

**First Unitarian Church of St. Louis Policy Board Meeting**  
**Monday, January 12, 2025, 6:30–8:00 pm via Zoom**  
**Minutes, notes version**

**President Kathy Wilke called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.**

**Others in attendance:** Chris Kocher, Vice President; Margaret Weck, Treasurer; Sidney Watson, Secretary; Carl Bassi, Mike Bray, Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant, Betty Neill, Chris Peterson, Lisa Ross, Trustees

**Absent:** no one

**Church Council:** Cathy Rauch. Erin Milligan and Kathy Wire attended the discussion of Transgender Inclusion in Congregations.

**Staff:** Lynn Hunt, Rev. Kim Mason

**Opening Words** by Chris Peterson, a poem by Mary Oliver.

**President Kathy welcomed** both Board and Council Members.

**Discussion of Transgender Inclusion in Congregations, session 4**

Session 4 is about Trans Experience and Spirituality. This session focused on the lived experiences of trans people in the world and in congregations.

**Board Covenant Reading** by Carl Bassi

**The Process Observer** is Margaret

**Land Acknowledgment Project**

Member Chris Tighe explained how, following a suggestion by the Worship Committee, the Social Justice Committee developed a proposal for a Native People's Acknowledgement Statement. The purpose of the Statement is not just to acknowledge the harms that happened in the past, but the harms that are happening today.

Here is the draft language presented to the Board:

We acknowledge the fact that our Church occupies what was once the home to the Osage Nation, Otoe-Missouria, Kickapoo, Quapaw, Ho-Chunk, Miami, Illini Confederacy and other tribes who were unjustly removed and who still continue to face injustice today. We stand in solidarity with them and celebrate their resilience.

In the spirit of our UU principle of putting love at the center, we will work to acknowledge injustices, and to support Native People in their struggles for justice and equality. We are open to experiencing transformation as we reach out to learn about others and to embrace pluralism as we come into

community with native people and celebrate our interdependence. We will commit to practicing generosity by helping Indigenous people who have been displaced and treated unjustly.

Along with the Statement, the Social Justice Committee also recommends that the Congregation commit to an annual contribution, religious education, and programming to support ongoing work by Native People.

The Social Justice Committee plans to present the draft Land Acknowledgement Statement and the other elements of the Project at the upcoming Mid-Winter Meeting. Over the next few months, there will be additional opportunities to educate the congregation about the proposed Project, take questions, and finalize the proposal. If there appears to be congregational support, the Statement will be put to a Congregational vote at the May Annual Meeting.

**Margaret moved that the Board endorse the Land Acknowledgement Statement to be presented at the Mid-Winter Meeting, seconded by Betty. Motion passed.**

### **Consent Agenda**

- Minutes from December 8, 2025, Policy Board meeting, Betty Neill
- Report of the Minister, Rev. Kim Mason
- Report of the Minister of Congregational Life, Rev. Sabrina Trupia
- Report of the Administration, Lynn Hunt
- Report from the President, Kathy Wilke
- Church Council Notes, Cathy Rauch
- Financials from the Treasurer, Margaret Weck

Lisa Ross noted that we now have a Social Justice Committee, which replaces several smaller committees, including Toward Justice and Social Responsibility. She encourages everyone to try to remember the new committee's name.

Lisa also announced that the \$15,000 grant to support the Freedom School Grant goes mostly to Beyond Housing, between \$10,000-\$12,000, with a smaller amount going to the church to offset our costs to host the school.

**Chris Kocher moved to approve the December 8, 2025, minutes. Chris Peterson seconded. Motion passed.**

### **Updates & Board Insights**

- Mid-Winter Meeting

President Kathy Wilke updated Board members on our roles and responsibilities for the upcoming Mid-Winter Meeting on Saturday, January 17. She will send an email with the details.

- 3-year Rolling Strategic Planning

Rev. Kim Mason explained the UUA's recommendation that congregations develop a 3-year rolling strategy rather than a 5- or 10-year strategic plan. The world is changing quickly, and we need to respond to an ever-changing environment. A 3-year rolling strategic plan allows for flexibility and adaptability.

With a 3-year rolling strategic plan, our goal is to create actionable goals for each of the six focus areas we have identified as a church:

- Membership and community building
- Religious education
- Worship
- Social justice
- Building and facilities
- Stewardship

The concept is to have goals for year 1 that are set up and ready to implement; goals for year 2 that are about 60-75% ready to go; and goals for year 3 that are about 25% ready to go. Goals are updated each year: year 2 goals are updated and revised, then rolled in as new, ready-to-implement year 1 goals; year 3 goals are revised and updated to become a new set of year 2 goals; and a new set of year 3 goals is developed.

It is the Board's responsibility to create the rolling strategic plan, evaluate our performance, and update it annually. The plan is to be implemented by our committees and staff.

Rev. Kim will introduce the 3-year Rolling Strategic Plan concept to the congregation at the Mid-Winter meeting. We plan to spend an hour giving members time to brainstorm goals for each of the seven areas. The Mid-Winter discussion is just one step in seeking input for setting strategic goals.

- Fundraiser on February 7

Remember, we have a fundraising event on Saturday, February 7—details provided in e-blasts.

## **New Business**

We need a Board liaison to the Nominating Committee, chaired by Steve Wilke. Please contact Kathy if you are interested.

## **Here's what we need to do before the next meeting**

- Please attend the Annual Mid-Winter Meeting on Saturday, January 17.
- Please volunteer to help with setup and cleanup for the Annual Meeting.
- Please attend the Fundraiser on February 7.

**Process Observer Margaret** noted that we ended 4 minutes late, but people who wanted to speak were able to do so. "We did fine."

**The meeting adjourned at 8:05**

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 9, 2026 via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sidney Watson  
Secretary