

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS
Policy Board Meeting Minutes
09 August 2021 via zoom

Meeting was called to order by President Gene Rubin at 6:38 pm.

Others in attendance: Steve Wilke, Vice President; Alison Lamothe, Secretary; Kathy Wilke, Treasurer; Susan Lammert, Trustee; Sarah Francois, Trustee; Jason McClure, Trustee **Absent:** Emily Colton, Trustee; Joel Hickman, Trustee; Mitch Herzog, Trustee

Staff: Kim Mason, Lynn Hunt

Church Council Chair: Cathy Rauch

Opening Words: Steve Wilke

Reading of Board Covenant: Kathy Wilke

Chalice Lighting: Gene Rubin

Process Observer: Steve Wilke

Consent Agenda. Documents submitted to Board to review prior to meeting.

Motion to approve: Gene. Motion passed.

- a. Minutes of Previous Meetings: 6-14-2021; 7-12-2021
- b. Report of the Minister – Kim Mason
- c. Report of the Administration – Lynn Hunt
- d. Report of the Board President – Gene Rubin
- e. Report of the Council Chair – Cathy Rauch
- f. Report of the Acting Religious Education Coordinator – Claire Weichselbaum
- g. Report of the Personnel Committee –Sarah Francois

Board Liaison reports:

Steve Wilke—No report.

Sarah Francois—The Personnel Committee is currently interviewing for the following positions: RE Director, Communications Director, Church Sexton, and in-person A/V Technician. We are also hiring a cleaning service.

Kathy Wilke—The Nominations and Leadership Development Committee is looking to fill the following positions in Fiscal Year 2022-2023: Policy Board President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Trustee; Church Council Chair and Finance and Stewardship Cluster Chair.

Kathy reported that Margaret Weck is focusing on the leadership aspect of the Committee's mission.

Quit Claim Deed. Church property had been registered in two parts. Robert Hunt did a quit claim deed that combines the 2 pieces into one property. Gene has notarized this deed.

Plumbing. The preschool classroom's leaky pipe has been replaced. No additional leaks have been detected since the repair. A shut-off valve was installed to isolate this room in case of future problems. Floor repair work is pending.

Livestream. Modern Communications, Inc. found drilling through our historic building a challenge! They are slated to finish their work by August 15. However, since the Delta variant has put our in-person re-opening plans on hold, if it takes longer it will be less of a concern.

Board members were encouraged to join the Hybrid Ministry Task Force on Sunday, August 15th at 11:15 am for a Q&A session after the Zoom worship service, to learn more about how our livestreaming services will work for in-person and remote attendees.

Policy Board One Year Goals

Welcomability and retreat. The Policy Board and Church Council met for a successful remote retreat. Gene summarized ideas that were generated in his latest Rubin's Ramblings, published in the 08/06/2021 E-News. These ideas will be discussed in upcoming Church Council meeting(s), when they will decide which ideas they would like to implement and how.

Church and financial understanding. Gene would like to address this topic in future Ramblings. His goal is to explain church finances in an accessible manner. Cathy suggested we hold workshops to elicit input from church membership. Gene prefers an informational approach first, then perhaps a survey to assess congregational interest in a more interactive workshop.

The continuing impact of COVID on our congregation.

The **Task Force** notes that we are currently in a Phase 1/High Transmission phase, based on local statistics and according to CDC guidelines. They will meet again on Wednesday, August 11.

The Task Force hosted two discussion sessions held over zoom prior to the Sunday service on August 1 and after the Sunday service on August 8. A total of 30 members, including Task Force hosts, took part in these discussions. Those who attended generally expressed their support for our cautious approach to re-opening.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to an open discussion of this topic. It was noted that, while the Task Force makes recommendations, ultimately it is the Board that decides how and when we will return to in-person services.

Gene raised the issue of how remaining closed to in-person worship impacts our stated goal of "welcomability." Kim noted that gathering is a part of our theology, but we must do so in a way that is safe. She has been in contact with other midwestern Unitarian congregations in high transmission areas, and they also remain closed. As the Delta variant has changed the trajectory of the pandemic, we may have to accept that we can only plan 3 or 4 weeks out at a time. We may need to become more comfortable improvising.

Gene encouraged us to think of clever ways that we could gather in smaller groups. For example, could parents of RE students gather for service while their children attend outdoor RE classes? We discussed the pros and cons of outdoor worship services, now complicated by technical issues related to

livestreaming. Another important question is how we handle the verification of vaccination status. We decided to develop a survey to see how members would like us to address this potentially contentious issue.

Prior to the next meeting, Board members should continue to educate ourselves and talk to church members. Jason McClure and Steve Wilke volunteered to work on the afore-mentioned survey.

Process observer check-in: We conducted ourselves well.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

The next Policy Board meeting will be held Monday, September 13, 2021 at 6:30 pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Lamothe