



**Agenda for the 167th Annual Meeting
The First Church in Belmont, Unitarian Universalist
Sunday, June 11, 2023, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
404 Concord Avenue, Belmont, Massachusetts**

Call to Order/Opening Prayer

Opening Remarks

Approval of Minutes

- 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes
- 2023 Special Meeting Minutes

Finance Committee Report/Budget Review

- Motion to Approve

Report of the Nominating Committee

Votes on Candidate Slates

- Finance Committee
- Committee on Ministry
- Nominating Committee

Committee on Ministry Report

History Committee – Covenant Task Force Update

Stewardship Committee Update

Parish Board and Committee Appreciations

Looking Ahead

- Welcoming New Board Members
- Priorities for 2023-2025

Motion to Adjourn





First Church in Belmont, Unitarian Universalist

166th Annual Meeting Minutes June 12, 2022

11:18am - Welcoming and call to order

- The meeting was called to order at 11:18 am by Sam James, Parish Board President (2020-2022).

11:19 Opening Prayer – Rev. Chris Holton Jablonski

- Donna Marcova poem

11:20 Quorum Call – 88 present, meets quorum of 62. Quorum affirmed by Sam Foster

Opening Remarks – Sam

- Quoting George Vaillant’s study “Adaptations to Life” Components needed for coping with life stresses 1. Planning, 2. Resilience, and 3. Humor
- Secured lease with Henry Frost Childrens Program (“HFCP”), annual rent \$90,000
- This year over \$633,000 in Pledges; thank you!
- Christmas Services cancelled due to Covid; however, over 100 gathered outside to sing Christmas Carols.

11:25 Approval of Minutes of June 2021 Annual Meeting

- Moved by Eloise McGaw
- Approved by unanimous acclamation of Congregation

Thanks for service to FCB

- Laurie distributed gifts to past Parish Board Members whose terms ended during Covid (’20-’21)
- Thanks, acknowledging Covid Task Force
- Thanks, acknowledging FCB Staff contributions

11:30 Budget Review – Martha Read

- A Financial Town Hall was held Mid-May, hosted by Finance Cte
- 2023 Budget approved by Finance Cte and confirmed by Parish Board
- Highlighting member support through pledges
- Highlighting Johnson House lease to Henry Frost Childcare Program (HFCP)

- Highlighting new grants through UUA
 - \$7,000 UUA Intern grant
 - \$10,000 Kids UUnited grant- CRE curriculum
- Projecting a very small deficit, vicinity of \$8,000
- 230 Pledge Units contributing to Stewardship Campaign
- Powers \$15,000 rental classroom wing this FY
- \$42,000 of HFCP (remainder in next fiscal year)
- 5.3% COLA for staff as recommended by UUA
- \$5,000 for off-site storage (formerly in Johnson House basement)
- \$2,000 increase for Soloist

11:41 Approval of Budget for 2022-23 Fiscal Year

- Moved by Mark Rosenstein
- Unanimous Consent of Congregation

11:43 Report of the Nominating Committee – Richard Waring

- This is the first year for nominations to the Committee on Ministry (“COM”)
- Work of Nom Comm was started last December
- Biggest ask: David Deese as incoming Vice President of PB

11:47 Motion to Approve Slate for Parish Board

- **Parish Board Officers to be elected:**

President: Laurie Graham (2022-2024)

Vice President: David Deese (2022-2024)

- **Continuing Officers to be elected:**

Treasurer: Martha Read (2020-TBD)

Parish Board Clerk: James Hencke (2021-2024)

- **New At-Large Trustees to be elected:**

Martha Courant (2022-2025)

Ariane Frank (2022-2025)

- **Continuing At-Large Trustees to be elected:**

Priscilla Cobb (2021-2024)

Roger Gallagher (2021-2024)

Pam Eggert (2020-2023)

Anjali Kumar (2020-2023)

Doug Massidda (2020-2023)

- **Past President (Ex-Officio):**

- Samuel James (2022-2024) Moved by Joel Mooney

- Approved by Unanimous Consent of Congregation

11:48 Motion to Approve Slate for Finance Committee

- **New Finance Committee Members to be elected:**

Jon Bridges (2022-2025)
Catherine Claypoole (2022-2025)
Lauren Corning (2022-2025)

