Thank you to all who participated in the Congregants Forum on November 13, 2016. The following records notes and comments provided at the forum.

Approximately 200 attended -- a very full participation, in all likelihood influenced by recent changes in church staffing (social justice) and the Nov 8 election.

Photos of the attendance List and written comments are here. The Communications Committee will transcribe the forum handwritten notes into this document.

If you have any questions or comments, including a request to modify what are in these notes, please contact board@firstunitarianportland.org. Please note that the Board did not request or retain any audio or video recording of the forum--and ask that any such recording that may have been made for personal use not be posted or distributed without the consent of the person(s) being recorded.

This document has 2 parts: (1) a compilation of written comments directed at the four, 5-year goals presented by the Board at the Forum; and (2) summary of oral comments provided in the “open forum” section held beginning around 1:55 pm.

PART 1: compilation of written comments directed at the four, 5-year goals presented by the Board at the Forum

5-Year Goal 1: Focus on collaborative governance, revising policies for clarity and brevity and creating linkages between the Congregation, the Board, and the Executive Team.

Summary of Major Themes:
There were a total of 96 comments made. Many of these were complex and could fit into several of the thematic categories that emerged. Those themes with 5 or more comments are listed below in order of frequency:

1. Comments relating to a sense of current autocratic decision making, or an expressed desire for a clearly understood democratic process with congregational input. 50 responses Examples given: Reader boards 5 responses, Kate Lore and social justice 3 responses, Unionization 1 response
2. Comments relating to a current sense of secrecy in decision making, or an expressed desire for transparency. 22 responses
3. Releasing the David Keyes report with an opportunity to discuss the conclusions and give input on whether to adopt individual provisions. 12 responses
4. Accountability to the congregation with more forums such as the annual meeting for linkage and input to the board and ministers. 10 responses
5. Honoring our 7 principles and covenant, treating the congregation with respect, rebuilding trust. 7 responses
6. Use of technology to connect the congregation (membership directory with pictures). 6 responses

Individual Comments Goal 1:

- Congregational input is influential, not just a public relations exercise
- All high impact change is vetted with the congregation - if a large number find it unacceptable, then it does not go forward
- Only personnel and legal issues should be confidential
- Change the bylaws so the board and congregation have veto power over ministerial decisions!
- End secrecy
- Cultivate transparency
- Respect the congregation
- Reject autocracy
- We need a more democratic process - modified policy governance may not be enough
- A large organization can work with cooperation - staff and ministers can still run the day to day, but much of the decision-making has been removed and we feel helpless and devalued
- Transparency and accountability - Example: screens came out of nowhere; where in the budget did the money come from? Where did the idea come from?
- Information on the pledge drive results is sadly absent
- The process - whatever process is to be followed - should be documented and followed, no matter how inconvenient
- Deciding on the process that should be followed for setting agendas, for making decisions, for getting bridging from the congregation, for spending, and for developing our budget, etc. needs to be an open conversation for anyone who wants to attend. The process should be highlighted in a process flow chart, posted with all of our other governance material, and available to the congregation on our website. I am willing to document it for you if you would like help. I believe the process is as important as the ultimate decision made (Christy Staats Christy@Staats.org)
- Where has democracy gone when the board has no power - only Bill/CEO
- How do I feel a part of this church’s direction when I don’t have input?
- Top down feels very disrespectful, creating distrust. It seems to violate the mission that values input and the democratic process. What is the fear that prevents the executive team from sharing reality with the congregation.
- Clear communication, an opportunity for congregational input prior to decision making (e.g. personnel is clearly within the purview of the ET, but sometimes the congregation needs to be informed and consulted)
• Perhaps we should bring back the annual meeting
• I suggest that the congregation might be more comfortable if the board had more influence on the “day to day” running of the church, working closely with the ministers and administrator of the church
• Differentiate clearly between arenas which need congregational input, a) board b) larger congregation, and those that don’t. Example: Do screens, which affect the worship experience need congregational input?
• How does democracy play in 1st church decision making?
• We need a coordinator for congregant volunteers. There is a lot of talent here and leadership ability.
• A membership directory that facilitates and hosts interconnection and community between members. A match.com that helps build internal community for external advocacy.
  • Yes
  • Yes
  • Ditto
• Increased transparency of governance - methodology: invite congregational feedback on consultant’s report
• Release the Keyes’ report
• How can governance be collaborative with such secrecy i.e. keeping the consultant’s report secret; keeping the complexity of Kate Lore’s leaving secret; no clarity about Bill’s intentions regarding social action groups - are they to be discouraged like Kate was?
• Senior minister is called to serve us, NOT to make authoritarian decisions without a democratic process.
• Complete transparency: Not just letting us know the facts, but letting the church members participate in the process
• Transparency: that means decisions that affect the congregation should be made visibly, with all alternatives explained, and criteria for deciding clarified and agreed on by congregants! No more top-down decision making!
  • Ditto
  • Ditto
• Make the full recent consultant’s report available to the full congregation, Report on the process for accepting or rejecting specific recommendations
• Perform a comprehensive policy review
• Survey stakeholders (ministry, board, committees, leaders, members) regarding what has worked well, what hasn’t, and how they would change it
• Use technology to enable all stakeholders to connect e.g. today’s forum topic could (concurrently to a physical meeting) be a virtual meeting on social media where comments can be captured over several weeks
• Hold public forums more frequently so it’s possible to hold a forum in a structured manner for its original intent (Gary Joaquin gary.joaquin@comcast.net 971 407-8759)
• End secrecy, cultivate transparency, respect the congregation, and reject autocracy
Emphasis on the linkages: more meetings like this to promote continual communication and feedback loops among congregation, board, and the executive team.

