

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
September 17, 2026
6:30 - 9:00 pm
First Universalist Church
[Cummins Room and Zoom \(multiplatform\)](#)

Start	Duration	Topic	Lead
6:30 PM	5	Call to Order	Marc
		<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	Marc
6:40 PM	20	Executive Session Somatic Grounding Spiritual Community Building - how are we moving past minimization?	Katherine Jen
7:00 PM	20	2026-27 board goals - discussion and approval	Marc
7:20 PM	15	Governing policy handbook - approve revisions	Lou
7:35 PM	20	2026-27 Draft Staff Work Plan - discussion/input	Jen
7:55 PM	5	Consent Agenda Approval of August 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 Committee reports - Finance, Stewardship	
8:00 PM	10	Break	Katherine to bring snacks
8:10 PM	15	Legal action follow up	Jen/Kirk
8:25 PM	10	Sabbatical planning	Jen
8:35 PM	5	Finish The Promise update	Marc
8:40 PM	10	Committee report discussion/open discussion	All
8:50 PM	5	Meeting review and Gratitudes	All
8:55 PM		Adjourn	

DRIVE model for decision making:

D: Who is the decision-maker? If not an individual, how will the decision be reached (e.g., consensus, majority vote, etc.)

R: Will there be a recommendation sought, and if so, from whom?

I: What input will be solicited? How? From whom?

V: Does the decision need to be vetted with anyone before it is finalized?

E: Who is responsible for executing the decision?

Helpful questions to consider, given our intercultural orientation of minimization, to promote equity and inclusion in moving our goals forward:

- What is our role in obtaining this goal?
- What are our values we need to consider as we think about our approach, particularly concerning equity, diversity, and inclusion?
- How have we structured our approach to ensure we are considering all points of view?
- How conscious, intentional, and transparent are we about our guidelines for interaction in our meetings? How might we be reinforcing a “go along to get along” approach?
- What do we think we already know about this topic? What assumptions are we making? What is the data to support what we think we know?
- What else do we need to learn? How are we going to get this information? From whom?

Roles, Responsibilities, and Resources for Board Members

[2026-27 Board Handbook](#)

Preamble

As members of the Board of Trustees of the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, we bind ourselves together, willingly, in this covenant in order to form a more beloved community rooted in our UU values of interdependence, pluralism, justice, transformation, generosity, and equity, with love at the center.

We covenant for moments of peace and conflict, and recognize the continuous need for reconciliation.

Board covenant

Love is the spirit of this church

1. Honor the sacred nature of our collective work and engage in it with a perspective of hope, gratitude, humility, and joy.
2. Empower each other to use our universal wisdom and to speak our truths.
3. Approach each other with an attitude of appreciation for the energy, time and commitment to this community.
4. Be an active and engaged member of the church community, tending to the work of our spirits, individually and collectively.

And service is its law.

5. Ground ourselves and our actions in the trust that we have been given as stewards of this church.
6. Keep with the spirit and letter of the board's formal governing documents (bylaws, governing handbook) when forming policies, procedures, and practices, all in pursuit of its mission and visionary goals.
7. Actively participate in discussions and decision-making processes and integrate the diverse perspectives of the larger community we serve.
8. Communicate board decisions to the congregation with care and clarity.
9. Hold ourselves accountable to our commitments and share the work.

This is our great covenant:

To dwell together in peace,

10. Remember that peace is messy and creating peace among us is a challenging, ongoing practice that helps us build trust, belonging, connection, safety, and security.
11. Commit to staying in community, knowing that conflict is inevitable when humans come together.
12. Conduct ourselves with respect and dignity towards each other, practicing dialogue that is truthful, kind, necessary, and timely.
13. Seek to build a trusting relationship with the congregation by using with discernment communication, disclosure, transparency, and confidentiality as tools.
14. Apologize for harms inherited and those that will inevitably happen as we work toward peace, and be accountable for repairing and changing behaviors.

To seek the truth in love,

15. Recognize differences as the inherent goodness of our community and that diverse perspectives hold the strongest degree of truth.
16. Seek out and encourage intercultural diversity among Board members.
17. Form policies, procedures, and practices with the understanding that truth and meaning are ever evolving.

And to help one another.

18. Trust that the board cooperates as a system that is more than the collection of its contributions, in its challenges and opportunities.
19. Value the varied ways people engage.
20. Offer and receive – not too much, not too little.
21. Seek joyful ways to give, learn and grow.

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Board of Trustees Meeting
August 20, 2026
6:30 - 9:00 pm
First Universalist Church
Cummins Room & Zoom (multiplatform)

Start	Duration	Topic	Lead
6:30 PM	5	Call to Order. Absent: Ada Hendrickson	Marc
		<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--Approved. Retreat recap and 2026-27 board goals--discuss changing the monthly agenda. Build some flex time for ad hoc discussion. Committee reports won't be reported on monthly except for the Finance report that could be reported on bi monthly and then more frequently in the Spring.	Marc
6:40 PM	20	Executive Session Somatic Grounding Spiritual Community Building	Marc Jen
7:00 PM	40	Retreat recap and 2026-27 board goals--Reviewed the roll up of scores ranking 1-14 as well as estimating the effort behind each goal. We discussed what we can handle and how to group the goals. Next steps will be to have a sub group work on scoping the goals so we can more fully understand what they mean. That scoping will be shared at the September board meeting.	Marc
7:40 PM	5	Consent Agenda Approved Approval of June meeting minutes Approval of annual 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	Marc
7:45 PM	5	Finish The Promise update--\$945,000 pledged and \$568,000 received. 28 pledges. The congregation will be asked to give at Water Sunday. The campaign ends Oct. 4.	Marc
7:50 PM	10	Break	Marc to bring snacks
8:00 PM	30	Executive session with counsel-- Approved	Jen/Eric
8:30 PM	10	Sabbatical planning-- No updates	Cameron
8:40 PM	5	Finance Committee Report	Marc/Jeanne
8:45 PM	5	Governance Committee Report-- a draft of the GPH is ready to vote on. Marc will determine how to vote	Lou
8:50 PM	5	Executive Committee Report Senior minister review update. Jen's review will be first week of October.	Marc
8:55 PM	5	Meeting review and Gratitudes	All
9:00 PM		Adjourn	

D: Who is the decision-maker? If not an individual, how will the decision be reached (e.g., consensus, majority vote, etc.)

I: What input will be solicited? How? From whom?

E: Who is responsible for executing the decision?

- What is our role in obtaining this goal?
- What are our values we need to consider as we think about our approach, particularly concerning equity, diversity, and inclusion?
- How have we structured our approach to ensure we are considering all points of view?

- What do we think we already know about this topic? What assumptions are we making? What is the data to support what we think we know?

[2025-26 Board Handbook](#)

Senior Minister Board Report
Prepared by Rev. Jen Crow
September 8, 2026

Spiritual Grounding - The Spiritual Work of Minimization

During my ministerial internship at Unity Church-Unitarian in St. Paul, I sat in on the monthly meetings of the Pastoral Care Associates. The Pastoral Care Associates visited the sick and dying, supported congregants with ongoing challenges, and showed up whenever a new child joined a family. Like the Care Companions at First Universalist, they brought curiosity and compassion into joyful and difficult situations. One of the first things you learn in offering pastoral care, or compassionate presence, is to show up with more curiosity and less judgement whenever possible. As I continue to learn more about how to move from minimization to acceptance on the intercultural development continuum - this swap - trading judgement for open-hearted curiosity - is more important than ever.

