

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda**  
**Wednesday, May 6, 2026**

**Via Zoom:** <https://zoom.us/j/91070175965?pwd=d2FUcWZCQjYzVEF2MFZabWJQQRrUT09>

**7:15 1. CALL TO ORDER & OPENING RITUALS**

- a. Chalice reading & lighting – David Rosales
- b. Board Covenant reading- Kristen Jensen
- c. Land Acknowledgement Statement –Carla McCasland
- d. Widening the Circle Statement – Helen Toy

**7:20 2. CONSENT AGENDA – Items may be approved in one motion unless a Board member requests an item be removed for question or placement under**

- a. Approve agenda
- b. Approve April 1, 2026 Board Meeting minutes
- c. Accept monthly Treasurer’s report
- d. Authorize deposit of the \$300,000 distribution received in March 2026 from the Lee Lawrence estate to the Board Designated Endowment Fund, with designation for use pending May 17 congregational action.
- e. Accept Operations Director’s report

**7:25 3. MINISTER’S REPORT**

**7:35 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS/LISTENING**

- a. Board or staff announcements:
  - Budget Informational meetings: Sunday May 10, 12:30 pm, Fireside Room, and Tuesday, May 12, 7 pm, Zoom
  - Congregational Meeting Sunday, May 17, after worship service
  - Board Update
  - Remind members of their assigned roles for the 5/17 Congregational Meeting
- b. Board Listening Presence (Helen)
- c. Congregants who wish to speak to the Board on agenda items or other matters

**7:45 5. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS - Break @ 8:30 PM, if needed**

- a. Approve Draft FY26-27 Budget for May 17 congregational vote
- b. Recruit more delegates to the UUA General Assembly
- c. Authorize funding for Freestone roadway repairs and other essential expenses
- d. Designate the Stewardship Committee as either a Board Committee or as a committee under the purview of the Minister
- e. Establish policy (i.e. authority & process) for external fundraising requests
- f. Develop Communication Goals (Carla & Kristen)

**9:00 6. BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS**

**9:05 7. CLOSING COMMENTS**

**9:10 8. ADJOURNMENT**

## **Aspirational Covenant of the UUCB Board of Trustees**

We as the UUCB Board of Trustees agree:

- To stay committed to connection even when we disagree;
- To recognize the fullness of our power, and the many responsibilities that power entails;
- To listen actively to each other and the congregation, and to seek out opportunities to do so;
- To be caring, respectful, present and open-minded;
- To work together to make the changes the congregation needs, as we keep the best interests of the congregation above our own and to live into our mission;
- To support and trust each other in our work;
- To remember the goal of our work is to build a thriving, loving congregation;
- To be unafraid in the face of hard decisions, to be unafraid of making mistakes, knowing that we will learn from them if we do, and to be unafraid of challenging our preconceived notions and updating our previously-held beliefs; and
- To come to decisions we all feel we can support while recognizing diverse views.

## **Land Acknowledgement Statement**

As we begin, we want to acknowledge that this church occupies land in Huchiun, the unceded territory of the Chochenyo-speaking Ohlone people. We understand that we continue to benefit from the seizure and occupation of this land. We acknowledge and embrace our responsibility to take restorative action. We affirm that this is deeply felt and commit our congregation to be in right relationship with Indigenous communities, aligning in solidarity, supporting Indigenous projects, and caring properly for the land.

## **Widening the Circle Vision Statement**

We, the trustees of UUCB, commit ourselves to championing racial justice embodying anti-racist practices, and confronting and dismantling white supremacy culture and all forms of oppression (including but not limited to racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, ageism, xenophobia and religious oppression (including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia) in everything we do.

## **Mission Statement of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley**

The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley is to create loving community, inspire spiritual growth, and encourage lives of integrity, joy and service.

## **Vision Statement of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley**

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley is a welcoming and vibrant congregation. We joyously support spiritual development guided by individual faith, reason, and conscience. We are committed to serving one another, the church community, the community at large, and the global community. We foster a spirit of generosity and trust that encourages care for our church home and affirms diversity and relationships consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles.

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

**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 discussed, before revisiting the topic at the May Board meeting.

e. Development 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

May 3, 2026

To: UUCB Board of Trustees  
From: Lisa Maynard, Treasurer

RE: Treasurer's Report for May 6 Meeting

This month there are two financial matters for the Board to act on:

Approve the proposed operating budget for FY 2026-27 (7/1/26-6/30/27).

*This item is in the discussion/action section of our May 6 agenda.*

The Board has had the proposed budget for a month, and Board approval is required to send the budget to the congregation for approval at the May 17 meeting.

Approve immediate deposit of the \$300,000 distribution received in March 2027 from the Lee Lawrence estate to the Board Designated Endowment Fund, with designation for use pending May 17 congregational action.

*This item is included it in the consent agenda for our May 6 meeting.*

On April 1 the Board approved a plan for use of the \$300,000 unrestricted distribution to UUCB from the estate of Lee Lawrence:

- a) use \$178,019.78 to pay back, immediately and in its entirety, the loan from the Board Designated Endowment to the Ministerial Housing Fund;
- b) deposit the remaining \$121,980.22 into the Board Designated Endowment as new funding.

This plan involves a deposit of the entire \$300,000 distribution into our Board Designated Endowment, held by the UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF). The designation of part of it as a loan payback, and the remainder as new funding, is an internal UUCB accounting matter that is not tracked by the UUCEF.

As we discussed in previous Board meetings, the use of a new gift for loan payback requires approval by two thirds of the members present and voting at a congregational meeting (Bylaws 9.1.4); the congregation will vote on this plan on May 17.

*What happens if the congregation for some reason does not approve the loan payback with the required 2/3 majority?*

As it stands now (after the Board's vote on April 1), the Board would need to decide, presumably at the June 3 Board meeting, what to do with the full \$300,000. The Finance Committee has discussed this possibility, and advises the Board, if the congregation doesn't support the loan payback, to follow the usual course of action for an unrestricted gift (bequest) of this size, to add the entire amount to the Board Designated Endowment. It therefore seems likely that the full \$300,000 will be deposited in the Board Designated Endowment, whether the congregation approves the loan payback plan, or the congregation doesn't approve that plan and the Board is required to vote for a different use of the gift.