It’s important for the senior minister to be a visible advocate for the programs we support that tie us to our vision/mission.

Walk our talk!! Manage church affairs in a democratic and just way. Last year’s Justice Begins at Home after thought campaign smacked of hypocrisy after the ET fought the unionization effort.

I think the board should be the governing body of this church, Ministers should be employees who answer to the board, including annual reviews of their (ministers) performance.

I don’t like it when we are told that our governance is “hard to explain”, or “difficult to get everyone involved in.” We want to be involved, so let us in, even if it’s hard, tedious, or messy.

More democracy

More accountability

Eliminate policy based governance

Take back the power to affect the spiritual lives of congregants

Limit the power of the senior minister to arbitrarily impose changes on the congregation

Transparency of all levels

To clarify the structure of what is considered “day to day issues” the senior minister decides, and those issues where the board and congregation have input and decision making power

Where is our senior minister today? Why is he not here to participate or observe? Why is the board left to deal with a hurting and angry population (and I am not talking about the election results)?

Seems like the executive committee with “agreeable board members” is making all the decisions secretly. We want to govern ourselves!

October 30, 2016  Dear Vice Moderator,

My husband Gary Riggs and I have been loyal and pledging members of First Church for almost twenty years. We were drawn to the church because of the music program and the social justice program. Our two kids, Heather and Graham participated in the Learning Community program for many years. Gary and I have sung in the Chalice Choir and in the Unitarian Choir as well as being ushers for many years.

This fall we have been shaken to the core because of issues of transparency at our beloved church. We were shocked and saddened by the ABRupt AND UNTIMELY departure of our well loved and gifted social justice minister, Kate Lore. We have sought answers as to the questions surrounding her leaving. We have heard many explanations for this transition. Some of which indicate that Kate initiated this transition and others indicate that Kate felt under appreciated and under valued by the leadership of the church and was asked to quietly leave. The first thought that occurred to us was that the church could no longer afford the financial
I know that ten years ago as a church we voted to transition to Policy Governance. I am reflecting on that decision and wondering now what the ramifications of that vote really mean… Perhaps after ten years we might as a church reconsider looking at that decision and voting it out if it does not currently serve the church well. I have spoken to board members and they have indicated that because of that decision, it means that the board has little power and responsibility to oversee the Executive Team. My understanding of our church governance has been informed by the fifth of the seven principles that states: The right of the conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in the society at large. This commitment stated in the seven principles seems to be in conflict with the way our church governance is currently structured.

I grew up as a Quaker. My world view was shaped by the radical commitment to the conscience of the individual. My father was a conscientious objector in World War II. I learned in my bones that the Beloved Community is a place where the voice of the individual is paramount. What has been the most disturbing aspect of this situation in our church is that it appears that the board has totally abdicated their role as being our representatives and overseeing the Executive Team regarding major decisions in our church.