At one of those Pastoral Care Associates meetings, Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs asked us to begin by pairing up, with one person as the speaker and one as the listener. The listener would ask this question: Who are you?, and the speaker would respond. When the speaker ran out of things to say, the listener would respond, "God be merciful. Who are you?" We did this for 5 minutes, then switching roles.

Of course, folks could choose alternate language that worked for them, though we were encouraged to at least try out the words we were given. As the process unfolded, deep listening and the repeated question opened up more nuanced responses and connection. We practiced curiosity with ourselves and each other in a space where judgement took a back seat.

Where might you swap judgement for curiosity in your own life and in your role as a leader? How might you notice judgement in yourself, and when it inevitably arises intentionally bring curiosity to bear? Where might you want to bring an extra dose of curiosity and compassion to your role as a leader?

Monitoring Items

Attendance and Membership Numbers - see included documents

Staff and Volunteer Changes

As of September 1, the Primary Contact for all of the Large congregations in the MidAmerica Region has shifted to Rev. Sharon Dittmar. Rev. David Pyle is still supporting the First Universalist with safety and security planning.

Staff/Volunteer/Congregant Grievances

There have been no volunteer or congregant grievances.

Protection of Assets

The church has all relevant insurance policies in place and paid to date.

Commercial Package - Premier

Commercial Umbrella

Workers Compensation and Employers Liability

Strategic Plan, i.e. Staff Workplan - for Monitoring and Approval

Twice a year, in September and February, the staff share their current workplan and progress toward achieving it with the Board. In these conversations, the Board is monitoring whether the annual workplan is a reasonable interpretation of the visionary goals, and whether reasonable progress is being made toward their achievement. This item is for information, consultation, and approval.

You can view the current staff workplan here:

 [2026-27 Theology, Themes, Workplan, Resources](#)

Information Items

Covenant/Safe Congregation Policy

As we continue to work to be more explicit about the church's culture, i.e. how we do things around here, I thought it might be helpful to see another congregation's explicit naming of the policies that guide their internal safety practices. [UU Church of Atlanta Safe Congregation Policy](#)

Sabbatical Planning

As we prepare for the shared work of my upcoming sabbatical, it has been helpful to delineate the planning work into two categories: Program and Operational. Updates on planning for both categories will be provided to the Board each month.

Program planning will include developing and communicating the theme of the sabbatical time (Storytelling for individual and collective transformation, aka the spiritual work of minimization), and planning congregational and Rev. Jen's activities to support exploration of the theme. Leadership of program planning will be shared by Rev. Jen, staff, the Facilitating Cultural Change Cohort, Worship Associates, the Adult Faith Formation Visioning Team, and Small Group Facilitators and lay leaders. Current plans include upcoming worship themes and theme based small groups, worship leadership

by Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs on September 20, Sacred Sites tour led by Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs on November 1st, and a congregational storytelling event in May led by Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs and Aimee K. Bryant.

Operational planning for the sabbatical time is the responsibility of the Senior Minister, staff, and Board. Operational planning includes: setting sabbatical dates, staffing levels and staff support, funding, shifting of roles and responsibilities, and emergency/contingency planning for unexpected events.

Operational planning updates:

Rev. Jen will be away on sabbatical from February 1, 2027 - April 30, 2027.

We did not receive the Clergy Renewal Grant from the Lily Foundation. Funding for additional staffing and program opportunities during 2027 will come from the church's operating budget. We will be seeking grant funding for some of the congregational program opportunities.

Surveillance and Next Steps

[Minnesota Reformer - Undercover Agents Surveillance](#)

[Unitarian Universalists Condemn Federal Government's Reported Surveillance of Minnesota Churches | UU World Magazine](#)

[DHS, probing anti-ICE activists, spied on at least five Midwest churches, court records indicate](#)

As we continue to understand and respond to the reality of government surveillance at First Universalist, support from the UUA and MARCH has been invaluable, and we continue to be grateful for the steadfast counsel of Eric Cooperstein in his role as church attorney.

Since the last board meeting, we notified the UUA that we have no objection to their filing a FOIA request for more information.

Rev. Jen and Kirk Cozine continue to follow up on other possible legal options in concert with the UUA and local affected congregations.

Overarching goal	Specific goal 1	Specific goal 2	Specific goal 3	Specific goal 4	Specific goal 5
Congregational covenant	Charter a Congregational Covenant Team by end of November, with goal of having a covenant for congregational approval at June 2027 Annual Meeting. Charter to include getting input on covenant process at other UU congregations, and feedback from congregation about their understanding of and feelings about covenant (e.g., what makes it effective and sacred)	Ongoing communication to congregation about the process and educate about what covenant is and how it can help create beloved community	Get regular updates from Covenant Team at Board meetings	Board provides ongoing support and troubleshooting to the Team	
Sabbatical planning	Sabbatical Team in place by end of September: ministerial coverage (including worship, operational leadership, pastoral care, stewardship, programming); sabbatical activities (peri-sabbatical events, congregational sabbatical activities); communications	Plan for ministerial coverage (operational, pastoral, programmatic, and worship) by November Board meeting	Monthly updates from Board on sabbatical planning beginning in October		
Complete Governing Policy Handbook revisions	Revisions as of August will be presented to Board for approval at September meeting	Governance committee will continue to review for possible additional revisions later in the year.			
Increased Board communications and visibility (e.g., regular Q&A or listening sessions, regular debrief among Board members about what we are hearing)	Continue listening sessions with BoT on Sundays or Wednesdays post community dinner at least 4 times during the church year, with specific topics to be discussed	Every other Board meeting, "spiritual community building" portion of Board meetings will focus on what we have been hearing from the congregation	Assign a board liaison to meet with different affinity groups	At least 6 times during the year, post a Smorgasboard column from a board member introducing themselves and what church means to them?	
Create Risk Management framework	Executive committee work with Jen to design and distribute a risk assessment survey to senior staff and Board by End of October	Review survey results at November board meeting and identify top priority risks	Executive committee work with Jen to assign owners (staff or committee) for each prioritized risk by early December	Draft risk mitigation plans for top priority risks developed by risk owners and reviewed at February board meeting	Set up recurring annual review (using this structure?), with updates to occur at end of fiscal year (May/June).
Intercultural development (Board and/or congregation), including multigenerational	Incorporate IDI as part of the spiritual community building part of Board agendas 4 times during the year.	New Board members (including new youth representative) to take the IDI and calculate new Board results by end of September	Board-led small group on Minimization and moving beyond it by December		

Bylaws revisions	Create new Bylaws committee (Kirk hereby offers to chair) at September Board meeting, rather than having existing Committee take this on.	Bylaws committee to collect exemplars and review current FirstU bylaws, then present proposal (major overhaul vs. minor changes) to November Board meeting.	Bylaws committee to present proposed revisions to Board at April meeting, for approval and submission to the members at the annual meeting.		
Work with staff to develop systems for congregational communications	Congregational survey to understand communication needs by end of October	Understand history of Cyber Coffee Hour and what went wrong by end of October	Create lay-staff working group by end of October	Understand current technological capabilities (e.g., Breeze) by end of November	Plan for tests of change by mid-January
Acknowledgement and appreciation by Board members of shared ministry and congregational member engagement	Continue writing personal cards to members who are steeped in shared ministry	Host an appreciation dessert post Wednesday dinner for lay leaders by January	Column about what lay leadership looks like in the Smorgasboard		

Trust
Belonging
Both

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Governing Policies Handbook

**Updated:
August, 2026**

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Definitions

- “Church” refers to First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, specifically including the First Universalist Foundation.
- “Board” refers to the duly elected or appointed Board of Trustees of First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Congregant / Congregation.
- “Congregant” includes members and friends of the Church who participate in Church activities or self-identify as being affiliated with the Church.
- “Membership” means the people listed in the Church roster, as defined by the Church Bylaws
- References to “Senior Minister” include the plural during times when the Church has Co-Senior Ministers.
- Delegation: wherever this GPH assigns duties to the Senior Minister or Board Members, those duties include delegation by the Senior Minister to other staff and of a Board Member to another Board member.

