

First Universalist Church Board of Trustees
August 17, 2023
Board Packet

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First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
August 17, 2023
6:30-9:00
First Universalist Church
Cummins Room & [Zoom](#) (multiplatform)

1. Welcome (6:30-6:35)
 - a. *Call to Order and Agenda Approval*
 - b. *Lighting 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.

2. Consent Agenda (6:35 - 6:40)
 - a. *Approval of June and Annual meeting minutes*
 - b. *Monitoring: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers & trends*
 - c. *Monitoring: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes*
 - d. *Monitoring: Financial Condition*
 - e. *Monitoring: Staff Grievance Procedure*
 - f. *Monitoring: Treatment of Volunteers*
3. Board Covenant (6:40 - 7:10)
 - a. (Please review Board Covenant in [Governing Policies Handbook](#))
4. Spiritual Leadership (continued from Board Orientation Meeting) (7:10 - 7:40)
 - a. Anti-racism as spiritual practice
 - a. *IDI*
 - b. *Board Commitment Form*
5. Board Committees/Teams (7:40 - 8:00)
 - a. Nominating Committee, (need liaison)
 - b. Finance Committee, (need liaison....Marc?)
 - c. Governance Committee, (need ?)
 - d. Change Teams (need liaison...Sarah)

Break (8:00 -8:10)

6. Visionary Goals Process - Where are we and what's next? (8:10 - 8:50)
7. Gratitudes (8:50 - 9:00)
8. Adjourn
9. Ushers and Greeters at Lake Harriet- <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4ea8ad28a1f85-ushers#/>

Roles, responsibilities, and resources for Board Members

- [2023 August First U Board Orientation](#)
- [JOB DESCRIPTION: First Universalist Board of Trustees](#)
- [Church Bylaws](#)
- [Governing Policies Handbook](#)
- [2023-24 Monitoring Schedule](#)

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
May 25, 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 April meeting minutes
- b. *Monitoring*: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers and trends
- c. *Monitoring*: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes
- d. *Monitoring*: End Outcomes Review
- e. *Monitoring*: Staff Survey

Consent agenda was approved

IV. Commitment To Beloved Community (Formerly Covenant Development Team) (7:00 ~ 7:10)

- a. Updates from Last Meeting

(Janet) What kind of behaviors people had seen that showed beloved community. A visual will be displayed. Rev. Andrea Johnson shared the visual.

(Eric Cooperstein) Someone had the idea of doing the hearts. Crowdsourced norms about our community. From that, they synthesized down to a series of statements.

Two deliverables—The Heart with many behaviors distilled to 8 behaviors. These can be talked about with new members or other ways of showing. Maybe ritualizing in a worship service.

(Rebecca Slaby) Stressed that we need to make these 8 behaviors accessible to visually challenged

Daryn Woodson shared that there was pain associated with white folks saying this is a learning opportunity for them (white people)

Sarah Hedges stressed that we need to now utilize this work. Also, to thank the committee that did this work.

Cathy Heist sees a connection between these behaviors and the visionary goals.

V. Fiduciary Responsibilities (7:10 ~ 7:50)

a. Monthly Financial Review (3rd Quarter Financials)

Projected deficit of \$300,000 for end of Fiscal 2023 (22/23)

C & M Olson Fund (C&M Olson Fund: Original donation amount was unclear.

Additions from Drew Cummins memorials in 2009-2010 approx \$5,000 along with some dollars from Easter offerings. Currently being administered as providing \$1500 grants per year to UU Ministerial students.) : \$23,806.75

o History Hounds Fund (Funds raised in prior years for 150th Celebration. Time and purpose of restrictions have expired. Fund balance is available for History Hounds, in keeping with the intent of the donors. : \$3,568.31

• The one major expense still pending this fiscal year is our final quarterly payment to the UUA's Annual Fund. This final payment totals \$13,500 and fulfills our commitment to the larger association for this fiscal year.