In terms of the future of the social justice program at First Church many questions remain which need to be clarified and articulated to the wider church community:
1. Will there continue to be a full time SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTER?
2. What is the church’s commitment to funding and supporting a social justice program?
3. Why was this decision made and was the board informed of all the dynamics that went into the decision and did they approve of this decision?
4. If there will not be another minister hired to replace Kate, where will the funds that were her salary be redirected to?
5. After looking at the congregational survey taken last spring, it indicates that 750 congregants participated in a social justice program last year. That would indicate that the social justice program is the most vital and core program that our church supports. Again, the question remains why would we want to diminish our commitment to social justice at this time?

I urge the Board to look at this decision in light of this moment in history when the neo nazi voices seem to be growing in intensity in our country. IS THIS TIME WHEN WE WANT TO PULL BACK FROM OUR COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE ?????

I ask that this letter be respectfully attached to the minutes of the November 3, 2016 meeting of the board.
With much appreciation for your thoughtful consideration of my deep concerns.

Gaye Rumsey-Riggs

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- The church decision making and communication about decisions are broken. Attend to fixing trust.
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Let’s talk about what caused the disconnect between the congregation and board/ministers: end of annual meetings face to face, question growth of membership, disparagement of congregational members leadership, and ministers becoming executives instead
- If changes in direction are being considered (say suggestions from the consultant)) let us know before action is taken
- More openness about financial matters, widely distributed
- Social justice support
- No top down decisions - transparent, collaborative, democratic decisions
- By definition, collaborative governance is not a CEO model as in the Keyes report, especially where the ministers are called by the congregation which is the church
- Make much clearer how lay committees fit into the decision making process and how work gets done
- Congregational vote to decide whether majority prefers collaborative governance or administrative model that places final decision with the senior minister
- New reader boards block art and are not conducive to a non-screen environment
- End reader boards
- Why weren’t we informed of the changes that have occurred?
- Return to annual congregational meetings
- Congregation called in on high impact decisions
- End top down decision making
- Make the directory available to all, ideally in paper directory form
- How does governance work today?
- Return to congregant meetings and congregant votes on critical issues for the church
- Yes
- Yes
- Governance is a problem right now with lack of information and transparency in so many areas - financial, programs, etc.
- How do we as members and Bill feel about him having complete authority as CEO/senior minister?
• Model: A democratic process so congregation feels valued, respected, and included; our pledges pay for this church. A dynamic two way process of communication is needed - plans put out, input included, etc.
• The David Keyes’ report is no longer under wraps - the board needs to make it public and make clear which recommendations are being implemented and whether congregants have any input
• Ditto
• Yes
• Yes
• Keyes did not interview the congregation and was hand-picked by the senior minister
• Yes!
• Yes
• Review the governance model - how is it working or not working
• How does governance work today?
• Transparency in decision making
• Accountability of the ET for progress toward mission and compliance with limits established in policy
• Established process for input into important decisions
• Decisions made in the past few years without congregational input must be revisited: tweeting in church; electronic reader boards in the sanctuary; differential undemocratic unequal pledge requirements for some activities i.e. Children’s RE and music and not others (Adult RE, social justice or sitting in a pew)
• Upcoming plans for “big changes” by the director for music, social justice, and adult RE need to be revealed in explicit detail and approved by the affected constituencies and the congregation.
• Prior autocratic decisions have upset and alienated many, many long term members and destabilized the church. This cannot continue!

3x5 Cards providing the most important 1-3 issues that should be addressed by the governance committee included the following:
1. Review the governance model.
   1. How is it working / not working
2. Will classes stifle … [?]
3. How does governance work today?
4. Absolutely imperative to remain program-focused and work toward healing our country through action (Political or Otherwise)
5. What does it mean to be mission focused "over program" focused?
6. Top 3 (for this responder):
   1. Transparency in Decision-making
   2. Established processes for congregant Accountability of the ET for progress toward mission and compliance with limits established in policy
3. Established process for input into important decisions

5-Year Goal 2: Increase church funding through enhanced giving, including goal to reduce or retire the Buchan Building mortgage.

