

Unity Church-Unitarian

Meeting Agenda of The Board of Trustees / June 14, 2025

Time	Item (Use Double Helix & Antidotes Worksheets during meeting)	Name
9:00	<p>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</p> <p>Reading: Mary shared a reading by Geeta Iyengar: <i>“When we start our practice, we are a beginner. Even today, we start as if we are beginners. You might have practiced for years, but each day, you start like a beginner. Even if you have practiced Tadasana for the last 30 years, when you start today, you still have to start with fresh eyes.”</i></p>	Rich Everyone
9:05	<p>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? And given our agenda and meeting content, what antiracist multicultural dimensions or ramifications feel relevant and focus your attention? Pay particular attention not only to the personal "within" but to group dynamics "among" and realities "beyond."</p> <p>*Antiracist multicultural tools and practices, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antidotes to white supremacy culture • Double Helix focus on intersection of antiracist and spiritual practice <p>Team Dynamics archive of teachings and practices (e.g. describe-interpret-evaluate, intersectionality+complexity, transformative conflict, types of power, identity politics, and more.)</p>	Everyone in quiet reflection
9:08	<p>State of the Congregation (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. Integrate your anti-racism/multiculturalism lenses as part of your check-in</p>	Molly Louise Laura
	<p>Reflection 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish Hall. Always a buzz, a lot going on. The advocacy and activism at Unity may not be loud or on the front page, but there is the quiet encouragement of the book stall, the quiet outreach of the Act for the Earth Team. Our congregation is not losing sight of activism here, in the outreach teams and the passions and daily work of those groups. • People were glad to put a face with my name as a board member. Have a good summer” reminded me of the church year, and whether people will still seek out Unity to process their issues during the summer, in the current political climate. • The Heritage Dinner was wonderful, a great program. What does it mean to ensure a legacy for Unity as part of an estate plan. Halle Q. Brown speaker was excellent. • Dine with Nine spontaneous meet-up to do some garden preparations, meet with parents. The end of the school year is exciting, but has its own stress for families. A lot of gratitude for Unity Summer in the Garden, for children. Chalice Camp is reasonably priced and grateful for quality of the program, including newcomers. 	

Reflection 2

- Sundays, I practiced approaching a visitor or others, new to me.
- Heritage Dinner. Our elders don't seem to worry about the future of Unity, they feel like it's in good hands, and they have faith in our future focus. They've turned it over to the younger people to take care of and lead. They're proud of Unity's legacy. Proud of our history with Hallie Q. Brown Center, and I learned how much longer HQB has been part of Unity than I was aware. Excitement around our new ends that resonates with dinner attendees and provides a path for moving forward; they like having three instead of eight ends.
- Wellspring Wednesday
- Empty Nest Meal Club is a cooking group; we raised kids together, in RE, the musical, camping trips, college, getting together once a month to swap meals and to prepare meals as a helping hand. How critical Unity has been in our families – and how our faith shows up in our children.
- Movie Night with Reverend Sinclair. Mostly church elders attended, another chance to learn that they are happy with Unity
- Ends Breakfast Gathering
- Thinking globally, "grief and gratitude" are the words that really stuck with me this month, saying farewell to Reverend Lara, loss of church people, and family and friends. Including our country and our culture, a lot of embedded grief out there. At Heritage Dinner realizing how many people who have passed, and their legacies. That event provides a powerful vision of what this church means to so many people. There is so much gratitude among people at Unity to have this place to come together and gather with our grief; we do goodbyes well. Expressions of people being sad that Lara is going, and yet they understand; seems to relate to our experience with ministerial interns. Unity is good for caring for each other. I find the spirit sends the right Unity friends to help me during when times are tough.

