



*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.*

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

May 15, 2016

12:55 Call to Order

12:55 Chalice Lighting and Opening Words

Lee Pardee lit our chalice and Rev. Ana shared some opening words.

12:57 Declaration of a Quorum

12:58 Election of Moderator

Lee Pardee nominated Julie Bero to serve as moderator. Liz Davis seconded and the motion passed by acclamation.

12:59 Appointing of Time Keeper and Parliamentarian

Tom Check was appointed as time-keeper, and Liz Davis was appointed as Parliamentarian.

12:59 Review of Agenda, Right Relations Covenant, Meeting Rules

Julie Bero led us through a review of the agenda, a reading of the Right Relations Covenant, and a review of the meeting rules.

1:03 Election of Inspectors of Election

Bob Patterson nominated Rita Pearl and the nomination was seconded; Lee Pardee nominated Tom Kennedy and the nomination was seconded; Marquetta Drakes was nominated and seconded; Nancy Witherell nominated Mitch Major and the nomination was seconded. This slate of inspectors passed by acclamation.

1:04 Approval of minutes of November and March congregational meetings and 2015 Annual Meeting

Tom Kennedy moved to approve the minutes and Bob Patterson seconded. The motion passed by acclamation.

1:05 Senior Minister Remarks

Ana shared that it has been an incredible year of growth for the congregation. She thanked the staff for all their collaborative work; she thanked the Worship and Music team led by Cara Haft for supporting worship and producing the Jazz and Pie and Cabaret fundraisers; she thanked Samira Kawash and Lee Pardee and all the volunteers who produced the auction and UniFair; she thanked the lay worship leaders and the choir for their contributions to worship; she thanked the Pastoral Care team, led by Coco Wilde and Edwin Lord for supporting members of the congregation; she thanked Julie Bero and Katie Trossello for leading the Twenties & Thirties programs, and noted that Julie was awarded the Unsung UU Award by



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the Metro District for all her hard work. She also thanked the Board for their service, and noted that Sean Fischer has been working very hard to help get our Forward First strategic planning process moving.

Ana also shared that starting next year we will have a ministerial intern, Kevin Jagoe, working with us for the next two years, primarily on worship, pastoral care, and adult spiritual development. This position has been funded by an anonymous gift from the congregation. We'll also have a seminarian (funded by the Women's Leadership Alliance). We will also have an affiliated Community Minister, Kelly Murphy Mason, connecting with our congregation. She'll preach at the Good Friday service and work on some adult spiritual development as well. She noted that all of these people approached us, wanting to work with our congregation.

Ana shared a list of lifecycle events over the past year in our community, including:

Member Deaths: Rev. Paul Ratzlaff, Rev. Orlanda Brugnola, Tamah Kuchynskas, Leonard Bergquist, Leah Wolin.

Family and friends of members' deaths: Lee Pardee's brother-in-law, Tim Darby; Coco Wilde's uncle, Roosevelt Savage; David Garvoille's mother, Janice J. Cole; Steve Schwartzman's father, Ken Schwartzman.

We've had two weddings: Mi Puchon and Ashley Curl, and Katie Falzetta (Garnett's daughter) and Jason Murray—and a baby dedication for their son Simon Murray.

We've had many births and adoptions in the community: David Smith, born April/12/2009, adopted by Jocelyn Smith this year; Nazair Schaffer born August/29/2015, adopted by Bill and Joanie Schaffer this year; Adeline Paton-Marceau born January/23/2016 to Linea Paton and Guillaume Marceau (she is also the niece of Juliana Paton who is in our youth group); Simone Paul-Perez born July/04/2015, to Melissa Paul and Jason Perez; Owen Pokorny born September/15/2015, to Hilary Scott and Joe Pokorny; Henry Thebus, born May/26/2015, to Laurel Hesch and David Thebus.

1:15 Director of Education Ministries Remarks

Meagan noted that she has written a longer report which is available on the website. She also shared that we will have a seminarian working with us next year, primarily on Lifespan Religious Education, and possibly working with the Women's Alliance as well. She thanked Becky Huffman, the chair of the RE Council, for all her help and hard work on the Religious Education program. She also shared that she has written a weekend workshop curriculum on Credo Development, which has been published.

1:18 Board President Remarks

Lee noted that she has also written a longer report, which is available on the website. She shared that membership and worship attendance have continued to grow throughout this year, and she feels a growth in spirit as well. She thanked our retiring Board trustees, Elaine Macken and Rachel Michael, as well as Jeff Muller, who retired mid-year, and James Goward, who replaced him. She thanked our other trustees and officers, and Mitch Major for his work on our investment accounts. She thanked the staff for all their hard work.



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Lee shared that the Board has been continuing to work on getting our finances and policies in order, and information on the rights and privileges of membership is on the website. She noted that we voted to support Black Lives Matter and we will soon have a banner placed outside the church. She shared that the Board has approved a project working with formerly homeless veterans for next year, and there is a meeting coming up on May 25. She noted that our kitchen upgrade (funded by our end-of-year campaign) begins soon, and thanked Connie Newsom, Danny DiGiacomo and David Thebus for their work on this project. The end-of-year campaign also enabled us to buy new tables for the Undercroft and video equipment for recording worship.

Lee also shared that we hope to have a Sexton in place by June 1. She shared that Paul Eisemann is on the mend and has found a new place to live, and the Board has voted to give him some financial support during this transition.

Lee shared that one of the things the Board will be working on over the next year is figuring out how to devote more of our members' time to mission and social justice work and less time to fundraising.

1:25 State of the Congregation

Garnett Losak shared that Sunday sermon attendance has been growing steadily and is now over 200 during the program year and about 75 during the summers. She shared that our Jazz & Creation Second Sundays have an average attendance of 223, well above other Sundays. Sunday School enrollment is up to 87, compared to 75 last year, and attendance is up as well.

