

**First Unitarian Church of Portland**  
Board of Trustees Meeting – January 6, 2022 – Agenda  
Board (only) Deepening 6:30, Board Meeting - 7 - 9pm - Zoom call – link

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82930223125?pwd=TDdrckx1T0lSTG1KT3BFWGx5MmQyZz09>

Meeting ID: 829 3022 3125

Passcode: 398649

One tap mobile

+12532158782,82930223125# US (Tacoma)

**Board Meeting**

6:30 Deepening/Check-in

7:00

**Convene**

Opening Words – Adam

Determine Quorum

Process Observer Review

Review Agenda

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

**Board Roles**

Timekeeper – Cindy

Process Observer – Caitlynn

7:05

**Congregant Comment Period**

7:15

**Updates**

Committee updates – reports attached

Dates to Calendar - none

ET Update

7:35

**Discussion Items**

- Board Forum topics
- Board learning circles
- Emerging church, ET observations to start conversation

8:45

**Meeting Wrap-up**

Closing comments, items for future agendas

Communications Check

Process Observations

Closing Words – Adam

9:00

Adjourn

**Our Mission:**

The mission of First Unitarian Portland is to create a welcoming community of diverse individuals; to promote love, reason and freedom in religion; to foster lifelong spiritual growth; and to act for social justice.

**Our Vision:**

First Unitarian Portland is a beacon of hope for us and for our community, a spiritual center in the heart of our city that helps each of us to find our moral compass, calling and challenging us to build the beloved community with an ever deepening sense of spirit, diversity and inclusion.

**Church Goals 2021-2024**

As we work to embrace our call as a justice-seeking community in the emerging post-pandemic era, we recognize the unique value First Unitarian Church and liberal religion bring to Portland and the larger community. We will:

1. Successfully complete the ministerial transition and establish covenantal relationships among the new minister, the congregation, staff, and Board.
2. Take the next steps toward living into the 8th Principle by examining all parts of the church structure to ensure we are accountably creating a multicultural and anti-racist environment where each person is welcomed and finds connection.
3. Create a long-term plan for development and sustainability of the church campus given congregational needs and resources, community needs, and the evolving dynamics of downtown Portland.
4. Enhance and promote an ever-growing culture of generosity and financial sustainability.

**Board Goals for 2021/24**

1. Take action to improve our practices and model antiracist behavior as called for in the 8th principle. Continue to educate ourselves on the issues so that we can support the development of this work in with the congregation.
2. Holding the mission of the church, engage in ongoing, generative conversations with the Executive Team and the congregation to:
  - a) Develop an understanding of the post-pandemic church that's emerging, as well as the pastoral needs and continuing connections among congregants.
  - b) Approve a revenue plan to sustain the mission of the church during this evolving period.
  - c) Consider viable options for maintenance of our current physical plant and future development of the campus as is feasible.
3. Continue to support the Ministerial Search Committee and the transition to a new Senior Minister.
4. Develop and nurture a covenantal relationship with the new Senior Minister.
5. Consider the appropriate size for the board and, if a change is decided upon, refer a recommendation to the congregation for a vote.

## **First Unitarian Church of Portland**

Board of Trustees Meeting – December 2, 2021 – held via Zoom

Board members present: Mindy Clark, Alan Comnes, Cindy Cumfer, Ryan Deibert, Theo Harper, Caitlynn Hill, Adam House, Barbara Morrison, Leila Wrathall, Andy Wilson, Ameena Amdahl-Mason, Marilyn Mays

Board members absent: None

Ministers and staff present: Rev. Bill Sinkford, Kathryn Estey, Carter Smith

Timekeeper: Leila Wrathall

Process Observer: Theo Harper

Congregants present: Steven Storla (Nominating Committee), Dotti Chidester (note taker)

### **Convened at 7:04 pm**

Opening Words – Barbara - Fall Song by Mary Oliver

Determine Quorum - there is a quorum

#### Process Observer Review

- none
- The Board Liberation Team (BLT) suggested a different process - all BLT members will observe process - one person will do it in particular - that person will pick the next person, this time is Theo
- There needs discussion so this was added to the agenda as a discussion item

#### Review Agenda

- usually, this is a short meeting, but are doing this as a regular meeting with hopefully a social gathering in January
- there were possibly generative topics but none were ripe or ready yet, we will refine our board goals as a generative topic, and Caitlynn has a request from Dana

#### Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

- motion: Theo, second: Andy. Passed unanimously.

#### Congregant Comment Period

- Steven is glad to be here with us. Nom Comm is contacting people who have been recommended to see if they would like to be interviewed.

