

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOVEMBER 21, 2024 TABLE OF CONTENTS

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First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
November 21, 2024
6:30 - 9:00 pm
First Universalist Church
Cummins Room & Zoom (multiplatform)

Start	Duration	Topic	Lead
6:30 PM	5	Call to Order	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	30	Executive Session Somatic Grounding Spiritual Community Building	Jeff Jen
7:10 PM	30	IDI Development	Ashley, Sarah
7:40 PM	5	IDI/Visionary Goals Tie-ins to Board Agenda	All
7:45 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
7:50 PM	10	Board Communication & Interaction with Congregation	Matt, Emily
8:00 PM	10	Congregational Meetings - Timing & Topics	All
8:10 PM	10	Break	
8:20 PM	10	Finance Committee Report	Marc
8:30 PM	10	Stewardship Committee Report	Lou, Sarah
8:30 PM	10	Governance Committee Report	Emily, Emily
8:50 PM	10	Gratitudes	All
9:00 PM		Adjourn	

Roles, Responsibilities, and Resources for Board Members

[Job Description: First Universalist Board of Trustees](#)

[Church Bylaws](#)

[Governing Policies Handbook](#)

[2023-24 Monitoring Schedule](#)

[First Universalist Church Web Site](#)

		Old Documents - Leadership Handbook, Bylaws	
		Balloon Payment on Mortgage	

Senior Minister Board Report
Prepared by Rev. Jen Crow
November 18, 2024

Spiritual Grounding

In this time of fractured aspirations for our country, I am turning to many different wisdom sources for direction and accompaniment in discerning what is needed in this moment.

The poet, Andrea Gibson, shared this in a “Post-Election Letter to a Friend” recently.

“Last April, after two years of chemotherapy, when my oncologist told me the cancer was now considered incurable, I felt the expected fear and grief. But something I didn’t tell you was this—I also felt relief. Why relief? Because when I heard the system say, “We can’t save you,” it was the first time since my diagnosis that I felt as if my life was in my hands. Watching the election, I felt something similar: grief, fear. Then this thought—*Our lives are in our hands*. They always were, but it’s clearer than ever now.

I keep asking myself, “What is my job in this moment? What do I specifically have to offer?” It’s empowering to ask those questions because no one’s job will be the same. There were many years of my life that I did not feel I was actively participating in change unless I was in the streets protesting. As my health worsened, I knew that wasn’t where I would be of most service. Creatively explore where you might be most useful. Throw a *What’s My Job* party and explore the question with your community. Friends may reflect a specific talent or gift they see in you that you haven’t yet recognized.”

There is clarity in this moment - we are in each other’s hands. And each of us, and this faith community, will have a job to do in the days ahead. As leaders of this congregation, the discernment of what our particular work in this particular moment will be is ours to share. Grounded in our particular heritage of Universalism that proclaims a love so powerful that no one is outside the circle and all must be treated as the whole and holy and worthy beings that they inherently are, what is ours to do?

I’m grateful to have our visionary goals to guide us, and a clear purpose already articulated. And, as the social and political landscape that we live within changes in the months and years ahead, we will continue to be called into discernment about this particular congregation’s role in offering spiritual nourishment, community care, and faithful action that empowers, protects, and stands in solidarity with the most vulnerable people in our community and our planet.

Now is the time to take stock, literally and figuratively, of our resources and our liabilities. What do we need to learn, and learn quickly? What do we already know about ourselves and each other? What spiritual practices, what practices of building Beloved Community, can we lean into? What resources do we have among us, and what do we need to cultivate and seek out? What habits and patterns do we fall into that do not serve us and our role in the world?

On November 6th, the author, Rebecca Solnit, shared this on [Lion's Roar: Buddhist Wisdom for our Time](#).

“You are not giving up, and neither am I. The fact that we cannot save everything does not mean we cannot save anything and everything we can save is worth saving. You may need to grieve or scream or take time off, but you have a role no matter what, and right now good friends and good principles are worth gathering in. Remember what you love. Remember what loves you. Remember in this tide of hate what love is. The pain you feel is because of what you love.

You can be heartbroken or furious or both at once; you can scream in your car or on a cliff; you can also get up tomorrow and water the flowerpots and call someone who’s upset and check your equipment for going onward. A lot of us are going to come under direct attack, and a lot of us are going to resist by building solidarity and sanctuary. Gather up your resources, the metaphysical ones that are heart and soul and care, as well as the practical ones.