• In our capital budget, \$41,000 remains in the line for staff salaries allocated to the campaign. This amount remains because there was one year during the capital project when we had a surplus in our operating budget, and chose not to apply the amount allocated for staff salaries that year. Many of our staff members have continued to work on the capital project and closing out the campaign this year, and some if not all of these funds could be allocated to the operating budget this year, by approval of the board.

Jen recommends moving the expired funds and the capital budget remains to be used. (est. \$68K)

Daryn suggests giving UUA 50% of what we pledged.

We are asked to pay \$85K and we are paying \$54K to UUA.

Jen believes we will receive the \$225,000 for the employee retention credit from Covid funding. And, that 100% of it should go back to the Operating Reserve. \$300,000 is our 3 month average of operating costs

Daryn moves to take Jen's recommendations to move temporary restricted funds and the remaining funds from the capital budget.

Motion was approved. (notes—move \$41K to staff salaries and the retired funds to reduce the deficit)

Sarah Hedges moves that the Employee Retention Credit is moved to the Operating Fund in its entirety. Motion was approved.

Fundraising Updates

(Arif) Looking at 200 households we have not heard from yet. Almost 300 phone calls have been made the last couple of weeks to support the annual operating budget for 2023/24. The fundraising team is meeting every week with small, incremental progress. Very slow. Inflation and other economic trends are creating headwinds. There will be a launch of a fund for Lauren Wyeth.

Rebecca highlighted that we could share the struggles that many church's are experiencing during this time.

Cathy asked if someone donates after July 1 and want it to reduce the deficit for 2022/23. This would not be possible but those donations could go to the Operating Reserve. Cathy also asked that if someone gives for Lauren Wyeth Fund it can go to this year or next fiscal year depending on when it was received.

BREAK - 10 mins

V. Fiduciary Responsibilities (8:00 ~ 8:25)

- a. Monthly Financial Review (3rd Quarter Financials) (see above)
- b. Fundraising Updates (see above)
- c. Approve Operating Budget 23-24 Church Year

We moved to Executive Session to discuss possible position eliminations.

Ideas were discussed to help improve our budget. They included—

Charging for RE classes in an equitable way. Those who could pay more should

Fundraising efforts to help offset RE costs

Could we increase rental income

2023/24 Budget Discussion

Matt thought the \$119K deficit was acceptable given we had reduced the 2022/23 budget deficit by \$68K.

Ben mentioned that we try to get to \$100K deficit

Bryana wondered if the Board could increase their giving. Arif suggested that there be a Board Matching Grant.

Arif suggested the Board could ask at the Annual meeting for the congregation to give more

Jen suggested the Board communicate with the congregation about reduced budget and reduced staffing.

Matt moved to approve the submitted budget including \$119K deficit but was not seconded.

Ben moved to approve a budget with no more than a \$100K deficit. This was seconded and voted 8 yays and 1 nay. Budget was approved.

VI. Change Team Updates (8:25 ~ 8:35)

- a. Updates from Last Meeting

VII. Visionary Goals Process (8:35 ~ 8:45)

- a. Updates on Process and Next Steps

This update will either be mailed out or discussed at the June Board meeting.

VIII. Policy Governing Review Plan (8:45 ~ 8:55)

Matt reported from the meeting with Bryana French, Chris Bremer, Sara McMullen and Matt Keller.

The plan will be to have a Policy Governance task force to evaluate how it has been working at UU and make recommendations. This will happen over the 2023/24 Church year.

Arif volunteered to be part of this.

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

VIII. Adjourn - 9:00

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
2023 Annual Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2023

[2023 Annual Report](#)

Approval of Board Authorization of Annual Meeting Minutes

Senior Minister's Report

Jen Highlights (see full report "Leadership Team Report")
Focus on Connection, Care and Community

Visionary goals process was outlined. Jen highlighted some themes emerging.

How can we live differently and be together in a sharing way.

Board President's Report (see Board President's Report)

Daryn shared her gratitude in being part of UU.