I. Purpose

This Governing Policies Handbook (GPH) serves as the operating manual for First Universalist Church. It sets forth and explains the relationships between the Church staff (led by the Senior Minister), the Board of Trustees, and the Congregation. The GPH provides a resource for understanding the expectations for and between each of these groups, including the authority of and constraints on the Senior Minister(s). Some, but not all, of the information in the GPH can be found in the Church Bylaws and other documents. To the extent that the GPH may conflict with the Bylaws, which are approved by the Congregation, the Bylaws govern.

More specifically, the GHP:

- A. States the Values, Mission and Visionary Goals and/or Policies that define who the Church is here to serve and in what way.
- B. Describes how Policy Governance works.
- C. Describes the roles, functions, and responsibilities of the Board and its interaction with staff and the congregation.
- D. Describes how to raise concerns and ideas to the staff and Board.
- E. Defines the relationship between the Board and the Senior Minister.
- F. Defines the expectations that the Board and Congregation have for the senior minister and the system of checks and balances for maintaining this relationship.
- G. Defines the roles and responsibility of the Board Standing Committees.

H. Establishes Community Norms:

1. Describe how we communicate and treat each other.
2. Describe the community's expectations and what happens when these are violated.

II. Values, Mission, Visionary Goals, and Church Relationships

The Church's governance structure is built upon a common understanding of our values, mission, and visionary goals. About every five years, the Church engages in a Congregation-wide process of identifying, focusing, and defining our shared values and goals. From a foundation of our deepest core values, we discern our mission statement, which subsequently informs our visionary goals.

A. **Values**

Our Shared Unitarian Universalist Values

Centered around a lasting commitment to **Love**

- **Interdependence:** We honor the interdependent web of all existence and acknowledge our place in it.
- **Pluralism:** We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.
- **Justice:** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all feel welcome and can thrive.
- **Transformation:** We adapt to the changing world.
- **Generosity:** We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.
- **Equity:** We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion.

B. **Mission**

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

C. **Visionary Goals**

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

1. Honor the richness of our Unitarian Universalist faith and embody its love within the walls of our church and beyond.
2. Foster our connection with, care for, and action on behalf of Earth's environment and all of life.
3. Pursue our individual and collective work for justice, in relationship with those most affected by systems of oppression.

4. Widen the opportunities for leadership participation and engagement in the many facets of how our church functions and thrives.
5. Provide meaningful presence to one another in times of joy, grief, and change.

D. Our Relationships with Each Other

At First Universalist Church we create our Beloved Community by...

- Welcoming all people and greeting them with intention, openness, and acceptance;
- Worshiping, singing, and playing together;
- Listening deeply with open minds and hearts;
- Learning from each other's experiences;
- Committing our time and money to the Church and the wider community to achieve together what we cannot do alone;
- Being present for and bringing joy and love to our interactions and relationships;
- Expressing humility about how our own needs relate to those of our community;
- Making space for pain, lament, despair, and hard truths; and
- Staying at the table in times of conflict, seeking and offering forgiveness.

III. Governance Process Policies

The policies in this section address how the Board conducts and monitors its own work.

A. Board Responsibilities

4. The Board has the following primary responsibilities:
 - a) Exercise its fiduciary responsibility to oversee the financial operations of the Church, including recommending annual budgets and capital campaigns to the Congregation for approval;
 - b) Supervise the performance of the Senior Minister, including entering into contracts with ministers who have been called by the Congregation, and conduct a timely annual performance review of the senior minister.
 - c) Conduct strategic planning for the Church, particularly including regularly revisiting the Church's visionary goal statements.
 - d) Attend to the Church's relationships with its primary stakeholders, including current and potential members and friends of all ages; ministers and other staff; programs,

committees, and affiliates of the Church, our neighborhood and local community, and the wider UU denomination.

- e) Approach its responsibilities in accordance with its covenant and with a style that emphasizes strategic leadership more than administrative detail, clear distinction of Board and staff roles, the future rather than the past, and by being proactive rather than reactive.
- f) Monitor and annually evaluate the Board's own process and performance.
- g) The Board has responsibility for the content and updating of this document.

B. Matters Outside the Board's Authority

- i. The Board does not supervise staff other than the Senior Minister and does not direct the Senior Minister regarding the hiring, firing, work portfolios, or compensation of staff. The Senior Minister, in their discretion, may from time to time consult with the Board or Board President regarding personnel matters.
- ii. The Board does not initiate or direct activities that are within the purview of the Senior Minister. The Board does not receive, investigate, or resolve grievances by Congregants about staff other than the Senior Minister. Grievances about staff are handled by the Senior Minister.
- iii. When Trustees participate as volunteers in staff-directed committees, teams or task forces, they do so in their capacity as Congregants, not as Trustees. All authority and accountability of such groups, as far as the Board is concerned, falls within the authority and accountability of the Senior Minister.

C. Officers' Responsibilities

1. President of the Congregation:

- A. Prepares agendas for Board meetings and other official meetings of the membership and presides over those meetings. If the President becomes unable to serve out their term, the Board will elect another Trustee to serve as President.
- B. Communicates with the membership including an annual report to be delivered at the Annual Meeting.
- C. Speaks on the Board's behalf and represent the Board at official functions such as new member ceremonies, ordinations, and installations as well as occasional outside gatherings and meetings.

The President may delegate their responsibilities to another Trustee.

5. Vice-President.

The Vice-President performs the duties of the President of the Congregation in their absence.

6. Secretary

- A. Records the minutes of all official meetings of the membership and of the Board of Trustees and forwards the minutes and other official Board documents to Church staff in a timely manner for preservation with other official records of the Church.
- B. Oversees the publishing of all notices as required by these Bylaws.
- C. Verifies the eligibility of all members to vote on Church business.

7. Treasurer

- A. Leads the Board's efforts to monitor the financial health of the Church
- B. Reports no less often than annually to the Congregation on the financial status of the Church and presents the budget to the membership for approval at the Annual Meeting.

D. Conflicts of Interest

- 1. A "conflict of interest" may arise when an individual's decision-making may be influenced by outside employment, business arrangements, or personal or family relationships. Persons who are in a personal relationship with or are a family member of a staff person may not serve on the board. This influence may compromise, or appear to compromise, an individual's judgment regarding governance or business decisions.
- 2. Hypothetical situations under which there could be a conflict of interest would include cases where a Board member or a member of their immediate family:
 - a. Serves as an elected or appointed official or as an employee of a federal, state, or local governmental entity; or serves as an officer or director or as an employee with another nonprofit or community organization; or is employed or affiliated with a business organization; AND
 - b. that organization or entity has some financial business dealing with First Universalist, or common issues affecting the goals and mission of this organization.
 - c. Is related to or in a personal relationship with a staff member of First Universalist.
- 3. It shall be the policy of First Universalist that where there is a conflict of interest, or where the potential for a conflict of interest may exist, each Trustee shall be expected to:
 - a. Disclose, at the earliest practicable opportunity, to the

other members of the Board, that a conflict of interest may exist and the nature of the conflict; and abstain from participation in discussions and voting on any matters for which there is or may be a conflict unless the other Board members present when a vote is being taken unanimously agree to waive the conflict and authorize the Board member to vote notwithstanding the conflict.