- Paying off Buchan Building should be the highest priority.
- Fees for “services and programs” need to be increased in order to fully fund this church.
- Clarity and transparency in how foundation’s funds are spent on an annual basis, ensuring that dollars donated towards the foundation is spent in a manner in keeping with our values and vision. What % is spent on operating programs, what is earned each year in interest or in the foundation funds being depleted by dipping into the principal?
- Conduct effective fundraising campaigns by: Following up with current and previous donors. Follow up with donors after he/she/they make a donation, I have never received a thank you. Beef up the Legacy Giving Program.
- No new buildings until the Buchan is paid off.
- Bake Sales seriously
- Nothing hidden, encourage incentives for estate planning.
- Less salary and benefits for our senior minister.
- Start living within the budget
- Financial growth will need to follow restoring trust. Many of us reduced our pledge this year in dismay at the lack of transparency to the duplicity we’ve seen.
- Succession and leadership planning and cultivation is really pivotal to long-term success. Need more warm touch and accompaniment.
- People will not come to this church and we will not expand our funding if we don’t focus on social justice. We need an organizer for this NOW! Not later.
- I would love to see the debt retired.
- Have a special fund to retire the mortgage.
- If we knew, from week to week where we stood financially, people would be better able to determine their pledge amount. Money comes in all year but we only see or hear about it during pledge time. Or when it’s time to vote on the budget. Put your YTD income in EVERY order of service.
- Pledging specific to this purpose.
- Transparency in all plans and actions.
- Process to control the priorities
- My support for additional funding will be limited by my understanding on the priority it will be spent. I have already reduced my general fund pledge so I can increase targeted investments in what I care about. We have had several ad-hoc requests for more money without required democratic
- I need to understand why it’s necessary to retire the mortgage, given that the interest rate is 4 ½ %. The church’s short/long term balance sheet isn’t
transparent to members. Transparency is essential in order to motivate increased financial participation.

- Place more attention on building the Foundation.
- Find out what other churches do for mortgaged space in getting that space paid off.
- Improve efficiencies in the operating budget without over burdening the senior minister. Raise as a priority paying down mortgage.
- Connect with young adult groups like Portland Resistance to increase donor base and membership. Young and working class poor are the lifeblood of our church we must show we have their back.
- A special fund drive for the mortgage.
- The decision to drop fees for the education and music program in exchange for defined annual donations came out of the blue. This seemed not to respond to congregants concerns. I find it downright disrespectful of single people, retired folks, those with fixed or low income. Being told that what I can give is not enough is a slap in the face. Just tell us what these program cost. My income went down in 2016 &17. I am just an example. Reducing the debt is a terrific idea!!
- To ensure the future of this church we need to fund a 5 year capital fund drive. The church’s finances will likely and we do not want the lender to revoke a lien on the church during difficult times. The church has no tax benefits on interest payments.
- Are any of the conference rooms being utilized as meeting space? 1) within the church member usage 2) availability for outside rental for nonmembers.
- Use the choir members to offer community gigs for $$
- Put solar panels on the roof to cut utility costs.
- It would be good to know what each program costs.
- Increase fundraising events like the auction
- End secrecy, cultivate transparency, respect the congregation. Reject autoconcy.
- Sadly, while our budget is unable to balance, while input/output perhaps we need to stop sharing the donation plate.
- Choirs are huge- have choir members pay a fee.

5-Year Goal 3: Make a cultural transition from program-focused church to mission-driven church, with priority on building beloved community between generations.

