Unity Church-Unitarian

Meeting Minutes of The Board of Trustees / August 8, 2026

Time	**Item** **(Use Double Helix & Antidotes Worksheets during meeting)**	Name
9:00	**Light Chalice & Reading** "We light this Chalice as a symbol of our faith, the light of truth and the warmth of love." **Read Covenant around the table**	Marcia Everyone
9:05	**How has joy appeared to you?**	All
9:10	**Reflection Intention:** Please take a moment and set an intention in service to our antiracist multicultural ends. From the array of tools, strategies, and practices in our repertoire* (see footnote below), what specific practice will inform ***how*** you will engage during today's meeting? **Consider an intersectional approach to the practice. The tools need to be adaptive to race, but also class.** Pay particular attention not only to the personal "within" but to group dynamics **"among" and realities "beyond."** *Antiracist multicultural tools and practices, including: ● ***Antidotes*** to white supremacy culture ● ***Double Helix*** focus on intersection of antiracist and spiritual practice ● ***Team Dynamics*** archive of teachings and practices (e.g. describe-interpret-evaluate, intersectionality+complexity, transformative conflict, types of power, identity politics, and more.) ● **State of the Congregation** template document	Everyone in quiet reflection
9:12	**State of the Congregations (brief check in by 3 people –up to 5 min each) plus group reflection** Use the State of the Congregation Blank Form to help guide your reflections. **In your reflection, consider the through-line that connects your observations. Where are the gifts? What do your reflections make you wonder and dream about for our church?**	Taylor Claire KP
	Reflection 1: ● Thought the entire transformational series was great - was interesting to see how everything played out after time ● Seemed like there were more people coming in the summer time. Felt vibrant and connected to the community. A place where people are this summer. ● Unity feels like a container for a lot of things - spiritual, individual practice, community practice, and transformation.	

	● Thinking about different ways to invite people to participate at Unity. Reflection 2: Sources - AFE Meat Me Halfway movie event, finding yourself at Unity (informal), Men's retirement group. ● One of the big themes at the men's retirement group was care giving. The experience of being a caregiver and how to support someone who is a caregiver. Looked at the idea of family / community care giving vs professional care giving and the nuances around related decisions. ● This space felt really expansive in how it was facilitated. Everyone had intentional space to share. ● At finding yourself at Unity there was a lot of curiosity around how ministry and church's work within the UU faith. People felt like there was a lot to learned and were interested in that learning. ● They talked about the courage it takes to reach out and inquirer about a new community. ● Had young people comment on feeling awkward about joining events where they are the youngest in the room. ● At act for the earth - was asked if I brought other young people to bring down the average age at the event (not a rare occurrence for me as a young person at Unity events). ● Those at my table also commented about really liking the warmer winters even though they know it is bad / related to climate change. An unawareness that they were talking about the crumbling of my and other young people's future really stung. ● Two curiosities came from these experiences ○ Acknowledging that it is not young people's sole responsibility to change the age makeup of Unity's spaces but that we do have a role to play I wonder, what if different age groups hosted spaces and then invited the rest of the congregation in. What experience / skills might they want to share? What about their generation's experience might they invite others into? ○ I see that we are really good at going deep quickly in the fairly homogenous groups at Unity. We are good at creating time, facilitating circle, using talking objects. I do wonder though if these same strengths that work really well in our church setting, actually mask or are a crutch for some of our weaker points / growing edges. I often hear people say this "going deep" just doesn't	

	happen outside of Unity. What skills have we not yet developed that we might need to go deep in the beyond? Reflection 3: ● Have been holding two theories of change (The IDI continuum and within, among, and beyond) with one another. Looking at how they interact with one another. ● Whiteness favors within and among. There is a difference between having beyond knowledge / using beyond as a lens and threading, within, among and beyond together all at once. ● Parallel in IDI ethnocentric stages (denial, polarization, minimization) - acceptance shifts this. When you get here you start to move into the beyond. ● It is very hard to shift from minimization to acceptance. Institutions are stable at minimization. There is much that pulls people to stay here. ● An understanding of structure is needed to pull people to acceptance. Experiencing life structurally. The language and grammar of structure. ● Belonging is often experienced at within and among. At whose expense in the beyond do we secure belonging? ● Thinking of conflict as something that provides us information about the structures that we inhabit vs thinking of conflict as just interpersonal.	
9:35	Generative Conversation: (50 min) We'll devote our generative conversation to the ET's Ends Outcomes Report and congregational survey to inform the ET before their retreat in late August. After reading the report, survey comments, and listening to Bill Etter's presentation, we are familiar with what the congregation said. But what is the meaning? - What did you hear from the survey respondents? - What themes, or an individual comment, should not be lost as the ET plans next year? - What surprised you?	Everyone
	● Tried to put this out as a standard survey - baseline. Felt like a learning year for the evaluations committee. Will make sure to have a discussion around getting the survey out to a more representative sample of the congregation. ● Someone commented about how we word the survey - Agreement with the ends vs embodying the ends. Where we want to go vs where is my refuge.	