### **Updates**

#### Dates to Calendar

- None

## Executive Team (ET) Update

- Progress on Meeting the New Day Annual Fund Drive (AFD)
  - The AFD is in the early stages of wrapping up and will continue to wrap up through the middle of January
  - as of 12/2: 91% of goal, hasn't changed since last week
  - have not heard from 140 pledging units from last year, additionally several dozen who pledged two years ago and not last year, it would require hearing from all of them at the level of last pledge to make goal, very unlikely to make goal, likely miss it by 2-3%
  - There is a message going out to all of those folks from Bill on 12/3, program leaders, Tom, and Bill are making calls as well, some pledges come at year-end or in the next sixth month of the new year
  - This is not necessarily a bad result, last year was the best fundraising year in the history of the church
  - early in the new year, the budgeting process will begin
- Reopening
  - The omicron variant has introduced more uncertainty
  - infections rates in Oregon dropped by 25% last week, has not yet been reflected in people coming to church, have not come close to the number of people allowed
  - The ET is meeting with the public health team next week about dropping the requirement for registration
  - When the ET asked program leaders about why they are not attending reasons included folks being conservative and families with young children being precluded
  - the choirs are back, amity was the last to sing and will be the first back again
- Holiday Schedule
  - December 12: December music and worship
  - December 21: solstice (Carter leading - gathering around the fire is the homily title) - both virtual and in-person
  - December 24: 4 pm live-streamed family service no pageant but asking children to illustrate the Christmas story
  - December 24: 8 pm candlelight in person and live-streamed
  - January 9: welcome learning community back into the building - family worship live and streamed, classes for children so parents can attend service

## Consent Agenda

- None

## Short Discussion Items

### Process Observation

- There was a review of past process observation practices including using Okun and Jones
- The board has fallen away from more rigorous observation

- Last year everyone made comments as they saw them
- BLT brought this today because at the last meeting it was discussed having everyone doing process observation
- it is important that is focused and having someone having that job could facilitate discussion and make the Board more intentional in noticing and calling in microaggressions
- Questions are: is it the intent that everyone does it? Do we make a schedule? People are cautious to speak up

#### Dana's proposal

- following up from beyond categorical thinking, more of our congregants are open to learning about microaggressions
- The proposal is for the Board to co-sponsor training on microaggressions with social justice including identifying and pointing them out in ways they can be heard,
- This could also help in moving the 8th principle forward
- There was discussion of having a facilitated discussion about microaggressions including the Board and other church leaders and future leaders
- There was a motion to work with Dana on this workshop by Caitlynn, with a second by Cindy and it was passed unanimously.

#### Draft Board Goals

- There was a discussion of the draft board goals, leading to the deletion of goal three.
- There was discussion that the intent of goal three was to review and consider the current state of the Board's relationship with the Congregation in light of the adoption of the 8th principle but we are setting it aside for now.
- There was some discussion of the 8th principle and policy-based governance. All Souls DC has done some work but their version of governance is much more Carver-based.
- There was a motion to adopt the following goals by Andy, seconded by Cindy, which was based unanimously.

*1. Take action to improve our practices and model antiracist behavior as called for in the 8th principle. Continue to educate ourselves on the issues so that we can support the development of this work with (INSTEAD OF in) the congregation.*

*2. Holding the mission of the church, engage in ongoing, generative conversations with the Executive Team and the congregation to:*

*a) Develop an understanding of the post-pandemic church that's emerging, as well as the pastoral needs and continuing connections among congregants.*

*b) Approve a revenue plan to sustain the mission of the church during this evolving period.*

*c) Consider viable options for maintenance of our current physical plant and future development of the campus as is feasible.*

~~*3. Using what we know and appreciate about our covenantal relationship with the*~~

~~Executive Team, and in light of the adoption of the 8th principle, review and consider the current state of the Board's relationship with the Congregation.~~

3. Continue to support the Ministerial Search Committee and the transition to a new Senior Minister.

4. Develop and nurture a covenantal relationship with the new Senior Minister.

5. Consider the appropriate size for the board and, if a change is decided upon, refer a recommendation to the congregation for a vote.

### **Meeting Wrap-up**

#### Communications Check

- The moderator's letter should include the holiday schedule, note the choirs returning, and the learning community coming back

#### Process Observations - Theo

- discussion of process observation was lively
- Cindy thanked Ryan for pointing out a microaggression in real-time
- Ameena suggested that the Board debrief forum immediately after next time
- next process observer: Caitlynn

Closing Words – Barbara - William Stafford Yes

**Adjourned - 8:45 pm**

## GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Chair: Ryan Deibert

Committee Members: Mindy Clark, Cindy Cumfer, Caitlin Hill, Adam House

DATE AND PLACE: Wednesday, December 8, 2021, 7-9 p.m.