- b. The secretary will record in the minutes the disclosure of a conflict by any Board member, and whether or not a Board member then abstains from voting.

E. Board Covenant

Preamble

As members of the Board of Trustees of the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, we bind ourselves together, willingly, in this covenant in order to form a more beloved community rooted in our UU values of interdependence, pluralism, justice, transformation, generosity, and equity, with love at the center.

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4. Be an active and engaged member of the Church community, tending to the work of our spirits, individually and collectively.

And service is its law.

5. Ground ourselves and our actions in the trust that we have been given as stewards of this church.
6. Keep with the spirit and letter of the Board's formal governing documents (bylaws, governing handbook) when forming policies, procedures, and practices, all in pursuit of its mission and visionary goals.
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19. Value the varied ways people engage.
20. Offer and receive – not too much, not too little.
21. Seek joyful ways to give, learn and grow.

F. Board Committees

1. The Board may establish standing or temporary committees to help carry out its responsibilities.
2. Board committees report to and take direction from only the Board.
3. Board committees should not be confused with committees formed by the Senior Minister or staff.
4. The Board may delegate authority to its committees, but committees only have authority expressly delegated by the Board
5. The Board may include individuals who do not serve as Trustees on its committees.
6. In establishing committees, the Board shall create a charter for each committee specifying:
 - i. The purpose, scope, and delegated authority of the committee
 - ii. The duration of establishment (standing or temporary)
 - iii. Membership of the committee

G. Standing Board Committee Charges

1. Finance Committee

- a) The purpose of the Finance Committee is to facilitate the Board's oversight of the financial health of the church.
- b) Its responsibilities and authority include the following:
 - i. review financial performance of the church and report to the Board monthly or as needed.
 - ii. work collaboratively with the Senior Minister to develop the annual church budget.
 - iii. monitor all financial policies established by the Board of Trustees and review and propose needed revisions to those policies from time to time. These policies shall include, at a minimum, investment, reserves, gift acceptance, and audit.
 - iv. advise the Senior Minister on staff financial policies as requested.
 - v. oversee invested assets of the church, including recommending investment policies to the Board, working with professional asset managers, and monitoring performance of the investment portfolio.
 - vi. establish and oversee a process of auditing church finances.
 - vii. periodically review and amend a monitoring schedule to detail the activities it will undertake to

accomplish its monitoring and other purposes, and to inform staff and other parties regarding its documentary and other needs of them. The Committee's monitoring schedule is attached as **Appendix A.**

- viii. The Board delegates to the Finance Committee responsibility for monitoring compliance with the Board approved policies in the areas of annual budgeting and long-term financial planning, financial condition and activities, and asset protection.
- c) Membership: The Treasurer shall serve as chair of the Finance Committee. The committee shall have no fewer than 5 members including the chair. Other members shall be approved by the Board, in accordance with First Universalist Bylaws. Only members of the church may serve on this committee. The senior minister or their designee shall staff the committee.

2. Governance Committee

- a) The purpose of this committee is to assist the Board in ensuring that the governance policies move the Church toward our visionary goals, through regular reviews of current policies and proposing needed additions and revisions to the policies. Final authority for policy matters can only be assumed by the committee upon express delegation by the Board.
- b) Its responsibilities and authority include the following:
 - 1. Review policies indicated by monitoring schedule.
 - 2. Determine each policy's alignment with the visionary goals.
 - 3. Identify needed changes to current policies to better align with the visionary goals.
 - 4. Solicit Board feedback on proposed policy changes.
 - 5. Submit proposals to the Board for approval and addition to the Governing Policy Handbook.
 - 6. Communicate with the Congregation on policy matters (e.g., columns in The Liberal, emails, congregational meetings, etc.)
 - 7. Undertake other activities as requested by

the Board.

- c) Membership. At least one Board member, approved by the Board, shall chair the Governance Committee. Other members of the committee may be members of the Congregation nominated and approved by the Board.

3. Stewardship Committee

- 1) The purpose of the Stewardship Committee is to encourage and develop a spirit of generous giving in Church members and assist the Board and the various committees of the Church in the stewardship of resources. Its mission will be to coordinate and oversee major fundraising efforts within the Church and to communicate this vision of stewardship to the overall Congregation, and the resources needed to fulfill it.
- 2) Its responsibilities and authority include:
 - i. Promote generosity and active involvement within the Congregation
 - ii. Run the annual canvass
 - iii. Oversee regular fund-raising events
 - iv. Support capital campaigns
 - v. Promote giving to increase Planned Giving / Heritage Circle funds
 - vi. Evaluate use of resources relative to mission and goals of the Church

G. Staff Relationship

- 1. Board committees serve to help the Board do its job, not to interfere with the staff doing its job.
- 2. Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff and, in keeping with the Board's focus on the future, Board committees generally will not have direct dealings with current staff operations.
- 3. Further, the Board will not impede its direct delegation to the Senior Minister by requiring approval of a Board committee before a Senior Minister action.
- 4. The Senior Minister works for the Board, never for a Board committee or officer. However, nothing shall prevent the Board from requiring a recommendation from a Board committee before taking action as a Board.

H. Grievance Policy

It is the intent of the Board to be responsive to staff and the Congregation, but it is not the function of the Board to resolve complaints or grievances that are not directly related to the Board's policy-making and policy-monitoring functions.

Complaints about Board Policies:

1. Complaints about Board conduct or violations of policy should be directed to the Board President.
2. A Trustee who receives grievance from a Congregant shall refer it to the Board President.
3. Complaints concerning GPH or other Board policies shall be handled in accordance with the Church's mission and visionary goals, which encourages direct and open communications. Such matters brought to the Board's attention will be welcomed for consideration in on-going revisions to these policies.
4. If as part of a complaint a request for Board action is received, the complaint will be communicated to both Board members and the Senior Minister. After discussion with the Senior Minister, the Board will determine if a policy change is required. If not required, the Board will resolve the matter directly with the initiator.
5. If the Board determines that a policy change is required, the Board will make the required change and communicate the resolution to the initiator.

Complaints about Staff Violations of Church Policy

If an individual believes staff or the Senior Minister has violated a policy,

1. They should first discuss it directly with the appropriate staff or Senior Minister.
2. If this is not possible or if the issue is not resolved by staff or the Senior Minister, it may be brought to the president or vice president for consideration by the Board.
3. The Board will resolve the issue as appropriate, which may include clarifying policy or taking disciplinary action.
4. The Board will communicate its resolution of the complaint to the initiator.

IV. Board-Senior Minister Relationship Policies

The policies in this section address how authority is delegated to the Senior Minister and how the Board and Senior Minister should work together.

A. Delegation to the Senior Minister

The Board's job is generally confined to establishing topmost policies, leaving

implementation and subsidiary policy development to the Senior Minister.

