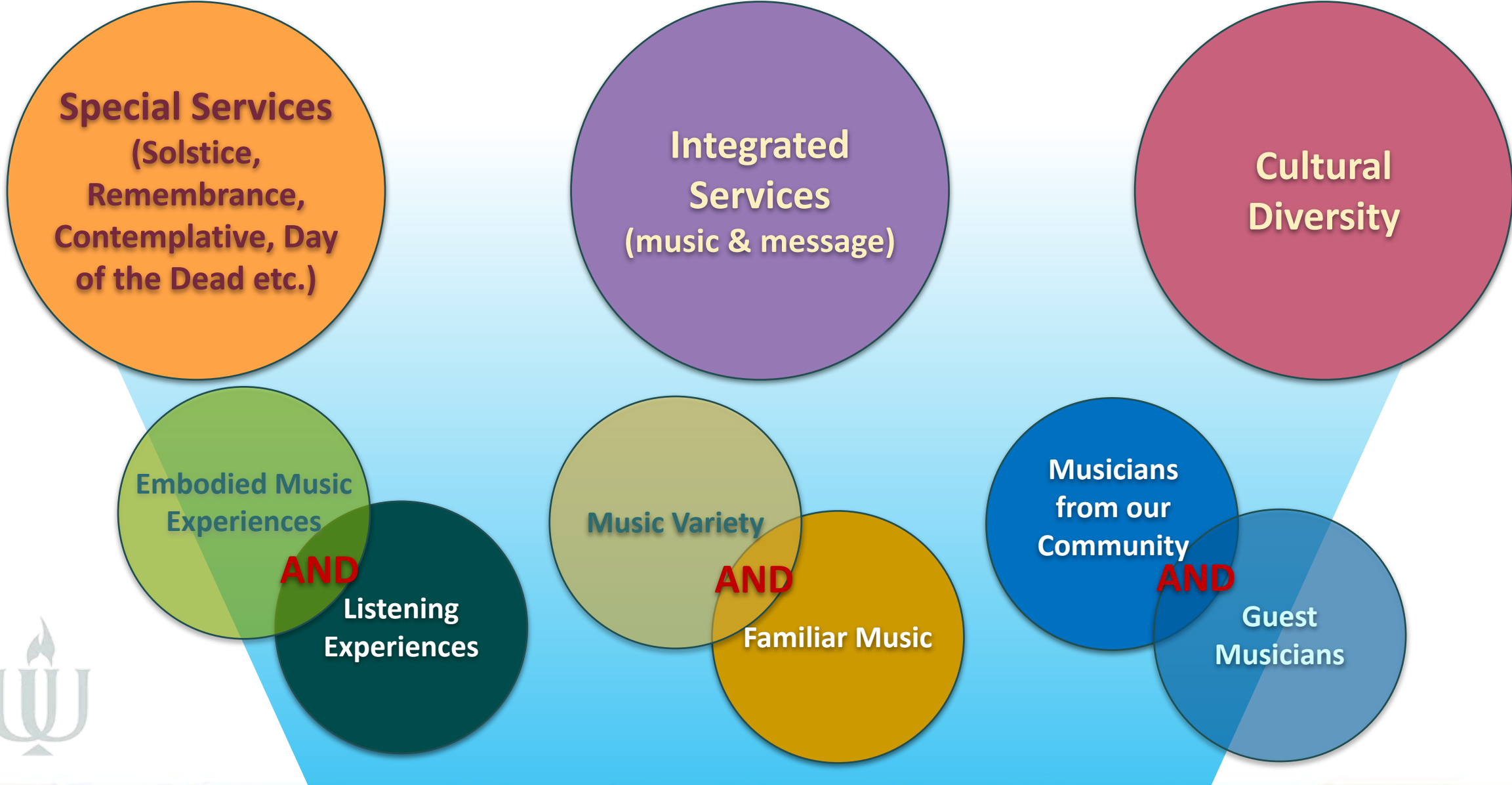
“Singing songs from the Black American music tradition in particular”



“Would love to see music from more cultures being sung together and performed during services.”



We want our services to be experiences as rich as our imaginations.



What we said we missed, liked especially, or wanted to experience:

What Music?

- Familiar hymns
- Chants
- New music
- Culturally diverse
- Classical
- Gospel
- Instrumental music
- Rounds
- Madrigals

How?

- Orchestra
- Folk band
- Drumming
- Adult choir
- Children’s choir
- Youth choir
- Jazz band
- Rock band
- Intergenerational choir
- Small singing groups
- Instrumental ensembles
- Singing in the pews

Who?

- Congregation
- Church members who are musicians
- Youth musicians
- Guest musicians
- Artists in Residence
- Staff musicians



We have many ideas for music aside from Sunday services:

Building Community

- Drumming circle
- Music lessons
- Community sing events
- Dances
- Concerts
- Neighborhood community sing (event in parking lot)

Social Justice

- Social justice choir
- Songs for marches
- Protest-ready music

Music Ministries

- Singing for the homebound
- Singing for hospice
- Singing at care facilities
- Music therapy



Thank you, Ann, and Shelley, and Shelley, and Lou. You made graceful, elegant work of this project. You made it easy to find hope, laughter, and precision. You offered hours of time and invaluable savvy. You brought a model of warmth and respect to me and to each other, and led with compassion without fail. I am a better leader for having learned with and from you. And I am grateful for blessing you've been to the people of First Universalist Church, its music, and its coming days.

I commissioned this team to develop a process for congregational listening on music ministry, to lead the process itself, and to present to me a comprehensive report of what you shared. The organizing team and I met to give the report its first read, and to duly reflect. One result of that work is this document—a summary of the report, crafted by the team and myself in collaboration and by consensus. I have shared this summary with our board of trustees, the First Universalist staff, and the congregation as a whole.

Starting in May, I'll be reading the comprehensive report several more times. First, I'll read to reflect and get to know the contributions in detail. Then, I'll look for patterns and points with particularly strong support. Next, I'll start a list of potential implementations and responses, and I'll spend time with each one. I'll look for the ideas that challenge us to grow as musically and spiritually. I'll think about feasibility, and equity, and willing participants, and alignment with our values and goals. I do also this with any potential ideas I encounter for the coming year.



This process will help me to make a plan of which ideas to work on first, and so on. From there, you'll begin hearing from me again as we ask for volunteers to step up and take on the various leadership and participating roles for our starting ideas. Our first new projects should start in the fall.

Miles Davis might tell us this way: "It's not the note you play that's the wrong note – it's the note you play afterwards that makes it right or wrong." These past years have dealt all of us and our community a heap of notes we never expected to land on. But the strength of beloved community is not in its ability to avoid the unplanned, but rather in its willingness to dream in possibilities amid the changes.

I am grateful to you, dear community, for engaging in this process of good dreaming. The congregation benefits already from your willingness to show up and imagine productively. Now it counts on even more of us to support and to contribute to our growing ministries of music. May we be blessed in the wake of our dreams, and our ministries grow in their power and their reach. May our next notes prove these last years were just right for our music.

Peace,

Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout, Director of Worship Arts Ministries
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis