

<b>First Unitarian Church of Oakland</b> <b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES</b> <b>MEETING MINUTES</b> <b>October 24, 2023 6:45 - 9:00 pm</b>	<b>Our Mission</b> We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, unite to build a beloved community within and beyond our walls. Guided by individual conscience and wisdom from many sources, we gather in worship and service to nourish the spirit, work for justice, and celebrate the divine in all. <i>Adopted by the congregation on March 18, 2019</i>
--	---

<b>Present:</b> Dennis Rowcliffe Nicole Fitzhugh Evalyn Seidman, Acting Secretary Judith Hunt Bev Smrha <b>Absent:</b> Marilyn McMahon, Secretary	<b>Guests:</b> Rev. Connie Simon (CSimon@uua.org) Rev. Laurel Liefert Rev. Samantha Wilson, uua.org Melissa James, uua.org Claire Eustace Administrator: Bill Blakely Public Comments: Dick Bailey Leslie Schipa
--	--

6:45 pm	<b>Open comment period</b> (15 min) (Members and friends to speak; 3 minutes each. Secretary reads aloud comments sent by email.) Dick Bailey and Leslie Schipa spoke.	<i>Congregation</i>
7:00	<b>Chalice lighting and opening reading</b> (3 min)	<i>Evalyn</i>
7:03	<b>Welcome and preview of meeting</b> (2 min)	<i>Nicole</i>
7:05	<b>Consent agenda</b> (5 min) A. Updates on Board activity and reporting actions taken since previous meeting.  <i>Actions taken:</i> Minutes of the September Board meeting were approved online. Rev. Kevin Mann was ordained as a minister on October 1 at FUCO, followed by a celebration reception at the church.	<i>Nicole</i>
7:10	<b>Hope for Us Engagement Team report</b> (15 min) Rev. Connie Simon (Hope for Us) stated that there will be differing needs for different groups in the church. The Ministers (Rev. Laurel and Rev. Kevin Mann, and our affiliated ministers) will need to support the Board with pastoral care. Covenants are needed with boundaries and structures.  The BIPOC members of the congregation will need to be held a little differently. There will be a need for courage and openness among, within and beyond subgroups.  SEPT. -OCT. Has been a time for outreach, imagining, planning. For the Board and Staff, HOPE FOR US is preparing for Pastoral Care. Rev. Jami Yandle and Connie will give support. NOTE: Since this meeting Rev. Jami's	<i>Rev. Connie Simon</i>

	<p>role has shifted to a broader role with UUA, and they will be less involved in ministerial work with the First Unitarian Board and Congregation at this time.</p> <p>OCT.-NOV. DEC. HOPE FOR US consultants to get familiar with the “Lay of the Land”. Sept. 16 was a first weekend retreat with Church members and staff.</p> <p>NOV. 1 was to be the next meeting via Zoom with Board members and some other church members in volunteer capacities by Zoom. Participants were to continue to develop the narrative of our story. The consultants described future sessions as follows:</p> <p>JAN.14: A Session 1 on “OUR STORY” is planned;</p> <p>FEB.: A Session 2 on “GRIEF AND POSSIBILITY”;</p> <p>MAR. A Session 3 on a Sunday in March to address “GROWTH - WHAT COMES NEXT?”</p> <p>A. DEVELOPMENTAL Ministry,</p> <p>B. INTERIM Ministry, or</p> <p>C. Another Year of PROCESS Ministry</p> <p>HOPE FOR US Coach Jacquis left her position and the UUA to attend to family matters. Rev. Jami may be engaged elsewhere in supporting Pastoral Care for the UUA on a wider basis. Melissa James plans to support FUCO from the UUA side and review our Liminal Action Plan. Rev. Samantha Wilson will also be involved in continuing support for our congregation. There will likely be a second Sundays Workshop in Jan., Feb. and/or March 2024, publicized by E-Blast.</p>	
7:25	<p><b>Minister’s report</b> (10 min) 7:30 Rev. Laurel Liefert met with Pres. Nicole and Bill Blakely (Volunteer Administrator) last week and has been meeting with HOPE FOR US staff as well. Kevin Mann has joined FUCO ranks as a minister. Clare Eustace will preach on Nov. 26. Kevin will preach at a service in December. Dick Bailey, Sarah Watts and Rev. Laurel to manage Worship Associate Training re sound, music, and technical operations.. Laurel plans to meet monthly with teams.</p> <p>A Pastoral Care summit meeting was held 1 week ago. Member Charlotte Dickson has developed Stage 4 Cancer. Pres. Nicole proposed the idea of giving a “healing hands” quilt to Charlotte. Laurel said a daughter of a member of the Namaqua Native American tribe may join First Unitarian. Church member Bill Pezick died on October 23. Rev. Laurel attended an in-gathering meeting with 3-4 new attendees organized by Clark Sanford and Maria Bielass. Rev. Laurel plans to e-write to the Congregation weekly.</p>	<i>Rev. Laurel</i>
7:35	<p><b>Proposal for Ceasefire Banner</b> (10 min) 7:40</p> <p>In response to the war recently started in Gaza, Rev. Laurel proposed that the Church place a Banner on the Church saying “Peace - Salaam - Shalom” or “Ceasefire” or similar. Rev. Sofia Betancourt, president of UUA has indicated that we must abide by 501(c)(3) regulations and not take sides in this conflict. Board needs to decide whether and how to propose this action.</p>	<i>Rev. Laurel or Dennis</i>