The Board's approval of immediate deposit is on our consent agenda for this meeting because of timing. We are nearing the end of the fiscal year and it does take a bit of time for the UUCEF to receive and properly record deposits to our endowment funds. Finance staff would like to initiate the transfer as soon as possible, so that the deposit to the Board Designated Endowment is recorded well before June 30.

*Today's Mechanics bank balances are:*

Checking, \$508,212.15 (includes the Lawrence distribution, received in March)  
Savings, \$156,910.78

# Operations Director's Board Report

APRIL 2026

- **New Member:**
  - Shawn Marchand
- **Average Attendance:**
  - In Person: 217
  - Online: 34
- **Finance**
  - Budget Q&As are scheduled for the congregation. In Person - Fireside, 5/10 @ 12:30pm. Zoom - 5/12 @ 7pm. I will ask Charis to send the link out with the Week Ahead announcements, and it is in the calendar.
  - Sundays Tap2Pay devices averaged \$215/Sunday in April. It has only been one month so far, but our Plate donations are trending up, presumably due to "passing the plate" during service.
    - Feb Plate (Breeze) - \$3391
    - Mar Plate (Breeze) - \$3299
    - Apr Plate (Breeze) - \$4746 (plus \$862 from Tap2Pay) TOTAL \$5608
  - \$50k gift received for "Staff support". Discussed with Finance committee, this will go into a fund reserved for staffing needs, which Marcus and I have authority to spend. We can either pull out needed amounts at the end of a budget year, like we will most likely need to this year in order to cover the higher-than-expected rise in health insurance reimbursement costs. We can also budget to spend a certain amount in the budgeting process when we can predict a need.
- **Facilities**
  - Most facilities tasks are on hold due to Peter's absence. I've taken over all in progress projects and am scheduling due maintenance with our contractors. For critical issues or emergencies, I am asking everyone to please email me directly. For other facilities requests, use the Facilities Request Form on the website (Members section), but please be patient, most will need to wait until we have full staffing.
  - Atrium Smoke Beam – Fire Alarm System
    - Smoke Beam replacement parts are in and a Tech is scheduled for May 5 to install.
  - Play Field Leveling
    - Almost Complete. Gopher mesh, weed barrier and border + wood pulp is in. The rubber pad in the small play yard is complete. They will have someone out to put in a ramp at the entrance in the first week of May. Then I will schedule a final walk-through to make sure everything is completed.
- **HR**
  - Peter is out on medical disability. We are unsure how long how long he will be out. Thor has agreed to work some extra hours during the week when he is available. Marcus and I are discussing options for the future to cover this extended leave.

- We will be asking members to step in where possible, especially with setting up chairs and floorplans for events and to please ask fellow congregants for help first when needed. Also to give us as much advance notice as possible (especially with Green Sheets). We can't promise staffing availability for setup, cleanup, or hosting at this time, and we really appreciate everyone's understanding.
- UUCB Leave Policy - Implemented to cover the first 90 days of any employee's disability, since we do not currently pay into CA SDI. This mirrors the policies from CA SDI, UUCB covers 100% of employee's salary, with 40% taken from sick leave balance. This flows into the UUA long-term disability insurance after 90 days of leave. Selene and Pier reviewed the policy, and I would be happy to provide a copy of the policy for the board. It will be added to the Employee Handbook, which I plan to update this summer.
- **Other Items for the Board**
  - **Freestone Road Repair**
    - Consulted with Pier & Selene about the need for an emergency repair of the road at Freestone, which was brought to my attention by our neighbors. We agreed we would split the cost, which was quoted at \$11,400 if done before May 1.
    - Emergency repair completed – Base erosion required additional \$6,100 in base rock work (total now \$17,500 vs. original \$11,400 quote)
    - **Current cost split proposal** – 50/50 split offered by neighbors IF church usage remains low; otherwise they propose 75/25 split (church/us) based on property count served (1 of theirs, 3 of ours)
    - **Budget Status:**
      - Allocated spending against \$12k authorization:
        - Road repair: \$8,750 (if 50/50 split with neighbors)
        - Tree work: \$1,000 (paid)
        - Fence repairs: ~\$1,000–2,000 (pending, split with neighbor)
        - Fire abatement weed whacking: TBD
        - Total: \$12k+ already committed or spent.
    - **Freestone Restricted Fund status:**
      - Current balance: \$2,322
      - Expected costs from this fund: \$8,750 + \$1,000–2,000 + fire abatement + prior charges (attorney fees, engineering invoices from December) will result in a negative balance in this fund.
    - **Discussion/Decisions required:**
      - Expected church usage level going forward to determine whether to accept 50/50 or property-based cost split
      - Total \$12k+ allocated to me is already committed or spent. Would the board like to allocate more funds for spending on essential and unforeseen expenses?

## 2026-27 Budget Notes

### UUCB Board of Trustees

**Overall Net Income: \$39.47**

#### REVENUE

- We removed \$50k in community space rental income. The Tongan church is no longer leasing space on Sundays, and community rentals have dropped recently. We also got a slow start this year, but we expect that won't be the case next year with the new staffing.
- This revised budget shows show a revenue line of \$30k, the approximate amount we could expect from the Quasi Endowment
  - To produce a balanced budget, we ask the board to separate our annual UUCEF fund withdraw and designate the annual draw amounts from the Quasi Endowment and Armstrong Garden funds to go to the operating budget for the next few years. The hope is that the congregation will continue to grow, and the pledges will eventually catch up to the operating costs. Having the annual draw from the Quasi Endowment might help bridge the gap. Ladd Griffith will still get its draw from the UUCB Endowment, the Kay Davis Fund, and the Building Fund, which has increased significantly in the past year due to Grace Ulp's bequest. This will give Ladd Griffith sustainable funding, even without the Quasi Endowment portion. We also expect to receive a couple more substantial bequests in the next year or two, which will increase the annual amounts over time.

#### EXPENSES

- **Personnel**
  - Used 2026-27 UUA guidelines for all salaried staff.
  - Increased hourly wage for all staff at least 2.5% (based on CPI)
  - Operations – Some staff restructuring will be needed to keep the salary budget line manageable for this year and future budgets. Marcus and I have a plan to adjust roles within the Operations department that will reduce overall personnel costs while maintaining operational capacity.
  - Music – larger increase needed to offer competitive rate for section leaders, who are paid “per call”.
- **Operations**
  - The church will now cover the premiums for life insurance and long-term disability for all staff working 15 or more hours per week.