All Church authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Senior Minister. The Senior Minister, in turn, is responsible for the actions and accountability of staff. The Senior Minister reports to the Board regarding the overall achievement of the Church mission and visionary goals.

B. Scope of Authority.

The Senior Minister is authorized to make all decisions, take all actions and develop all activities that are consistent with the Board's policies. The Board may, by extending its policies, "undelegate" areas of the Senior Minister's authority but will respect the Senior Minister's choices so long as the delegation continues.

1. No individual trustee, officer, or Board committee has authority over the Senior Minister or staff. A trustee, officer, or committee may request information from the Senior Minister, who may provide the information or consult with the Board chair regarding whether the request is appropriate.
2. The Senior Minister must abide by, and ensure staff abides by, any limitations on the Senior Minister's authority, as expressed in section 5 of this document.
3. The Senior Minister must report to the Board president any material violation of the responsibilities and authority that the Board has delegated to the Senior Minister. The Senior Minister shall also inform the Board whether the violation has been cured, under investigation, or requires further input from the Board.
4. The Senior Minister does not supervise or direct individual trustees, Board committees or task forces, regarding Board policy, nor is the Senior Minister obligated to interpret the Church bylaws or existing Board policies to such individuals or subgroups.

C. Senior Minister Responsibilities

As the Board's official link to the operating organization, the Senior Minister is accountable for all organizational performance and exercises all authority delegated by the Board's governing policies.

The Senior Minister's responsibilities broadly fall into the following areas:

1. Accomplishment of Visionary Goals as adopted by the Board and the Congregation.
2. Conducting and supervising the operations of the Church, including supervising staff, including hiring and firing;
3. Appropriate use and delegation of power.
4. Engage with the Board on issues that overlap or fall between the

spheres of respective responsibilities of the Senior Minister and the Board. These overlapping issues are sometimes referred to as “middle bucket” issues, where interests of the Church would benefit from the collaboration of the Senior Minister and the Board.

D. Monitoring Senior Minister Performance

1. The Board shall evaluate the Senior Minister based on their reasonable progress toward achieving the visionary goals, while complying with the policies established by the Board.
2. The Board will make the final determination as to whether the Senior Minister’s interpretations of the visionary goals are reasonable and whether reasonable progress is being made toward their achievement.

E. Disciplinary Policy

When the Board determines that the Senior Minister has committed a material breach of their duties or limitations, the Board may enter into the following process, always remaining cognizant of the unique nature of the called relationship between the Senior Minister and the Congregation:

- a) Informal warning. When the Senior Minister reports, or the Board identifies, a material breach of the Senior Minister’s duties or limitations, but one which the Board believes can be rectified through discussion with the Senior Minister or other corrective action, the Board may provide the Senior Minister with an Informal Warning and request that the Senior Minister present to the Board at the next Board meeting (via separate written communication to the Board prior to the meeting) their plan to remediate the violated policy. The Board may take further action as it deems necessary, including but not limited to calling upon resources available through the UUA or instituting more frequent monitoring of the Senior Minister regarding the violated policy. [either party can request involvement of the UUA]
- b) First formal warning. [for more serious isolated incident or a pattern of violation or poor performance] This step will be taken if there is no noticeable improvement in the Senior Minister’s willingness and/or ability to refrain from policy violations following a reasonable period of time for the Senior Minister to implement changes and for the Board to monitor them. [the First Formal Warning need not be preceded by an Informal Warning, depending on the nature of the violation] [UUA] The Board may take actions consistent with the alternatives in section _____ below.

- c) Second formal warning. This step will be taken if the policy violations continue. The Board at this point may also determine whether to notify the Congregation, the means of doing so, and the content of the communication.
- d) If policy violations continue, the Board may:
 - C. Board will hire outside consultant or attorney to advise Board;
 - D. Make known to the Congregation the nature of the ongoing policy violations as well as the ongoing efforts to address the issue at every point. The Board will also call a meeting of the Congregation in compliance with Church bylaws regarding selection/removal of the minister; or
 - E. Recommend termination of the Senior Minister for continued policy violation. The Board will meet with the Senior Minister to determine how to address their departure.

F. Ministerial Compensation

- i. Ministerial compensation consists of salary (including housing allowance) and benefits. Professional expenses are not considered part of the minister's compensation.
- ii. The Board will annually review only the senior minister's salary and benefits and may adjust as appropriate to current financial conditions.
- iii. Compensation increases may include:
 - 1. A cost of living adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) estimate for the current year, and/or
 - 2. A performance based merit increase as appropriate, depending upon current financial conditions. The Board will use the Senior Minister's performance evaluations for the time period since the last merit increase to assist in determining such merit increase.
- iv. The Board will maintain records of the Senior Minister's salary and benefit changes and will review this policy annually.

V. Senior Minister Authority and Accountability

This section addresses the Senior Minister's authority and Board expectations around its exercise.

A. General Duties

- 1. The Senior Minister shall exercise reasonable care to ensure that the Church does not engage in any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is illegal, imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics. This does not include congregationally supported civil disobedience that is rooted in UU values and furthers the visionary goals of the congregation.

2. The Senior Minister shall establish and implement policies and procedures to prevent misconduct and dishonesty that meets accepted business practices. For purposes of this policy, misconduct and dishonesty includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Theft or other misappropriation of assets, including assets of the Church or any entity with whom First Universalist Church has a business relationship.
 - ii. Misrepresentations or other irregularities in Church records, including the intentional misstatement of the results of operations.
 - iii. Fraud, forgery or other alteration of documents.
 - iv. Personal conduct outside of work inconsistent with UU principles and values.

First Universalist Church specifically prohibits these in the actions of the Senior Minister, all employees, and all others responsible for carrying out its activities.

B. Treatment of Paid Staff

The Senior Minister shall ensure that working conditions for paid staff are humane, fair, respectful, and professional.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall:

1. Create, keep updated, and implement an Employee Handbook that includes all policies setting forth the expectations for staff conduct and the rights of staff.
2. Create and maintain safe and healthy work conditions for staff.
3. Maintain a staff grievance procedure that provides recourse to staff after all other procedures have been exhausted.
4. Provide an integrated and comprehensive staff structure with clear direction on individual and team roles and functions and on lines of responsibility and authority.
5. Use best employment practices in all areas, including hiring, job descriptions, salary ranges and benefits, regular performance appraisals, discipline, discharge, and exit interviews. :
6. Not promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

C. Integration and Treatment of Volunteers

Much of the work of First Universalist Church is accomplished by and through volunteer committees, task forces and other groups. This shared ministry is central to the vitality of the Church. The Senior Minister is responsible for incorporating volunteers into the fabric Church life, including providing for their meaningful participation in committees, social justice, pastoral care, stewardship, and other functions in ways consistent

with the Church's mission, visionary goals, and policies. The Senior Minister will recognize and implement appropriate policies to protect vulnerable populations such as youth and people living with physical and mental disabilities.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall exercise reasonable care to prevent:

- i. Illegal discrimination against existing or potential volunteers.
- ii. The exposure of volunteers to unsafe or unhealthy work conditions.

