

PROGRAM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
FIRST UU ST. LOUIS
AUGUST 25, 2025

Attending: Cathy Rauch, Kathy Wilke, Erin Mulligan, Kathy Wire, Rev. Sabrina Trupia, Tom Finan, Fran Hoffmann, Grace Munie

Reports:

Board Report (Kathy Wilke): The Board has not met since the last Council meeting b/c of the August Board and Council retreat. Kathy asked for feedback on the retreat content and format.

Participants commented:

- the retreat was a good balance between activities (improvisational games were a highlight) and content;
- reports on governance were somewhat dry for long-term members, necessary for new ones;
- new members and longer-term members both participated actively.

As follow-up, the Board is engaged in ongoing identification of a discrete number of goals over a relatively short timeline, with outcomes identified to assess completion.

Outreach and Social Action (Fran Hoffmann):

- The Designated Collections process is complete for 2025-26, with 22 collections approved and scheduled; Community Fund recipients selection is in process with RFPs due 9/9/25; award decisions to be made in the third week of September.
- Partner Church Committee is making plans for the PC Sunday in November and a bake sale.
- Social Justice Committee is enjoying robust participation at its monthly meeting and a (too long) list of potential activities. Among the most salient at the moment:
 - An inaugural after-service lunch held in August was deemed a success and needs an ongoing structure for continuation
 - Educational events for a Native People's Acknowledgement Project and Immigration Task Force are being planned for fall.
 - Conversations with the St. Louis Freedom School projects are unfolding to explore the possibility of First UU becoming a site for a school in summer '26
 - Discussions continue regarding the feasibility and desirability of resuming Human Rights Vigils on Saturday morning given the ongoing need for participation in demonstrations in the larger community.

Programming Cluster (Grace Munie):

- Worship Committee will be co-chaired by Roz Cook & Pam Geppert, and will meet 6-8PM on the 2nd Tuesday
- Tom Finan will be the Worship Committee's liaison to the Clark Lecture Committee
- Three members of the Worship Committee will be participating in the "So You Think You Can Preach" seminar hosted by Elliott Chapel
- RE: classrooms being organization in anticipation of fall programming

Growth & Engagement (Erin Milligan):

- Women's Alliance has a full set of programs scheduled through September
- Membership Committee, led by Gwen Hickman, plans monthly meetings the 3rd Sunday after church; there is a new curriculum available for newcomer orientation which Rev. Sabrina will be adapting for use by First UU; the committee is discussing how to expand its membership.
- Young Adults, led by Luke Steffens, has been inactive over the summer, is planning to resume in-person meetings soon, and is hoping to sponsor a panel program on religious diversity for the fall.

Stewardship (Kathy Wire):

- Finance Committee continues to assess expenses from the tornado, will be meeting on 8/28 to review the church's portfolio, identify targets for fundraising efforts, and review expenditures to date.
- On-site meeting with our insurance representative went well; rep is somewhat optimistic that recent adjustment to ratings of churches that are over 100 years will be favorable to First UU's rates.

Facilities (Tom Finan):

- Facilities Committee continues to assess tornado damage, identify what is city's responsibility for repair, and arrange for repairs we need to make. Overall, damage appears to be less than first thought.

Other Business:

- Cathy Rauch is seeking additional members for the Clark Lectureship Committee (in addition to her, Grace Munie and Tom Finan) and plans to propose expanding utilization of funds from their original format of nationally recognized speakers for single events to more flexible and programmatically focused forums.
- Cathy Rauch shared information on ASHREI'S Rapid Response Program for what to do if ICE officers come to the church (<https://www.ashreifoundation.org/rapid-response>) and suggested its phone number be placed in materials available for ushers/greeters. The Rapid Response number to call if witnessing ICE activity is: (314) 370-7080.

Submitted by:
Fran Hoffmann