- The disability is only Long Term, meaning there is a 90-day waiting period before this benefit kicks in. We should start looking into either contributing to CA SDI or creating a cash reserve so the church could cover employee disability for the first three months of any leave. This is typical in churches outside of CA.
  - Accounting Services. 2025-26 budget was higher to cover the extra cost of switch to Quickbooks. Next year should settle back to previous rates. However, we are due for a financial review per our bylaws. \$15,000 was added to pay for that review.
  - Consultants and contractors – For the 2025-26 FY, this did not get used. The staff transitions did not leave a lot of capacity for major projects or work to be done by contractors, but we do expect to see this more in the coming year.
  - Guest Ministers. We are over budget for the 2025-26 budget year due to Marcus’s parental leave. This is not expected again next year, and Marcus is happy with the budgeted amount.
  - Buildings and grounds budget – Added funds for contractors and needed repairs. Shifted some funds from the B&G Supplies budget line to the B&G Maintenance budget line. Since the Good Earth teachers rarely use our Atrium restrooms anymore, we have significantly reduced the bathroom supplies we need to order.
  - Donations to Non-Profits – This covers all the donations we make to other organizations. It is \$24,500 for Good Neighbor (Calculated by adding \$12,000 from a line under the Program Revenue and half the plate collection amount). It also includes the donation to GRIP, and the Shuumi we pay to the Sogorea Te’ land trust.
- This budget reflects the Treasurer’s request and the Finance Committees agreement with having part of Lee Lawrence’s bequest to UUCB pay back the loan from the Quasi Endowment made to the Minister’s Housing Fund. We have removed the expense line of \$15k that would otherwise be needed to cover paying that back.

## **Narrative Notes**

- This is an operating budget only. This does NOT include any TRNAs, restricted funds or other accounts. This represents money coming in and money going out in the fiscal year only.
- We have been working hard to simplify and consolidate the accounts since moving over to Quickbooks. As a result, this may look slightly different than it has in past years.

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley**  
**2026-27 Budget - DRAFT for the Board of Trustees**

		2025-26 Budget	2025-26 YTD (DEC)	2026-27 Budget	2026-27 Budget Notes
1	<b>Pledge Income</b>				
2	Pledge Income	\$ 525,000.00	\$ 377,846.00	\$ 550,000.00	Based on the Stewardship goal
3	Prior Year pledge payments	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 25,098.00	\$ 30,000.00	
4	<b>Plate Collections</b>	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 14,398.00	\$ 25,000.00	
5	<b>Other unpledged contributions</b>	\$ 30,500.00	\$ 13,542.00	\$ 30,500.00	
6	<b>Good Neighbor*</b>	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 2,604.00	\$ 12,000.00	
7	<b>Restricted contributions released</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,000.00	
8	<b>Special Project Donation</b>	\$ -	\$ 45,000.00	\$ -	
9	<b>Program Revenue</b>	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 4,315.00	\$ 12,500.00	Income from Chalice Camp, Leadership Retreats, Congrats to Grads, Food Drive, etc.
10	<b>Rental Income</b>				
11	School Buildings (good earth)	\$ 362,300.00	\$ 180,726.00	\$ 369,546.00	Based on proposed 2026-2029 lease increases
12	Community use - space rentals	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 31,735.00	\$ 100,000.00	Lowered due to no longer having Tonga Church and KFFD rentals
13	Cottage Rental	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 19,200.00	\$ 38,400.00	
14	Lexington Rental	\$ 31,400.00	\$ 22,420.00	\$ 40,800.00	
15	<b>Fundraising</b>	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 22,839.00	\$ 25,000.00	
16	<b>Interest Income &amp; Trust Income</b>	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 8,355.00	\$ 13,500.00	
17	<b>Endowment Disbursement</b>		\$ -	\$ 30,000.00	Annual draw from the Quasi Endowment
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>\$ 1,256,700.00</b>	<b>\$ 771,608.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,307,246.00</b>	
19	<b>Salary, Wages, Housing &amp; Benefits</b>	\$ 836,165.06	\$ 404,060.46	\$ 862,886.53	Slight staff restructuring
20	<b>Insurance</b>	\$ 61,630.84	\$ 32,053.00	\$ 62,475.00	
21	<b>Workers Comp Insurance</b>	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 3,236.00	\$ 7,500.00	
22	<b>Accounting Services</b>	\$ 28,000.00	\$ 16,940.00	\$ 40,000.00	Additional 15k for Financial Review needed per our bylaws
23	<b>Consultations/Contractors</b>	\$ 8,800.00	\$ 675.00	\$ 4,000.00	
24	<b>Guest Speakers, Ministers, Musicians</b>	\$ 6,850.00	\$ 3,995.98	\$ 6,850.00	
25	<b>Supplies</b>	\$ 10,200.00	\$ 2,918.12	\$ 11,200.00	
26	<b>Office Expenses/Administration</b>	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 9,017.78	\$ 18,500.00	
27	<b>Phones &amp; Computers</b>	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 8,223.41	\$ 16,750.00	
28	<b>Advertising &amp; PR, Online Resources</b>	\$ 5,250.00	\$ 1,057.65	\$ 5,250.00	
29	<b>Property Taxes</b>	\$ 36,500.00	\$ 18,732.13	\$ 31,500.00	
30	<b>Professional Development</b>	\$ 21,191.00	\$ 4,565.32	\$ 23,370.00	
31	<b>GA Delegate &amp; Leadership Scholarship</b>	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,104.00	\$ 3,000.00	
32	<b>Staff &amp; Volunteer Appreciation</b>	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 907.00	\$ 1,700.00	
33	<b>Bank Fees, Tap2Pay Sub</b>	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 1,730.77	\$ 5,250.00	
34	<b>Taxes &amp; Business License Fees</b>	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 463.68	\$ 1,000.00	
35	<b>UUA Annual Program Dues</b>	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 19,999.98	\$ 46,325.00	
36	<b>Building &amp; Grounds Supplies</b>	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 2,856.01	\$ 7,000.00	
37	<b>Building &amp; Grounds Maintenance</b>	\$ 34,000.00	\$ 21,517.00	\$ 40,000.00	