- **Continuing Finance Committee Members, all returning, to be elected:**

Stefan Frank (2019-2022) (Chair 2020-2023)
Mike Widmer (2019-2023)
Brian Caputo (2020-2023)

- **Ex-officio Members:**

Laurie Graham, Parish Board President
Martha Read, Parish Board Treasurer

- Moved by Eloise McGaw
- Approved by Unanimous Consent of Congregation

11:49 Motion to Approve Slate of Committee on Ministry (“COM”)

- **Nominations for New Members of the Committee on Ministry:**

Jackie James (2022-2025)
Leslie Kolterman (2022-2025)
June Lattimore (2022-2025)

- **Continuing Committee on Ministry Members to be elected:**

Margaret Dunn (2021-2023)
Mary Harrison (2021-2023)
David Lind (2021-2023)
Laura Wooster (2021-2024)
Nick Hausmann (2021-2024)
Kathy Crawley (2021-2024), Chair
Chris Jablonski, ex officio

- Moved by Eloise McGaw
- Approved by Unanimous Consent of Congregation

11:52 Motion to Approve Nominating Committee

- **New members of the Nominating Committee to be elected:**

Martha Gallagher (2022-2025)
Marion Westgate (2022-2025)

- **Continuing members of the Nominating Committee to be elected:**

Nicole Griffin (2020-2023), Chair
Karsten Kueppenbender (2020-2023)
Catherine Stalberg (2021-2024)

Jonathan Wolf (2021-2024) Co-Chair

- Moved by Bob McGaw
- Approved by Unanimous Consent of Congregation

11:53 Committee on Ministry (“COM”) Review – Eloise McGaw

- Eloise retiring after 3 yr term as Chair
- 15 years ago started with Doris Hunter, former Interim Minister
- Purpose of COM: provide feedback loop between minister, staff & congregation
- Provide 3-yr staggered terms for members, with Minister as ex-officio
- This structure voted in at last year’s Annual Meeting
- COM to be populated by Nominating Committee with new members
- COM to present Annual Report to the Congregation
- Congregation isolated in 2020 due to Covid, but persisted
- Listening Circles in Jan’20, on Zoom Mar ’20, over 100 participated
- Jan ’22 hosted a reflection at Sunday Coffeehour, 50+ attending
- Mar ’22 over 50 in Listening Circles, most attendees were 10+ year members
- Key questions: What brought us in, what keeps us here, aspirations
- Feedback: yearning for more intergenerational activities, keeping a hybrid mode, and deeper connections
- Performance review of Minister performed by Chair of COM and President of Parish Board
- Plans & hopes: more feedback across generations & targeted Listening Circles
- Shout out to Lauren Corning, rotating off COM & joining Finance Cte.

12:02 Safer Congregations initiative – Bayard Klimasmith

- Approached by Marion Westgate on subject of program safety in 2019
- Emphasis on children, digital communication, legal, safety, confidentiality
- Peeled off as separate strategy: Violent intruder, engaged Belmont PD
- Started initiative proactively, without a compelling incident that provided impetus
- Why do other congregations struggle?
- No defining difference between perpetrators and other priests, so conclude an institutional weakness w/lack of transparency.
- FCB already had some good procedures, but a lack of consistency and no procedure for oversight
- When should staff report to the Parish Board?
- Goal: to protect the most vulnerable.
- 11 years ago – Behavioral Covenant should be reflected
- Reduce opportunity for errors
- Seeking permission from parents
- Avoid unilateral decision making
- Make it easier to report breaches
- Both PB and staff automatically notified of violations of protocol
- Build ability for adjustments to procedures

- Establish Safer Congregation Coordinator on PB
- Schedule of regular training for staff and volunteers
- MA Form 51A mandatory report
- Clear pathways w/confidentiality guidelines
- Social Media policy, incl. Zoom breakout rooms
- Offered QR code for congregation access to Safer Congregation docs
- Policy going up on Website

12:18 Goodbyes – Sam James

- Highlighted Covid challenges
- Property care challenges
- Good partnership w/staff
- Took stock of 166 year old institution
- Recognition of present Parish Board
- Thanks to retiring: Lynn Read & Bayard Klimasmith