D. Communication to the Board and Congregation

The Senior Minister shall ensure that the Board and Congregation are fully informed concerning important issues, and that the Board is, to the degree possible, supported in its work.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall:

1. Inform the Board in a timely manner of any relevant trends, issues, or events affecting the health of the organization.
2. Submit monitoring information required by the Board in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion.
3. Gather as many staff and external points of view, issues and options as needed for fully informed Board decisions.
4. Develop and maintain a calendar for the Church year that is publicly accessible.
5. Advise the Board within 30 days of any deviations from established policy or recommend changes in such policies whenever the need for revision comes to their attention.
6. Ensure that a complete and current set of all Church operating policies is readily accessible to all Church members at all times.

E. Public Statements

The Senior Minister shall not make public statements about the official position of the Congregation or Board on controversial social, political, and/or congregational issues beyond what the members or Board have formally and explicitly adopted as positions of record. If the Senior Minister wishes to communicate publicly on issues relevant to their ministerial role that have not been endorsed by the Board or Congregation, they should indicate they are speaking in their personal capacity and not on behalf of the Church. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe upon the fundamental principle of "freedom of the pulpit" or the exclusive purview of the Senior Minister to determine the format and content of worship services.

F. Annual Budgeting and Long-term Financial Planning

Careful, transparent fundraising, budgeting, and financial planning are critical to the programmatic and fiscal integrity of the Church. The Board and the Senior Minister share the responsibility of fundraising for and developing and approving annual operating budgets and capital expenditure budgets.

A. Annual Operating Budget and Capital Expenditures Budget

Regarding the annual operating budget and the capital expenditures budget, the Senior Minister shall:

- i. Develop annual operating and capital budgets guided by the Church's policies, priorities, current strategic plan, and resources.
- ii. Ensure that the Church Board of Trustees has sufficient time and information to review and approve the annual operating and any proposed capital expenditure budgets. To meet that goal, the Senior Minister shall:
 - a) Present the draft annual operating budget and capital expenditure budget to the Finance Committee, if currently constituted, or otherwise to the Board, for review and comment no later than five days prior to the April Finance Committee meeting or April Board meeting.
 - b) Provide notice to the Church members of at least one meeting for the purposes of discussing the draft annual operating budget and capital expenditure budget with Church leadership no later than 5 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, with such meeting(s) to be concluded no later than 3 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting
- iii. Present the final proposed annual operating budget and capital expenditure budget to the Board of Trustees for its approval no later than five days prior to the May Board meeting.
- iv. The Board shall approve and present the budget and any proposed capital expenditures to the Church membership for its approval at the Annual Meeting.
- v. In the course of preparing the annual budget, the Senior Minister shall insure that the annual operating and capital expenditure budgets:
 - a) Contain sufficient detail to support a reasonably accurate projection of revenues and expenses, and
 - b) Distinguish operational and capital items; and
 - c) Align with the Visionary Goals and other Board-stated priorities in allocating among competing fiscal needs.

Long-Term Financial Planning

The Senior Minister shall engage in long-term strategic planning on a regular basis, including annually revised estimated operating budget and capital expenditure projections for each remaining year covered in the plan.

G. Financial Condition

The Senior Minister holds the responsibility for maintaining the Church's financial health, including:

2. Ensuring that cash remains at or above the amount needed to settle payroll and debts as scheduled.
3. Expending Legacy or restricted funds only for the purposes determined at time of receipt or designation.
4. Ensuring that expenditures do not deviate materially from the approved annual operating budget or capital expenditure budget.
5. Providing cash reconciliations and completed financial reports on a monthly basis to the Board in writing.
6. Providing reasonable access to financial records by the Board, its committees, and authorized outside advisors.
7. Performing the following only with the explicit prior approval of the Board of Trustees:
 - i. Borrowing funds
 - ii. Making unbudgeted transfers or "loans" between the general funds and the Legacy funds
 - iii. Soliciting funds within the fiscal year for non-budgeted purposes with explicit designation of the intended expenses, and periodic reporting of the funds raised and matching expenditures.

H. Asset Protection

The Senior Minister shall protect Church assets by, at a minimum:

1. Comply, to a reasonable extent, with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles with regard to all financial transactions and reports.
2. Obtain insurance covering:
 - a) theft and casualty losses at replacement value less reasonable deductible and/or co-insurance limits;
 - b) General liability and conduct by staff and Directors in the ordinary execution of their duties; and
 - c) Employment practices.

3. Hire staff and contractors or otherwise use best efforts to:
 - a) Prevent un-bonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.
 - b) Properly maintain the Church physical plant and equipment.
 - c) Solicit at least two competitive bids when making purchases or entering contracts for over \$10,000.
 - d) Invest foundation and Church capital in accordance with approved investment policies.
 - e) Protect intellectual property, information, and files from significant damage.
4. Protect the Church's non-profit status.

I. Planned and Unplanned Absences

To protect the Church during the Senior Minister's absence from the Church, the Senior Minister shall:

1. Have no fewer than two other staff members familiar with Board issues and processes.
2. Have a plan in place for the continuation of full ministerial services in the event of the Senior Minister's absence.

Revisions approved by Board of Trustees 17 September 2026

2026 Attendance

August Attendance																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
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Statistical Report for August 2026

Board Meeting September 17, 2026

MEMBER MEMORIAL SERVICES:

Murray "Riley" Owens, deceased, July 24, 2026

MEMBER MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT:

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL: Two new members in July

MEMBERS REINSTATED:

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL:

Ingrid Moe, resigned membership 8/24/26 -

Jen will update the Board verbally

CHILDREN DEDICATED:

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

September 10, 2026

6:00-7:30 pm | Online

Members present: Cameron Smither, Amelia Marquez, Dick Niemiec

Staff present: Jen Crow, Brad Schmidt

Stewardship liaison present: Ginny McAninch

Members not in attendance: Marc Gorelick, Dan Berg

Meeting convened at 6:00 pm

1. Chalice lighting and grounding, led by Cameron and Jen

2. Committee Charter Review & Annual Calendar, led by Cameron

- Members reviewed the updated section on the Finance Committee from the revised Governing Policies Handbook, as well as the committee's annual calendar of meeting topics.
- Light discussion of the potential for an audit, even an informal one; will discuss in the future.

3. Brief First U finances overview, led by Brad

- Brad shared high level overview of the church's financial approaches, including accrual accounting method, fiscal year timeline, the use of funds (AKA "projects" in our accounting software) that include but extend beyond the operating budget, his role vs Senior Minister role

4. 2025-2026 Year in review, led by Brad

- Brad walked the group through formal financial documents reflecting July'25 – Jun'26. Started by reviewing the operating budget via the Detailed Income Statement. Main takeaways:
 - Overall: currently perfectly breakeven – no deficit, no surplus; were initially ~\$7k in deficit but have applied unrestricted gift to get to breakeven.
 - Revenues: most as expected; some unfilled pledges (low double digits \$K) mean revenues may continue to rise if they get filled; Jen, Brad, and Ginny will explore opportunities to close the loop with these pledging units to raise this revenue.
 - Expenses: most as expected; staff managed budgets well; building and grounds ended the year higher because of known property tax and security costs
 - Investment activity: unexpectedly higher, contributed to raising reserves
- The Building and Capital Reserve ended the year at a considerably higher place than expected, just over \$141k

5. The Year Ahead, led by Cameron

- Rev Jen updated the committee that the sabbatical grant we applied for was not funded in this round; while disappointed, we will seek feedback and consider applying again.

