

First Universalist Church Board of Trustees
November 16, 2023
Board Packet

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Start	Duration	Topic	Lead
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis			
Board of Trustees Meeting			
November 16, 2023			
6:30 - 9:00 pm			
First Universalist Church			
<u>Cummins Room & Zoom (multiplatform)</u>			
Call to Order			
6:30 PM	5		Jeff
		<i>Lighting the Chalice</i> <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	15	Executive Session Somatic Grounding Spiritual Community Building	? Jen/Arif
6:55 PM	5	Consent Agenda Approval of October meeting minutes 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
7:00 PM	15	Finance Committee Report Quarterly Financial Performance Financial Policy Review - Outcomes/Actions	Marc
7:15 PM	10	Governance Committee Report	Lou, Sarah
7:25 PM	10	Stewardship Committee Report	Emily, Emily
7:35 PM	5	Break	
7:40 PM	10	Visionary Goals Update & Plans	Jeff, Sarah, Emily
7:50 PM	30	Proposed Goals for Year	All
8:45 PM	5	Key Congregational Dates - Winter Meeting - 2/11/24 -> 1/28/24? - Congregational Budget Meeting - 5/09/24 - Annual Meeting 6/09/24	Jeff
8:20 PM	10	Staff Experience - Introduction & Plan	Lou
8:35 PM	10	Staff Grievance Policy	Arif
8:45 PM	5	Jen's Sabbatical Plans	Jen
8:45 PM	5	First Universalist Website	Emily B.
8:55 PM	5	Gratitudes	
9:00 PM		Adjourn	
Roles, responsibilities, and resources for Board Members			
<u>JOB DESCRIPTION: First Universalist Board of Trustees</u>			
<u>Church Bylaws</u>			
<u>Governing Policies Handbook</u>			
<u>2023-24 Monitoring Schedule</u>			

Senior Minister Board Report
Prepared by Rev. Jen Crow
November 12, 2023

Spiritual Grounding

This month, after talking about welcoming each other and greeting one another with intention in September, after talking about learning from each other's experiences in October, we're talking about staying at the table with each other in times of conflict in November as one of the ways we build Beloved Community.

When we are trying to build beloved community - a community ordered in love where we have committed to listen and learn from each other and especially in a community where we have chosen to be together across generations, cultures and racial identities, together in a community where our words say that we welcome all - we are going to have to get good at staying at the table with each other in times of conflict.

The kind of conflicts we are asking each other to stay at the table for may involve different wants and needs for our spiritual development and our ways of acting on our faith in the world. They might be disagreements over how we order our community and how we make decisions in alignment with our values. Our conflicts with each other might be personal or political or structural - they will likely involve power differences and dynamics of privilege and oppression. Sometimes these conflicts will be indirect and felt more than talked about - sometimes these conflicts will be named out loud and direct. When our conflicts involve genuine differences between us - they will most likely not be simple or easy or fast to resolve. These conflicts will take time and care if they are going to be experiences of transformation rather than harm.

Deep breath. This isn't something that most of us are practiced at. Let's remember some things we know to be true. Conflict is healthy and normal. Conflict can be terrifying - it sets off reactions and responses in our body and mind. Conflict at church can be especially impactful because it gets at our core sense of belonging. And - we need to get good at conflict if we are going to build beloved community

What might be a different way of looking at conflict? UU minister, Teresa Cooley, writes "Conflict doesn't mean we have done something wrong. It means we have something we need to learn." (*Transforming Conflict*, 10) A chance to learn from each other's experiences. Conflict is an opportunity for us to learn from each other.

When have you experienced conflict - in the moment or later - that has taught you something? What did you learn about the other person's experience or perspective that was new for you? How did this change you?

Monitoring Items

Attendance and Membership Trends

Please see attached information.

Staff and Volunteer Grievances

There have been no staff or volunteer grievances.

Staff and Volunteer Transitions

There have been no staff or volunteer transitions this month.

Exit Interviews

Summaries of exit interviews from the past several years were provided to Lou Quast and Cindy Marsh in July 2023 as part of their review of staff experience working at First Universalist. We look forward to an in-depth discussion with the board about their findings and staff feedback and recommendations to maintain areas of satisfaction and improve the experience of working at First Universalist.

Financial Review - September 2023

As of September 2023, revenues exceed expenses by \$11,637. A reduction of \$84,343 in comparison to August 2023. Annual Giving revenue continues to be favorable to the budget by \$135,562.21 due to an anonymous gift of \$100,000, as well as increases in pledges to close the budget gap totaling \$50,000. Program expenses are favorable to budget due to savings in our curriculum and supplies budgets across most program areas. Members of our support staff were hired, while others worked extra hours to cover summer programming and prepare for the start of the church year, resulting in personnel expenses being higher than expected. Service/Rental income, and in particular Donations/Fundraising, are unfavorable to budget by a combined \$36,642. We have yet to launch our yearly fundraising initiatives which is contributing to the negative variance, but we are also experiencing a reduction in our anticipated giving and participation for the year.

As we look towards the end of the fiscal year, we are currently projecting a total deficit of \$219,372. As a reminder, the congregation approved an annual deficit budget of \$100,000, meaning we're projecting a deficit to budget of \$119,372. Based on our commitments to date, and projections for our scheduled fundraisers, we're conservatively estimating a negative \$93,546 variance to budget in total support. We're also projecting negative end of year variances in other categories such as administrative expenses, program expenses, and building and grounds expenses, but these areas are only contributing to 12% of the overall forecasted deficit to budget.

Information Items

Rev. Crow's sabbatical time

All letters of agreement with our ministers include this benefit:

Sabbatical time is accrued at the rate of one month per year of service. Sabbatical time may be taken after 3 years of service and accrual shall not exceed 6 months.

As of June 30, 2023, I have accrued 6 months of sabbatical time, and must either take some of that time this year or lose it. I am working with staff to find the best time of the year for me to take one month of sabbatical time during this fiscal year.

Hope for Us

In communicating with the Hope for Us team lead, Connie Goodbread, she confirmed the total cost of our commitment as \$2000, with an additional \$2000 of support coming from the MidAmerica Region. Our consulting/coaching team has also changed because of individual circumstances, and will not include Connie Goodbread, Rev. Connie Simon, Rev. Jude Geiger, and Margie Manning - with Rev. David Pyle included in planning. There is a revised agreement included in this packet for a new signature from the Board President.