12:22 Introduce Incoming President - Laurie Graham

- Opening remarks – Welcome new PB Members
- ”
- Thanks to Sam James
- Preview of Upcoming initiatives
 - Bylaw Cte to present in the fall
 - Review of Ames Covenant – John Howe to help create separate group
 - FCB Green - Ongoing move to “Carbon-Free” by 2035, working with Property Care & Finance, then presenting to PB
 - Compensation Committee: David Deese, Martha Read, Pam Eggert - Keep focus on how we are compensating staff;
 - COM – Expand on what is learned from Listening Circles
 - Tower Clock – Mike Flamang initiative – Town Meeting last week approved grant from Belmont Community Preservation Funds which also requires 10% (\$2,900) contribution from FCB/Belmont community

12:30 Adjournment – Laurie Graham

- Motion by Bob McGaw
- approved unanimously



SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING Minutes | April 2, 2023 | 12:30pm

In the Parish Hall, to approve Bylaw Amendments

The First Church in Belmont, Unitarian Universalist

Presiding Officer: Laurie Graham, President

12:30 Laurie Graham called meeting to order, requested the quorum count. Over 100 in attendance, quorum confirmed..

Rev Chris, Welcoming Prayer – “Thanks for each & every circle, building on a beautiful legacy...”

Laurie: There will be 2 votes: 1. To approve proposed amended Bylaws, except for Covenant, Article 2; 2. Vote to replace the current “Ames Covenant” with a placeholder until congregations votes on new covenant

12:34 Laurie introduced Sam James, Immediate Past President, who started the process to review Bylaws .

Sam James: Introduction to Bylaws revision process.

- Process started 15 months ago.
- Bylaws Task Force approved by PB in Nov ‘21
- Task force members: Roger Read (chair), Anne Stuart & Martha Courant
- Charge to Task Force:
 - 1. To change legalese to common language
 - 2. Incorporate an elected Committee on Ministry (“COM”)
 - 3. Look for anything left out.
- Task Force conducted 6 community meetings to review elements of Bylaws.
- Without the structured governance of the Bylaws, a President could take the church in various directions, despite the interests of the Congregation.
- The Bylaws provide long term stability and limit authorities.

95-98% of intent unchanged, but breaks down long paragraphs and sentences into understandable components.12:40 Sam introduced Roger Read, Chair of Bylaws Task Force

- Task Force approved by Parish Board November 2021.
- 1. Updating Bylaws
- 2. Including elected COM
- 3. Technical Corrections
- Thanks to members: Anne Stuart & Martha Courant
- Publication of documents, posted to website: March 15th

Key elements

- Now 14 Articles
- Notice rules for Meetings
- Added COM
- Terms of office
- Ames Covenant placeholder (heard a consensus that Ames no longer adequately or accurately represented the Congregation)
- Used modern language of inclusion (not male dominant)
- Clarified membership process
- Clarified Parish Board (“PB”) election
- President & Treasurer “Ex Officio” roles in Finance Cte are voting roles.
- Committee on Ministry (“COM”) elements:
 - Members elected for staggered, overlapping 3 year terms
 - Produces an annual report to a. Parish Board, and b. Annual Meeting
 - Engages and interviews the Congregation
 - Chair of COM responsible, jointly with PB President, for annual review of the Called Minister
- Covenant is why we gather, Section 2.01 propose placeholder, with History Cte to lead process for new covenant by Annual Meeting 2024. PB to formally appoint a Covenant Task Force to shepherd this process.

12:50 Laurie calls for Motion #1, to Approve the Bylaw Amendments.

- So Moved by Mark Rosenstein
- Seconded by Richard Waring

Open for Discussion:

- Q: Is there an MRC (Ministerial Relations Committee)?
- Ans: it is moribund, not active. The COM is a different committee from the MRC with a different format and purpose
- Q: What are the ministries of the church
- Ans: We minister in many ways, not just the Minister. We are all ministering to each other. Including supportive ministries (eg Social Action), beyond our walls.
- Q: Question of Remote (or Hybrid) Meetings, why not in amended Bylaws?

- Ans: There is MA enabling legislation signed 3/29/23 allowing non-profits/ churches to hold remote meetings. Laurie raised the issue of impediments to access. We want to go beyond what the law allows; this is a topic for future discussion and consideration by PB.