	2025-26 Budget	2025-26 YTD (DEC)	2026-27 Budget	2026-27 Budget Notes
38 Kitchen Supplies/Hospitality	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 3,601.00	\$ 10,000.00	
39 Utilities	\$ 45,500.00	\$ 23,855.96	\$ 48,000.00	
40 Committee Expenses	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 4,000.00	Board Discretionary - \$2k, plus funds for Endowment Committee and Stewardship
41 All Programs/Teams Budgets	\$ 14,730.00	\$ 8,960.00	\$ 9,900.00	Some of this moved to account for passthroughs & donations to non profits
42 Honoraria/Classes (Personal Theology)	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 2,000.00	
43 Donations to non profits				
44 Good Neighbor	\$ 24,500.00	\$ 10,525.43	\$ 24,500.00	\$12k - Good Neighbor (line 6), \$12.5k - 50% plate (line 4)
45 Enduring Partner: Sogorea Te' Land Trust	\$ 3,000.00		\$ 3,000.00	
46 Enduring Partner: GRIP	\$ 2,000.00		\$ 2,000.00	
47 Enduring Partner: Partner Church			\$ 1,250.00	Partner church was in programs, but makes more sense as a partner expense
48 Program Expenses	\$ 680.00	\$ 6,571.51	\$ 6,000.00	Expenses from Chalice Camp, Leadership Retreats, Congrats to Grads, Food Drive, etc
49 Fundraising/Event Expense	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 42.00	\$ 2,000.00	
50 Owed to Endow to pay back MHF			\$ -	Finance Committee recommendation for Lee Lawrence Bequest to pay back Endowment
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,256,496.90</b>	<b>\$ 608,109.19</b>	<b>\$ 1,307,206.53</b>	
Projected Over/Under	\$ 203.10		\$ 39.47	3/26/2026 - JH

**5/6/25 Agenda item 5c:** Authorize funding for Freestone roadway repairs and other essential expenses

See Operations Director report on Consent Agenda for information on this item.

Other background information:

Past Board Action that made funds available for Freestone costs above annual operating expenses included authorizing a Freestone Contingency Fund and repayment requirements, per attached Board Resolution 23-1. The \$12,500 loan from the General Fund authorized by the resolution was fully expended (and has not yet been repaid).

Attachment: Board Resolution 23-1

Resolution No. 23-1  
A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF BERKELEY  
ESTABLISHING A FREESTONE CONTINGENCY FUND  
WITH REIMBURSEMENT REQUIREMENTS

**Whereas**, Resolution No. 22-1 containing shared assumptions as well as directions, authorizations, and milestones for continued ownership of the Freestone property has been approved by the UUCB congregation; and

**Whereas**, seeking confirmation from Sonoma County on the allowable uses of Freestone, given current property zoning as single family residential was authorized and directed in Section 4 of Resolution No. 22-1; and

**Whereas**, reconsidering the matter of the opening of Freestone for congregant use at the time of completion of “phase 1” repairs of the property in compliance with permitted zoning uses was authorized and directed in Section 9 of Resolution No. 22-1; and

**Whereas**, the Board of Trustees has been informed that there is a time-sensitive window of opportunity between May 10 and May 23 to apply to Sonoma County for a Vacation Rental Permit and related Transient Occupancy Tax License that, if approved, would authorize uses of the Freestone property that are not currently permitted; and

**Whereas**, ensuring there is no-to-very-minimal net cost, including staff time, to UUCB from property ownership of Freestone, including costs for management, insurance, tax assessments, legal fees, permitting, maintenance, repairs, and improvements is authorized and directed in Section 11 of Resolution No. 22-1; and

**Whereas**, the Board has received a recommendation from the Finance Committee on the structure, limits and reimbursements for a Freestone Contingency Fund should the Board wish to advance the use of UUCB funds for applying for permits, obtaining professional expertise, and other such costs related to fundraising pursuits that are authorized by the Freestone Oversight Committee or the Board of Trustees to implement Resolution No. 22-1,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees:

1. Establishes a Freestone Contingency Fund, with funds advanced from the UUCB General Fund, to allow expenditures authorized by the Board of Trustees or the Freestone Oversight Committee to be made in support of implementing the direction of Resolution No. 22-1. Examples of such expenditures include permit application fees, professional expertise, and other costs for pursuit of fundraising strategies. Any funds expended from the Freestone Contingency fund are to be reimbursed to the General Fund as provided for in Section 5 below.

The maximum authorized allocation from the UUCB General Fund to the Freestone Contingency Fund is \$12,500, as provided for in Sections 2 and 3 below.

2. Allocates \$5,000 in Fiscal Year 2022-23 to submit and support applications to Sonoma County for a Vacation Rental Permit and a Transit Occupancy Tax License, including the associated home inspection and other Sonoma County permit and license application related costs. Expenditures for professional expertise, fundraising pursuits or those that otherwise support implementation of Resolution No. 22-1 may be made only upon advance approval by the Freestone Oversight Committee or the Board of Trustees. Any unspent funds from the \$5,000 allocation may not be carried over into Fiscal Year 2023-24, when a separate allocation is made, so as to not complicate UUCB's accounting workload.

3. Allocates up to \$7,500 in Fiscal Year 2023-24 to the Freestone Contingency Fund to pursue fundraising possibilities, obtain professional expertise, or otherwise advance implementation of Resolution No. 22-1, subject to expenditure authorization in advance by the Freestone Oversight Committee or the Board of Trustees. This \$7,500 allocation in FY 2023-24 is separate from, and in addition to, the \$7,500 that is contained in the FY 2023-24 budget for property tax, insurance, and utilities.

4. Clarifies that the Freestone Contingency Fund amounts are not a budget allocation but rather are intended to enable UUCB to take advantage of critical opportunities that may arise as fundraising strategies are pursued in support of implementing Resolution No. 22-1.

5. Directs the Executive Director to maintain tracking of all Freestone expenditures from the date of the congregational approval of Resolution No. 22-1.

6. Directs that UUCB's General Fund will be reimbursed for all Freestone Contingency Fund expenditures as soon as fundraising results make such reimbursement practicable, and directs the Freestone Oversight Committee to make recommendations to the Board on the timing of the reimbursement.

6. Directs the Freestone Oversight Committee to approve, oversee, monitor expenditures out of the Freestone Contingency Fund, and make regular reports on the fund and its expenditures to the Board of Trustees.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on May 3, 2023.

**Agenda Item 5d:** Designate whether the Stewardship Committee is a Board Committee or under the Minister's purview, considering ideas from Dan Hotchkiss' Governance & Ministry Chapter 10.

