



*The First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn  
is a joyful, loving, religious community that inspires and empowers people to  
Grow spiritually, Care for one another, and Work for social justice and stewardship of the earth.*

## Congregational Meeting

March 6, 2016

**12:50 Call to order**

**12:50 Chalice lighting and opening words**

**12:55 Declaration of quorum**

**1:00 Nomination of moderator**

Lee Pardee nominated Samira Kawash. Many people seconded, and the motion passed by acclamation.

**1:00 Review of Right Relations Covenant and meeting rules**

**1:05 President's Report by Lee Pardee, Board President**

Lee reported that the stewardship campaign has already raised \$176,000, more than halfway to our goal, just in its first week. Members are responding to our request for generosity: the average pledge increase is 20%.

She also shared that the congregation has received several bequests from former members and friends of the congregation: Jean Geissler, Ari Hoogenboom Sr., Myra Addington, and Deon Baker, totaling \$71,381.

The Women's Alliance has given the congregation \$4,500 to support our Youth Advisor, Rebecca Chin. We also got an anonymous donation of \$2,000 that bought us 40 new hymnals. Another anonymous donation to Meadville Seminary will support our ministerial intern for next year.

Elaine Macken gave the congregation \$25,000 to replace the Chapel Floor. This work will begin in June.

Members and friends also gave almost \$10,000 in our end-of-year appeal, and this money will support a kitchen upgrade, planned by Connie Newsom, as well as video equipment to record our services, and new tables for the Undercroft. Members and friends gave a bit more than \$2,000 for holiday gifts for our staff.

Lee also shared that a number of members and friends have included First Unitarian in their estate planning.

**1:10 Budget Update by Lake Wise, Treasurer**

Lake reported that we are on budget for the current fiscal year. He explained that revenues related to the building and expenses related to the building are roughly balanced. He explained that we are making a prudent endowment draw this year. He noted that our endowment covers 24% of our non-building expenses, leaving 76% to the congregation to raise.

**1:15 Forward! Plan Update by Sean Fischer, Trustee**

Sean explained that our Forward! Plan is a strategic plan adopted at our last annual meeting. The plan is available in the members' section of our website. Sean shared that the Board has identified 13 teams of people who are needed to carry this work forward, with each team requiring 3 to 5 people. So far, we have formed about half of the teams we need.

Sean explained that each team will begin its work by asking: What will the congregation look like in 3 to 5 years if we succeed? For example, Sean shared that the Nominating Committee has taken on the additional responsibility of developing a path to leadership and identifying new leaders in the congregation. This team has been discussing ways to ensure that our leaders view leadership as a spiritual practice. As another example, another team is working with Meagan to create an adult spiritual education program which help members build a core UU identity.



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In response to a question, Sean explained that we have two groups working on developing leaders – one working on internal leaders and one on external leaders working for justice in the community. We don't know yet what programs they will create, but they are currently working on creating those plans.

Nancy Wolfe said that the congregation needs to be reminded of how to read the Forward Plan. Sean explained that the plan is available on the website under the Members tab.

Bob Patterson moved to extend discussion for 5 more minutes. Several people seconded, and the motion passed by acclamation.

Bob asked that the congregation be more fully involved in the plan, and Sean said that as plans get going, the congregation will be asked to be more and more involved. Derek Pearl and others raised the question of whether the plan will push the congregation in any one direction in terms of spirituality. Sean explained that the purpose of the plan is to make sure we live out our mission, and all the teams are trying to make sure that their individual work helps us carry out our mission better.

#### **1:30 Election of Delegates to Metro District Meeting**

Nancy Witherell shared that one of the responsibilities of the Nominating Committee is to connect us to the wider world and help us all strengthen our UU identity. She presented the proposed slate of delegates: Judy Boals, Ashley Curl, Cyndi Kerr, Sam McKelvie, Mi Puchon, and Skylar Salerno.

Nancy moved to adopt the slate of nominees; several people seconded.

A question was raised about how the congregation could get to know the nominees better before voting for them to represent us at a meeting like this. Garnett shared that pictures and bios of all delegates were shared in the e-newsletter.

The motion to adopt the slate passed by acclamation.

Nancy presented the slate of delegates to General Assembly: Bob Bero, Kathy Ivans, John Lenker, Edwin Lord, Derek Pearl, and Rita Pearl.

Nancy moved to adopt the slate of nominees; several people seconded. The motion to adopt the slate passed by acclamation.

Dawn Elaine Reed asked that, as we introduce nominees, we treat everyone the same and not assume that people will know longtime members. We are growing rapidly and just as older members may not know newer members, newer members don't necessarily know older members.

#### **1:40 Motion to Purchase and Display a Black Lives Matter Banner**

The motion to purchase and display a banner notes that the congregation voted to endorse the UUA Action of Immediate Witness on Black Lives Matter at our meeting in November. The banner would be displayed on the church fence for one year. The congregation would need to raise the money for the banner in advance and would commit to replacing it if it is removed or defaced.

Lee Pardee moved to purchase and display the banner, and several people seconded.

In response to questions, Lee shared that the banner will likely cost \$60 to \$100. She also noted that we could include our website on the banner if we want to give people a way to take action. Several people asked that the banner make clear that we support Black Lives Matter because of our UU faith and our commitment to Standing on the Side of Love. Lee said that the Board will take this into consideration.



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Bruce Wilde called the question. The congregation voted to call the question. The motion passed by acclamation.

Lee asked that the congregation contribute to make the banner possible. She also shared that Weaving the Fabric of Diversity has prepared information about other actions we can take to support Black Lives Matter.

Connie Newsom asked that we take some action to back up our support of the Black Lives Matter movement. Bob shared that he is very proud of the congregation for supporting this movement. Sam McKelvie shared that she hopes the banner will inspire people to take direct action, and that the Forward plan will also help us continue to develop as leaders for social justice.

**1:55 Meeting adjourned**

Dave Garvoille moved to adjourn the meeting, several people seconded, and the motion passed by acclamation.