

**First Unitarian Church of Portland**  
Board of Trustees Meeting – March 3, 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 – Andy  
Determine Quorum  
Process Observer Review  
Review Agenda  
Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

**Board Roles**  
Timekeeper – Alan  
Process Observer –

7:05          **Congregant Comment Period**

7:15          **Updates**

- Committee updates – reports attached
- Comm Com on Board Forum

Dates to Calendar

- 4/10/22 – Board Forum on transition

ET Update

7:40          **Consent Agenda**

- Approve April 4, 2022, as date of record for church membership

7:45          **Information Sharing/ Generative Discussion**

- BLT report-back on 8th Principle conversations with other congregations

8:45          **Meeting Wrap-up**  
Closing comments, items for future agendas  
Communications Check

Process Observations  
Closing Words – Andy

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.
5. "Continue, and enhance as we are able, our vibrant ministries in worship, music, adult and young people's spiritual education, and social justice."

**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  
February 2, 2022 – held via Zoom**

Board Members present: Alan Comnes, Cindy Cumfer, Ryan Deibert, Theo Harper, Caitlynn Hill, Adam House, Leila Wrathall, Andy Wilson, Ameena Amdahl-Mason, Marilyn Mays.

Board members absent: Mindy Clark, Barbara Morrison

Ministers and Staff present: Rev. Bill Sinkford, Kathryn Estey, Rev. Tom Disrud, Carter Smith

Timekeeper: Caitlynn Hill

Process Observer: Marilyn Mays

Congregants present: Dotti Chidester (note take

**Convened at 7:04 pm by Ryan Deibert**

Opening Words - quotes from Frans DeWaal and Ta-nehisi Coates– Theo

Determine Quorum - there is a quorum

**Board Roles**

Timekeeper – Caitlynn

Process Observer – Marilyn

Process Observer Review - if you're volunteering someone, communicate

Review Agenda

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes - motion: Cindy, Andy, unanimous

**Congregant Comment Period**

## **Updates**

### Dates to Calendar

2/13 Bill Q and A, Andy finance

2/13/22, 1:30 PM - Cindy Cumfer's talk on Racism, White Supremacist Culture and Anti-Racist Work at First Unitarian Church of Portland

2/27 2-4 pm learning circle My Grandmother's Hands Intro thru chapter 2

4/10/22 – Board Forum on transition

### ET Update

- COVID update - drop in infection rates, met with public health for a strategy, developed a metric, when the model that the pub health team says 150 can gather, we will regather, lowest was 18, current 35, trends likely sometime in march, meet again on Feb 17, hopefully, set a date then, it will take two weeks for music to be ready and three weeks for RE
- AFD 96.4% of goal including matching offer, only 12 additional pledges, \$69K short, but one time gift will more than cover, increased goal so actually 99.9% of the budgeted amount. Reduction in 6% in the number of pledge units.
- Budget season: basic assumptions, initial to Finance at the end of Feb, budget for pledges that is constant with the 2022 goal, assume no rentals beyond Northwest Academy and Outside In, assume 1 sanctuary service, few if any evening meetings beyond choir practice, use part of the one-time gift to fund a full-time communications role, add 0.25 data entry position, assume a COLA for staff, union contract renegotiation this spring, reduce the use of reserves, the first budget out of balance, the work begins
- Certified membership to UUA 909- stable up 3
- DeReau Farrar's leave ends February 15
- The First Unitarian worship team asked to offer opening worship at GA
- What provisions for GA? Planned as multiplatform UUA estimates 2,500 in person, 15,000 online

## **Consent Agenda**

Approve Kern Thompson reviewed financial statements for fiscal ending

Jun 2021 (motion: Leila, second: Marilyn, passed unanimously)

## **Discussion Items**

*Adding a 5<sup>th</sup> church goal/approving church goals:*

Following the Board Forum on the church goals, it was proposed that a 5<sup>th</sup> goal be added:

"Continue, and enhance as we are able, our vibrant ministries in worship, music, adult and young people's spiritual education, and social justice."

Suggestions for this addition included: Adding a reference to pandemic, and adding it to preamble or make it goal number 1

Ameena proposed to move this goal to number 1 and move the rest down (second: Leila, passed unanimously)

*Emerging church, continuing conversation.*

- Stable memberships
- Attendance is down from highs, but stable now 400-500 devices
- Children and youth registration down
- Programmatic staffing levels will wait for new senior
- Knowing space and building needs may not be possible for 2-3 years
- Staff realignment will be needed before then
- We need to start from an acceptance of facts on the ground
- Religion is declining in American life
- Three paths: do nothing, regroup programming, or expand aggressively online
- Will virtual match with the candidates and their strengths?
- How do we plan beforehand?
- Not get too wedded to any solution
- It could be like after 1918 flu, crowds
- It will be a dance between congregation and new senior
- Related to Religious education, there is a deep sense of loss for parents and hunger for engagement for kids
- How many reserves would we be willing to invest?
- Real estate development task force model for the emerging church may be appropriate
- Board will be changing
- It's important to see the facts on the ground, more will be known if we wait until January 23
- Transitions can be unexpected
- There will be a new Executive Team
- What would be helpful for a new minister? Honesty, care to queue up conversations, put things on top of the table
- The last search committee stayed in place for a year to help the new minister
- There needs to be an intentional process to introduce the minister to the board
- A process to bring minister up to speed would be helpful

- The Board will need to name conversations in process for the new minister to be aware of. Perhaps a smaller group can meet with the new minister.
- Ryan is going to connect with Mindy about this.
- Bill reflected on only having a short time left at First Unitarian.