Reflection 3

- Heritage Dinner
- Looking for a framework to talk about State of Congregation, I went back to James Luther Adams, liberal religious theologian who spent time in Nazi Germany during the rise of the Nazi movement. One of his observations was the lack of response to the rise of Nazism, people didn't know enough or find the courage enough to step up. In conversation with a rightwing person, he asked about the contemporary significance of liberal Christianity. He responded angrily, "Religious liberalism has no significance, *no costing commitments*" I think about our ends, and asking our congregation to yoke itself to the work of justice. What is this costing us and what is the key to our faith? The key to being in moments like this one, is the way in which we form voluntary associations to stand up and stand with. In that sense of a crucible, how are we, in this moment of rising fascism, doing this work to lead us to "costing commitments." Jesus's statement "by their fruits shall we know them" ...is legacy analysis. In the meantime, Adams suggests, "By their *groups*, by their roots, shall we know them."
- The Heritage Dinner is one of those great examples and the way people reacted after hearing Bennie Roberts. The association with HQB is going to lead to something; we need find those roots.
- Anxiety is squishing out in interesting places: we've got to control the money, while our work is to continue to remind ourselves of how we

	<p>relate to one another, what we do, and what we value together. We'll figure out the money.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Ministry Team. Small group conversation about a piece of art and whether it reflects what we want to say about Unity. We've gotten good at going deep to determine the most important things. • Pastoral Care Team. What's going to happen; the tension and pressure of this moment in this urgent timeframe. I have faith in the crucible the team has put together to figure out what this ministry is doing next • I have a great deal of hope in what we're doing together and finding our way. <p>Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a recipient of the Empty Nest meals, cards in the past month, what a difference it makes to the recipient of congregational care. • The challenge of making relationships, for example in our reparations work. To thread the needle to make connection the primary thing, and how to do that when you're dealing with intercultural relationships. • Interconnectedness in the end statement, how we are interconnected through race, culture, and the way in which that can mean becoming "the mob." We need to engage in conversations about how we want to be interconnected, how do we elevate the practice to look at alternative ways of being interconnected 	
9:30	<p>Generative Conversation: (30 min) What do I personally do, and what do I bring to board work in these areas? - linkage - monitoring - guiding the future of the church</p> <p>We the people of Unity Church-Unitarian, grounded in a joyous vision of beloved community within, among, and beyond ourselves, -- understand the interconnected roots of oppression and yoke ourselves to the demands, sacrifices and hard work of antiracism, multiculturalism, and climate and economic justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we as the board start leaning into these ends. Regarding linkage, committee reached out to COMTs and other groups that we connect with. How can we turn this into an ongoing conversation. Maybe the board can have a linkage committee next year, for us to make some real movement on something that we've talked about for a while. • What's the right role for the board to play, considering each of our existing relationships to the church. How does it feel when a group or organization is asking us for example, for money. How do I personally relate to this request. Relationship is a two-way street. What do we want these relationships to be? A feedback loop? • Linkage to these groups or organizations, based on your experience – what is the purpose of the linkage, what are we seeking from that linkage, what does the group or organization want from this relationship? What is the purpose and value of the linkage? • The perennial question is how can this be a mutually beneficial, nonexploitative relationship. You can understand how a relationship between the church and the organization might bear fruit. Teach me 	Everyone

	<p>what I need to know about what you are doing. Most organizations welcome this opportunity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example of Sanctuary Committee a couple of months ago for State of the Congregation. I just listened. But afterwards, I was able to share my own personal experiences were with our team. They were so appreciative of my sharing with them. Reparations, HQB, Act for the Earth Team will be a different experience. I think we can have personal interactions that are valuable and appreciated, and can lead to further meaningful engagement. We can yoke ourselves both as individuals and as board members, and we can bring these experiences to inform our work as board members. • Several moments in Bennie Robert's presentation where he used the word ministry, how he was linking the mission of HQB with a faith community. Moral ownership is our aspiration. We talk about moral owners as different from stakeholders. When people are showing up for No Kings Day, they are showing up, and taking their own action for a deeper ownership of democracy. • Interconnectedness, linkage, moral ownership, when we evangelize love, when the material condition is comfortable, it feels good. But when we evangelize love in a situation where material reality is challenging, evangelizing love is hard. Overnight, class can make you upper class or working class, based on material reality. • Liberation theology comes to us asking us to experience a radically different environment in which to evangelize love. Bolivia, Transylvania. Those experiences radicalize a new experience of love. • Benny is talking about love. He's talking about ministry, and he's trying to evangelize in his own way what that experience and what that word ministry means, and he's linking it to Unity Church. • How as a board, responsible for policies, can we see that HQB can evangelize love into the Unity community. We experience that love as part of our own redemption. How do we have the kind of conversations to be moral owners of each other, with particular attention to material conditions, of which reparations is a big part. • Linkage is a good conversation to have – in August, ET is going to retreat focusing on the ends. Interconnected roots and specific areas of justice. What does the board want the ET to be thinking about as we go into the interpretation stage over this summer. About this particular end? • As a privileged church with resources, we have a privileged way to provide resources. Another relationship is where we actually approach things as equals trying to bridge difference – uncharted territory. We never drop the banner that as a church, we give donations. We need to be able to share within the relationships, critique and criticism. • Homorodszentpeter. American way is money. They said, "No, we do not want your money unless you are open to being transformed by the relationship. The relationship and being transformed by it was paramount. • What do we need to provide to the ET about this end. We need to be yoking ourselves to real relationship. What's in your lane? We have skills, to engage with differences. Some of the work-work programming ministry – specific concrete thing – is our transformation, the breaking open of our hearts, couched in our understanding. We need to be reaching out to build beloved community. 	
10:00	10-minute Break	