### Agenda Items:

1. **Centering practice to transition to generative work** (Caitlynn lead a body scan exercise.)
2. **Generative discussion, part 3 - 8th Principle and Pillars of Gov. Comm.: Implications for Evaluation of Ministry and Board Self-Evaluation.** This is an open time to begin developing questions, early leanings, and potential action that we may be called to pursue as we begin to evolve and adapt our practices of evaluation of the ministry and board self-evaluation to better embody the [8th Principle](#).
  - a. **Are we asking the right questions?**
    - i. **what have we done to accountably dismantle racism?**
      1. **what would it be like to start with this question?**
  - b. **Journeying toward spiritual wholeness - what are we journeying toward and what might those actions be to get there?**
    - i. **what does that mean to individuals, board, ministry, etc**
  - c. **MSC model**
    - i. **using a survey to get “A” level understanding and then digging deeper in cottage meetings**
      1. **caucus / affinity spaces for marginalized groups**
      2. **help to point us in direction of what we are journeying toward**
      3. **and what oppression looks like in our space**
    - ii. **diversifying how we collect data - “targeted sampling”**
  - d. **Accountability in Eval of Ministry**
    - i. **Accountability and covenant - are we good at having hard conversations?**
    - ii. **WSC is so ingrained (in our behaviors, in our culture), very hard to see and difficult to talk about / call in.**
      1. **Requires a deep commitment to dismantle**
  - e. **Cindy: What we understand as “reason” is cultural.**
    - i. **Each person holds their own truths.**
    - ii. **How do we put something together that reflects everyone’s truth?**
      1. **Visioning Eval of Ministry that reflects the multiple truths in the congregation.**
  - f. **Centering the work of People of Color**
    - i. **What does that mean? As a Governance Committee?**
    - ii. **How to respect the work and time of People of Color as a majority**

**white congregation and board?**

- 1. Understanding the difference between invitation to community and using our resources to compensate folks of color / fill needed roles.**
  - g. Using the evaluation tool from Paula Cole Jones**
    - i. How do we authentically evaluate ourselves?**
  - h. How do we bring transformative experiences to the rest of the congregation**
    - i. Our job is to bring the congregation on the journey.**
  - i. How to connect with people who are coming virtually**
  - j. Are we doing right by the community outside of our own?**
    - i. Are we ruffling the right feathers?**
    - ii. Reflecting on another time in our church's history.**
- 3. Plan January agenda - Our next meeting will be Wednesday, January 12th.**
- a. Caitlynn is scheduled for words**
  - b. Begin planning for evaluation of ministry/congregational survey**
    - i. What are the specific things we want to engage in for the evaluation of ministry? What resources do we need?**
  - c. Other items?**
- 4. Other items?**
- i. We are lacking an embodied practice in our worship.**

Closing Words—Mindy



**First Unitarian Church of Portland  
Board Officers Committee/Board  
November 17, 2021, 4:30 – 6:00 PM**

**Present:** Mindy Clark (moderator), Cindy Cumfer, Kathryn Estey, Andrew Wilson, Marilyn Mays, Barbara Morrison, Theo Harper, Adam House

**Absent:** Ryan Deibert, Leila Wrathall

Meeting convened at 4:36 pm

**Opening Words – Mindy**

**Welcome & Quorum**

- BOC has a quorum

**Minutes of 10/20/21 BOC meeting**

Approved with the corrected the spelling of Leila’s name

**ET Update - Kathryn**

- Meeting the New Day Pledge Drive: 11/17/21 90% pledges to date

<b>2022 Pledge Goal</b>		Dollars pledged	# of pledges
\$1,575,000	YTD 2022 pledges	\$1,418,079	706
PLEDGES TO DATE (11-17-2021)	Full Year 2021 pledges	\$1,544,504	850
\$1,418,079			
90.04%	Full Year 2020 pledges	\$1,480,200	893
STILL NEED:			
\$156,921			

- Certified 905 actual members, but some are part of households with two members in one pledge unit
- Also at 90% this point last year, but we were at 92% at the end of the week last year, 97% by the first week of December
- It takes a while to get pledges in the database, the true list will be available in a week and a half or so and then the reach out effort will start
- We have had more capacity for in person attendance than people signing up, each week the public health team updates how many can be in the sanctuary including staff, musicians, clergy, etc. This Sunday it is a little over 250 people. We had twenty walk-ups last week.
- Start building the budget shortly for the year starting July 1
- After pledge numbers are firm, union negotiations will begin. The first two contracts were two years, this one was three years. We are hoping for a three-year contract.
- We will have an auction this year but earlier

- GA will be here this year

**Discussion Items - In Executive Session**

- Ministerial compensation
- Senior Minister Agreement

**Executive session ended at 6:09 pm**

**Closing Words**

## FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PORTLAND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Communications Committee December 7, 2021

Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)

The meeting convened via Zoom at approximately 6:30 pm.