Financial Report (see Financial Report)

Anonymous \$100K gift

Ben made a motion to approve the budget as submitted. Seconded

Motion made to speak for a maximum of 2 minutes and the time to discuss be limited to 30 minutes. Motion was seconded. Motion was passed.

Discussion

(Online) The budget does not represent our values. Lower paid staff have a reduction. Higher paid salary maintained their level of pay.

Karen Willy (sp) Question around operating reserve fund and how it ties into the balance sheet. Jen responded by saying that the Balance Sheet in the Board Packet should be the one to review as it is the most up to date and accurate.

Dan Berg Stressed that the budget is painful and that Dan supports the proposed budget. Appreciates the candor and realistic view of the 23/24 budget. Hoping we can do better than this budget as the year unfolds.

Karen Wills (online) Stressed that no one is making millions and (check recording)

Blair Hartley The money pulled from Capital Campaign for maintenance. Is this for salaries. Is it sustainable. Jen said that maintenance is \$130K per year and we will draw \$155K from the Capital Fund.

(Next person). We have spent a lot of money on improving the facilities. Concern of laying off the staff. Can we revisit the budget. Can we have ongoing conversations on other opportunities. Ben said that we tried to maintain staff. Starting a Finance Committee and having a 6 month check in we would look at increasing staff levels.

Hattie Doesn't agree to a deficit budget. Concerned about the number of Ministers and what they all do. Sorry we built the building and can't staff it.

David B Supports the budget. Historically, many fundraisers. Referenced that Justine S. helped show that giving showed our values. The pandemic has thrown us off. We haven't talked about money like we use to. Saying "yes" to raising money.

(online) Rebecca Slaby The Capital Campaign happened before the pandemic. It's not that the staff has prioritized the building over people.

(online) Karen Other income is expected to double. Why?

Liz Short Served on the annual giving committee and understands how difficult this is. Challenge for congregation and leadership. "We are the budget". Challenge to leadership—we are trying to build a beloved community. How without a communication person. Jen responded—we will have a 50% assistant hired. We will spread other communication work amongst staff.

(online) Susan Keller Does the budget include money for the peace garden and other outdoors benefits. Jen said there is money in the budget for the grounds but not specific.

(online) Have the ministers and board consider taking a cut to help maintain staff. Daryn responded that it would be unfair for those to take less and work more. Keeping equitable pay.

Meg Riley Co moderator of the UUA. Echos that many congregations are struggling. It is a reality. To become a minister requires a lot of investment and time. Ministers are drowning in debt and fleeing the profession.

The motion was approved for the 2023/24 budget.

The Nominating Committee

Ray Dillon. Recognition to the nominating committee. Honored Jim R.
Foundation Board Recognize Neal and Anne McBean

Outgoing Board of Trustees Bryana French honored
Rebecca Slaby honored
Ben Miles honored
Daryn Woodson honored

All new members of the Board, Officers, Foundation Board and Nominating Committee were approved.

Board of Trustees

Emily Bijnagte
Marc Gorelick
Ilo Leppik
Lou Quast
Emily Wallace
Sarah Hedge

Officers

Jeff Snyder, President
Sarah Hedge, Vice President
Matt Keller, Secretary
Marc Gorelick, Treasurer

Foundation Board

Isabel Quast
Philipp Muessig
Deborah Talen

Nominating Committee

David Bach
Sandy Culpepper
Katie Fox
Ray Dillon

Delegates to 2023 General Assembly of the UUA

Aliana Hermann-Campana
Samantha White
Matt Dalby
Liv Dalby
Rev. Andrea Johnson
Karen Wills
Meleah Houseknecht
Rev. Jim Foti
Ralph Wyman
Carol Jackson
Jill Braithwaite
Sarah Hedges

Closing words (Jen)

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
June 15, 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
- a. Circle of Gratuities for Those Departing

III. Consent Agenda

- a. *Approval* of May and Annual meeting minutes
- b. *Monitoring*: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers and trends
- c. *Monitoring*: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes
- d. *Monitoring*: Staff Survey

Motion to pass the Consent agenda was approved.