	During the break we learned that an armed man posing as a police officer had gone to the homes of State Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark, whom he shot and killed; and State Senator John Hoffman and his wife Yvette, whom he severely wounded.	
10:10	<p>Consent Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve May 10, 2025, BOT Meeting Minutes • Monitoring Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IIB. Staff Changes ○ IIE. Financial Condition ○ IIH. Communication and Counsel to the Board 	Board, ET
	<p>Motion to approve the consent agenda First: Jane Prince Second: Marcia Hayes Motion passes unanimously</p>	
10:15	<p>Monitoring Reports for Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IVC. ET Performance Evaluation – Form and Structure (20 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Please read section 4 of the policy ▪ Is there an additional evaluation that the board needs to do beyond Ends and Limitations? ▪ What are we missing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The question before us, written in our policies is that we are instructed on a regular basis, to conduct an evaluation of the ET. It's on our perpetual calendar for April. Should we do a stand-alone evaluation and what would the parameters be? • Board's commitment and governing policy is to evaluate the ET on the basis of the advancement of the ends and compliance with the limitations. • Our monthly reports allow us to monitor the ET, along with our annual evaluation through the congregational survey. • Is there a need for a summative evaluation, something that would help the board have an overarching sense of the ET, rather than each of these parts? • The board may not need more information about how the church is progressing as a whole. But as the ET's boss, what does the ET need? Does the ET want a 360-evaluation? • The board is not the ET's manager, nor do we want to be. It would not empower or liberate us to do our work. Because of that, the ET is doing a performance evaluation of ourselves. Board needs to step back and ask the ET to show us the numbers. • There is agreement that a 360 might be an appropriate evaluation tool, if you were seeking information about treatment of staff and volunteers. • ET did a report for the May 17 Congregational Gathering, a summary and a look-back. Wearing our corporate hats as the board, did we hear all we need to hear from ET? Are there other questions we should be asking? • Board needs to do something to acknowledge that this is currently a requirement, and we need to address it, remove it. • The board can monitor any policy at any time by any measure – that is completely within its purview. • Board needs to do a self-evaluation and evaluate compliance with board/executive oversight. If this is not in our perpetual calendar, it should be. • If this annual evaluation should not be in our written policies, it needs to be removed. 	Board, ET

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating ET doesn't fit with policy governance. • Do we need more information to do our job? We're supposed to be at 20K feet. Is there something that helps us at 20K feet, to get a summative view of whether we're hitting our numbers. What numbers? • How do we change board metrics? Are we doing enough to fulfill our responsibilities? What is reasonable? • This requires some training. Some other way for things to be presented. • Is there accountability training for policy governance? • What metrics are assigned to the ends? • What about the ET circling back to us after its ends retreat. • Table further discussion for further discussion in August and resolution in September. 	
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10:30	Board Committee Consent Agenda (reports) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy/Bylaws • Recruitment 	
	Motion to accept Policy/Bylaws and Recruitment reports: First: Jackie Duffus Boyd Second: Louise Livesay Approved motion passes unanimously	
10:35	Board Committees for Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ends Process (15 minutes) • Updates. Committee has drafted a board walk and talk on the Ends outcomes. Laura sent out the 6/17 recording and all comments have been recorded. • Should we revisit or change any of the things we heard from the congregation? Ends are never going to be everything to everybody. People feel like they can live with the ends. The ET can use comments and suggestions to inform their work, but further change is not required by the board • One comment the committee asked that the board weigh was that we consider reordering the ends, to better reflect "within, among and beyond." <p>Motion to reorder ends statement: 1) theology, faith formation; 2) cultivate; and 3) understanding interconnected roots.</p> <p>First: Marcia Hayes Second: Jackie Duffus Boyd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion noted that "within, among and beyond" are to be considered within each end. • "Understanding the interconnected roots" reflects the urgency of the current political climate, and reflects our commitment to "yoke ourselves" to groups and organizations to carry out this work. <p>Motion does not carry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote on accepting the ends as written in their entirety. <p>Motion to accept final Ends Statement First: Louise Livesay</p>	Claire Marcia Jackie