- Cameron gave an update on Finish the Promise efforts: after reviewing the current pledged amount and including the congregation's commitment in the form of the year's budgeted loan payments, the church has passed a significant financial milestone and will celebrate during the water communion service! We are within striking distance of paying it off completely; the push to collect the final amount is on with a firm end date of Oct 4.
- Ginny gave a short Stewardship committee update, sharing their capacity for hosting events may soon be growing; some discussion around the benefit of budgeting more resources for those efforts in next year's budget.
- Rev Jen discussed the possibility of pursuing some grants during the coming year, planting the seed for getting congregants involved in grant writing.
- Cameron and Amelia discussed the potential for shared conversations and commitments related to the church's purchasing from companies not aligned with our values (e.g., Amazon, Target); more discussion to be had.

6. Closing led by Cameron

- Thank you to the committee for returning for another year of financial monitoring and storytelling.
- Next meeting scheduled for October 8 at 6pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35pm

Respectfully submitted,

Cameron Smither, Treasurer

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Balance Sheet

	Actual As of 06/30/2026
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$197,880.08
Investments	\$3,874,227.02
Accounts Receivable	\$23,719.22
Other Current Assets	\$29,436.57
Total Current Assets	\$4,125,262.89
Non-Current Assets	
Fixed Assets	\$4,622,043.28
Total Non- Current Assets	\$4,622,043.28
Total Assets	\$8,747,306.17
Liabilities and Fund Balance	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$118,915.31
Benefits Payable	\$30,573.59
Other Current Liabilities	\$287,729.13
Total Current Liabilities	\$437,218.03
Long Term Liabilities	
Loan Payable	\$1,352,486.31
Interfund Transfer	\$0.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	\$1,352,486.31
Total Liabilities	\$1,789,704.34
Fund Balance	
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$4,442,958.71
Donor Restricted Net Assets	\$2,514,643.12
Total Fund Balance	\$6,957,601.83
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$8,747,306.17

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

Operating Budget

	Actual 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026	Budget 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026
Revenues				
Support				
Annual Giving	\$1,259,094.94	\$1,275,550.00	(\$16,455.06)	\$1,275,550.00
Donations & Fundraising	\$224,144.18	\$236,500.00	(\$12,355.82)	\$236,500.00
Total Support	\$1,483,239.12	\$1,512,050.00	(\$28,810.88)	\$1,512,050.00
Earned Revenue				
Services & Rentals	\$110,011.09	\$109,000.00	\$1,011.09	\$109,000.00
Investment	\$51.40	\$0.00	\$51.40	\$0.00
Other Income	\$8,320.38	\$2,000.00	\$6,320.38	\$2,000.00
Total Earned Revenue	\$118,382.87	\$111,000.00	\$7,382.87	\$111,000.00
Total Revenues	\$1,601,621.99	\$1,623,050.00	(\$21,428.01)	\$1,623,050.00
Expenses				
Personnel & Professional	\$1,252,945.73	\$1,243,000.00	(\$9,945.73)	\$1,243,000.00
Administrative	\$122,659.40	\$148,001.00	\$25,341.60	\$148,001.00
Fundraising	\$18,184.25	\$19,500.00	\$1,315.75	\$19,500.00
Program	\$66,449.85	\$67,500.00	\$1,050.15	\$67,500.00
Building & Grounds	\$158,468.81	\$140,300.00	(\$18,168.81)	\$140,300.00
Other	\$0.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00
Total Expenses	\$1,618,708.04	\$1,622,801.00	\$4,092.96	\$1,622,801.00
Investment Activity	\$17,086.05	\$0.00	\$17,086.05	\$0.00
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$0.00	\$249.00	(\$249.00)	\$249.00

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

Income Statement

Building & Capital Reserve Budget

	Actual 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026	Budget 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026
Revenues				
Support				
Donations & Fundraising				
Capital Campaign	\$78,775.00	\$155,500.00	(\$76,725.00)	\$155,500.00
Total Donations/Fundraising	\$78,775.00	\$155,500.00	(\$76,725.00)	\$155,500.00
Total Support	\$78,775.00	\$155,500.00	(\$76,725.00)	\$155,500.00
Total Revenues	\$78,775.00	\$155,500.00	(\$76,725.00)	\$155,500.00
Expenses				
Administrative				
Professional Fees	\$1,451.84	\$0.00	(\$1,451.84)	\$0.00
Total Administrative Expenses	\$1,451.84	\$0.00	(\$1,451.84)	\$0.00
Building & Grounds				
Equipment (Non-Capitalized)	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
Equipment Repair & Maintenance	\$1,662.21	\$500.00	(\$1,162.21)	\$500.00
Repairs & Maintenance	\$805.42	\$8,000.00	\$7,194.58	\$8,000.00
HVAC	\$6,007.00	\$6,000.00	(\$7.00)	\$6,000.00
Elevator	\$3,583.37	\$3,500.00	(\$83.37)	\$3,500.00
Grounds Maintenance	\$2,750.00	\$4,000.00	\$1,250.00	\$4,000.00
Capital Campaign Expenditure	\$0.00	\$133,000.00	\$133,000.00	\$133,000.00
Interest Expense	\$53,864.49	\$0.00	(\$53,864.49)	\$0.00
Total Building & Grounds	\$68,672.49	\$155,500.00	\$86,827.51	\$155,500.00
Total Expenses	\$70,124.33	\$155,500.00	\$85,375.67	\$155,500.00
Investment Activity	\$27,440.80	\$0.00	\$27,440.80	\$0.00

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Income Statement

Building & Capital Reserve Budget

	Actual 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026	Budget 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026	Variance	Annual Budget 07/01/2025 to 06/30/2026
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$36,091.47	\$0.00	\$36,091.47	\$0.00

MINUTES

First Universalist Stewardship Committee

Thursday, 27 August 2026, 2:00 pm | Room 209

Attendees

Committee members: Lynn Broaddus (chair), Rev. Jen Crow, Clyde Derrick, Unique Jacobo, Ginny McAninch, Sigrid Nielsen

Staff attendees: Brad Schmidt, Jie Wronsky-Riley

Notes

Appreciation: Rev. Jen noted that long-time member Riley Owens passed away and included the church in his estate plan.

Breeze 101: Brad and Jie joined the meeting to show us how Breeze works. First they showed us how congregants can use it as a directory, but also to manage & track their pledges and gifts. They then showed us how gifts are recorded, both those that come directly into Breeze (e.g. credit/debit card and ACH gifts), and those that need to be manually entered into Breeze (e.g. checks, stock transfers, etc.) We learned that there's a one week or longer lag between someone's payment through Breeze and when that payment shows up on the church's Breeze portal.

We discussed the fees associated with online giving vs the cost of staff time to enter gifts that come through other means. It would be helpful to have an analysis of those tradeoffs to advise donors when we'd prefer to receive their gifts electronically vs as check or other mechanism that requires manual entry. The Finance Committee may want to follow up on this. We noted that the church budgets ~ \$15,000/year for credit card processing fees.

The group had more questions than we were able to address this evening, so we may want to invite Brad and/or Jie back to future meetings.

Update on "Finish the Promise" campaign: At this point we have \$962K committed toward the \$1.36 million goal, with roughly \$550K received.

Early Adult event: It is not feasible for the group to organize a fundraising event in time to include it with Finish the Promise (i.e. September). However, they are mulling the possibility of pulling something together with a longer planning horizon.