Attending: Theo Harper (Chair), Alan Comnes, Ameena Amdahl-Mason, Mindy Clark, Barbara Morrison. Mindy necessarily departed the committee meeting after the December Moderator Letter topic.

Chalice lighting and opening reading were shared by Theo

Participant check-in

December Moderator Letter. Topics discussed for inclusion:

- a. Choirs return to chancel and, more generally, call out the return to in-person church meetings beginning in January....we think?
- b. AFD - Update on progress. Board members gave thank you calls
- c. Beyond Categorical Thinking—materials from this training (last given in early November) are available at [tinyurl.com/BCT-Case-Studies](https://tinyurl.com/BCT-Case-Studies)
- d. As the Board lean into the 8th principle, these are things we want to call out.
- e. Learning circles begin in January—reading books focused on WSC and BIPOC experiences
- f. Seminary for a Day on 1/29/2021.
- g. Board is looking at governance structures that further progress on living into the 8th principle—reaching out to other 8th Principle Congregations to see how they are changing policies and leadership norms.

Committee discussed BLT's proposal (from BLT's 12/6 meeting) to initiate Board sponsored Learning Circles. Although subject to BOC approval, a first meeting (Zoom only) has been tentatively set for afternoon of January 9, 2022.

Ameena will see if there are resources that have been compiled from the RJAG group for sharing with the Board.

November Forum on Church Goals Debrief / Follow up

- a. Good Board member turnout and decent congregational turnout; ~ 20 people. Good discussion on the call although the crowd was not as broad as it could have been.
- b. Recommendation: Board members should prep in advance to make sure the agenda is clearly understood *and* have an immediate post forum session to consolidate action items / thoughts / reaction.
- c. One specific follow up was a request for another Beyond Categorical Thinking training. That is unlikely but the study materials are available. See Moderator Letter, above.

Topics for Board-Sponsored Forums

- a. Church property / block. A forum focusing on congregant *needs* for the Church buildings (recognize the need for reduced physical space).
- b. Support the Ministerial Transition/MSc
- c. e.g., “What to expect in a Ministerial Transition Year?”
- d. Recommend BOC reach out to the MSC to see what their needs are on transition support.
- e. “Ask Your Board Forum” Take questions in advance and have a live forum to answer them.

Church Survey—what is the plan this year? Committee members asked: can it be shorter? Can the committee have input on specific questions?

Action item: Theo or Ameena to raise this topic at next BOC.

Closing words were shared by Theo. In the spirit of “joyful words,” he read a quote by Louis Wain (the O.G. of cat memes).

Next Communications Committee meeting: January 11, 2022. Also, see attached list of future committee meetings and assignments to provide opening/closing words.

Meeting adjourned about 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Alan Comnes

**Revised Communications Committee Meeting Schedule and Opening / Closing Words Assignments**

DATE	READER
JANUARY 11	THEO
FEBRUARY 8	ALAN
MARCH 8	BARBARA
APRIL 12	AMEENA
MAY 10	ALAN

JUNE 7	BARBARA
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Old notes

### **Items for November Moderator Letter**

Opening of Church.  
Summary of Board Forum-(thank you to participants).  
Upcoming possible Church holiday celebration.  
Ministerial Transition plans are moving forward.

### **Preparation for Board Forum**

Zoom room will open at 12:45 for Board, 1:00 for participants  
Short introduction by each Board member who will in turn choose next member to speak.  
Theo to send out message to Board members concerning time for forum.  
Discussion concerning possible disgruntled questions from congregants.  
Discussion of questions for break-out groups.  
Answers to the questions will be put in the Moderator Letter.  
Theo suggested 5 break-out groups.  
Link will be in the e-News and QR code on screen slides.  
Theo will document the process we used to generate the Church goals.

### **How to be more engaged in our work with the 8th Principle**

What can we do to be more actively engaged-people want direction?  
Preliminary decision to have a retreat next March to include;  
Assignment for the Board to read 60 pages from *How to be and Antiracist*.  
BLT to contact other churches as to their actions concerning the 8th Principle.  
Barbara will glean actions expressed in *Widening the Circle*.

### **Plans for Ministerial Transition and Bill's retirement**

A committee will be formed with more concrete plans to begin in January.