

First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati
Congregational Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2013

Draft to be approved at 1/26/14 Congregational Meeting

Call to Order: Lyn Martin and Linnea Lose, Co-presidents of the Board of Trustees, convened the meeting at 12:00noon and welcomed the congregation.

Approval of Minutes for Prior Meetings The minutes from the congregational meeting on May 19, 2013, were approved as submitted.

Registrar's Report Linda Miltner reported that the following members established voting rights: Jenny McLellan, Pat Smart, Kim Kloke, Faith Maynard and Rachel Bolles. There are 306 members as of today. The printed directories are ready today and members can access the directory online also.

Senior Minister's Report Sharon reported that she will be monitoring the 9am service to see if it is working well. She thanked Jane Kay and Janet Schenk for assuming the chairmanship of Extended Ministry. She also thanked Morita Marmo who had been chair of Extended Ministry for many years. She urged that we stay in touch with members who are not always able to attend services now. Sharon thanked Barb Rider and Carol Lloyd who have undertaken the duties of the Membership Committee, and also Shelly Wallace and Beth Whelan who were chairs for the last two years. She also thanked Dan Schneider and Don Sherman who will now be chairs of the Social Justice Committee.

Operations Manager's Report Carrie Spiess, Operations Manager, feels that First Church is a vibrant community. Before she applied for the job, she looked at our website and the more she read, the more she knew that this was the right place for her. She hopes to take the next steps together with members of First Church to organize and streamline church operations, although she acknowledges that it may be challenging and bumpy.

Financial Report The Board is undertaking a thorough financial review this year because of personnel changes and to meet its responsibilities as required by the Constitution. The Finance Committee will lead the way for this financial review with the assistance of Treasurer Tom Cottrill, Operations Manager Carrie Spiess and Board member Andy Chirch. To handle the daily bookkeeping while Carrie is onboarding, the board has hired a temporary accountant, Lisa Kammerer. The Finance Committee, in conjunction with the accountant, will develop written financial policies and procedures. When these financial policies and procedures are completed, the Finance Committee will initiate an independent review by an accounting firm. It will not be as exhaustive or expensive as an audit, but it will review many of the same financial practices. This should happen by Spring 2014. One side effect of the financial review is that last year's budget has not been completed for this meeting but will be forthcoming soon. The 2013/14 budget is on target so far.

Endowment Fund Report Tom Brennan reviewed the purpose of the Endowment Fund. It is a separate organization which manages five accounts that supply funds to the church. The Endowment Board is seeking to ramp up its solicitation of donations as well as remind members of legacy gifts. The

Endowment Fund has a professional money manager and the Endowment Board reviews the performance of this manager twice a year. If the performance is not doing well, the Endowment Board considers a change in the money manager. In FY 2013, the Fund distributed \$37,537 from its five accounts to the Church. As of June 30, 2013, the Fund had a value of \$927,933. The net growth in value was 5.9%.

Board Co-Presidents' Report The Board was very intentional this year in electing co-presidents rather than a single president. The Board wants to model how collaborative governance works or doesn't. So far, the Board and Church Council are realizing that collaborative governance – which included restructuring the staff and hiring an operations manager – is a good fit for our church. Evidence is in the surge of creative energy that results from committees and staff working together to create highly meaningful worship services and programs. Other evidence is in the large number of items the Board has found falling between the cracks, which is leading to documentation of policies and procedures.

The Board decided to name only three goals this year so as to focus and attain them. They are:

1. **Goal One - Expand member engagement through focused programming**
2. **Goal Two - "Communicate, communicate, communicate"**
3. **Goal Three- Facilitate a smooth and intentional on-boarding of new staff and volunteer leaders.**

Acknowledgements The co-presidents recognized the following members for their service to the church: **Ray Sinclair** who is the Supreme Connector and who years ago began talking to new members to learn their interests and to connect them to church activities. **Linda Miltner** who developed a database of members' interests and talents so that committees could easily find the right matches. **Bev Baker** who created Community Builders more years ago than anyone can remember. **Dave Wallace** who has devised the new "Most Valuable People" (MVP) team approach to staff Sunday services which is an innovative engagement model we plan to use more. **Larry Bullock** who has worked so long on the website without fanfare and it was Larry who filed for the original URL firstuu.com. **Joe Busby** who has worked for untold hours to keep the church's computers working. **Doug Rohrer** who has worked relentlessly to harness technology in innovative ways so church leaders can keep projects moving forward and coordinated without being delayed by the need for face-to-face meetings that are nearly impossible for busy people to schedule. **Gaut Ragsdale**, our parliamentarian, who never misses a congregational meeting to ensure that all views are fairly represented.

Introduction of Committee Chairs – Lyn introduced the 2013/14 Committee Chairs and thanked them for their leadership.

Other Business Before adjournment "Good of the Order" remarks were accepted from those attending. Dot Christenson raised an issue regarding applause during Sunday Services. She was seeking information to obtain a sense of the body about clapping. A show of hands indicated that sentiments are mixed on this issue. The matter was not debated and there was no binding vote taken.

Alice Schneider, Secretary