



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

Board of Trustee Job Description

Thank you for considering the position of trustee for the First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn. Serving as a trustee is an honor. You will have the opportunity to participate in high level discussions with our paid professional staff including Rev. Ana, Meagan Henry, Garnett Losak, and fellow trustees on important business matters that concern the congregation. It is also an important ministry -- or service to others. You are bringing your talents to bear in healing a hurting world, promoting Unitarian Universalism and making manifest our faith's seven principles.

The Board of Trustees is a corporate body with legal and fiduciary responsibilities for the congregation. It leads and serves our mission and establishes policies that set the direction of the congregation. The board is also responsible for preparing the annual budget and hiring senior staff. The term of service is three years. During that time, trustees are expected to keep abreast of congregation activities and programs, attend congregational meetings whenever possible, and participate fully in congregational life.

Trustees should act in accordance with the congregation's Right Relations Covenant; and follow the rules of the by-laws of the congregation. Each year, the board creates and agrees upon a covenant. As a trustee, you will be asked to sign this document and abide by its promises.

Standing Committee

The standing committee is made up of three members of the board including the board president or co-presidents. They are responsible for setting the agenda of board meetings and handling urgent matters when the board cannot meet. The Standing Committee generally meets the week before the board meeting. The Senior Minister is an ex officio member of the Standing Committee.

Board Meetings

The lion's share of your responsibilities will take place at the monthly board meetings. For the past several years, meetings have been held on the second Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm. The new board will meet immediately following the annual meeting to choose a date/time that works for all. Board meetings are held in the Francis White Room and last approximately 2 hours. Meetings may or may not be held in the summer depending on the needs of the congregation. There will generally be at least one Board retreat each year. The Senior Minister, Director of Educational Ministries, Director of Congregational Life, Director of Facilities, Clerk of the Society, and Treasurer also attend the board meetings. Except when in executive session, board meetings are open to members of the congregation.

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While spirited discussion is welcome at meetings, it is expected that all trustees will respect and support final board decisions.

Attendance

Board members are expected to attend all meetings in person. However, participation by video conferencing is preferable to absence. Trustees who miss a meeting are responsible for learning what took place at the meeting.

Meeting Agenda

The agenda and meeting materials are circulated by the board president at least two days before the meeting. We endeavor to keep our board meeting to two hours. In the interests of efficiency, trustees are expected to have read all materials, including the minutes of the previous meeting and staff reports, before arriving for the meeting. Board members who wish to add items to the agenda must communicate their item for consideration to the board president by email in advance, preferably before the Standing Committee meeting.

Business and Spiritual Practice at Board Meetings

The board president or co-presidents is/are chosen by the board. The president generally serves as meeting chair. Meetings are conducted in an orderly fashion. The agenda is timed and speakers are recognized by the chair. In keeping with our spiritual mission of the congregation, every meeting starts with a chalice lighting, opening words and a brief check-in. A process observer may also be appointed by the board chair who will report to the board at the end of the meeting.

Staff and Committee Liaisons

Each board person will be assigned a committee/and or staff person to connect with on a regular basis. Although trustees are welcome to attend committee meetings, it is not a requirement. It is more important that liaisons connect regularly with their committee chair to insure that there is a good flow of information from the committee to the Board. Committee liaisons will report on the activities of their committees at Board meetings.

Staff liaisons will connect with staff people at various times throughout the year, especially during budget preparations.

Selection Criteria for Board Service

The Leadership Development Committee does consider “fit” between your interests and experience and the needs of the board when considering the board candidates. We strive to have a diverse and inclusive board in terms of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, education, professional experience, interests, abilities and disabilities. Because board service is a three-year term, we typically seek members who have been involved with First U with increasing levels of responsibility for at least three years. Candidates with less than three years of service who have evidenced deep commitment to the

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congregation with their time and talent(s) or have commensurate experience from serving other religious or community organizations may also be considered for Board service.

Summary and additional expectations...

Serving as a trustee of First U is a wonderful way to share your gifts with the congregation. Trustees model good leadership by demonstrating how to act in right relationship, how to work using good process and how to be responsible stewards of our congregation's future.

Specifically, as a trustee you will:

- Serve for a three-year term.
- Attend the monthly board meeting, the retreat and additional meetings if necessary.
- Count the Sunday collection about once every other month.
- Send occasional thank-you notes to congregants and others who have contributed significantly to the congregation through their work.
- Occasionally select readings to open board meetings.
- Serve as a committee and/or staff liaison

Trustees are also expected to:

- Be a visible and positive member of our congregation.*
- Learn about and uphold the congregation's [by-laws](#).
- Attend and participate in the planning of congregational meetings.
- With the advice of the Finance Council, determine a budget to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting that supports our mission, controls expenses and preserves our endowment.
- Attend important congregational events.
- Retain voting membership by making an annual pledge that demonstrates leadership based on the fair share giving guide.

*Trustees are required to maintain their membership in the congregation by completing a pledge form annually and paying the pledge.