Board direction at April 1, 2026 meeting: *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.*

Attachment: Chapter 10, Governance and Ministry, by Dan Hotchkiss

## Faith and Money in One Conversation

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When it comes to money in congregations, people often fall into one of two camps. The first may include children of the Great Depression, experts in finance, elementary-school teachers, and people anxious about their own money situation. Their top priorities are to make sure the budget balances and to prevent the congregation from making any plans it is not certain it can meet. They squint at budget spreadsheets like bookkeepers of old with their banker's lamps and sleeve garters. I call this group Green Eyeshades.

The second camp typically includes young clergy, upscale decorators, affluent retirees, college professors, and commission salespeople. They firmly believe that with God, all things are possible. They say things like, "We're a congregation, not a business." When lassoed into talking about money, their eyes glaze over. Staring at a distant sunrise, they float over the surface of numerical reality. I call them Rose-Colored Glasses. This group can be identified at budget meetings mostly by their absence.

The division between Green Eyeshades and Rose-Colored Glasses is as old as Mary and Martha, Moses and Aaron, and Job and Job's wife. It is as deeply rooted in our culture as the duality of secular and sacred, temporal and spiritual. There is nothing wrong with it, so long as each group values the other's contributions and sees both camps as members of one team. But the boundary too often gets rigidly baked into the decision-making structures of the congregation, leading them into costly mistakes.

In many congregations, if you ask the board what it controls, the word "money" features prominently in the answer. If you ask why, you'll hear that lay leaders should properly control the purse strings. If a staff member needs to pay for something, they should ask the board or perhaps the

treasurer as an agent for the board. That may not be quite how spending decisions really happen, but the espoused structure is quite simple. Leaders fall into two categories: lay and staff, and it's the lay leaders who control the money.

For me, the two main types of leadership are not lay and staff, but governance and ministry—each of which includes paid and unpaid, lay and ordained leaders. And both governance and ministry involve money. Recapping briefly, governance means “owning the place on behalf of its mission,” and ministry means “running the place, accountable to the board.” The board leads governance, which includes policy, partnership, and planning about money. The staff, led by the head of staff, leads the ministry, which means managing the congregation's daily work, which includes spending and receiving money. Financial management, writing checks, receiving and accepting gifts, bookkeeping, and financial reporting are all part of management and therefore the responsibility of staff. This way of thinking seems strange in some congregations, but in well-run charities and businesses, it's common sense.

## Board Governance of Finance

What is governance when we are thinking about money? Like governance in general, the board's financial work consists of policy, partnership, and planning. Let's take them one by one.

The board creates a structure of *financial policy*, keeps watch to ensure that its policies are followed, and approves a ministry vision that guides the creation of a budget. Financial policies establish rules by which financial managers must live: Who can open a new bank account? How many people must be present when we count the Sunday offering? The most important of these rules are board policies. The rest are left to be created and adopted by the head of staff.

A major part of the board's role, in *partnership* with the head of staff, is to conduct oversight of finances. As with worship, education, and other parts of ministry, the board monitors the staff's work by receiving written reports throughout the year. The purpose, in the case of finance, is to confirm that the board's financial policies, including those that require following the budget, are followed. If it finds problems, the board can supplement its passive monitoring by actively requiring information or

even intervening directly. The reports are not an opportunity to undercut the head of staff or the established process for staff evaluation. If the board believes that the finance staff are not functioning well, that is a topic for them to discuss with the head of staff, not with other staff directly.

Oversight is not the same as helping. In fact, sometimes the board is most helpful when it restrains its helpful impulses and insists that others do their jobs. To oversee effectively, the board must stand apart, making its expectations clear and also saying plainly that it is the head of staff's responsibility to make things right. It is almost never helpful for the board to try to fix administrative problems directly. The most basic rule of oversight, in finance as in any other area, is that you cannot oversee yourself. This principle, all by itself, explains why involving the board in financial management decisions is a poor idea.

Financial oversight can be complex, but the basic concept is simple. One part of it is passive. The board receives monthly reports about income and expenses compared to budgets. A quarterly balance sheet shows assets and liabilities—all assets and liabilities, with no exceptions. Each board member should understand these reports well enough to answer basic questions: Are we on budget? Is our budget balanced? Are we keeping track of funds whose donors have restricted how we can use them? Most boards need to invest an evening or two a year to ensure that each board member has this basic understanding.

The other part of financial oversight is active. Every year, an unbiased person who has not been involved in financial management examines managers' records to answer some important questions. Have the reports been accurate? Could our procedures be improved? Did we comply with donors' intentions when we promised to? This part of the board's oversight is active, in the sense that the board takes the initiative and asks whatever questions it thinks are needed each year.

Even in this questioning mode, the board's financial oversight is mostly passive. But I do not mean to leave the impression that the board is limited to this. Circumstances do come up—in finances or in any other area—when even the most trusting board grabs the controls and exercises its power to manage. If money is being stolen, if the safety of children or vulnerable adults is at risk, or if a catastrophe occurs, the board must set its policies aside and appoint an agent to investigate and make changes as required. Boards don't often take such drastic steps, but they should be prepared to take them as often as they need to.

Most of the time, board oversight produces nothing more than a few suggestions from the auditor or some questions that can wait for the annual evaluation session with the head of staff. And almost none of it needs to take board meeting time.

If all is well, the board can devote most of its meeting time to *planning*. How far into the future? Far enough to allow future budgets to accommodate the plan. For most boards, that means planning several years ahead. In Chapter 11, we'll see how that long planning horizon fits into the full cycle of board-staff goal setting and evaluation. For now, it is enough to note that money, more than any other single factor, sets the planning rhythm and tempo. The board's planning process has to look far enough into the future to create a vision that can drive fundraising, budgeting, staffing, and even building.

Any realistic plan must consider two facts. One is that ministry costs money. The other is that ministry produces money, in the sense that a congregation's ministry vision is a major factor in inspiring people to give money. Vision comes first, but budgeting should come close on its heels, so potential volunteers and donors can see that their congregation understands what it takes to make good things happen.

## Staff Management of Finance

The board's role in finance is to generate the vision that shapes ministry for years to come. The staff's role in finance, as in other areas, is to manage day-to-day operations. Financial management does differ from, say, managing a children's Bible camp. A camp achieves the congregation's purposes directly, while money supports them indirectly. One response to this reality is to organize for the two purposes separately, putting money under the control of a treasurer who is not otherwise accountable for the ministry outcomes that money is meant to produce. Or to put a rabbi at the head of "spiritual" life while an executive director reports separately to the board about how that life is paid for, housed, and staffed.

