

First Unitarian Church of St. Louis Policy Board Meeting
Monday, April 15, 2024 at 6:30 – Virtual

Agenda

President Steve Wilke called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Others in attendance: Alison Lamothe, Vice President; Sidney Watson, Secretary; Susan Lammert, Trustee; Rebecca (Becca) McBride, Trustee; Chris Kocher, Trustee

Absent: no one

Staff: Rev. Kim Mason, Lynn Hunt

Church Council: Sherry Bassi

Other attendees: Kathy Wire

Chalice Lighting: Rev. Kim

Opening Words: Rev. Kim

Reading of Board Covenant: Alison

Process Observer: Chris

Budget and Canvas Update

Kathy Wire, Finance Committee Chair, reviewed the draft 2024-2025 church budget, going over various expenditure line items. The Board will talk more at the next Board meeting after we complete the canvass, and we have a better idea of our income for next year. Kathy is also waiting for the final expenditure numbers for several line items. The Board makes the final decision on the budget, although the Board typically gives great deference to the Finance Committee's recommendations.

Board members will reach out to a few members who have not yet pledged for 2024-2025.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes of March Meeting – Sidney Watson
- Report of the Minister – Rev. Kim Mason
- Report of the Board President – Steve Wilke
- Treasurer's Report – Kathy Wilke
- RE Report – Danielle Kozemczak

Kathy Wilke moved to accept these documents. Susan seconded. The motion **passed unanimously**.

Building Update

The building flooded last week. Water entered the building through the drain in the bathroom floor in the RE wing, where we did roofing work last year. A great deal of water, about three inches, spread up to the front foyer.

Tom Finan called a plumber, who said the problem was that the drain was full of roots. The strange part is that Lynn had recently had drain maintenance done. We don't know what exactly Lynn had done. She's out of town. We will know more when Lynn gets back. Becca suggested we check with the plumber who did the maintenance work to see if they have insurance to cover the damage to the building

Possible Affiliated Community Minister

Sabrina Trupia has inquired about becoming an Affiliated Community Minister with First U.

An Affiliated Community Minister is an unpaid position. Typically, a Community Minister has a primary employer outside the church, such as a chaplaincy or working for a not-for-profit. They are not part of the church's staff. The Community Minister's relationship with the congregation is based on a covenant that describes the role of the Community Minister within the congregation, uncompensated services provided by the Community Minister, a fee schedule for other services, and other matters.

Sabrina served First U as a contextual education student in 2021-2022 while at Eden Seminary. Sabrina completed a UU ministerial internship in 2022-2023, was approved for fellowship, and was ordained last week. Because of family ties in the St. Louis area, Sabrina decided not to engage in the search process through the UUA and plans to remain in the St. Louis area for the next year, 2024-2025

Sabrina is now in Preliminary Fellowship. Affiliation with First U will help Sabrina. The UUA requires a Community Minister in Preliminary Fellowship to be affiliated with a local congregation to maintain that credential and progress to Full Fellowship. (See Sample UUA Covenant, <https://uuma.org/resource/sample-covenant-settled-minister-affiliated-community-minister-congregation/>.)

The minister proposes and drafts the covenant in conversation with the Community Minister. The Board must approve the covenant.

Becca moved to authorize Rev. Kim to draft a covenant for Sabrina to become an Affiliated Community Minister with First U. Susan seconded. The motion **passed unanimously**.

Sabbatical planning

We continued to discuss options for covering the pulpit and pastoral care while Kim is on sabbatical for the first four months of 2025. Kim suggested that this Board recommend a plan for covering Sunday services and pastoral care recommendation to the new Board. It will then be the new Board's responsibility to implement that plan.

We review the three options again:

- (1) Hire a sabbatical minister to cover all Sundays and provide as much pastoral care as we can afford.
- (2) Have the Worship Committee bring in different people every Sunday and hire someone to be on call for pastoral care.
- (3) Combo: Hire a part-time sabbatical minister to cover two Sundays a month and pastoral care and have the Worship Committee provide guest speakers two Sundays a month. The version might allow us to contract with a sabbatical minister to do RE or other leadership roles and pastoral care.

We discussed the need to talk more with the Worship Committee about their thoughts and preferences about how to cover Sunday services. We also want to share some Board members' concerns that while we appreciate their great work and enthusiasm for finding speakers, we do not want them to burn themselves out during Rev. Kim's sabbatical. Steve will talk with the Worship Committee.

Nominations

The Nominations Committee is still seeking candidates for two Board positions, President and Vice President. The Board discussed several suggestions for candidates, which Sidney and Steve will share with the committee.

Annual Meeting – Sunday, May 19

The annual meeting is on Sunday, May 19, and we have two matters to bring to the congregation. First, we would like to take a congregational vote on whether First U should support the proposed revision to Article II of the UUA Bylaws, Principles and Purposes. Steve would like to take a straw poll at the next board meeting. Alison thinks that we should have a recommendation as a board.

Second, we would like to take a straw poll of the congregation to see which social justice project has the most support for becoming the church-wide social justice project envisioned by the Active Hope Project. Rev. Kim and others are reaching out to the three community group finalists. We hope to have enough information and engagement with the three community groups by the May 19 meeting.

Process Observer Chris said we did “pretty good until we went off the rails near the end, but it was a good discussion. No wasted time.”

Actions Items for Next Meeting

- Lynn will get Board members the names of people who have yet to pledge so we know who needs contacting.
- Rev. Kim will talk with Sabrina Trubia about an Affiliated Community Ministry covenant and draft a covenant, if appropriate.
- Steve will talk with the Worship committee about the pros and cons (primarily possible burnout) of their responsibility for finding a speaker every Sunday during Rev. Kim’s sabbatical.
- We look forward to hearing from Kathy Wire the final budget figures for 2024-2025.
- Please send nominations for the Fathman and Ross awards to that nominations committee, Becca, Chris, and Susan. Lynn has a list of prior winners,

In May, Steve will give the Opening Words, and Chris will read the Board Covenant (which should be on the agenda).

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

The next Policy Board meeting is on Zoom on May 13, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sidney Watson, Secretary