- Bring back Kate Lore. The Social Justice program has been and should continue to be at the heart of a mission-driven church.
- First, conduct a thorough assessment of “program components.” Map connection of those programs visually to aspects of the mission. Create criteria for program sustainability that is inclusive of intergenerational focus.
- We need a social justice minister in this crucial time in our country. Our programs—peace action, EJAG, environmental, etc are a major draw to like minded people. Kate Lore is greatly missed.
- Coordinated efforts between Soc. Justice programs with clear assistance a Social Justice director/minister. Better utilize resources through collaboration.
- Mission statement is much too long! Have a meeting devoted to chewing on what the mission statement really says to us—and discussing any changes and focusing on the mission. It’s really important if we’re changing to a mission based church.
- What does it mean in action to be mission-focused rather than program-focused.
- I would like to learn more about why this cultural change is needed. Without understanding this, it’s very difficult to give input. I agree that understanding the mission of the church is central and that participation at all levels of involvement at the church should be invited and encouraged.
- Agree with goal, but fewer programs with more collective impact for our city and state—We need to lead our community with more than witnessing by banners on our buildings.
- We are not a creed-based religion. Each “program” we feel drawn to is part of our spiritual practice...is church for each individual. Please keep that in mind as we move toward a more unified “mission.”
- Deeper spirituality + Deeper engagement with needs of the community beyond church community = Church Mission.
- What programs do we have now that are not related to some aspect of the mission? Who decides which programs are related? Minister only? Board & minister only? Congregation, board & minister?
- When we are actually focused on the written mission, I think this is a reasonable goal that will include the full congregation. However, what is currently enacted is Bill Sinkford’s mission for this church, which we can only guess at, due to his lack of transparency. We, the congregation, must have a say in the mission of this church and our senior minister must listen. It is the board’s job to make sure that happens.
- I want to be a part of a church of ACTION and Social Justice. Now, more than ever. We need Kate Lore, but that is not possible. Social Justice must be a cornerstone of the mission of our progressive religion.
- Efficiency and effectiveness can be gained if programs are based on the mission.
- It is very difficult to respond to this request for input because it isn’t at all clear which “program-focused” and “mission-driven” mean to the board. There must have been conversations in which board members reached a shared definition—and that should be shared with us, especially with people who have been active in programming. Not what changes might occur--stay at the policy level--but what problem are you trying to solve and how do you see this culture shift helping to solve it?
- Need clearer discussion of mission priorities and how programs fit (or do not fit) into mission as understood by board, ministry, congregation and staff.
- I want to see all of the activities of the church guided by the mission & asked to describe how they support the mission.
• Create some kind of process--e.g. A form, checklist--that asks every program proposal to describe how the program relates to the mission of the church.
• Yes building beloved community in all we do, e.g. climate justice aligning with other groups, loving all creatures, all of creation. Not 1 invited to intergenerational but yes, reaching out to others including all interested.
• This is a false binary. We can and should do both.
• As someone who spent 7 years feeling like a choir member and a church member, I feel like it would be helpful to have ministers communicate and connect with the choir more. Visit a rehearsal, send an e-mail, any thing. It would be especially helpful when a decision comes from above the choir to stay through both services (even on a trial basis) to hear directly from the ministers why that is important. This would help programs to be more connected to the church and its mission.
• An old idea for Social Justice: Choose, each year, by a democratic process a single social justice issue on which the church agrees to work on for that year. Most, not necessarily all programs would focus on that issue.
• The huge benefit congregants list for adult programs is simply getting to know other congregants.
• Hard to understand this goal. What is problem we are trying to solve? What are the implications of moving from program focused to mission-based church? What does this mean?
• I don't agree at all with the consultant’s recommendation to diminish the caliber & quality of the music program. People attend First Church because the music facilitates a spiritual connection that words often can’t duplicate.
• How can we be of more support to our area UU churches via aligning our programs with theirs?
• I would like to know more about why the Board came to the conclusion that the church is “program-focused” (and what the Board believes that means) before I can give meaningful input on my ideas for how we might charge the church to be more “mission-driven.” I understand the mission. I understand we have programs. I want to know more of what the Board believes needs changing.
• Don’t change the adult education classes. Yoga, education, etc. they are all based in community.
• Beloved community=church, city, region, state, nation, world
• The goal seems to come from the consultants report & is meaningless to me. What is the goal trying to improve? Has it been examined? It seems to me that our strength is flexibility in programming to allow for interests of many.
• Could it be as simple as asking every group to articulate their/its interpretation & demonstration of the mission?
• I don’t agree with this goal at all. I think the most important thing this church can do is to hire a new social justice minister.
• Is our mission to have an impact on our community? Or to grow bigger and take in more $? It’s not to all end up in the same place (say heaven, in the Christian church).
• Veganism/meat reduction as a goal. What we eat is our choice; animal agriculture is devastating to the health of the planet as well it uses up vast amounts of humanity’s most precious resources; fresh water and arable land, and thus Food. It is also very cruel.
• (1) Focus on collaborative governance, (2) financial stewardship ↑ church fund & retire debt, (3) cultural transition for Program Driven to Mission driven church, (4) Devel (sic) Plan for devel (sic) a sustan (sic) of church (?) campus
• The idea of a Mission focused church comes from various Evangelical churches. How do you know that it fits UU churches?
• I see a larger need for many covenant groups. I see that kind of group as one that meets regularly, that does work that directly relates to the mission of the church and that is led by a staff member or volunteer who is skilled in leading groups--and if the purpose of the group is specialized, a leader who is trained in those skills. This model would include music, led by trained, paid conductors; lay ministry, led by someone trained in social work or psychology; social justice groups led people with strong people skills. Because we are a non-credal church, what binds us together must be commitments to deeply spiritual activities. Some activities are more appropriate for a club, not a church. And those should go.
• Who will determine which programs (as They are presently) will be tied to and reflective of the mission statement?
• Bring music, song, and meditation into the older grades of youth classes. Kindergarten starts it and we need that lovely connection time they learned at an early age back into the older years. Let church teach the spiritual connection to all ages.
• I looked for the mission statement on website?? Couldn't find. I believe that programs guided by common missions makes for more unity, less fiefdoms--more multigen--one community.
• Inter-generational goal: Involve children/youth in services more often, at least at Together Time Sundays. We want to hear their voices, their music. We need to hear them more and make them a part do they feel included and can carry on the mission forward. Introduce more modern music options.
• People come here for social justice opportunities--we are UU’s--we don’t want to “progress through a spiritual path”--that’s what Scientologists do.
• Begin a church-wide discussion of “Simple Church” so congregants can understand what Bill is trying to do to programs.
• Priorities: We have a great mission, in writing, but we have to follow through. Especially in terms of: “Transparent, Democratic Processes,” & “shared stewardship of...resources.” Right now, and based on the consultant’s report that already seems to be in action, Bill Sinkford holds almost complete power and autonomy over every major discission (sic) in this church. This is NOT in keeping with the mission of thich church. This is in keeping with Bill Sinkford’s mission.
• Just the words “mission based” is confusing it sounds conservative. Say it differently: ensure that our programs are in concert with the mission statement. I believe many are
feeling as if the programs that draw them here and keep them here are being threatened.