Second: Rich Lau
Motion passes unanimously

- Chair formally and officially thanked our Ends Committee for its “incredible, heroic, and dedicated, selfless work. Make sure Claire sees that I really, really appreciate the committee’s work on behalf of the board, the executive team and our congregation. We thank you and love you and are so pleased.”

Evaluation (10 minutes)

- New evaluation this year will not be asking if people have hope for the future because that will not give us the information that we need. Bill Etter has given us much excellent content.
- Mary is editing the congregation survey, Marcia is loading it into Survey Monkey, going out next week with a July 4 deadline. It will provide a baseline for the ET to provide programming in the first year of the ends.

Motion to accept the Evaluation minutes and discussion as proposed

First: Louise Livesay
Second: Jackie Duffus Boyd
Motion passes unanimously

Reparations (45 minutes)

- Maura Williams joins us from Racial Justice Ministry Team

Motion to accept Reparations minutes

First: Jackie Duffus Boyd
Second: Marcia Hayes
Motion passes unanimously

- Power point presented to background the board.
- Reparation Committee met with three representatives and the staff of the Saint Paul Reparations Commission (SPRC) at Unity for Wellspring Wednesday dinner and meeting in the library on April 16, to get acquainted and explore proposals for Unity’s contribution from the Currier Fund to the SPRC to support its work.
- We asked SPRC to bring forward a proposal for funding to perform their work.
- SPRC reached out recently seeking more clarity for what its proposal should contain, how much funding should they propose a use for?
- We turn to the board today to determine what amount of money we want to provide from the Currier Fund. As SPRC is a moral authority for our work, how do we balance our desire to support its work with our role as responsible stewards of that fund.
- Current value of the fund just under \$650K. One suggestion is to provide 50% to SPRC and 50% to earmark reparations work with the indigenous community and other organizations.
- Reparations Committee seeks input from the board on the components of an SPRC proposal: amount, uses, timing, commission alignment, and submission to Unity.