7:45	<b>Operations Team report (10 min) 7:50</b> Volunteer Administrator Bill Blakely reported that he would accompany the owners of “Bio One” to the roof of FUCO. They planned to remove pigeon poop and to staple up netting to prevent pigeons from roosting on the church steeple (\$7,320). Bill reported that the front exterior of the church was power-washed for \$3900. Bill suggests a janitorial company should clean the Arts & Crafts Room. Bill said Clark Sanford has established the Church’s Internet Service provider contract with Monkey Brains, a new service provider, at a savings of \$1,000/month. The Church Office copier will be replaced from the Swenson Group, at the same monthly charge. Molly Hermes established a Decluttering Team at the church. 25 members participated in a Clean-Up Day. The Church provided support for the Stewardship campaign and for Rev. Kevin Mann’s ordination, including more than \$3,000 to the UU Church of the Phillipines. The Workers Compensation policy was changed to ADP, pay as needed.	<i>Bill Blakely</i>
7:55	<b>Hiring (5 min) 7:50</b> Update on the process of hiring an administrator. Dennis said we are close to hiring an Administrator. Since the October Board meeting, the Board President, Secretary, and Treasurer have been involved in interviews with candidate Daisy Quan. Note: The position has been offered and Ms. Quan has accepted the position.	<i>Dennis</i>
8:00	<b>Stewardship (10 min) 7:55</b> As of 10-24-2023, pledges received had totalled \$120,000. Clark Sanford and Maria Bielas are preparing a spreadsheet of people who have not yet pledged. Do we need volunteers to provide testimonials at services during the next 3 weeks? Last year the Board members had to call people who had not yet pledged. The Board may need to call people to complete their pledges for the coming year.	<i>Dave Ruede</i>
8:10	<b>BREAK (5 min)</b>	
8:15	<b>Finance Team Report (10 min)</b> The Finance Team has identified that the Church will operate with a \$6K shortfall for the year. The Finance Team said the possible fund shortfall could be made up with an “auction” and with the building’s rental program renting space for meetings, etc. Finance Team members should be invited to the next Board meeting.	<i>Dennis</i>
8:25	<b>Updates: Staff/ Board Meetings (5 min)</b> The Board must meet with Staff members. Marilyn to talk with Susan and Renee. The Handbook has an evaluation template. Objectives: Have them know they are supported, valued members of our community; ask if they have what they need to do their work; have a record on file that they have continued to do their work through the Church’s time of transition.	<i>Nicole</i>
8:30	<b>Looking Ahead (5 min)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need Budget Meetings to vote on /pass a budget in December</li> <li>• Question re Reschedule December Board Meeting from Dec.19.</li> <li>• Start mid-Jan. Planning for Annual Meeting to be held March 3, 2024: we need to decide what COLA we will offer.</li> <li>• The Annual Meeting can be hybrid (in person and on Zoom).</li> <li>• Start planning for an All Church Retreat in the Spring (daylong or overnight offsite). Board President Nicole Fitzhugh suggested an</li> </ul>	<i>Nicole</i>

	indoor site in Oakland such as a Community Center building, Lake Merritt Garden Building, etc.)	
8:35	<b>“For the good of the order” (5 min)</b> (Questions, brief planning, spontaneous items, or pulled from consent agenda) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board thank-you’s to be sent to Worship Associates at the end of the year: to the Ordination Committee for Kevin Mann (Noemi, Donna Fujioka, Daisy Quan, and to Kevin’s mother); to Bill Blakely and crew to thank for organizing and coordinating the Building and Grounds cleanup work.</li> <li>• Review tasks chart</li> <li>• Review rotating tasks signup list</li> </ul>	<i>Nicole</i>
8:30	<b>Extinguish chalice &amp; closing reading (5 min)</b>	<i>Evalyn</i>
8:35	<b>END OF PUBLIC MEETING</b>	

---

[UUA Statement on the Humanitarian Catastrophe in Gaza and Israel](#)

[First Unitarian Safety Plan](#)

**BIKE RACK**

-