Pandemic Impact

For further learning - [The Upside & Downside Impact of the Pandemic - Vibrant Faith](#)

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
Oct. 26, 2023; 6:30-9 p.m.
Cummins Room and [Zoom](#)

Start	Duration	Topic	Lead
6:30 PM	5	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>In attendance: All in attendance</p> <p>Motion to add to the agenda: Move to add to the agenda Hope for Us Move Proposed Goals to end of the agenda Motion was approved</p>	Jeff
		<p><i>Lighting the Chalice</i> <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></p>	All
6:35 PM	20	<p>Executive Session Somatic Grounding Spiritual Community Building</p>	Jeff Jen/Arif
6:55 PM	5	<p>Consent Agenda Approval of September meeting minutes Monitoring: Acceptance of attendance and membership numbers & trends Monitoring: Acceptance of staff and significant volunteer changes Monitoring: Congregant grievances Monitoring: Staff & Volunteer grievances Monitoring: Updated staff work plan</p> <p>Consent agenda was approved</p>	All
7:00 PM	15	<p>Finance Committee Update August Financials</p> <p>Ahead of budget almost \$100K. Would be on budget without the \$100K anonymous gift. Discussed how to read the waterfall chart</p>	Marc
7:15 PM	15	<p>Governance Committee - Proposed Charge</p> <p>Reviewed the current Governance Committee charge. Added more detail. Discussed how this committee crafts and suggests policy, monitoring and making it transparent to the board and congregation. Emphasis on grounding them on our Visionary Goals. Living into our goals. A question was raised if our by-laws are monitored. This monitoring could be recommended by this committee. Also discussed who adds to the GPH</p>	Lou, Sarah

		<p>new/changes. Next steps are to add members to this committee and to start a monitoring schedule.</p> <p>Motion was approved</p>	
7:30 PM	15	<p>Stewardship Committee - Proposed Charge</p> <p>Reviewed the charge. Discussed the calendar of meetings and giving cadence. Discussed the tactic of proactively targeting causes to raise money for. Maybe a monthly, informal in person discussion of where we are with stewardship. Discussion of having at least one member of the board on the committee. It was a friendly amendment that it will be added to the charge. Should we have a term length and/or limits. Could we have a general rule that there will be term lengths and limits for all committees.</p> <p>Motion was approved as submitted, modified and amended. Motion was approved to the members listed.</p>	Emily, Emily
7:45 6 PM	10	Break	
7:55 PM	10	<p>Visionary Goals Update</p> <p>Requested that congregants fill out the survey. 6 have responded. Another request in the Liberal again. We may send out by email as well. Thoughtful feedback. Also mention from the pulpit. Waves of communication. Can we have results by the November board meeting.</p>	Jeff, Sarah, Emily
8:05 PM	10 10	<p>Proposed Goals for Year - Review & Approve</p> <p>Motion approved to move this section to the November Board meeting</p> <p>Hope For Us Agreement</p> <p>Build our conflict skills especially in light of racism. Team from UUA and coaches. A plan to be developed on how to work with us. Will be on line. Focus on how staff of color and marginalized members have experienced church. Discussion on how many sessions we are signing up for. We need clarification on how many sessions and total cost before signing. Hope for Us would like Board approval. We commit to spending no more than 32 hours and \$2000.00. Jen said that \$5000.00 was budgeted.</p> <p>Motion was approved</p>	All
8:15 PM	10	<p>Change Team Plan</p> <p>Discussed putting this team on hiatus. This is a standing Board Committee. Could the Change Team review our new initiatives and Charges in light of anti-racism. If we put this on hiatus, we</p>	All

		should honor those who served on the team and ritual them at a service. Could be before end of year.	
8:25 PM	10	<p>Right Relationship Team - Status/Plans</p> <p>Update on top of the report on Rights Relations. Jen referenced Transforming Conflict book and recommended it.</p>	Arif
8:35 PM	10	<p>Nominating Committee - Proposed Scope Increase</p> <p>Discussion around increasing shared leadership. Leadership development was discussed. Spiritual and practical skills. Leadership recruitment and development. The Nominating Committee could expand their scope. Not to make a by-law change but try it out first. This is a committee of the Board. How could this committee help us lean into our Visionary Goal of shared leadership. Can they help find and coach upcoming leaders. Ray Dillon was in attendance. He will run this concept by the Nominating Committee. Ray mentioned a past Skills and Interest inventory that used to be completed. Ray also mentioned a photo directory. These items would help to identify leaders. How can we foster a stronger relationship between the Board and the Nominating Committee. Requested to get feedback on the photo directory idea from staff. Can we find out if we will keep past skills and interest inventory info and will it be in the updated data project.</p>	Jen, Arif
8:45 PM	10	<p>Key Congregational Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Winter Meeting - Congregational Budget Meeting - Annual Meeting <p>Proposed Dates:</p> <p>Annual Meeting June 9, 2024 Congregational Budget Meeting May 9, 2024 (Zoom) Winter Meeting (informational meeting and Visionary Goals approval) February 11, 2024</p>	Jeff
8:55 PM	10	Gratitudes	All

Agreement with HOPE for Us Conflict Engagement Team
Online Services of the HOPE for Us Coaching Team

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

<https://firstuniversalistchurch.org/>

Coaching Team

Rev. Connie Simon - csimon@uua.org

Rev. Jude Geiger - jgeiger@uua.org

Margie Manning - mmanning@uua.org

The Director of HOPE for Us - Connie Goodbread - will be part of this team. Connie will debrief with the team after every session and be available to the team for support. Rev. David Pyle, the Lead for the Mid-America Region and Primary Contact to First Universalist Church of Minneapolis is also part of the team.

Please read this document carefully with the leadership of the congregation - both religious professionals and laity. Once read, the governing Board President needs to sign it and return it for the HOPE for Us Director's signature.

The HOPE for Us Conflict Engagement Team works utilizing the theological discipline that is the foundation of Unitarian Universalism. (See addendum) Above all, our work is relational and seeks to amplify love and justice in the world.

There is not one right way to do the work. However, there is one requirement - everyone involved must come into the relationship seeking a deeper understanding, wanting to do the work as it is discovered, and willing to be transformed.

We work organically - the work we do is in partnership with the Congregational Leaders. We will begin by building trust and creating a

plan for moving forward. There may come a time when we decide, together, to change the plan. If so, we will do that. Trust is an important part of our process. If it cannot be developed or is broken, we may need to stop the process or put it on pause. If congregational leaders are unable to engage in the work being asked of them, we may need to stop the process or put it on pause.

What a Hope for Us Coaching Team Brings

- “Outside eyes” to help you see your congregation and/or situation as perhaps you cannot alone.
- Experience. Congregational Life staff and the Hope for Us Coaches have over 50 years of experience serving congregations.
- Decades of experience in working with congregations through conflict.
- Knowledge of congregational dynamics and a system perspective, believing that conflict is often the result of a congregation’s emotional system rather than the fault of any individual or group of individuals.
- An anti-oppressive lens to help understand how larger social systems of oppression and exploitation may affect this conflict and the congregation.
- Our humility. We bring experience and knowledge and we are not the experts in your congregation; you are. We know you ultimately know your congregation better than we do and know what will and will not work. We will be your partners.
- Hope. We would not be sending you this proposal for services if we did not believe this conflict can be worked through and learned from.

