



2025-2026 Officer Nominees

For the Board of Trustees

Three-year terms ending in 2028



Julie Elting is a Colorado native but lived in Hawaii for 20 years before relocating to Brooklyn in 2018. The move to New York was an intentional choice that took 50 years to turn into reality. Professionally, Julie has been a registered nurse (RN) for 39 years and an Advanced Practice RN since 2008. Her clinical focus is on community-based maternal/child health with certificates in lactation and perinatal palliative care. She is an associate professor of nursing at Long Island University - Brooklyn where I teach research, policy, and theory. Personally, Julie and her husband, Dirk, have been married for 39 years.

They have three kids, Devin (lives in Queens), Maria (Oregon), and Russell (Hawaii). Julie has been associated with the Unitarian Universalists since the early 1990s and was active in Religious Education, stewardship, and the parking committee at her congregation in Hawaii. She and Dirk joined First U in 2019 and have volunteered at various events including UniFair and the auctions. Her leadership roles include the Women's Leadership Alliance (secretary, current president) and Share the Plate (chair for 4 years).



Luke Messina has been a member at First Unitarian since 2018. He has been active in many facets of congregational life including helping to plan events, provide support, and foster community.

Luke has been particularly active with First Unitarian's queer and young adult groups. This includes helping plan past appearances at Brooklyn Pride and contributing to two summer Pride services.

Since August of 2024, he has co-chaired the Connections Committee. During his time as co-chair the committee has helped launch affinity groups, formalize processes for welcoming/outreach work, and hosted a movie screening.

In March of 2025, Luke began facilitating a Queer Spirituality group. He believes our congregation is a unique and special place, and is dedicated to serving our shared community in any way he can.

Luke lives in South Brooklyn and works in voting rights and accessibility for the city government.



Amanda Nietzel is a longtime NYC resident with a passion for community. As a member of the First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn, Amanda hopes to support all the great works happening in our congregation. Amanda co-chaired (with Mariasara Alcott) last year's very successful UniFair. She joined First Unitarian in January 2021.

Amanda's professional skills include editorial, leadership, project management, and technology development. She brings her empathetic nature to all her projects and collaborations.



James Goward (he/him) has been a member of First Unitarian for over 12 years. A Massachusetts native, Jim has called New York City home for 34 years. He is a lawyer who has worked at the N.Y.P.D, as a public defender at the Legal Aid Society, and is currently a prosecutor in the Bronx. He has served as the president of co-op boards for two successive buildings that he and his family have lived in. He enjoys playing music, roller blading and reading, (favorite authors include David Foster Wallace, James Joyce, and Stephen King).

For Clerk of the Society, One-Year Renewable Term



Sarah Morgan has been a member of First Unitarian since 2009, and previously served as the Clerk in 2015. She works for the Natural Resources Defense Council and lives in Hastings-on-Hudson with her husband, Jack, and their two kids, Cyril and Lewis who are both registered in our Sunday School.