- Suggested that we avail SPRC \$100K now, and the remaining \$224K to seed as a Reparations Trust Fund with ongoing fundraising by Unity
- Gantt Chart lays out timeline for initial \$100K contribution through year-end 2025, taking into account a potential counter proposal. This power point represents a starting place for our consideration
- Concern that SPRC is asking for an amount, and then tell us how they want to use it. It seems backwards. If we say we're going to give you 50% of our funds now, we are tying our hands before we have adequate information. It's early to say that this should be a 50-50 division.
- Concern that Unity understand the SPRC and not impose our dominant culture expectations on an outside group, entirely African American, who are in a role that has never existed in city government.
- We will not be guaranteeing a specific dollar amount. We can offer a specific amount, and not put a lot of red tape around it. The goal is to have a relationship that will transform the congregation – and this is just the start of it. Less of a need to know what they will do with it, because we trust them to do the right thing.
- How can we be in partnership with SPRC around this, not just the giving of money. How does this invite partnership to lead to transformation in both directions.
- We did discuss an ongoing relationship at that meeting. They invited us to attend their meetings, and invite congregants to attend their meetings. SPRC members brought with them a representative from the Kansas City reparations movement, who talked about a group of ministers and congregants who support reparations work in that city. They did talk about the ways we can be in partnership with them, that may be something our ET could consider for the coming year.
- SPRC Chair Crews proposed \$175K to pay for its "harm report." Other members in attendance proposed other ideas, and it became clear that the SPRC may have some work to do on reaching consensus.
- Our concern is when we talk about taking the commission as a moral authority, what should be our role to tell them how to use our money or offer them advice from our knowledge of city government.
- Maura Williams (RJMT) provided insight on hers and Ray Weidemeyer's ongoing relationship with the SPRC. They have been attending all SPRC meetings, which are recorded and available on line. Most of their work occurs in committees. To date, SPRC:
 - Submitted an RFP to the African American Redress Network and another consultant for the production of a harm report;
 - capped the total cost of harm report at \$175K to avoid the city's procurement requirements;
 - Uncertainty about their future in the current climate, and feel pressured to KEEP MOVING;
 - Held their first listening session hosted by the Ward 7 councilmember;
 - Seeking guidance from city councilmembers to draft a slavery disclosure;
 - Identifying public relations/marketing needs for public education and support;
 - Forming an archives committee to maintain it at a physical place, such as Hallie Q. Brown.
- Maura continued. SPRC is an advisory group to the city council. This is a long-term project and the city council's priority is to complete the harm report and create community engagement. SPRC does not know what all their needs are. It would be helpful for Unity to clarify what money is available now, for use over what period of time and in the future. At this point, their proposal would likely be the harm report, and seed funds for

	<p>reparatory justice. It will be helpful for SPRC to know how we want them to work with us.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to Maura and Ray and the RJMT for working with the commission even before it was seated, and building trust within the SPRC with Unity. • Consider ways to transform our whole congregation and engage them directly. Suggest that board challenge grant through generosity ministry, asking our congregants to match an amount from the Currier fund. • Let's get SPRC funds to help with the harm report, and hold off on additional funding as we talk about other ways to engage and involve our congregation, as "foot soldiers." • Heritage Society speaker Bennie Roberts from Hallie Q. Brown spoke of giving land to the city to build the UniDale Mall as a center of African American business and development. HQB wants its land back. This is reparations. We have the ability to be a voice to help effect that change. How do we best utilize these funds in our community? • Two paths for this work: 1) the Currier Fund, and 2) a request of the ET to program this work within the congregation. This must still be the board's work as well. • LauraSue proposes a motion that the Reparations Committee send a letter to the commission offering up to 125 or 150K, that there is additional money which they could request in the future to support their work on the harm report and other nonoperational expenses, as it chooses. We should take action today, because we don't want to leave the SPRC hanging. • Chair asserts that the board needs a much more specific recommendation to consider and approve, before any letter goes out the door SPRC. • LauraSue withdrew her motion and suggested that the Reparations Committee will meet and draft a letter to be send out to the board for a vote online. Board agrees on this next step. • Chair notes that this is a topic that would benefit from a half-day retreat, but further recognizes that we are keeping things moving forward which could result in ET forging some congregational programming and engagement for the fall. 	
	<p>Motion to accept final Ends Statement First: Louise Livesay Second: Rich Lau Motion passes unanimously</p>	
11:55	<p>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"?</p> <p>In lieu of check out question, and in view of terrible incidents of this morning, the board joined hands in prayer, led by Rev. KP.</p>	Everyone
	<p>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."</p>	Everyone
12:00	<p>BOT Reflection and Problem Solving and communications</p>	Trustees

Upcoming Reminders – July:

August State of the Congregation – Jackie, Jane, and maybe LauraSue
CommUnity column (due June 15 to Martha) – Mary Topic: New beginnings with new ends and encouraging congregation to complete the survey, the release of which is imminent
August Reading and Host – Molly
Board Walk & Talk – Jackie had drafted one regarding the ends process, but feels it could be redundant. Instead, Mary will draw from that draft to include in her column

Committee Assignments:

- Ends Process: Claire (Convener), Marcia, Rich, Jackie
- Evaluation: Marcia (Convener), Molly, Mary
- Policy/ByLaws: LauraSue (Convener), Rich, Claire
- Recruitment: Louise (Convener), Jane, Molly
- Reparations: Jackie (Convener), LauraSue, Jane, Louise
- Grievance (as needed): Mary (Chair), Claire (Secretary), +1