What We Can and Cannot Do

- We cannot give you the right answers. There are many paths, not one right path.
- We cannot fix it.
- We cannot (and will not) tell you what to do. Together we will make a plan.

- We can ask you clarifying questions.
- We can facilitate conversations.
- We can share our experiences and knowledge.
- We can remain open to the needs of the congregation
- We can be flexible and pivot when needed
- We can and will stay in relationship
- We can make suggestions and recommendations. It is your responsibility to accept or reject any recommendations we make. We will do our best to help you plan to move deeper into Covenant and congregational vitality. However, we believe responsibility for putting the plan in motion and learning from this conflict belongs to leadership and the congregation as a whole.

Our Commitments and Loyalties

- Our loyalty is to the mission and long-term vitality of the congregation and the core values at the heart of Unitarian Universalism.
- With that in mind, we acknowledge we serve at the pleasure of the Board. We will not take any action within the congregation without first checking with the Board President and/or (Senior) Minister.
- We will share all information with the entire Hope for Us Coaching Team.
- We depend on the continued collaborative relationship and shared ministry of Minister(s), Board and staff.

Costs for online sessions

The cost is \$125 an hour for each Coach on the HOPE for Us Coaching Team. We always work in a team. Every 1 hour online session is 5 hours of work for each Coach. The congregation will be invoiced for hours worked by the Coaches.

This agreement is for 32 hours. There may be a need for one on one individual sessions, Chaplain work, sessions with different groups, and/or sessions with the congregation. All of these different meetings will

be online. The dates and times will be worked out between the Congregational Leadership, participants, and the HOPE for Us Coaches. The congregation has agreed to \$2000 and Mid America Region has allocated \$2000 for this work.

The congregational leadership is able to ask for more sessions if leadership and the HOPE for Us Coaching Team decide more sessions would be useful.

Agreement to this Process

If the Board agrees to this proposal, please have the Board President sign, and date the section below and return to Connie Goodbread cgoodbread@uua.org The Director will sign and date the agreement and send it back to you.

Board President

Date

Hope for Us Director

Date

Addendum

Unitarian Universalism (One Holy Love for All) Three Spiritual Disciplines/Practices

The three Spiritual Disciplines/Practices of Unitarian Universalism

Covenantal = not creedal

Pluralistic = not fundamentalist

Transformational = living tradition, revelation is open and continuous - not sealed

Covenant as Discipline/Practice

Compassionate

Curious

Humble

Trusting and trustworthy

Covenant is a values-based vow you make to creation and yourself about what you value most and what you will hold yourself accountable to.

Covenant is meant to bring you, first, back into relationship.

Covenant is not a tool by which we manipulate others, shut people down, leave people out or get our way.

Once Covenant lives inside of you - inside each of us - we can make it live in the sacred space between us. Once it lives between us it binds us, one to another.

Once it is alive between the people of the community, it is alive in the community and it binds the community together.

Covenant is a vow of our hearts that we make together. Keep together. Break together. Fix together.

If an individual does not learn how to practice this first discipline of Unitarian Universalism they will not truly get to the second discipline.

Pluralism as Discipline/Practice - many things are true at the same time

Open Minded

Curious

Humble

Pluralism is accepting and acknowledging the truth of others.

There are many paths up the mountain. There are many ways to see situations and to experience the world. There are all kinds of different struggles. All ways that lead to a good heart, all ways that liberate everyone, are good ways.

There is no fundamentalism in Unitarian Universalism. That is not to say that there aren't fundamentalists - any of us can be at a stage in our lives where we think and believe that we have found the one and only truth. While this can be true in individuals it is not the discipline/practice of Unitarian Universalism. This discipline sees, acknowledges, holds as sacred the fact that many things are true at the same time.

If we cannot embrace pluralism how will we ever be transformed?

Transformation as Discipline/Practice - Unitarian Universalism is a living tradition - change is the way

Unitarian Universalism is a path, not the answer. Far too often people find Unitarian Universalism and believe they have found the answer. That would be an end. What they have actually found is a path. It is a set of spiritual disciplines, practices, that can lead to a deeper understanding of one's self and creation.

Transformation is the reality of being open and willing to become and become and become yet again. Unitarian Universalists are not born again, we are born again, and again and again.

We are never finished. There is not a dissatisfaction in knowing that we are never finished - it is an adventure. There is always more.

If you hold Covenant in your heart - struggle to live into that sacred promise - make it holy between you and others - hold yourself accountable to it - Pluralism comes pretty naturally.

To live a life of compassion means we are present and aware of the other people around us. We know our liberation is interwoven with the liberation of everyone else. Their reality is as real as our reality. This is the practice of Pluralism.

Once Covenant and Pluralism are alive in us, we will be transformed.

Unitarian Universalism is a living tradition - revelation is open, not sealed. Change is the only constant.

Statistical Report for October 2023

Board Meeting Nov. 16, 2023

MEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICES: 0

MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT: 0

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL: 2

Mary Margaret Magee

Jim Murphy

MEMBERS REINSTATED: 0

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL: 4

Geraldine Sattinger

Liz Dunn

Claire Wilson

Rita Franchett, died Oct. 31

CHILDREN DEDICATED: 0

Total members as of the last meeting: 1053

To be added: 2

To be removed: 4

TOTAL MEMBERS: 1051

October Attendance

	2023						2022				
Adults	Sun. 9a Sanctuary	Sun. 10a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Sanctuary	Sun. a.m. Livestream	YouTube Views	Totals	Sun. 9a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Livestream	YouTube Views	Totals
1st week	105		111	36	91	343	140	128	45	114	427
2nd week	100		115	39	81	335	102	131	50	118	351
3rd week	159		139	47	94	439	89	138	58	105	332
4th week		191		28	77	296	60	115	46	129	304
5th week	162		144	37	79	422	95	129	49	87	311
Monthly Total	526	191	509	187	343	1835	486	641	248	466	1725
Average for October	132	191	127	37	69	367	97	128	50	93	345
RE						9 & 11 RE					9 & 11 RE
1st week						133					225
2nd week						135					213
3rd week						121					191
4th week						5					64
5th week						102					204
Monthly Total						496					897
Average for October						99					180
Combined Average						466					524

- Third Sunday 10 a.m. service due to MEA weekend
- YouTube views collected at 10 a.m. 11/7/23

