

FIRST UNITARIAN  
CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY  
**BROOKLYN**  
A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

**Purpose Statement**

*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.*

**Goals and Strategies**

**Goal #1 Promote collective and individual spiritual exploration, growth, and practice**

Strategy: Expand Sabbath Practice

Create a Sabbath Team to build upon our current Sabbath exploration through expanded Sabbath Sundays and initiatives to encourage and facilitate at home Sabbath practice.

Strategy: Create Adult Spiritual Growth Program

Create Adult Spiritual Growth Team to work with Meagan to create a comprehensive Spiritual Growth Program for adults, including workshops and classes in UU history and theology, world religions, and spiritual practice.

**Goal #2 Cultivate a caring, welcoming community that models a just and loving world.**

Strategy: Care and Support Plan

Create a congregation wide system that encourages members to care and support one another and the congregation as a whole. Include all members, from our youngest to our oldest, from our newest arrivals to our long-term members. Encourage groups/committees to integrate caring practices into their regular work. Improve

congregational awareness and use of pastoral care. Continue to educate members about stewardship as one major way we care for the congregation.

Strategy: Welcoming Newcomers

Create a system to help move visitors toward active congregational involvement. This may include elements such as more affinity groups, more small group ministry and pathways that are attractive to self-identified introverts.

**Goal #3 Equip people with the skills and confidence to become change makers for justice in their communities**

Strategy: Leadership Training

Create a program to train members for leadership within and outside of the congregation, including facilitation skills, presentation skills, and leading with different social styles, as well as practical approaches to organizing and working for justice today. Develop a clear Path to Leadership to identify and develop current and future leaders in the congregation.

Strategy: Articulating a Religious Grounding for Social and Environmental Justice

Through workshops, worship services, and common reading, we will help one another articulate our convictions in the language of liberal religion with the intention of using this framework in our public advocacy.

**Goal #4 Become an environmentally responsible congregation that serves as a powerful voice for sustainable living.**

Strategy: Energy Usage Plan and Implementation

Identify a team to conduct an energy audit and recommend solutions to reduce building energy usage and switch to greener energy sources. Develop community connections - possibly with other Brooklyn Heights congregations - to share and increase knowledge and progress.

Strategy: Promote ethical eating and food justice

Through a cohesive set of congregation-wide conversations and activities, develop a collective awareness about the impact of our food choices. Bring our congregation's food practices in line with our values of promoting greater sustainability and justice, and explore ways to assist individual congregants in meeting their own food justice goals. Seek opportunities to promote greater sustainable and ethical eating practices within

our local communities, such as exploring programs for composting food waste and strengthening our relationships with local CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture).

## **Goal #5 Develop and responsibly manage the resources needed to support the congregation's work and growth.**

### Strategies:

#### Staff

- Employ appropriately skilled individuals and organize them in the most effective way to support the Forward Purpose and Plan.
- Evaluate paid and volunteer staff periodically.

#### Finances

- Report income and expenses monthly to the Finance Committee and Board.
- Establish a Financial Task Force that:
  - Clarifies the endowment's purpose and recommended annual draw guideline.
  - Examines and makes recommendations on how the congregation should ensure that the annual budget supports fulfilling the congregation's purpose, fairly compensates staff, estimates income conservatively and follows the recommended annual draw from the endowment.
  - Identifies new resources for possible income growth.
  - Determines the need for a capital campaign and, if needed, submits a plan to the Board in March 2016 and to the congregation by the May 2016 annual meeting
- Stewardship Team continues to grow the congregation's culture of generosity and significantly increases annual giving.

#### Facilities

- Facilities Needs Task Force, appointed by the Board, develops a preliminary Facilities Plan by January 2016 to support the Forward Purpose, increase rental income, and provide a safe and more accessible building.

#### Communications

Board and other church organizations communicate regularly to the congregation through the website, e-newsletter, and congregational meetings, with Board's communications having particular emphasis on the Forward Plan, its current work and the congregation's financial status.

## Governance

Governance Task Force of a variety of experienced congregational leaders and the senior minister appointed by the Board to:

- Examine current Board structure and policies and make recommendations for any desirable changes, including requiring leadership training.
- Consider a Program Council or other mechanism to strategically coordinate the programmatic life of the congregation.
- Assess current need for and purpose of Finance, Investment, Facilities, Ministries, and Staff Relations Committees.
- Make a preliminary report to the Board by December 2015.

Board reviews progress of the Forward First Brooklyn 2015 Plan on a periodic basis and updates it as needed with congregational approval where appropriate.

*Adopted at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation: May 17, 2015*