	• Loyalty question - would you recommend Unity - is corporate language and not appropriate for religion. How are we meaning making from a question like that? • It's important to have standard questions over time but having things that are not clear and then using them to make meaning is not necessarily helpful. What assumptions are we making about answers and are they appropriate? • Maybe the survey is one means of gathering information but we should also use others. • Does the ET use the loyalty question? - Not used to make huge decisions. Look at the degree to which that number shifts to see the depth of connection people share with the church. If it was dropped we probably wouldn't lose something vital to our understanding of the church but the metric is helpful. • How much does the survey influence programming and ends work for the ET, knowing that the survey does not always represent the full demographics for the church. How is the ET including thoughts and information? - Strategic planning and ends report do not rely solely on the survey. This is one piece of data that is useful to the extent that it shows shifts in data. Very aware of the data limitations. • Numbers of people who participate in the survey year to year really varies which could impact drawing conclusions from year to year. • Your stakeholders and your donors are not different groups - the real value is when you can break down trends by demographics. That will be important as we become more multigenerational. Would wish for future boards to not drop all longitudinal data because there are nuggets in that long term trend data. In conversations at Unity we have that capacity to equip our lay leaders to do micro focus groups to dive more deeply and capture information from specific groups. • How we can see and think about congregant work related to Unity's values / ends that is not done directly through the church but is influenced by the church. • How can we get ideas and input from our congregants about how to move in the direction of the ends outside of the ends process. Doesn't feel like the survey is doing this. Growing our collective skill of imagining / visioning a different future and seeing our congregation as an asset of imagination. • How does corporate get data out of similar surveys - how do you extrapolate? How do we make use of information when it is contradictory? • Mt. Zion's survey has the same problem.	

	• Lots of tension right now shown in the survey results - rejuvenation vs justice work. • People felt like they had to prove themselves in the survey and justify their involvement. Where does this come from and what does it mean for our ends work? • Shame in there - where is that message coming from? • There was some - "I've been here and now I feel uncomfortable". What happened here to make them no longer feel welcome? • If we have always had an undertone of being involved in social justice, what about this moment is making it feel not okay when this is something that previous ministers have been involved in? • Are we willing to lose people who do not align with the ends if this is where we are going? • There are people who are at odds with all of our ends in the congregation but find other things here. • There are two persistent dualities here. People who are here for primarily spiritual experiences to be connected to the ministry and those who come to take action in the world. You can have both and this church should have both. Will often have one or the other faction upset as you tilt one way or the other. How do we measure this tension? How do we feed both? • People loving and involved in lots of activities vs those who do not know how to get started - perceiving cliques. How do we want to help people navigate involvement? How much do we want to / can we do on that? • How do we reconcile the interest in intergenerational work while also seeing a split in the data in terms of interest around different ends among different ages. • YOU ARE NOT GOING TO MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY! • This is a faith of action and you need to heal people enough so they can take action.	
10:25	**10-minute Break**	
10:35	**SDK Financial Review** • SDK will present the financial review to the board. As we consider the results of this review, are there any findings we need to follow-up on?	Board, ET
	Motion to accept the SDK Financial Review. First: Sara Ford Second: Debbie Cushman	

	Discussion: ● Used to use Shelby Next - not an A1 accounting system. We had 85-90% of information that a better accounting system would typically have in our monthly monitoring reviews. This meant when the audit happened each year, the numbers looked a bit different because they had 100% of the data needed but they did both tie out. ● We now use quick books and did not have an audit or review last year as we moved to this new system and figured out information about our financials. ● Clean up around procedures - Need to release restricted funds when they are spent so we actually know that the money has been spent. ● These financial statements tie directly to our internal statements - that is great! ● General standard is to have 3 months of cash on hand and we had 28 days at this moment in time. Note that cash flow ebbs and flows throughout the year. ● Current ratio (assets to liabilities) - 3.9 to 1 - (sign of your liquidity). Like to see at least 2 to 1, so that is good. ● Footnote 9 under NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - the listed 403 (b) is actually a 403 (a). ● What should we be looking at / tracking as a board - ○ Reconciling the list of restrictions monthly. ○ Knowing the cadence and cycles of cash on hand so you can see what is typical. ● How do we feel about the shift in balance between operations and capital that happened last year - staff is feeling really good about this ratio. The amount of capital income is right on target for what we need to keep the building maintained. ● What one or two questions can we as a board ask the ET to help us satisfy that we understand the financial health of the organization? ○ Having things reconciled with information that agrees with itself. ○ Cash on hand and the current ratio. ○ There is now a one to one mapping of each endowment fund with an investment account. ● Making sure that what we were showing as restricted funds are actually restricted and that what we showed as restricted funds matched what the auditors see as restricted funds. Approved - motion passed unanimously	