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
9 November 2023
6:30-8:00 pm

Members present: Dan Berg, Marc Gorelick, Julie Most, Dick Niemic
Staff present: Jen Crow, Brad Schmidt
Guests present: Cameron Smither

Meeting convened at 6:30 pm

1. Chalice Lighting
2. Monthly financials and year-end projections
 - a. YTD revenue remains ahead of budget by \$110,000. Annual giving is \$136,000 ahead, while other fundraising is behind by \$26,000
 - b. YTD expenses approx. 8% over budget (\$32,000), driven largely by admin expense
 - c. YTD surplus of \$63,000, vs. budgeted of \$51,000
 - d. However, year-end projection shows base-case scenario of \$219,000 deficit, vs. budgeted \$100,000 deficit
 - e. This is driven primarily by revenue projected to be approx \$110,000 less than budgeted; expenses projected to be close to budget
 - f. Discussion around fundraising:
 - i. Need to ensure fundraising is broadly targeted rather than trying to get additional funding from same few individuals; Brad noted \$50,000 appeal targeted at families with children in RE
 - ii. Newly formed Stewardship Committee is considering various ideas (e.g., an auction), as well as planning to start annual pledge drive earlier than usual. Their input may help refine year-end projections
 - g. Committee will monitor projections closely; if anticipated revenue shortfall persists, may need to examine expense control/reduction
3. Financial policies
 - a. Few standard finance policies are in place
 - b. Priority areas include:
 - i. Roles and responsibilities
 - ii. Receiving and recording income
 - iii. Disbursing funds
 - iv. Fraud prevention – segregation of duties, internal controls, audit, etc.
 - c. In 2015, Brad began to draft some policies to address the gaps but these remain in draft form and have not been brought to the Board
 - d. The committee reviewed this draft and gave feedback on several items
 - e. Next steps
 - i. Brad will incorporate committee input into current draft
 - ii. Marc and Brad will categorize, identify remaining gaps, and research existing policies from other churches

- iii. Dick will follow up on audit recommendations (per previous minutes)
- iv. Draft policies will be brought to the December meeting

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Gorelick, Treasurer

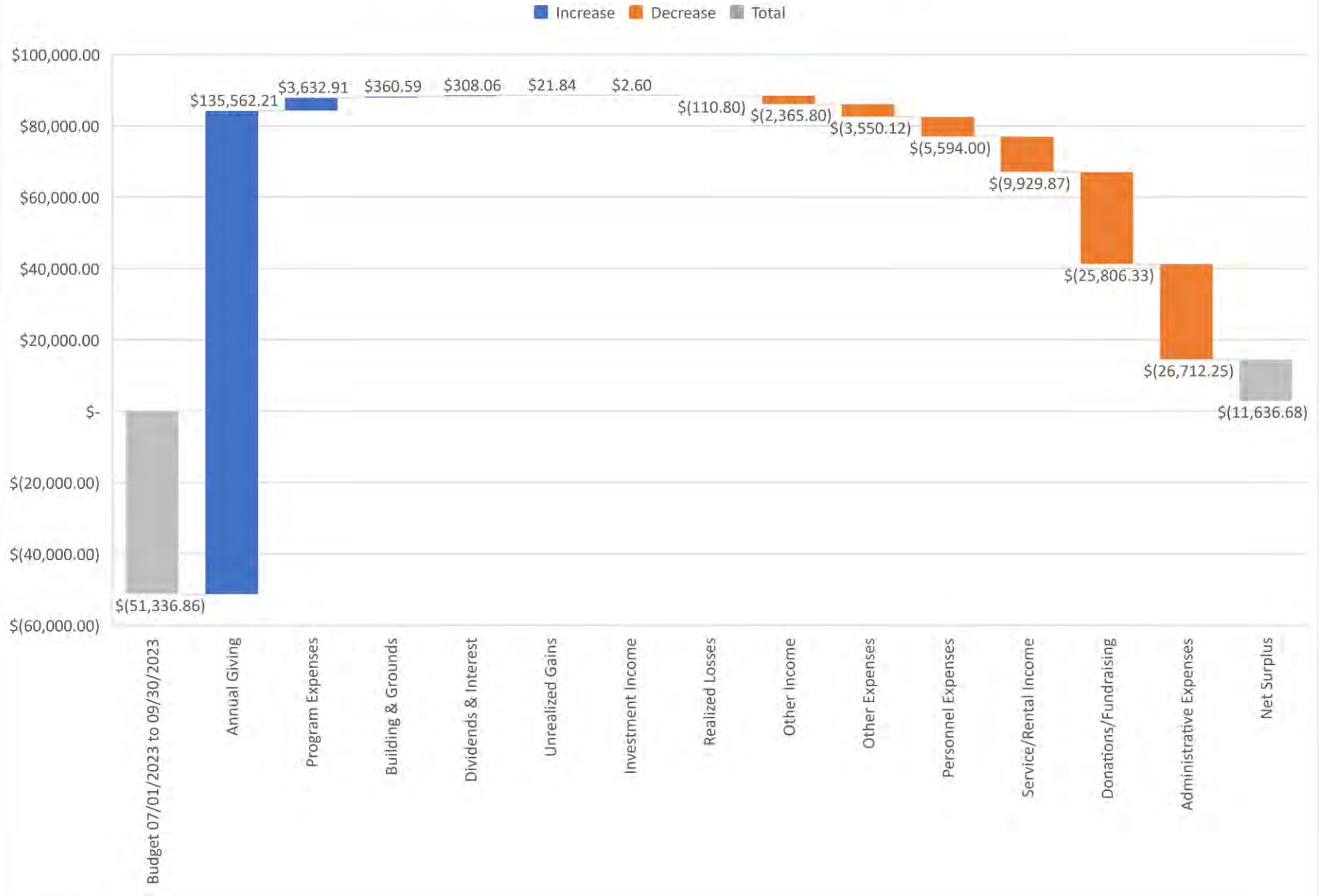
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