My preference is to coordinate program, personnel, and money through one staff structure, so one leader can be held accountable for steering all three vehicles in the same direction. Separating ministry from money makes change harder, while putting the same person on the hook for both deprives that person of excuses for repeating practices that have

only sort of worked before. I see no way to achieve this without getting over the requirement that ministry and money be stored in separate compartments. Which brings us to a question that turns out to be quite knotty sometimes: What role will the treasurer play? Should the treasurer be part of governance or part of ministry? The answer is part of a larger question: How does a congregation organize so that finances can be both efficient and safe?

## Organizing for Finance

In many congregations, the treasurer is clearly part of management, doing what the treasurer of a twelve-member book club would do—paying bills, depositing receipts, and preparing financial reports. In a twelve-member congregation, that can work, though as the original apostles found, money can cause trouble even in small groups (Matthew 26:15).

The standard way to prevent money problems is to equip anyone who handles money with a partner. In churches that receive an offering, two people should be present while it's counted. Both should see the bank deposit slip, and both should sign the tally. This process has become both easier and more complex as cash and checks fade from the scene in favor of bank transfers and digital wallets. But the underlying principle still is sound. For every way of handling money, two or more unrelated persons should confirm each transaction. Everyone who handles money needs a partner.

You can justify this practice by taking a dim view of human nature, or you can appeal to mathematics: If each person has a 10-percent chance of choosing to do wrong, the probability that two will make the same choice independently is 1 percent. The same formula applies to errors, which can be just as damaging as theft. When we're organizing for finance, we're never talking about one job, always two.

It follows that the question of the role of treasurer is really about two roles. Leaving aside actual job titles for the moment, let's call one the financial manager and the other the financial governor. The manager is part of the ministry, and the governor is on the board.

The finance manager, who works mostly in the office and reports to the head of staff, oversees receipts, disbursements, payroll, and perhaps a small fleet of computers and their software. Some of the work involves

reporting to the board, but most of it is done within the staff. Staff need paychecks and reimbursements, and they are the first to know if a printer breaks or a check bounces. When decisions about money must be made, the head of staff is best positioned to make them and to be held accountable for them. The finance manager might supervise contractors to do payroll or bookkeeping or a volunteer to count and deposit incoming funds. In New England towns and parishes, we call this role “collector.”

The financial governor's role is less familiar because in most congregations, no one is doing it. The financial governor is a board member who coordinates the board's financial work—work which, with the treasurer, so occupied with daily management, most boards neglect. The financial governor connects the board with its finance committee, helps frame the board's financial policies, takes charge of the annual audit or review, and holds an annual financial education session so board members and others understand the financial statements and the realities that they reveal. Most importantly, the finance governor contributes a financial perspective to the board's deliberations about open questions. Money should not be the first consideration in board planning, but neither should it be an afterthought.

Which of these positions should be called treasurer? Canada and most US states are surprisingly permissive when it comes to corporate officers. Almost every jurisdiction requires a president and a secretary. But treasurer? In some states, you don't need a treasurer at all, and the exact role and duties are mostly left to be defined in bylaws or board policy.

Business and nonprofit practice varies. In large organizations, the treasurer is often a mid-level manager working for the chief financial officer (CFO) who makes sure cash is available when needed. If the board has a designated finance governor, the position goes by a variety of titles—treasurer, financial advisor, financial strategist, or finance committee chair.

My main concern is not with job titles but with clarity of roles. If you belong to a denomination or look to a larger congregation as a model, you might consider following their lead, keeping the distinction between governance and ministry clear. Otherwise, I suggest using the title treasurer for the board's designated finance governor and calling the paid or unpaid financial staff by another title that fits their responsibilities—secretary, office manager, administrator, or CFO. For security, I would require the financial manager to appoint an unrelated person to manage

cash receipts and bank deposits, with a title like financial secretary, donation clerk, or collector.

Having a sound structure for finance is a first step. Another is to build trust, and sharing appropriate information is an essential element in building trust.

## Transparency about Money

“I wish we were more transparent about our finances.” For almost every problem congregations face, transparency is one proposed solution. Treasurers and business managers, who work hard to produce honest, accurate reports, are often surprised by the implication that they're hiding something. Transparency is good, but flooding people with reams of data rarely solves the problem.

Rather than more *data*, people need more *information*—data framed so that it informs their thinking. Not everybody needs and wants the same information; it depends on their decision-making roles. True transparency requires a plan to give financial information to each of four distinct audiences in ways and at a time that makes it possible for them to influence decisions. Here are some suggestions about the information each group needs.

**The Paid and Unpaid Staff.** People who manage programs, buildings, personnel, and cash flows need information that helps them control costs, monitor revenues, and achieve goals. Line-item budget spreadsheets are a good format for informing operational leaders how they are doing. If possible, reports given to individual staff members should indicate which budget lines they are responsible for, and if other budget lines appear, who is responsible for those.

**The Board.** There is no harm in routinely giving full budget and financial reports to the board, so long as the result is not a vague, wide-ranging board discussion of whatever happens to catch someone's eye. The board's main need, though, is for information that informs specific conversations the board will have about future strategic choices, policy changes, and vision goals. Providing this information is a big job. The treasurer, finance committee, and others should prepare to offer focused, analytic reports about strategically important questions that the board will take up at each meeting.

**The Wider Circle of Leaders.** In congregations of almost any size, a group of sixty to eighty people expects their voices to be heard on major questions, especially those that might bring change. In small congregations, this is almost everyone; in larger ones, it is a small minority. You see some of this group at congregational meetings; others operate more quietly by giving money, time, expertise, and spiritual leadership. Clusters of them gather as deacons, elders, or past presidents in certain Sunday school classes or informally in homes.

Financial information for this group can be framed as, “Here are one to three important issues that the board expects to make decisions about in the coming year. We would value your help thinking through the issues before they decide.” Along with a description of each proposal is an estimate of likely costs and other impacts on our finances.

As a rule, these leaders will pay no attention to invitations delivered in the pulpit or newsletter. Your congregation may have traditional ways of gathering this group. If you’re in doubt, ask the last long-tenured clergy leader how they did it. The Wider Circle is a fluid group—people join and drop out over time—so you can invite the whole congregation if you like. But pay attention to who comes, especially newcomers to the Wider Circle. Members of the Wider Circle are more likely to support the board’s financially impactful strategy decisions if they know their thoughts and feelings have been heard and thoughtfully considered.

