



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 Trustees 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 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 the board president or co-presidents and one or two other trustees. They are responsible for setting the agenda of board meetings and handling urgent matters when the board cannot meet. It generally meets the week before the board meeting. The Senior Minister is an ex officio member of the Standing Committee.

Board Meetings

Immediately after the Annual Meeting of the congregation, the new board will meet with the Clerk, Treasurer, staff members and clergy to elect a president or co-presidents choose a date and time for the monthly meeting. For the past several years meetings have been held on the second Thursday of the month at 6:30PM. The Board may also choose a date for a summer or early fall retreat. It is customary for nominees to the Board to be invited to the May meeting.

The lion's share of your responsibilities will take place at the monthly board meetings.

Board meetings are held in the Francis White Room and last approximately 2 hours. Except when in executive session, board meetings are open to members of the congregation. 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 phone or video conference 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 electronically by the board president(s) 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 chosen by the board. The president generally serves as meeting facilitator. Meetings are conducted in an orderly fashion. The agenda is timed and speakers are recognized by the facilitator. *In keeping with our spiritual mission of the congregation, every meeting starts with a chalice lighting, opening words and a brief check-in.*

Liaisons

Each Trustee will be assigned between one and three committees or teams. As a liaison to the group, you will be responsible for communicating (usually in writing) key activities of the group. You will also be a conduit for committee requests or needs from the board throughout the year.

Selection Criteria for Board Service

The Leadership Development Committee does consider "fit" between your interests and experience and the needs of the board when selecting candidates for the board. 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 have evidenced deep commitment to the congregation with their time and talent(s) or have commensurate experience from serving other religious or community organizations.

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 and occasional additional meetings.
- Attend the annual board retreat.
- Count the Sunday collection approximately 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 or close board meetings.

Trustees are also expected to:

- Be prepared for meeting and participate in making decisions on behalf of the congregation.
- 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 Committee, create a budget to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting that supports our mission, controls expenses and preserves our endowment.
- Attend and support important congregational events.
- Retain voting membership by making and completing an annual financial pledge to the congregation.