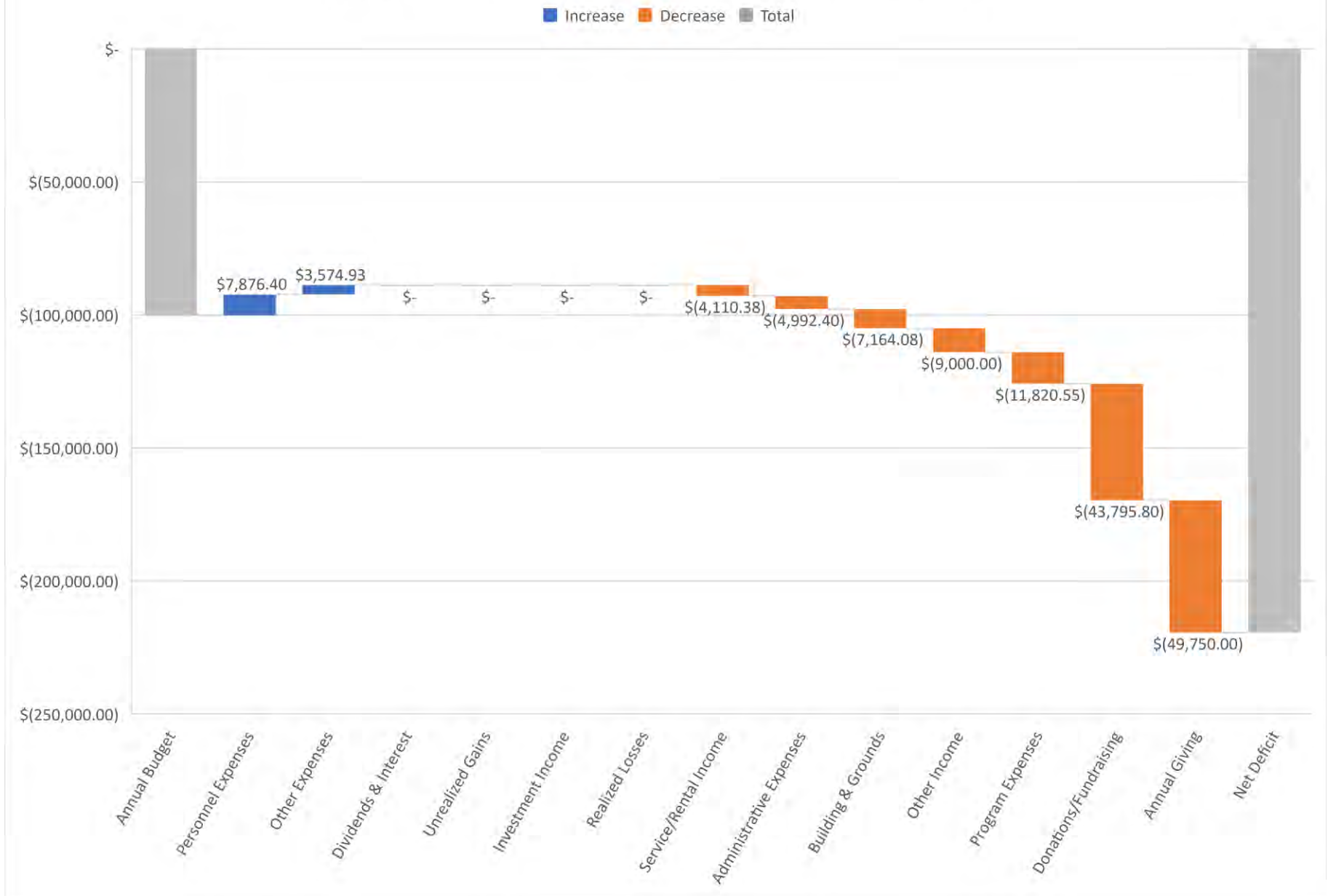
Operating Budget

	Actual	Budget	Annual Budget		Fiscal Year End Projection		
	07/01/2023 to 09/30/2023	07/01/2023 to 09/30/2023	Variance	to 06/30/2024	Best	Expected	Worst
Revenues							
Support							
Annual Giving	\$389,159.70	\$253,597.49	\$135,562.21	\$1,049,750.00	\$1,100,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$900,000.00
Donations/Fundraising	\$22,043.59	\$47,849.92	(\$25,806.33)	\$293,750.00	\$296,204.20	\$249,954.20	\$132,954.20
Total Support	\$411,203.29	\$301,447.41	\$109,755.88	\$1,343,500.00	\$1,396,204.20	\$1,249,954.20	\$1,032,954.20
Earned Revenue							
Service/Rental Income	\$15,820.09	\$25,749.96	(\$9,929.87)	\$103,000.00	\$108,791.79	\$98,889.62	\$83,439.62
Investment Income	\$2.60	\$0.00	\$2.60	\$0.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
Other Income	\$384.18	\$2,749.98	(\$2,365.80)	\$11,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$384.18
Total Earned Revenue	\$16,206.87	\$28,499.94	(\$12,293.07)	\$114,000.00	\$119,801.79	\$100,899.62	\$83,833.80
Total Revenues	\$427,410.16	\$329,947.35	\$97,462.81	\$1,457,500.00	\$1,516,005.99	\$1,350,853.82	\$1,116,788.00
Expenses							
Personnel Expenses	\$306,968.68	\$301,374.68	(\$5,594.00)	\$1,205,500.00	\$1,197,713.60	\$1,197,623.60	\$1,201,458.95
Administrative Expenses	\$63,187.09	\$36,474.84	(\$26,712.25)	\$145,900.00	\$145,642.38	\$150,892.40	\$173,400.40
Program Expenses	\$16,366.95	\$19,999.86	\$3,632.91	\$80,000.00	\$78,870.55	\$91,820.55	\$104,320.55
Building & Grounds	\$20,699.29	\$21,059.88	\$360.59	\$116,800.00	\$108,239.08	\$123,964.08	\$131,214.08
Other Expenses	\$5,925.07	\$2,374.95	(\$3,550.12)	\$9,500.00	\$5,925.07	\$5,925.07	\$5,925.07
Total Expenses	\$413,147.08	\$381,284.21	(\$31,862.87)	\$1,557,700.00	\$1,536,390.68	\$1,570,225.70	\$1,616,319.05
Investment Activity							
Realized Losses	(\$110.80)	\$0.00	(\$110.80)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Unrealized Losses	(\$2,845.50)	\$0.00	(\$2,845.50)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Dividends & Interest	\$308.06	\$0.00	\$308.06	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Unrealized Gains	\$21.84	\$0.00	\$21.84	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Investment Activity	(\$2,626.40)	\$0.00	(\$2,626.40)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$11,636.68	(\$51,336.86)	\$62,973.54	(\$100,200.00)	(\$20,384.69)	(\$219,371.88)	(\$499,531.05)

2023-2024 Year to Date Net Income Actual vs Budget



2023-2024 Projected Year End Net Income vs Annual Budget



First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Balance Sheet

	Actual As of <u>09/30/2023</u>
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$66,905.21
Investments	\$3,056,153.72
Other Current Assets	\$9,576.34
Total Current Assets	<u>\$3,132,635.27</u>
Non-Current Assets	
Fixed Assets	\$5,676,570.35
Total Non- Current Assets	<u>\$5,676,570.35</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$8,809,205.62</u></u>
Liabilities and Fund Balance	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$64,012.81
Benefits Payable	\$19,857.65
Other Current Liabilities	\$14,063.94
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$97,934.40</u>
Long Term Liabilities	
Loan Payable	\$1,519,065.89
Interfund Transfer	\$0.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>\$1,519,065.89</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$1,617,000.29</u>
Fund Balance	
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$4,244,955.72
Donor Restricted Net Assets	\$2,947,249.61
Total Fund Balance	<u>\$7,192,205.33</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	<u><u>\$8,809,205.62</u></u>