12:58 Charlie Hamann Move the Question

- Voice Vote for Motion #1 called by Laurie – Unanimous “Aye”, all opposed? (Silence).

1:02 Laurie calls for Motion #2 , to approve a placeholder for a new Covenant

- So Moved by Eloise McGaw
- Seconded by Mark Rosenstein
- Discussion Slide reviewed by Roger Read, Steps:
 - Placeholder Vote today
 - Spring '23 appointment of Covenant Task Force
 - Report to 6/11/23 Annual Meeting on process plans
 - Goal: present & approve new Covenant at '24 Annual Meeting
- Laurie: early discussions reveal consensus that the new Covenant be incorporated into the Bylaws
- Questions and Comments:
 - 1. Process & religious aspects – how do we make our community less “Jesus focused”. Will there be things addressed other than wording of covenant?
 - 2. Ask that we move cooperatively toward Annual Meeting '24 for new Covenant
 - 3. What do we tell “them” we stand for. Laurie: UUA discussion elevator speech; 7 Principles & Purposes
- History: Ames Covenant promulgated in the 1880's
 - 1927 Adopted by FCB
 - 1980's – Bylaws Committee expected Ames to be revisited
 - Lingering concern about tax exempt status if we have no Covenant of Purpose. Suggest that we call a Special Meeting rather than waiting until Annual Meeting of '24
 - Many in congregation unaware of existence of Ames Covenant

Laurie: we are not taking out the Ames Covenant forever, just removing it from the Bylaws. It remains our Covenant until replaced.

1:20 Susan Kobayashi – Move the Question

Laurie - Call for a Voice Vote to Move the Question. “Ayes” unanimous; opposed (silence)

1:23 Voice Vote for Motion #2 to insert a placeholder, “Ayes unanimous; opposed (silence)

1:25 Rev. Chris' Closing Words

Motion to Adjourn made by Eliose McGaw, Seconded by Mark Rosenstein



Slate of Candidates To Be Voted Upon At The Annual Meeting Of The First Church in Belmont For 2023 – 2024

Parish Board Officers Continuing Officers to be elected:

President: Laurie Graham (2022-2024)

Vice President: David Deese (2022-2024)

Treasurer: Martha Read (2020-TBD)

Parish Board Clerk: James Hencke (2021-2024)

New At-Large Trustees to be elected:

Susan Galli (2023-2026)

Gabrielle Garschina-Bobrow (2023-2026)

Eleanor Hobbs (2023-2026)

Continuing At-Large Trustees to be elected:

Priscilla Cobb (2021-2024)

Roger Gallagher (2021-2024)

Martha Courant (2022-2025)

Ariane Frank (2022-2025)

Past President:

Samuel James (2022-2024)

New Finance Committee members to be elected:

Doug Burden, Chair (2023-2026)

Joel Mooney (2023-2026)

Continuing members, to be elected:

Stefan Frank (2019-2024)

Jon Bridges (2022-2025)

Brian Caputo (2020-2024)

Catherine Claypoole (2022-2025)

Lauren Corning (2022-2025)

Ex-officio, voting members:

Laurie Graham, Parish Board President

Martha Read, Parish Board Treasurer

Nominations for the Committee on Ministry:

Eleanor Sugarman (2023-2026)

Bayard Klimasmith (2023-2026)

Livia Racz (2023-2026)

Continuing members to be elected:

Kathy Crawley, Chair (2021-2024)

Jackie James (2022-2025)

Leslie Kolterman (2022-2025)

June Lattimore (2022-2025)

Laura Wooster (2021-2024)

Nick Hausman (2021-2024)

Rev. Chris Jablonski, ex officio



Nominations for the Nominating and Recruitment Committee:

Jody Renouf (2023-2026)

Leslie Talmadge (2023-2026)

Continuing members to be elected:

Martha Gallagher (2022-2025)

Marion Westgate, Co-Chair (2022-2025)

Catherine Stalberg (2021-2024)

Jonathan Wolf, Co-Chair (2021-2024)

Respectfully submitted by the Nominating and Recruitment Committee:

Nicole Griffin, Co-Chair

Jonathan Wolf, Co-Chair

Karsten Kueppenbender

Cathering Stalberg

Martha Gallagher

Marion Westgate