Garnett shared that congregational giving has also been growing and we expect to reach \$315,000 next year, compared to about \$283,000 this year. The number of pledging households has also been growing; this year we have 186, and we expect to have 200 pledge units next year.

Garnett noted that we have our quarterly newsletter, our website is updated every week, several Facebook groups, including a new Queer Caucus group, the weekly e-newsletter, Twitter, and Young Adult and Family e-newsletters. Our Facebook followers are up to 1059 from 905 last year; our e-news is now sent to 963 people, up from 897; we now have 108 Twitter followers, up from 66.

Garnett shared that we are now up to 256 members this year, compared to 217 last year. As of June, we will have had 44 new members join this year. That means we've grown 18% over last year, and 48% over the last 10 years. Our new members range from 17-74 years old, and the median age is 36; three new members attended our Sunday School and 17 have kids in Sunday School. She shared that an increasing number of visitors (26%) have reported that they heard about the church from friends or family.

Julie shared that the TNT newsletter reaches 200 people and has a 75% open rate, which is much higher than standard nonprofit newsletter open rates.

1:42 Forward Plan Update

Sean Fischer noted that the Forward First plan was adopted at the Annual Meeting last year, and it called for the creation of 14 teams to do a variety of work over the next 3 to 5 years. He noted that the plan is available on the website under the Members section.



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Sean shared that the Board has successfully formed 7 teams so far, and we plan to form the other 7 next year. The current teams are: Adult Spiritual Growth, Congregational Leadership Development, Ethical Eating, Sabbath Practice, Welcoming Newcomers/Membership Pathways, Working for Social and Environmental Justice/leadership development, Stewardship and Fundraising. The names of people on the teams are in the Annual Report. There are a total of 30 people working on these 7 teams. Sean thanked Ana, Meagan, and Garnett for serving on several teams each, on top of their ongoing responsibilities.

Sean shared some examples of team goals, including:

- Congregants have more opportunities to become familiar with world religions and a variety of spiritual practices;
- Congregants grow their leadership/facilitation skills and knowledge of FUUB policies and procedures;
- Congregants approach leadership as a form of ministry and spiritual practice;
- FUUB becomes known as a hub for social and environmental justice.

1:50 Election of Trustees & Nominating Committee

Nancy Witherell moved to accept the nominations of Cara Haft, Patrick Gunn, and James Goward for the Board of Trustees. The nomination was seconded. The motion passed by acclamation.

Nancy Wolf commented that she appreciated that bios and photos of the nominees were posted online, and asked that bios and photos be available during the meeting next year.

Nancy Witherell moved to accept the nomination of Sarah Morgan as Clerk of the congregation. The motion was seconded, and it passed by acclamation.

Nancy noted that the nominating committee is only proposing 5 people for the Nominating Committee this year, instead of proposing 10 people and having a contested election. She shared that creating winners and losers through a contested election tears at the fabric of our spiritual community. She also noted that contested elections make it difficult to put forward new leaders who may be very qualified but aren't well known yet in the congregation. Nancy noted that the bylaws allow for this procedure as long as we are open to nominations from the floor.

Nancy Witherell moved to accept the slate of proposed nominees: Nancy Witherell (for a second year), Beth Evans (for a third year), Arthur Hall, Dave Garvoille, and Sam McKelvie. The motion was seconded.

The floor was opened for discussion. Derek shared that it's difficult to vote for people one doesn't know.

The motion to accept the slate of nominees passed with one vote in opposition.

2:02 Approval of 2016-2017 Budget

Lake Wise shared that revenue and expenses for this year are on target to stay within budget at about \$765,000, including a prudent endowment draw at 4%. He noted that revenue from rentals of the space more than covered the cost of maintaining the building this year.



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Lake noted that our investment return on the endowment has been satisfactory over the past year, even with our adoption of socially responsible investing restrictions. The endowment has grown over the past year despite our prudent draw.

Lake shared that next year's budget is balanced at \$810,000, a 5.7% increase over last year, including a prudent draw from the endowment. The proposed budget includes a \$25,000 increase in pledges, 8.7% over last year, and a 12% increase in rental income, largely due to a long-term rental of the Chapel to St. Ann's school. The budget also includes a \$34,000 expense increase to hire a full-time sexton, and \$14,000 in increased program expenses (about 13% more than last year). The budget includes a ministerial intern, seminarian, and affiliated community minister, at minimal cost to the Congregation. The budget also continues to comply with the prudent draw standard.

In response to questions:

- Adam noted that the Julie McKinney music fund should have about \$11,000 left at the end of this year; we spent all of this year's contributions plus about \$1,000 from the fund.
- Lee noted that we don't have a specific plan to get closer to our Fair Share dues to the UUA, but if we end the year with a surplus the Board will decide how much of that to put back into the endowment and whether to give more to the UUA; we'll do the same next year.
- Lee noted that we do continue to keep our community's needs for space in mind even as we seek to earn revenue by renting out our building for events.
- Lake noted that the rental of the Chapel to St. Ann's will help us maintain our programs without significantly constraining other activities that might use our space.
- Garnett noted that we track membership by the number of pledge forms we receive, so we do track people who leave as well as new members who join.
- Lake, Lee, and Garnett clarified that the space rental to St. Ann's is just for school days, during the daytime. The school will use it for dance classes and other uses; their own space is now under construction. Garnett noted that St. Ann's has insurance and will add us as a co-insured party, and our insurance also covers anything that happens inside our building.

Lake moved to adopt the budget as proposed. The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Lake recognized some generous bequests from past members and friends, including Jean Geissler; and thanked Elaine Macken for her generous gift of \$25,000 for a new chapel floor.

2:38 Adjourn