11:20	**Consent Agenda** ● Approve June 2026 BOT Meeting Minutes ● IIB. Staff Changes ● I B. Membership ● IIE. Financial Condition ● IID. Financial Planning ● Ends Outcome Report	Board, ET
	If there are no objections, the reports for the June meeting minutes, IIB Staff Changes, I B Membership, IIE Financial Condition, and IID Financial Planning, and the Ends Outcome Report are accepted as compliant as written. Motion passes	

11:25	**Monitoring Reports for Discussion:**
	● II H. Communication and Counsel to the Board
	● IIC. Comp & Benefits Report
	  ○ Review of Called Minister's Salary
	  ○ Review of Non-Called ET Salaries
		Board, ET

	Motion to accept II H Communication and Council to the Board as being compliant as written. First: Rich Lau Second: Taylor Burr Discussion: Are we interested in doing quarterly rather than monthly financial reporting - IIE? Motion within a motion to change the schedule for financial condition IIE quarterly Rich Lau Debbie Cushman Approved - motion passed unanimously Approved - motion passed unanimously Motion to accept IIC Compensation and Benefits Report as being compliant as written. First: Sara Ford Second: Rich Lau Discussion: Approved - motion passed unanimously	

11:40	**Board Committee Consent Agenda (reports)** ● Evaluation ● Future Vision ● Linkage	Kat Taylor Molly
	If there are no objections, the reports for the Evaluation, Future Vision, and Linkage Committees are accepted. Motion passes	
11:45	**Board Committees for Discussion** ● Reparations (5 minutes) ● Nominations (15 minutes)	Jane Rich
	Motion to accept the Reparations Committee Report First: Marcia Hayes Second: Debbie Cushman Discussion: ● Mark charles event was a big success ● Attended earth lodge event in granite falls ● August meeting will be thinking in terms of the currier fund ● In addition the the racial and indigenous justice teams wanting to do reparations work - act for the earth team is also wanting to join that work. ● Continuing to exercise our humility knowing that people who have been working on this issue have been doing this for a long time. ● John Stoesz really appreciates Unity doing this work at the board level and that we are doing both stolen land and stolen labor reparations. Approved - motion passed unanimously Motion to accept the Nominations Committee Report First: Rich Lau Second: Molly Flattum Discussion: ● Having a hard time recruiting with one candidate dropping out. May need one to two additional candidates for the slate. ● What are we going to do with that slot? ● There was lots of interest but also a lot of life circumstances made them not apply.	

	• There is a bit of a sense of Unity is good - I will rise to the occasion later. • How do we keep information about former applicants Approved - motion passed unanimously	
12:00	**Check-out Question:** Reflect on your antiracist multicultural focus set at the start. What was practice like for you? Releasing simplistic judgments of good/bad or success/failure, what emerged from practice in body, feelings, thoughts, words, actions and further questions? What difference did it make toward antiracist multicultural ends not only "within" but also **"among" and "beyond"**?	Everyone
	Extinguish Chalice "Though we extinguish the light of the Chalice here, we know the light of truth and the warmth of love go with us in our hearts."	Everyone
12:00	**BOT Reflection and Problem Solving and communications**	Trustees

Upcoming Reminders – September

Reading and Host – Debbie
State of the Congregation – Kat, Marcia *Committing to Unity Sept 29, 6:30-8:30*
October CommUnity column (due August15 to Martha): Jane

Discussion:

Board Wholeness Discussion
Financial Review follow-up
ET Salary Discussion
Followup on Board Book
Annual Meeting in December

Committee Assignments:

- Evaluation: Kat (Convener), Sara, Taylor
- Future Vision: Taylor (Convener), Kat
- Linkage: Molly (Convener), Marcia, Rich
- Nominations: Rich (Convener), Jane, Debbie
- Reparations: Jane (Convener), Molly, Sara
- Grievance (as needed): Marcia (Chair), Claire (Secretary), Debbie, Rich
- Policy (as needed): Rich, Kat