- I am for our programs being mission orientated (sic). Who will determine that? What about programs that are mostly for developing community like the Good Times group and movie discussion groups?
- I agree with incorporating the mission into programming--I'm concerned that things are being changed without consultation & collaboration with the programs themselves.
- Why make this change? Aren't the programs already helping us find and follow our Moral Compasses and building the beloved community?
- Transparency does not mean the Board will be more communicative. It means I can see budgets and have impact on them. It means I can see audit reports. It means proof is given of ET compliance not hearing, “it’s all good.”
- We do not want our programs chosen for us, abolished by people who don't care about them. This seems like it could trample Goal 1--true linkages, true communication, true conversation between the exec team, board, and congregation.
- This goal is very foreign to me. I don't know why the board has come up with goals without congregational input. The mission of our church is within the context of our seven principles. I think every one of our programs serves our seven principles and this our deeper mission. I am afraid of having a committee or the ministers arbitrating which programs reflect our mission. For instance, the suggestion by one of our ministers that our congregants’ desire to do spiritual yoga here in our church home is not mission based frightens me. The Keyes Report recommends dismantling our called minister structure, our social justice program, our performance music program, our adult RE program. If this is in the service of our mission I reject the idea of this transition.
- Moving to a mission based church seems to me an excuse to cut programs. I've already heard that music is not part of the church’s mission and should be cut and that yoga is not UU-enough to be included in the Adult Education program.
- New Rules are great, however they're ineffective without methods to verify compliance of both Board & ET.
- I do not see a program with program vs. mission. We have always strive to make our programs based on our mission.
- We can call our policy mission driven and still keep our programs (with an eye to the mission of the church). I think both intellectual & physical classes can be part of the church mission. Why does the board see a conflict?
- Need a new head of Social Justice--to support the church.
- It sounds like the church wants to take away programs’ ability to determine their focus, like there are programs that don't fit the church’s mission already?
- Be more clear about difference between program centered and mission-centered.
- Many of the programs form our way of connecting and learning--which is ministry.
- If the program does respect and incorporate the mission what can we do to make sure it is allowed to continue...say the strong community developed over the last two years in the gentle yoga class.
• This shift seems unnecessary and ungrounded as no formal or through evaluation of church programs has, to my knowledge, been done. It’s an excuse to cut programs that don’t bring in revenue.
• Why not just ask each program to articulate how what they do addresses the church mission? We don’t see what “the problem” is that you are trying to “fix.” And was it identified in congregation survey?
• Ditto
• We need to be a mission-driven and program based church, as we have established deep roots through programs within the greater PDX community, Metro region, state and national organizations. Not sure the ministry and Board are aware of these impacts.

5-Year Goal 4: Develop a long-term plan for development and sustainability of church campus given changing dynamics of West End and downtown Portland.