Stewardship Committee meeting on November 6, 2023

Attendees: Emily Wallace, Co-chair, Emily Bijnagte, Co-chair, Will Hegeman, Janet Merrill, Velma Wagner, Tom Saterstrom

Notes

- Will has graciously offered to co-chair this committee with Emily Wallace
- Committee agreed that the 501c3 application process should be looked at and an analysis of benefits should be performed. Emily B. took this item and will report to the Board and the Stewardship Committee.
- Heritage Circle was discussed
 - Who should reach out to folks who have letters of intent to give \$ from their estate to the church? (most likely a minister should have this conversation, we need Brad to pull an updated list)
- Velma has requested that we evaluate church investments as a future looking project
- Testimonials are KEY for helping people understand why church matters and why giving to the church matters.
- 1:1 conversations are the MOST effective way to raise \$ for an annual pledge drive. We have a goal to have 200 conversations, we need to recruit volunteers to help us do this as well as host a training with scripts for those volunteers. Budget year ends on 6/30/2024
- Emily W. and Emily B. need to:
 - find out how many pledges are already in for this budget year
 - find out from Arif and Jen how long this Capital Campaign is going to last (2 years, 3 years, etc).
 - Learn about the theme as well as Capital Campaign chairs.
 - Ask Liz about potentially bringing back Heritage Circle name tags as well as the luncheon honoring those folks.
- All Stewardship Committee members need to start brainstorming if they can recruit other church members to have conversations (1:1) about annual pledge giving.

Next Stewardship Committee meeting is 11/30 @ 6:30pm via Zoom.

Draft Visionary Goals

Survey feedback

Draft visionary goals

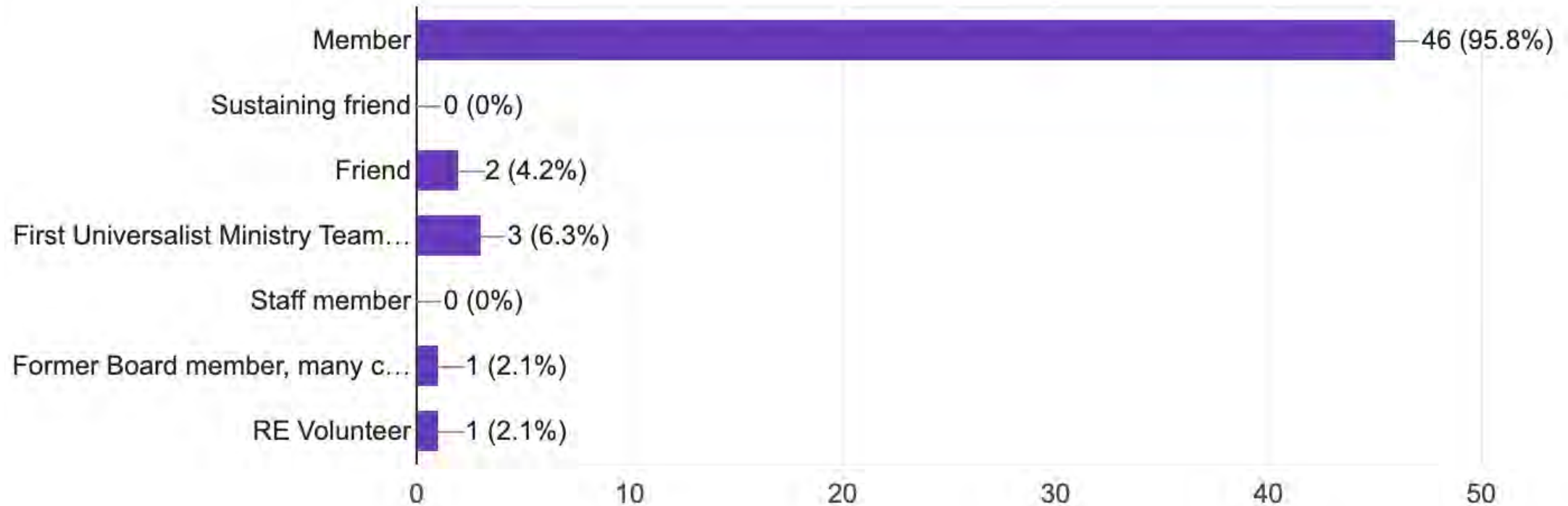
1. Honoring the complexity of our Unitarian Universalist faith and embodying its love within our congregation and beyond.
2. Fostering our connection with, care for, and action on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life.
3. Pursuing our individual and collective work for justice, in relationship 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.

Questions

- Question 1: What is your role within First Universalist? Check all that apply.
- Question 2: Within the draft Visionary Goals, where do you feel resonance, alignment, or inspiration with your plans, goals, and aspirations within this congregation?
- Question 3: Within the draft Visionary Goals, where do you feel a sense of dissonance with your plans, goals, and aspirations within this congregation?
- Question 4: In what ways do these draft Visionary Goals invite you to think differently about your role in the congregation? Are there things these goals invite you to consider doing differently? More of? Less of?
- Question 5: If you are open to the possibility of being followed up with regarding your feedback on the draft Visionary goals, please provide your name and the best way to contact you.

Who took the survey?

48 responses



Survey summary

- **Within the draft Visionary Goals, where do you feel resonance, alignment, or inspiration with your plans, goals, and aspirations within this congregation?**
 - 3 negative comments
 - 12 positive comments
 - 6 called out: 1. Honoring the complexity of our Unitarian Universalist faith and embodying its love within our congregation and beyond.
 - 18 called out: 2. Fostering our connection with, care for, and action on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life.
 - 10 called out: 3. Pursuing our individual and collective work for justice, in relationship with those most affected by systems of oppression.
 - 4 called out: 4. Widening the circles of power and engagement with our shared ministry.
 - 14 called out: 5. Providing meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change.
- **Within the draft Visionary Goals, where do you feel a sense of dissonance with your plans, goals, and aspirations within this congregation?**
 - 13 had positive feedback
 - 10 had negative feedback
 - 3 had other feedback
 - 4 had comments about missing goals
 - 6 called out: 3. Pursuing our individual and collective work for justice, in relationship with those most affected by systems of oppression.
 - 10 called out: 4. Widening the circles of power and engagement with our shared ministry.
- **In what ways do these draft Visionary Goals invite you to think differently about your role in the congregation? Are there things these goals invite you to consider doing differently? More of? Less of?**
 - 15 had positive feedback
 - 7 had negative feedback about goals and the process
 - 4 had other feedback
 - 4 had "meh" feedback - "No" or "we've always had goals"
 - 11 had other feedback - listing just a number or suggesting different ideas
- 24 people gave their name or other contact information

Within the draft Visionary Goals, where do you feel resonance, alignment, or inspiration with your plans, goals, and aspirations within this congregation?