Events Committee proposal: Clyde shared with us his draft "Events Committee Charter", which would encourage and coordinate fundraising / community building events for the church and its broader community. During our discussion we agreed on the following:

- This is a terrific idea and could help us avoid some of the scheduling conflicts we ran into last year. It would be terrific to have a group of people focused on these opportunities.
- The Committee should be an independent committee (not a subcommittee of the Stewardship Committee) that works directly with Rev. Jen and staff (not a Board-appointed committee). The work requires coordination with staff, so this makes the most sense.
- The chairs/co-chairs should be church members, but other committee members need not be members.
- Fundraising events would need to be approved by the Stewardship Committee, with certain routine fundraising / “suggested donation” practices exempted (e.g. some of the fundraising efforts by CYFM, community dinner contributions, Daytime Connections contributions, food that is “sold” after Sunday services)
- Some events would be exempted from Event Committee oversight – e.g. memorial services, weddings, building rentals.
- It has been the church practice to make all events financially accessible to a wide audience, either by having a “suggested donation” rather than a required ticket fee, or by having a certain number of free tickets. We would like that to continue under the Event Committee’s leadership.

Clyde generously offered to be the inaugural chair for the Event Committee. Jen will oversee the continued editing of the committee’s draft charter and will solicit input from key staff members. In the meantime, we will go ahead and start recruiting members for the committee. Clyde will draft a posting for an upcoming edition of The Liberal.

Upcoming opportunities / Committee development

- All committee members except Lynn (who will be out of town) plan to attend the Leadership Lunch on Sunday, September 13th.
- Unique, Lynn and Sigrid are interested in signing up for the UUA’s Pledge 101 course. Lynn will follow up on the sign-up process. (*Post-meeting note: The first night of the course conflicts with the Stewardship Committee’s meeting.*)
- It would be helpful to recruit a few additional committee members. Unique will ask the Early Adults to see if anyone from that group would like to join us, and Lynn will talk with Rev. Laura to see if there are any new members she would suggest we talk with.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm

Next meeting: Our next meeting will be in-person on Wednesday, September 23rd at 6:00 pm.

Program Visioning Circles - Summer 2026

Before Rev. Ashley announced her departure from First U, she and staff member Rachel Rott had been planning to hold a series of Program Visioning Circles. Rev. Laura was supportive and stepped in to co-facilitate with Rachel. The group was a mix of folks who have been leaders and small-group facilitators at First U in a variety of areas at church.

The circles served multiple purposes:

- Bring together First U lay leaders from a variety of areas in church life—this is relational work as much as it is information-gathering;
- Learn and distill together the ways our Spiritual Growth Programs are successful and supportive of congregants and our mission, vision, and values;
- Discern where we have gaps in our care and support for one another as staff and leaders and where our systems and processes are not meeting our needs;
- As we continue to live our values as fully as possible in the reality of fascism, climate disruption, and uncertainty, what matters most in our Spiritual Growth Programs?

Below are brief syntheses of the three gatherings that took place over the summer. We welcome any questions the Board may have!

Gathering 1 - July 26, 2026

We gave this context to circle participants: *It could be said that everything we do at church is ministry. Every small group, team, committee, and act of service is an opportunity for connection and spiritual deepening. From helping to set up for Community Dinner, to leading or attending a group, to working in the RE program, to serving on the Library Committee, to being a Worship Associate, to serving on the Board. Everything we do together here is the work of the church, and everything we do here can be an opening to spiritual deepening for ourselves and others.*

This was the “question” for the circle: *Share about a time at church when you experienced deep belonging and being seen and known.*

July 26 Synthesis:

- Small group spaces are where some of the deepest connections happen at church
- Finding people who share similar struggles and also connecting across difference is important
- Youth and kids having adults beyond their family who care about them, support them, cheer them on is valued
- Youth empowerment and ownership in church is important
- Small groups are a place where it's possible to show up with courage and vulnerability - to be able to say what's really happening and have it be heard and held
- Taking part in church through leadership, helping to facilitate small groups, being an RE grownup in spaces with our kids/youth—these are powerful ways that people find, cultivate, and invest in community
- Especially in the moment we are living through, crises of democracy, erosion of social safety nets... it is important that church is a place where we name what's happening, hold space for grief, and can come together to build out havens of greater safety and structures of care

Gathering 2 - August 12, 2026

Question for the circle: *In a space where you've had a leadership role at church, what felt really affirming and energizing to you? Were there parts of the experience where you felt unprepared or unsupported?*

August 12 Synthesis

Felt affirming and energizing:

- Having good materials and also being encouraged to be authentic/yourself as facilitator (one example was *A Place to Start*)
- Being supported by *people* on staff (knowing someone specific was checking in on you)
- Partnering with others to co-facilitate
- Having excellent prepared materials (*Newcomers Circle*)
- Leading small group work is "sacred, relational, a gift"
- Having a group of co-volunteers that you get to know means so much (OWL facilitators)
- Being alongside other folks who have done a thing that is new to you is a great way to learn your way into a new role—you can hold each other up
- Our faith is a place where we can practice greater risk-taking - having hard conversations
- "This faith, this church, at this moment in time"
- It is powerful to be able to facilitate/lead in a way that is messy and real for all of us
- Doing something together gives you purpose

Felt unprepared/unsupported:

- Hard with few or no systems in place as a lay leader
- Doing admin/recruiting/training without support
- Would be good to have rosters of other leaders/facilitators
- Creating or rewriting curricula for church programs can be fun but is also intimidating as lay leaders when it's done in isolation
- When your co-facilitator isn't as strong a leader or doesn't help carry the load, the work is less rewarding and doesn't feel good
- Debrief/reflection processes are needed
- When challenging situations come up in a small group, it isn't clear where you go for support
- Need processes/support when things aren't working
- Would like more involvement/support from clergy in small groups— even just an occasional check in
- Some of our tools/materials no longer serve our purposes and we need new ones
- Feels like you're on your own sometimes

Gathering 3 - August 18, 2026

We gave this context to circle participants: *Church is a place where we get to do things differently than the ways we might do them in other areas of our lives. By committing to building the Beloved Community, we can practice a wholehearted and radically inclusive way of being in community.*

Question for the circle: *With that in mind, what is it that you are most longing for, as a congregant or in your leadership role(s), outside of worship at First Universalist?*

*[Items in **bold** were the strongest themes from Gathering 3]*

- **Multigenerational and other connections across difference** are a deep longing that we heard over and over
 - Co-learn / grow with people across age and other difference
 - People seem to be able to find affinity groups well at First U
 - Volunteering in RE is a strong connection point where people form lasting friendships
- **Folks would like to be known**
 - Big church = sometimes you feel anonymous
 - Desire for ministers to tap into more small group spaces, even just to pop into them now and then to get to know folks and see them
 - Be known as someone who can offer X and be asked to do it when it's needed
 - Finding balance between a large and robust congregation and deep and meaningful connections
- Desire for longer-lived groups that give you a chance to go deep with the same group of people
- Folks want to build connections and friendships at church when we're not in crisis, so that when we are, our community muscles are strong
- Some longed for more intentional focus on racial justice

- People want practices (like circle process) that facilitate deeper and more authentic connection
 - Less scripted, more focused on connection with good facilitation so that the sharing feels equitable and contained
- **The Social Hall is intimidating for a lot of people!**
 - More structured opportunities for connection after church and outside of Sundays (circle suppers were mentioned - people talked about the power of being in one another's homes as a relational practice)
 - Newcomer/Welcome Table - Broaden the invitation so that anyone can join and be part of a conversation with prompts?
 - Longing for social hour to feel more connective and welcoming