• Parking, parking, parking!!! +1
• Buy the 12th Ave parking lot +1, 1
• Buy building at north end of parking lot. +1
• Use building (at north end) to be used as a center to support all UU congregations in the region.
• Build UU retirement center +1, 1, 1 (above the current church office)
• Explore using current office building as a mixed use building which could house affordable housing.
• Get grants & loans (maybe HUD) to build an affordable housing tower with office & parking on undeveloped ¼ block of campus. +1
• Social services (health care, food pantry, etc) should be offered.
• Homeless Family Shelter should be expanded.
• Expand sanctuary - include comfortable seating
• Strengthen/expand $ financial planning. +1
• All 3 properties should be revenue generating. We need to find new ways of financing so the financial burden doesn’t weigh heavily on just congregants to accomplish the future plans.
• Re-starting parties/get-togethers at our houses - invite guests, potentially new congregants.*
• Consider scholarships for needy and talented young - invite young to tell us about their lives. *
• *Both UU activities in San Miguel MX
• Find ways to attract a younger demographic here (too much white hair)
• Work with PSU students to create internships for students in the social work program, to work in our Family Shelter. Students should receive credit hours. PSU is part of the urban environment.
• How can we secure safety in getting to our cars after PM meetings.
• In these troubled times, consider sanctuary for immigrants.
• Build a community center for young adults.
● Take “sustainability” seriously as a platform for stability - ecological - social/spiritual - economic.
● Organize shuttles. +1 No one lives downtown anymore. Many people don’t drive. Carpooling isn’t enough.
● Better parking options - what’s being considered? +1
● Attention to climate change and move as a model to a carbon neutral campus. +1
● Get a non-barnlike sanctuary! Have a long term building process with budget with budget projections with congregational input.
● Maximize income based on rent.
● More clearly define what our community boundaries are. What is physical, virtual. Where do we start supporting other churches in the Portland Metro area?
● Add no more new buildings unless they can’t be managed with our new bu…?
● It makes no sense to increase our footprint. We do not need more buildings - we need more programs to include everyone in our church.
● Nice to have a growing garden, but no more money spent on improving our facade!
● Creative use of mass transport - pick-ups - buses etc from east side. +1
● Electric vehicle charging station
● School.
● Maybe a satellite chapel across the river with a TV feed of the service where folks can be together but not travel so far.
● Campus long term plan: Sustainable energy station on site

Goal “Not Listed”: What other goal or ideas do you have for the church beside the four adopted by the Board?

Note: many of these were questions or concerns.

In order to expand our mission I would like to see satellite centers in the NE and SE sides of town for classes, tutoring, action creation … Maybe partnerships with for example PIMC (Portland Insight)

What staffing changes will be happening in the next 5 years.
We need more community outreach in other UU churches in the area.

Restore the social justice program with leadership of a Social Justice minister to implement the social justice mission. Please preserve the quantity and quality of the music program to further the mission elements of worship, community and witness as a voice.

I have deep concern about how the music program will run in the future. I feel present music program will be gutted and replaced with program of congregant sing-a-long.

Where does the foundation fit into or relate to increase church fundraising as in goal number 2
Will Kate be replaced?

The vibrant social justice program has sustained a big blow in the last month and I fear it will be minimized.

Survey the congregation to discover members that are legally blind and hard of hearing to identify what is needed for them to feel important and included not marginalized.

Leverage social media to enable members and friends to connect names with faces, to identify common interest and build community. It is very difficult for new members to make connections after the service.

Restart get togethers at our houses and invite guest potential new congregants. Consider scholarships for needy and talented young people have them tell us about their lives.

Find ways to get young people involved, too much gray hair.

These activities mentioned are ones we used in San Miguel we have done the first one here at church.

Public forums like these are great to have the answer isn’t necessarily to have more meetings. I do suggest hosting more physical forums including unstructured one on least a quarterly basis. Leverage…. Social media, email, and other to encourage ongoing communication. I don’t see a conflict between a mission driven church ,us and a program driven church… Missions drive programs...its logical.

However there is a strong feeling to support a program that is not currently supported by the mission, then this suggest that the mission needs to be revised. Missions are not cast in stones they can be amended.

Is building the beloved community in our mission statement large enough to include our greater region, state, nation, and world community? If yes that could be made explicit in the mission. The social justice council has already begun (started 2 years ago) to link its programs in an overarching theme. Their work should continue and work on strengthening collaborations. We need to sustain the social justice council.

How will consultant’s assessment be implemented?

End secrecy, cultivate transparency, respect the congregation, reject autocracy.

Instead of congregational meeting on how to be with one another, meet on transparency with the ET.

More meetings for brainstorming.
Get a new Kate Lore.

PART II: Summary of Congregants oral comments provided in the “open forum” section held beginning around 1:55 pm.