2

#2

1, 2, 3, 5

2 and 3

1, 2, 5

#2 and #3. I like that action on Earth's environment is mentioned.

1, 2, 5

All of them really resonate, but particularly 2

1,2and5

2,3 and 5 - generally although I have some issues with some wording/concepts

2

Fostering our connection to mother earth and our efforts working for justice

I feel a lot of resonance with goal #2 and goal #5. My own goals and aspirations as a board member and as a human being are to care for and act on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life. And I believe that providing meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change is fundamental to belonging to a community that nourishes you.

2 and 3

I resonate with goals 2, 3, and 5, with some reservations about 3 because I think that "those most affected by systems of oppression" is at best redundant with the concept of justice and at worst restricts our "justice" to someone's definition of oppression.

Like 1, 2 (especially), 3, 5. Don't know what 4 means.

2,3 and 5 - generally although I have some issues with some wording/concepts

#2, 3, and 5. Number 5 because my own life stage contains opportunities for grief and change as well as joy - this speaks to my own needs. Number 2 and 3 because we need to determine what our next steps are in terms of environmental justice and racial justice and hopefully have a shared vision for what this means and what our strategies and tactics are.

2 and 3 most important to me..

All five goals are good. I resonate most to 2 and 4.

Embodiment of love in the congregation and beyond. Resonates. Number five number one resonate. I like pursuing justice in relationship with those most affected.

#2, 3, and 5. Number 5 because my own life stage contains opportunities for grief and change as well as joy - this speaks to my own needs. Number 2 and 3 because we need to determine what our next steps are in terms of environmental justice and racial justice and hopefully have a shared vision for what this means and what our strategies and tactics are.

Numbers 3 & 5 speak to how I aspire to live my life and be a present member of my communities.

1,2and5

Goal 5, for sure; goal 1, with a significant addition

2,3 and 5 - generally although I have some issues with some wording/concepts

No 5
Providing meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change is something I feel called to think about, and take action. Being the best person I can be, to live out my life using my values and to help others seems to be my goals at this time.

1, 2, 5

#5 - Creating and deepening connections with members of our church.

1, 2, 3, 5

I feel a lot of resonance with goal #2 and goal #5. My own goals and aspirations as a board member and as a human being are to care for and act on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life. And I believe that providing meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change is fundamental to belonging to a community that nourishes you.

I feel a lot of resonance with goal #2 and goal #5. My own goals and aspirations as a board member and as a human being are to care for and act on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life. And I believe that providing meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change is fundamental to belonging to a community that nourishes you.

They all sound GREAT!

All these sound great

I think these 5 as a whole represent where we want to go.

Yes

I like all these and they embody my values in a very good way.

I find these visionary goals to be very compelling and engaging.

All are good

all the above

All of them fit with my hopes and aspirations

All five resonate for me, but the first one especially stands out because it forms the basis for the other four.

in order 1,5,2,3,4 but I support them all

I resonate with all of them, but especially with the first one.

Not feeling the resonance.

Nowhere

These visionary the goals are all meaningful to me however my feeling of "resonance" with First U has diminished significantly over the last two years.

Within the draft Visionary Goals, where do you feel a sense of dissonance with your plans, goals, and aspirations within this congregation?

These are nice words, I wonder how we're going to do it!

I do not feel any dissonance with any of these goals.

None - they all resonate

I don't.

No dissonance

I do find dissonance

I believe that there are many opportunities to live out my hopes with these Goals.

None

Not really anywhere

None of the above

1 and 4 leave me disengaged. I don't feel that Unitarian Universalism is "THE path", but a path. "Circles of power and engagement" sounds very controlling and political.

The preface to the visionary goals talks about practicing beloved community among and beyond us. What is missing is how we are building faith within each of us.

I don't understand #4, and what it implies. What are "circles of power"?

I don't understand what #4 means. I would like to see something about personal growth and spiritual development.

4: Would like an explanation of this. 1: Our congregation needs work on this.

Maybe "deepening and widening the circles of power within..."

My worry is not with the wordings of these goals. My worry comes from the history of how our last visionary goals got interpreted into actions that significantly wounded our community and me personally.

Too nebulous

4 is too vague, needs context, define "shared ministry"

I don't feel a sense of dissonance with any of the goals except #4, as explained in my previous answer.

In #4 the idea of "shared ministry" feels evangelical to me, which is something I disagree with and gives me pause.

I did not participate in the first round of drafting these goals, because I very much objected to only being allowed to consider one question--therefore molding my answers. I wanted to be able to express my own hopes, aspirations, goals. I felt deeply disrespected as a result.

The language and sentence structure feels complicated. Particularly number two and number three. Can we make them less academic? Maybe remove the kind of funky opening phrases. Overall, I have to work hard to try and figure out what they're saying.

There were events that unfolded over recent years that contribute to my experience of seeing these visionary goals as aspirational and deeply disconnected from "behavior" of church leadership.

3 The individual work for justice puts one in a silo and hard to be in relationship with those most affected.

3

What happened to racial justice? #3 seems so vague. Where is being a welcoming congregation? Multigenerational? Not sure what #4 means.

Goal #3: I feel dissonance with "systems of oppression". I feel that there is justice work to be done that might not be caused by either a "system" or by "oppression". This gets back to the complexity of issues described in Goal #1.

No. 3 Pursuing our individual and collective work for justice, in relationship with those most affected by systems of oppression. I find that interpretation of the goals differs a great deal among the members of our congregation. Agreeing on systems of oppression is not as easy as one might think. And, how to deal with it is even harder. We're talking about power. Power is a complex and delicate thing to deal with in our community.

3 The individual work for justice puts one in a silo and hard to be in relationship with those most affected.

I feel that there is justice work to be done that might not be caused by either a "system" or by "oppression". This gets back to the complexity of issues described in Goal #1.

In what ways do these draft Visionary Goals invite you to think differently about your role in the congregation? Are there things these goals invite you to consider doing differently? More of? Less of?

Small text block, likely a goal or reflection snippet.

Learning more about justice and injustice.