**The Congregation.** This largest group of all—which, in theory, in most North American denominations, holds great power—is typically quite passive. Unless there is dramatic business to be conducted (or the promise of exceptionally good food), few members attend congregational meetings. Instead, this group votes mostly with its feet and with its dollars. Financial communications to the congregation should not focus on governance or management decision-making. Instead, whenever possible, make a case for the ministry you’re doing by telling stories. Tell people how their support will benefit themselves and others, extend their values, and help them to become their best selves. But don’t forget to mention that good works cost money! A price tag on a program or outreach gift helps educate the congregation and enhance giving, so long as the main emphasis is on the lives you touch rather than the cost.

Leaders get so used to talking to each other about staff positions, programs, and budgets, it’s hard to shift to telling stories about how lives are enhanced by the congregation’s work. But with this widest group—

especially in larger congregations—you’re talking not to your leaders, but to “customers” and donors. Some of them will someday join the wider circle of leaders, but for now they are supporters and beneficiaries, not decision-makers. They need inspiration more than they need facts.

Transparency is challenging! The traditional approach of handing out more copies of standard financial reports gives too much data and too little information. Each group in your congregation has its own financial information needs, and so transparency requires that leaders craft a message appropriate to each. When you succeed, you invite your whole constituency to feel it “owns” the congregation’s budget, strategies, and ministry. Talk of money makes some people nervous, so financial information needs to be respectful and nonthreatening as well as clear.

It is always easiest to talk only with those who think as we do, but a congregation needs all of its members’ time, energy, and financial gifts, and we rarely have the luxury of outsourcing financial communication to a specialist. What we can do is to consider some of the main groups who need different kinds of information about money. And we can do our best to translate it into plain talk and straightforward numbers so the anxious and the less informed can learn and have their voices heard.

## Budgeting as Leadership

The budget process, as it is often practiced, sets up needless friction between Rose-Colored Glasses and Green Eshades. A budget committee asks each program unit to request a budget for the coming year. The units ask for more than they expect to get—and then some. Budget committee folk throw all requests onto a spreadsheet and call it a “dream budget” and use it as the basis for a fund drive. The fund drive, predictably, falls short of the “dream” goal. How could it not? Calling a goal a dream almost guarantees that you’ll fall short.

The Green Eshades people peer down from their high stools. “Good stewards live within their means,” they say, and sharpen up their pencils to trim the dream budget down to a blunt, practical nub. At this, the Rose-Colored Glasses people rise up like an operatic chorus. “How dare you say we can’t afford what God has called us to accomplish?” The Eshades with their pencils skirmish with the Rosy Glasses and their dreams. Eventually, they come up with a budget—but there has to be a better way!

That better way begins by recognizing that a budget is a plan for doing ministry. The first draft of the budget is not a spreadsheet, but the ministry vision. This document confronts the question most budget debates address only indirectly: Which aspects of our mission will be top priorities this year? Only after the board adopts the vision are the program unit leaders asked to propose a budget, and the call asks not for a “dream” budget, but for a budget that will make the vision possible.

If the board does a good job of creating the ministry vision, it does not need to be involved in generating the spreadsheet, which is created by a budget team within the staff based on the ministry vision and input from the leaders of each program. The first stop for budget approval is the head of staff, who then presents it to the board for approval. This first stop is important. The head of staff must be prepared to tell the board, “I think this budget is a reasonable plan to achieve our ministry vision.” Without that affirmation, the budget may be balanced but fails to support the ministry vision.

Alternatively, the head of staff might need to say, “I see no realistic way to fund the vision we agreed upon, and so I recommend we trim our vision to fit our means.” That may be discouraging, but it is much better than what happens in too many congregations, where the budget flows directly from the spreadsheet crew to the board, often still in “dream” form, and the clergy leader shrugs as it goes by. The board might pass the budget but without the endorsement of its most important advocate.

When the budget is based on the board-approved ministry vision, created by the staff, endorsed by the head of staff, and approved by the board, it has the persuasive power of the congregation’s entire leadership behind it. The staff and teams know that their work has leadership support, and so do donors—with great positive effect on fundraising, to which we turn next.

## How Boards Raise Money

“Fundraising is the board’s main job.” I was stunned by this blunt advice from the executive director of a respected arts nonprofit. It was certainly a notion of board membership different from what I had learned from my experience in churches! The church boards I’d worked with delegated fundraising responsibility to the stewardship committee and had as little

to do with it as possible. Something in this arts administrator’s frank talk appealed to me.

In the years since then, I’ve worked with many congregations’ boards. While I rarely enter as a fundraising consultant, worries about money are never far from board members’ minds. How can boards—and board members—help the congregation to raise the funds necessary to support its work?

Most boards try to avoid this challenge, but a few embrace it and say, “Stewardship is a lay responsibility. As the lay board, we’ll run the fund drive.” As noble as such boards’ intentions are, the notion that a board can take on fundraising (or any other practical task) is fundamentally wrongheaded. Boards don’t do work; people do. A board can talk about fundraising, but nothing happens till some board member takes responsibility for doing it—and the *doing* happens almost entirely away from the board table. Nothing wrong with that. But it is not “the board running the fund drive.”

The board’s first contribution to the fund drive is to state the vision goals they mean to achieve using the money that is raised. Too many boards expect their stewardship or fundraising committee to choose a theme or vision. But what’s needed is not a vision for the fund drive, but a vision for the *congregation*. Only the board, acting in concert with the clergy leader with the support of the whole leadership, has the authority to pronounce the congregation’s vision.

A second necessary contribution from the board is to identify the “ask.” How much is the congregation asking each of its members to give? Not just this year, but over time, what level of gift does the congregation expect? This is a complicated matter, because no one number (or even any one percentage) will be right or fair for everyone. But every congregation gives some message on this subject, intentionally or not. And that brings us to a truth from my friend, the arts administrator: one of the strongest signals any organization sends is its board members’ own giving. Even when giving levels are supposedly a secret, the signal goes out and influences everybody else’s giving. Do board members give the minimum (dues, in a synagogue), or do they give much more than that? And how much? It follows that one of the most important conversations any board can have is about its expectations of its members with respect to their financial giving.

A third essential contribution boards can make to the success of the fund drive is for board members to participate as volunteers. When I pressed

my executive director friend about how the board actually participated in raising money, she admitted that she was responsible for the fund drive itself, working through a volunteer she had selected. (A bigger nonprofit would pay a development director.) Board members served as volunteers within that staff-led structure.