There is no alternative to persevering, and that does not require you to feel good. You can keep walking whether it’s sunny or raining. Take care of yourself and remember that taking care of something else is an important part of taking care of yourself, because you are interwoven with the ten trillion things in this single garment of destiny that has been stained and torn, but is still being woven and mended and washed.”

Let’s take care of ourselves and each other, and let’s find our role individually and collectively.

Monitoring Items

Attendance and Membership Trends

Please see attached information.

Staff and Volunteer Grievances

One grievance against a staff member was received, reviewed, found to be without merit, and dismissed by the Senior Minister and the Board. There have been no 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. There have been no additional exit interviews since that time.

Information Items

[2024 UUA Certification Data Report](#) - this report contains information on membership, financial, religious education, and social justice engagement in Unitarian Universalist congregations this year.

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
October 17, 2024

Start	Duration	Topic	Lead
6:30 PM	5	Call to Order Present: Jeff, Sarah, Marc, Cathy, Emily, Emily, Ilo, Lou, Ashley, Martha Moriarity Absent: Matt, Jen, Arif	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	20	Executive Session Somatic Grounding Spiritual Community Building	Jeff Ashley
7:00 PM	55	IDI Development - Ongoing development work for the board	Ashley, Sarah
7:55 PM	5	Consent Agenda Approved 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	All
8:00 PM	10	Break	
8:10 PM	10	Finance Committee Report - YTD financial results through August are very positive; primary driver is revenue, which is ~\$275,000 over budget. Resons for this are a change in accounting treatment of donations from cash to accrual basis, which moved several donations made in the last fiscal year into the current fiscal year and several large pledges that were fulfilled early in ths fiscal year. - Annual financial policy review revealed no issues; new audit and cybersecurity policies are under consideration. - We are in the process of moving congregational investments into ESG equitiies.	Marc
8:20 PM	10	Governance Committee Report Jen's annual review is in process; currently considering congregants to ask for input.	Lou, Sarah
8:20 PM	10	Stewardship Committee - Pledging Subcommittee. Significant help will be required for one-on-one conversations...having volunteers talking to people in their affinity groups was suggested as a way to approach these conversations. - Fundraising Subcommittee. Early planning on community-building events in spring; thinking about a concert followed by a social hour with light refereshments. Also looking at a youth-led fundraiser. Organizing/planning help required for these events. Likely switching to a model requiring payment up-front rather than a pledging for events.	Emily, Emily
8:40 PM	10	Board Involvement Work on a discussion guide continues; goal is to touch multiple group and have multiple points & ways of connection in order to have an ongoing understanding of peoples' hopes as well as share the work of the board.	Matt, Emily
8:50 PM	10	Gratitudes	All
9:00 PM		Adjourn	

Statistical Report for October 2024

Board Meeting November 21, 2024

MEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICES: 1

Nancy Browne, Oct. 12

MEMBER MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT: 0

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL: 0 - *New Members from Nov. 3 and 10 class will be reported on Nov. stat report for Dec. meeting*

MEMBERS REINSTATED: 0

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL: 1

Gail Hanson, died Sept. 27

CHILDREN DEDICATED:

Total members as of the last meeting: 989

To be added: 0

To be removed: 1

TOTAL MEMBERS: 988

October Attendance

	2024											2023
	Sun. 9a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Sanctuary	Sun. a.m. Livestream	YouTube Views	Totals	Sun. 9a Sanctuary	Sun. 10a Sanctuary	Sun. 11a Sanctuary	Sun. a.m. Livestream	YouTube Views	Totals	
Adults												
1st week	89	95	29	90	303	105		111	36	91	343	
2nd week	100	114	36	84	334	100		115	39	81	335	
3rd week	59	87	30	78	254	159		139	47	94	439	
4th week	107	128	34	139	408		191		28	77	296	
5th week						162		144	37	79	422	
Monthly Total	355	424	129	391	1299	526	191	509	187	343	1835	
Average for October	89	106	32	98	325	132	191	127	37	69	367	
RE					9 & 11 RE						9 & 11 RE	
1st week					138						133	
2nd week					157						135	
3rd week					n/a						121	
4th week					138						5	
5th week											102	
Monthly Total					433						496	
Average for October					144						99	
Combined Average					469						466	

Youtube views recorded 11/12/24 at 1:30 p.m.
 3rd week - MEA - Ritual Sunday- No RE