IV. Visionary Goals Process (7:00 ~ 8:00)

- a. Finalize Draft and Write Clear Next Steps for 23-24 Board members

Laura Park attended to facilitate the discussion and drafting

Next Steps–

New board to review the recommended goals

More feedback from congregation?

BREAK - 10 mins

V. Policy Governance Team (8:10 ~ 8:40)

- a. Create and Approve Charge

Approved to make a Governance Committee

Task Force comes back with a plan by January 2024

Plan, Research, Assess, Recommendations

Task Force to read up on governance (book from Arif)

Could take 2 years to complete

Profiles of other churches

VI. Final Reflections on this Church Year & Board Culture (8:40 ~ 8:55)

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

VIII. Adjourn - 9:00

Draft 2 Visionary Goals

The people of First Universalist practice [BELOVED COMMUNITY](#) among and beyond us. We do this by:

1. Honoring the complexity of our Unitarian Universalist faith and embodying its love within our congregation and beyond.
2. Fostering our connection with, care for, and action on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life.
3. Pursuing our individual and collective work for justice, in relationship with those most affected by systems of oppression.
4. Widening the circles of power and engagement with our shared ministry.
5. Providing meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change.

Link all of these to sermons that explain them.

ignore everything below this line:

Eliminated:

1. Articulate our Unitarian Universalist identity, teach it to our children, share it with others, and live it in the world. *(wanted a more Universalist version of this. See new visionary goal #1)*
2. Find love's inspiration and transformation in our religious rituals and practice. *(tried to get at this with the new visionary goal #1)*
3. Grow an ever-widening (spiritual/faithful/religious) community of mutual belonging that honors/welcomes/connects with each person's full identity. *(this didn't seem to have the same power as the shorter, practice-oriented new visionary goal #2).*
4. In new visionary goal #2, eliminated "the skills/covenants that create" *(makes the goal shorter and if you practice Beloved Community, that's the whole point really.)*
5. Widen the circles of leadership and engagement with our shared ministry. *(part of practicing Beloved Community, is implied in all the rest of the visionary goals except maybe the widening part, and it's too responsive to a particular fear).*
6. Accountably dismantle white supremacy in ourselves, our congregation, and in the larger community. *(needed completely new language which I attempted in new visionary goal #4. It incorporates the language from your Powerful Question although not exactly gracefully. You may still feel your congregation did not say it wants this, but its vision of a multiracial congregation depends on it, so you can reasonably respond that you set this goal so that their aim could be met.).*
7. In new visionary goal #5, eliminated "as a faith practice." *("in covenant" gets at that succinctly and it makes the goal shorter.)*
8. Recognizing that ecosystem degradation harms the web of life and particularly marginalized human communities, we will...*(too many words and when you get to the fundamental purpose of church, it is primarily about changing the lives of people. I did add "beings" to new #5.)*
9. Align and ally with change even while it is shaping and changing us. *(Powerful, but just not quite the visionary goal. If the other visionary goals demand change from us as individuals and from the church community, this will happen anyway.)*

6. Center the joy and liberation of the most marginalized in all that we do.
7. Practice Beloved Community among us.
 - o Practice beloved community where we adapt to change and foster a sense of radical belonging to all living beings
 - o Practice Beloved Community, becoming a community of mutual belonging that honors and welcomes each person's full identity.
 - o Original use of Beloved Community: Absence of poverty, hunger, and hate. Everyone is cared for. Also, see below.
8. Embodying the love of our Universalist heritage (tradition/lineage), teach it to/share it with/facilitate it with/explore it with our children, share it with others, and live it in the world.
9. Aligning and allying with change even while it is shaping and changing us.
 - o welcome and align with change that inspires new ways of being... disrupts systems of oppression... just brainstorming here

The people of First Universalist:

Practice Beloved Community amongst us

Show up in community in right relationship

Although the idea behind the beloved community is timeless, the phrase was first used by philosopher-theologian Josiah Royce (1855-1916) who founded the Fellowship of Reconciliation. It was then popularized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) and the civil rights movement.