This is as it should be. Fundraising is part of the congregation's ministry, whether it takes the form of a bake sale or a stewardship pledge drive. The best way to manage such work is to put someone competent in charge and let them do their job. The best way to ensure the unity and harmony of all the congregation's work is to create a single ministry leadership structure to hold all of it, including fundraising.

Not all clergy welcome the responsibility for running a fund drive, and fewer still will want to be involved hands on. But a person can be responsible for something without doing it themselves. As a practical matter, clergy are accountable for the success of fundraising—in the sense that the consequences of success or failure reflect on them, whether they like it or not. Who better, then, to select and support the leadership that fundraising requires?

The board's role in fundraising success is essential, but it does not include "running the fund drive." It does include articulating the vision that successful fundraising supports and expecting board members to contribute gifts and time. The board makes its unique and indispensable gift to the fund drive when it leads in ways only the board can. The board's role is not to raise money but to declare the purpose for which money will be raised and to structure the roles and processes that maximize the chances of success.

# 11

## Board-Staff Collaboration

Good governance allows the board to spend most of its time thinking about the future. Clear delegation empowers the staff to get more ministry done in the present. Accountability assures the board that it can trust the staff and lets the staff know that it has the board's support. How does the board know that the staff is paying attention to the goals and policies it worked out with the clergy leader? How does the staff know that it is doing what the board wants? Trust builds over time but not automatically. Having a systematic way of setting goals, keeping in touch, and periodically evaluating how our work is going to help to create an atmosphere of candor and frank exchange between the board and staff.

Figure 11.1 shows one system for creating trust through regular communication and clear role boundaries. The diagram depicts a cycle—you might imagine wrapping it around a cylinder so that it repeats year after year. Across the top is the board's work; across the bottom is the staff's. In the middle row are activities that fall into the shared zone where board and staff work together.

The planning retreat is one of the board's key annual events. The clergy leader always attends, and the board might invite other staff as needed. The retreat produces two main products: a list of *open questions* about the congregation's future and a list of *vision goals*. Both lists are short—no more than three items apiece. The vision goals are the ones contained in the ministry vision. They state up to three big steps the congregation means to take toward fulfilling its vision in a future year. The open questions are one, two, or three topics for the holy conversation the board plans to host in the coming year.

Why short lists? Because congregations suffer from attention-deficit disorder. Two or three items are the most they can hold in their collective

**5/6/26 Board Agenda Item 5e:** Establish policy (i.e. authority & process) for external fundraising requests

*Board direction at April 1, 2026 meeting: 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.*

**Excerpt: Existing Governance Manual Fundraising language:**

**8.8 Fundraising**

UUCB engages in activities to generate the income needed to fund the UUCB budget, including the Annual Pledge Drive and special events, concerts, sales, auctions, gatherings, and other activities that shall be planned in a given year. Fundraising activities are to be coordinated with attention to minimizing competition and distraction, especially for the Annual Pledge Drive as the core funding source for the church. Publicity for special purpose or program-related fundraising should not conflict with major all-church/General Fund fundraising.

8.8.1 In accordance with the policy on Global Delegation, the Executive Director has final approval of the fundraising cycle.

**See also:** *Fundraising Policy (attached)*

## **Fundraising (to be revisited)**

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*Approved by the Board of Trustees on 11/18/10*

Fundraising is an important part of church life, providing opportunities for our members to strengthen their commitment and contribution to the church as well as providing funds for the church's operations and programs and for charitable causes.

### **Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for fundraising activities proposed by church groups as well as those sanctioned by church groups. Non-church related fundraisers are not allowed except as rental events. This policy does not pertain to routine events such as collection of offerings, canvasses, funding campaigns, etc.

### **General Guidelines**

All fundraising activities should be in keeping with the mission of UUCB and the principles of Unitarian Universalism.

The Board of Trustees delegates the approval of fundraising events to the CT. All fundraising activities must be approved by the CT beforehand.

Fundraising events must be coordinated with the Communications Administrator.

All fundraising decisions will be made by the CT.

Personal face-to-face solicitation of church members/friends or using the church directory and email groups or lists for email, phone, or mail solicitations is not permitted without prior approval by the CT.

### **Definitions**

Allowed fundraising beneficiaries:

- UUCB – Church's general fund or a special purpose
- Nonprofit organizations that hold an IRS certification and that have a clearly defined humanitarian objective consistent with UUCB's mission.
- Church group — a committee, task force, church-affiliated organization, or other internal church group of UUCB

**Fundraiser:** An event or activity that seeks to generate income for a beneficiary above the cost of conducting the event or activity. Types of fundraisers include: Luncheon/snack table, music concert/recital, dance, play, forum/speech, for which a donation is requested

**Sale:** The selling of services or merchandise to members, attendees or website users, including goods and services auction, rummage sale, crafts fairs, or sale of jewelry, art or books

**Solicitation:** Request to raise funds or promoting goods and services, either to attendees at an event held onsite or through a communication medium, including special plate collection, special event (e.g., food drive). Such requests not directly related to the mission of UUCB are not appropriate.

**Note :** The UUA, Pacific Western Region, and Pacific Central District of the UUA may send solicitations directly to members. UUCB has no control over these requests.

UUCB fundraiser: Activity that directly benefits UUCB.

UUCB-sponsored

fundraiser: Event sponsored by a church group to benefit an organization other than UUCB. These can include social justice projects and performing arts events by outside groups.

## **Notes**

For UUCB-sponsored fundraisers, a predetermined percentage of the revenue or proceeds will be shared with UUCB. The percentage to be given to UUCB will be determined on a case by case basis and will generally range from 10% to 25%. Organizers of and performers or vendors at events will pay a fee for use of the space and staff support in addition to a percentage of proceeds/receipts. There may be exceptions to this, as determined by the CT. As appropriate, letters of agreement will be signed by both parties.

For non-church related events, individual UUCB members or friends who wish to host a fundraising event benefiting an allowed beneficiary are invited to seek out a related church group for UUCB sponsorship.

When a fundraising event is completed, the individual/church group in charge will deposit the money collected into the safe or in some other secure place in the church, with their signatures, before they leave the church grounds. Requests for reimbursement with receipts will be submitted to the Business Administrator/Director of Administration within 10 days of the event.

For tax purposes, members may request donation acknowledgments for non-reimbursed expenses.