

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 1, 2026**  
**Meeting Conducted via Zoom Video Conference**  
**Minutes**

**ATTENDEES & CALL TO ORDER**

Voting members: Ryan Devine, Michael DeWitt, Selene Fabiano, Kristen Jensen, Beth Jerde, Carla McCasland, Helen Toy

Absent: David Rosales, Pier Sun Ho

Ex officio members: Rev. Marcus Liefert, Beth Pollard (Secretary), Lisa Maynard (Treasurer), Janae Heard (Operations Director)

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Selene Fabiano, Co-President, at 7:16 p.m. Kristen did the chalice lighting and reading, Carla read the Board covenant, Helen read the land acknowledgement, and Michael read the Widening the Circle Vision Statement.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**A motion (M/S, Kristen/Michael) to approve the following passed unanimously:**

- a. Approve agenda
- b. Approve Board meeting minutes of March 4, 2026
- c. Accept monthly Treasurer's report
- d. Accept monthly Operations Director's report
- e. Authorize distribution of \$7,500 from the Calkins Trust as recommended by the Finance Committee
- f. Appoint Natalie Campbell to the Committee on Shared Ministry
- g. Recommend congregational affirmation of nominees to the Nominating Committee: Michael Armstrong, Suzette Anderson-Duggan, Lorriane Schnurr, Paul Hudson, Sima Misra, Carisa Orwig, Cynthia Asprodites (new), Kay Fairwell (new)

**MINISTER'S REPORT**

Sunday Sexton: Staffing has been rearranged to provide a Sexton on Sundays, who will do A/V during the worship service in addition to facilities tasks during about an 8-hour shift.

Stewardship: The committee and its leadership have been doing a wonderful job; current estimate is coming within \$10K of goal

Plate donations: Started passing the plate in the pews during last Sunday's service, with an attachment to enable electronic giving; raised nearly \$750 as contrasted with \$450 the prior week.

Regional connection: He is participating in a regional ministers' retreat, and, along with some other UUCB staff, will attend the Pacific Western Regional Assembly the following week.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/LISTENING**

- a. Board or staff announcements
  - Budget Informational Meeting: Sunday, May 10, 12:30 p.m., Fireside Room
- b. Board Listening Presence (Helen Toy) – Nothing to report this month

c. Congregants who wish to speak to the Board on agenda items or other matters: No one wished to speak

### **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

a. Finance Committee recommendation for May 17 congregational vote to approve repaying the 2024 loan from the Board-designated endowment to the ministerial housing fund with a portion of the bequest from the Lee Lawrence estate

Treasurer Lisa Maynard explained, as noted at the March meeting, that the loan repayment from the bequest enables using rental proceeds from UUCB's Lexington Avenue house to support the recommended General Fund budget rather than being used to repay the loan.

M/S, Kristen/Helen, to approve the Finance Committee recommendation. Motion passed unanimously.

b. Review and consider acceptance of Draft Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget for May 17 Congregational vote.

Treasurer Lisa Maynard and Operations Director Janae Heard presented the draft budget. The Board made no changes to the draft. The Board will vote on it at the May 6 Board meeting.

c. Review May 17 Congregational Meeting Draft Agenda

A congregational vote on the loan repayment was added to the agenda.

M/S, Kristen/Michael, to approve the May 17 congregational meeting agenda, along with authorization for the Board president to make any necessary changes. Motion passed unanimously.

d. Consider establishing the Stewardship Committee as a Board committee

Currently the Stewardship Committee informally lies under the purview of the minister, but there is no Board policy on that designation. Additionally, there is some reasoning to instead make it a committee of the Board. The question for the Board is where it wishes the Stewardship Committee to reside in UUCB's organizational framework: A committee of the Board or delegated to the Minister.

A concept to think about is whether Stewardship is a function or effort that helps the Board do its governance work, or whether it is more operational in doing the ministry of the church. Rev. Marcus noted that Dan Hotchkiss, in his book Governance and Ministry, provides some guidance in how to consider the Stewardship Committee's place, and leaning towards considering it operational and under the minister's purview.

Other considerations discussed:

- If Stewardship is delegated to the minister, how does the Board want to interface with Stewardship? When and how would the Board want to hear about Stewardship?
- Church members may be more responsive to being asked by the minister than by the Board to be Stewardship Committee chair
- How Stewardship ties into the outreach work of the Endowment Committee, which is a Board committee
- Perhaps we should establish Stewardship as a year-round committee that has responsibility for fundraising in general, although it might make it harder to find people who are willing to chair/co-chair the committee.
- Connectivity with the minister is important for incorporating outreach into worship services during the annual pledge drive

After some discussion, the Board assigned itself the work of reading Chapter 10 of Governance and Ministry - where Stewardship responsibility is referenced, before revisiting the topic at the May Board meeting.

e. Development of policy for reviewing external fundraising requests.

Rev. Marcus noted that UUCB receives donation requests for UU initiatives/organizations, humanitarian crises, or other needs, and Board policy is lacking on how and by whom a response to those requests is decided. Furthermore, there is no mechanism in place to review those “enduring partners” to whom UUCB regularly donates outside the Good Neighbor program. The question for the Board is having a policy that designates to whom and how decisions on fundraising requests and other contributions are made.

Regarding how other UU churches handle such requests, Rev. Marcus said that larger churches tend to delegate the decision-making authority to the minister while in smaller churches they are typically handled by the Board.

The Board’s Governance Manual Task Force was asked to bring back to the Board any existing Governance Manual language around fundraising requests and donations. The Board might then designate a task force to develop more comprehensive language to address gaps/lack of clarity.

f. May Beacon Article Ideas (Carla)

Carla may use a theme related to the May Day General Strike, such as from the angle of awareness of the power of the people and the power of the dollar. It could tie into Stewardship, as in using our dollars to pay for what matters to us- along with the Strike concept of boycotting things we object to.

Communications: Discussion about the Beacon led to discussion about communications and follow up on Kristen’s request for the Board to develop some communication goals/direction. She and Carla will take the lead on drafting some goals and related considerations to present to the Board, after reviewing current Governance Manual language and speaking with Rev. Kathryn, Membership & Engagement Manager Charis Domador, and Lonnie Mosely.

**BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBER/LIAISON REPORTS**

None

**CLOSING COMMENTS**

Beth Jerde reported that the “Resist with Red” fundraiser with tiny handmade red hats symbolizing resistance in solidarity has so far raised \$800, supporting Cubans through the Global Exchange, the families of Gaza journalists who were killed, and another food distribution project for local immigrants.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Pollard, Secretary