Here are [five defining characteristics of the beloved community](#):

1. Given our shared desire to be peaceful, happy, and safe, the beloved community described a practical, realistic, and achievable society.
2. In the beloved community, conflict still exists, but it is resolved peacefully, nonviolently, and without hostility, ill will, or resentment.
3. In the beloved community, we appreciate and recognize the inherent worth and value of all people, animals, and ecosystems.
4. In the beloved community, we are motivated by kindness, compassion, and love for all life. We work cooperatively to peacefully end hunger, prejudice, poverty, homelessness, environmental destruction, factory farming, and violence and injustice of all kinds.
5. In the beloved community, the means we use to create change are just as kind and compassionate as the ends we seek. Our commitment to unconditional and all-inclusive kindness and goodwill allows the beloved community to become what Dr. King called "an engine of reconciliation."

See also: Here's another good place to learn more about King's meaning of Beloved Community:

<https://thekingcenter.org/about-tkc/the-king-philosophy/>

June Attendance

	2023				2022			
Adults	Sun. 10a Sanctuary	Sun. 10a Livestream	YouTube	Totals	Sun. 10a Sanctuary	Sun. 10a Livestream	YouTube	Totals
1st week	204	30	66	300	155	95	51	301
2nd week	135	43	79	257	238	77	195	510
3rd week	130	44	120	294	93	6	138	237
4th week	83	14	-	97	172	94	169	435
5th week								
Monthly Total	552	131	265	948	658	272	553	1483
Average for June	138	33	88	237	165	68	138	371
RE								
1st week				0				0
2nd week				0				0
3rd week				0				0
4th week				0				0
5th week				0				0
Monthly Total				0				0
Average for June				0				0
Combined Average	138	33	88	237	165	68	138	371

4th Sunday 2023- GA worship

Statistical Report for June 2023

Board Meeting August 17, 2023

MEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICES:

MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT: 0

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL: 0

MEMBERS REINSTATED: 1

Mark Symchych

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL: 8

Amy Bligh

Victoria Huitt

Myra Woods

Rev. Kelli Clement

Richard Huebner

MariAn Klein

Steve Eberly

John Bringewatt

CHILDREN DEDICATED: 0

Total members as of the last meeting: 1055

To be added: 1

To be removed: 8

TOTAL MEMBERS: 1048

End of Year Totals

Fiscal/Program Year	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
New Members Joined	41	15	18	21	81
Total Membership	1055	1060	1058	1061	1058

July Attendance

	2023					2022			
Adults	Sun. 10a Sanctuary	Sun. 10a Livestream	YouTube	Totals		Sun. 10a Sanctuary	Sun. 10a Livestream	YouTube	Totals
1st week	119	29	78	226		103	75	117	295
2nd week	107	46	77	230		101	55	89	245
3rd week	105	35	111	251		145	91	246	482
4th week	103	40	118	261		140	57	45	242
5th week	110	34	86	230		104	45	120	269
Monthly Total	544	184	384	1198		593	323	497	1533
Average for July	109	37	77	240		119	65	99	307
RE									
1st week				0					0
2nd week				0					0
3rd week				0					0
4th week				0					0
5th week				0					0
Monthly Total				0					0
Average for July				0					0
Combined Average	109	37	77	240		119	65	99	307

Statistical Report for July 2023

Board Meeting August 17, 2023

MEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICES:

MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT: 0

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL: 7

CT Neal-Herman

Raelyn Rasset

Peter Benwitz

Jen Kalaidis-Meslow

Merinda Brayfield

Amelia Marquez

Nick Boldon

MEMBERS REINSTATED: 0

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL:

CHILDREN DEDICATED: 0

Total members as of the last meeting: 1048

To be added: 7

To be removed: 1

TOTAL MEMBERS: 1056

A note from Liz, Membership Coordinator: Summer 2023 is by far our youngest class of new members. Some demographics on new members, as we build a multiracial, multigenerational, multicultural community are:

Median age: 31 (range is 27-75)

People of color: 1