### **Meeting Wrap-up**

(Adam next process observer)

### Communications Check

- Board forum 4/10 on transitions

### Process Observations

- We handle the deepening well
- We were kind and respectful
- Did we have enough quiet time when the conversation is hard?

Closing Words - Testify by Eve L Ewing– Theo

8:46 Adjourned

## GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Chair: Ryan Deibert

Committee Members: Cindy Cumfer, Caitlin Hill, Adam House

DATE AND PLACE: Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 7-9 p.m.

Light Virtual Chalice

Opening Words—Adam **Adrienne Marie Brown - Stardust and Rivers**

Announcements

Review agenda: Additions/Changes?

### **Agenda Items:**

#### **1. New schedule for words:**

- a. March: Ryan
- b. April: Cindy
- c. May: Mindy
- d. June: Caitlynn

#### **2. Continued planning for evaluation of ministry/congregational survey**

- a. Formulate questions for ET response
  - i. 8th Principle progress
  - ii. Bill's last year - questions around wrap up
    - 1. Summary of ministry
  - iii. Reflections on RE - how it's fairing, some challenges they hope to address
  - iv. Ministry to younger adults - any staff support in this area
  - v. Comments on employee morale, reflections on how shift from virtual to in-person (and back) affected them
  - vi. Where is the congregation at relative to Paula's scale?



- vii. Reflections on challenges of the future church, strengths we have that might sustain us
- viii. What of the ministry of the church that was (pre-COVID) has suffered, and needs rekindling? What may have receded and is OK to let go?
- ix. How much should we be planning now vs. remaining flexible in uncertainty?
- x. Given the changes downtown and the ways our physical campus is being used, how are we welcoming our houseless neighbors? How is our ministry reckoning with that? How might we be called in ministry to this moment? What might our houseless neighbors offer us as part of our community?
  - 1. How would we center these voices?
- b. Identify specific planned outreach (e.g. limited survey, CommComm listening commitments, and directed conversations?)
  - i. Asking for groups to reflect (Alliance, Nom Com, Foundation, Ministerial Search Com.)
  - ii. Possibility of not having a congregation wide survey
    - 1. If we do a survey, folks would like demographic info (would be info on who is responding v demographics of the congregation)
  - iii. Report on open ended questions we ask of congregants (heart questions).
    - 1. Questions as suggested by **Adam (to add to a Google Doc)**
      - a. **Congregants can answer on the document and then can be attached to the assessment**

### 3. Begin planning for board self-evaluation?

Some materials that may support the conversation for evaluation of ministry:

- a. Our most recent [assessment of the ministry report](#)
- b. [Prior congregational survey questions](#)
- c. [Comm Comm "Playbook"](#)
- d. Timeline:
  - i. Discussion at the **April** Gov Comm Meeting
  - ii. Draft report due at the **May** Gov Comm meeting
  - iii. **June (6/2)** board meeting - assessment of the ministry

### 4. Other items?

### 5. Process Observation: (comments by all)

Closing Words—Adam (?) Maya Angelou - Caged Bird

**FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PORTLAND**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
Communications Committee Meeting Minutes  
February 8, 2022

The meeting convened via Zoom at 6:30PM

Present: Theo Harper (Chair), Barbara Morrison, Alan Comnes Reading: Alan: Spring by Mary Oliver

The January meeting minutes were approved as written.

The February Moderator Letter was discussed. Alan will write since Mindy is in Hawaii

Possible subjects:

April forum will be on April 10th.

Approval of new Church Goals: Additional goal added with unanimous approval of Board.

Continuing work on 8th Principle. Learning circles can be found on the Church website. MSC working on a new schedule.

Remember that in order to vote on a new minister, congregants must sign the book by April.

Pledge results: 96.4%.

ComCom will discuss with GovCom about upcoming surveys. Discussion followed concerning if they will be needed and if so that they are specific to real needs. Theo will contact Ryan.

Discussed outline of next forum. Alan will lead on this effort.

Should we ask if some of the MSC members would like to attend? Should we see if some of the former MSC members would like to attend? Alan will look for past debriefing letters.

Should we ask MSC members to come to the next ComCom meeting? Alan will make up slides.

Document other tasks to do for the forum. Discuss at March Board meeting. Marketing?

Board Dialogues

Listening and providing information are our goals this year.

When should they start? November or December?

Barbara will send a list of groups to Theo.

Theo has asked Adam to help with technology-Google Docs, etc. Adam agreed to do this.

Alan in recognition of Black History Month read a quote from Caste.

Meeting adjourned at approximately

8:05 Barbara Morrison, secretary