My impression is that our justice work as a congregation is largely focused on social/racial justice. These goals might encourage us to learn more fully into environmental justice as well. #4 should invite us to explore our policy governance model and how we can more effectively balance the roles of the staff, board, and congregation.

I think goal #4 is inviting me to participate differently in church, as I think about who has power in our church, how it's used, etc. I think that goal makes me want to think more about power in general, including my own power to influence others.

Goal #1, "Honoring the complexity of our UU faith" certainly makes me think. What is our UU faith? What can I learn from those sacred texts and spiritual practices? Can I build community by studying / practicing with others in our community.

Participating in collective action as part of this community

It has made me try to understand my own resistance to some changes. Do I have legitimate reasons for resistance, or do I just feel comfortable "the way things were"? I welcome some changes, but not others.

I think they are good, inspiring goals and hope we will live into them

I'm no longer an active "do'er" but I continue to be supportive of work in all these areas.

#3 invites me to learn more and become involved

It reinforces my decision to move on to a community that resonates more clearly for me and feels more grounded in reality.

They call me to embrace the many ways they call us into action on behalf of the greater good.

They provide a tighter focus on what we do as members of this congregation.

As an RE volunteer, I can see how these goals fit within the RE curriculum as a whole.

Greater participation in Goal 5.

It's clear to me from reading these goals that I could/should be much more engaged in activities that support the goals. Unfortunately, my energy level isn't what it used to be.

I would like to be more involved in changes that happen at church.

I struggle w these being called goals. These are not goals. Guiding principles maybe? Goals you ACHIEVE. These are framed as "we do this by." Very different. And I like that. Just call them what they are then. And then I think a call to have us all use elements of these same principles in our own lives invites us in need ways.

Really, these goals are not specific enough to make me think differently about my role in the congregation. The previous visionary goals were much better and I don't think we had achieved them yet. Having participated in a VG workshop last spring, I don't have confidence that the process worked well enough to warrant changing the existing VGs.

7 Continuing to look for opportunities for me to participate in these goals.

The process of developing the goals caused me to feel alienated from the church.

I have sustained my membership through an ongoing pledge that I brought to a nominal level as I sort out my relationship with First U. The disconnect between stated values and actions has felt profound - hypocrisy comes to mind - not beloved community.



Worship

Sunday worship services are offered in person and online at 10 a.m. during the summer (May 14 through Sept. 10). We'll return to two services on Sunday, Sept. 17.

Learning from Each Other's Experiences

October 2023
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis



First Universalist Church

Website and communications research and revamp project

Emily Bijnagte

Project plan

Discovery | 5

- Website evaluation
Em Evaluation Oct 27 — Nov 15
- Staff and Board input
Board Em Research Staff
- Congregation input
Congregation Em Research
- Agency discovery and evaluation
Agency Ashley Evaluation
- Discovery findings and report
Em Summary of findings

Planning | 3

- Agency selection
Agency Ashley Final
- Alignment on findings and goals
Board Em Staff
- Detailed project plan
Em Recommendations

Build | 7

- Agency kickoff
Agency Handoff
- Agency timeline and check-ins
Agency
- Check in # 1
Agency Ashley Em
- Check in # 2
Agency Ashley Em
- Check in # 3
Agency Ashley Em
- Final Review
Agency Ashley Em Final
- Testing and evaluation
Ashley Board Em Evaluation
Research Staff

Launch | 3

- Launch plan
Agency Ashley Em Rachel
Staff
- Handoff and moving forward
Agency Ashley Em Staff
- Plan for new content and feature needs?
Agency Ashley Em Staff

Maintenance and Care | 3

- Page update rules
Em Staff
- New content rules
Em Staff
- Calendar organization and tagging
Em Staff

Website evaluation process

- Working to get access to the Google Analytics for the First U site and will review
- Sitemapping the current site to understand flow and structure and will provide recommendations for updates
- Guerilla heuristic evaluation
 - Match between the system and the real world
 - Consistency and standards
 - Flexibility and efficiency of use
 - User control & freedom
 - Recognition rather than recall
- UX review and recommendations

Staff and Board input process

- Survey feedback
- Requesting feedback from the board on the process as well as specific requests / issues / concerns with the current website and communication approach
- Design and final recommendations will route through the board once approved by the working team (Ashley, Emily B. and others-hopefully!)

Initial survey – website questions

- <https://forms.gle/299bmR3ogzaMyH8e8> – please take it if you haven't already
- How often do you visit the current website?
- What types of information are you looking for on the website?
- What, if anything, is missing from the current website?
- What, if anything, is working well on the current website?
- Which of the following groups do you seek out relevant information for on the church website?
- How does the current First U website make you feel?
- How **should** the First U website make you feel?
- How do you view the current website?
- How would you describe First Universalist Church to a friend?
- Thinking about how you would describe First Universalist to a friend, how well does the current website convey that?
- If you could wave a magic wand and change anything about the current First U website, what would you change?

Initial survey – communication questions

- Now we want you to think about your experience with **The Weekly Liberal**, our newsletter.
- Which sections of The Weekly Liberal do you enjoy?
- What, if anything, is working well with The Weekly Liberal?
- What, if anything, is missing from The Weekly Liberal?
- Now think about all of the different ways in which you communicate with First Universalist - in person, email, website, The Weekly Liberal, and other ways. Do you have any suggestions for improving the overall communication approach at First Universalist?
- What would make church communication (The Liberal, the website) more easily accessible to you?
- On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being that you hate it and 5 being that you love it, how do you feel about the name of the e-news, "The Weekly Liberal" ?
- If you could rename the weekly e-news, what would you call it and why?"
- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with the church website, The Liberal, or any other communications with the church?
- If you are interested in the possibility of talking more about the website or The Weekly Liberal and other ways the church communicates with members and friends, please provide your name and best way to contact you.

Survey results so far – quick summary (34 results as of November 11)

- Most people view it less than once a month or every month (85.3%)
- Missing from the current site: calendar, easy searching, current information, reasonable speed of page loads, good navigation
- Working well: Breadth of information about what is going on, events prominently listed
- 66% of respondents are looking for information for seniors and elders
- Website doesn't do a great job of conveying First U
- People like the information in the Liberal, and generally are ok with or like the name

Agency discovery and evaluation

- Ashley is spearheading this effort
- Beginning to meet with potential vendors for the final design and build of the updated website
 - Review design approach and website build strategy
 - Will ensure proper documentation can be created to allow for easy updates and management of the new site

Discovery findings and report

- Will share out a full deck –at December or January Board meeting - depending on speed of agency selection and ability to get enough information from stakeholders
- Congregation and stakeholder concerns and issues
- Recommendations for improvement (prioritized)
- New site map recommendation with navigation updates
- UX and design recommendations
- Next steps