- He would like a picture directory so he can put names to faces and get to know congregants better.
- The board is not our enemy. We should have rules in place for us to be able to participate and all of us can do our jobs. Appreciates the board.
- Kate Lore was her minister and her heart is broken because she left with so little notice so we could not celebrate her accomplishments. She doesn’t like the process and wants the congregants to be apart of the decisions or at least informed and able to give their thoughts. She feels many are leaving the church because we are not listening to them.
- The church needs more openness and encouragement for the congregants to be more involved. Please make the Keye’s Report available so the congregants can give you their input.
- I have been a UU for 20 years She feels the church has been mission driven and wants to know why are we tearing apart and disbanding the social justice com. (Randy spoke about incorrect information.)
- Thanks to all who are here. Sometimes the process is more important than the outcome. The ET needs to make themselves part of this process.
- We went away for 2 weeks and came back and Kate was gone. We needed more time to prepare. We need to be more included.
- I came from a lay led church and all decisions were made by all and the the process was hard. When the church told the congregants about the union and not supporting it, I went to the board meeting and voiced my concerns. With such a big issue only 3 people were there. I spoke with Bill and he was very receptive and had myself and Pat Malone help with the formation of the union. We have to be part of the solution and participate.
- I have served on smaller churches and our process is not bad. Being a mission based church benefits all the programs.
- We must all be responsible if we want to see changes to happen. If we don’t feel we are being heard go to the board meetings.
- Heartened by the church service this morning. Open Hearts/Open Minds. More open dialogue needed and heartened by what she read today. Love
- Long time members and we’re thinking of withdrawing temporarily and partially. Feel our voices are not being heard appropriately - especially with ET and with no congregational discussion about the boards in sanctuary (screens). They disrupt the aesthetics and this wasn’t raised with those who experience them. Don’t like this process, not democratic.
- Supports the picture directory and Recovery Inc for people with mental health issues. No need to make judgements about trivial things of life. Has found Recovery Inc very helpful.
• Adds her voice to voices of 22 letters to the Board and ET with concerns with the total lack of transparency in decision making using secret criteria. Board says it’s confidential and we don’t need to know this information. The board is misguided and the ET has a secret decision making style. Write letters, stay vigilant. This is our sanctuary - take it back democratically.

• Thanks to the Board for continuing the process. She’s part of Healthy Congregational Team that helps congregations in conflict. Encourages us to intervene at early point of conflict. This meeting is a step in that process. Address as problems to be solved, not issues to be won.

• Amazing space that we’ve all come out to share. She honors everyone and feels blessed to be a part of it. Reach across these moments of conflicts - we all believe in process. Challenge to stick with process board created and what showed up in the meeting. Wants more clarification on the goals - educate the congregation on them. Can’t contribute well until I understand it. Wants to start this over again.

• Specific suggestion to board on Keyes Report - consider hiring a 2nd report with q’s the congregation would like to see answered. Have it be done by someone who isn’t just a large congregation expert - look for other professional expertise to help supplement the Keyes Report.

• Big difference in this representative democracy from her experience in small congregation direct democracy. In light of the Report, decisions were made. She feels left out for someone whom Social Justice is a huge part of this church. This gathering turned into a real listening session. Good start.

• Two young men (visitors or new) came to the SJ tables and want to be involved in immigrant work. Our work has gotten larger. We can all be agents of social change. Stay involved and on the larger road.

• This is his first negative experience in this room. We all see the world as we are, not as it is. And today we’re mimicking the national view. We’re fired up over the election, not just on the report or Kate’s leaving. Gracious acceptance will lead to a different conversation, without attacks, threats of leaving. The sanctuary was full today - we’re doing a lot of great things - help, don’t complain.

• He was on the board and opposed the decision to make Keyes Report confidential and still thinks it’s a mistake. Sees Board as sincere yet misguided trying to protect the congregation from information they should have. Wants to start a discussion of Simple Church and mission/program hierarchical structure. Encourages all to read it. Come to BOC, board meetings. BOC not posted on website.

• Good forum. Good to talk about conflict. Strength is that people want to talk before leaving. Programs are wonderful - not silos. All is a connected fabric. She believes in the goodwill of the Board and good process. Wants to see that what congregants bring to board is talked about. Reader boards are like billboards in a sacred space. Board talked about it and decided it wasn’t worth bringing to the whole congregation. Some congregants wanted to look at options, not just accept things as they are. She loves and cherishes the people here.