

First Unitarian Church, South Bend
Annual Congregational Meeting
18 May 2025

I. Call to Order at 12:05pm by Chuck Leone, Board President

II. Quorum verification by Fern Hamlin, Board Secretary

There were 49 members present, 3 via Zoom, and 6 assigned proxies, for a total of 58.

III. Opening words by Eli Williams

IV. Approval of 2024 congregational meetings. Francisco Gomez-Dossi moved, and John Mitchell seconded, to approve the minutes of the 1/21/24 and 5/19/24 congregational meetings. Motion carried.

V. Update on minister search. Chuck explained the appearance of a new possible candidate for a parttime position, though nothing definite will be known until the candidate completes investigation of several other possibilities.

VI. Treasurer's report and operating budget by David Mayfield, Board Treasurer. David noted the updated pledge total of \$145,000, which increases the budgeted total income to \$172,350 and the total surplus to \$39,545. Appreciation was expressed to the Stewardship Committee for its work on the annual pledge drive. David shared a few budgetary visual aids and commented on significant future actions and considerations: investment of church money in CDs; possibility of our parking lot becoming a "special project" this year; and the possibility that the congregation might have to reconsider the annual budget if a minister is hired. Gary Metzler moved, and Anne Mannix seconded, to approve the proposed budget. Motion carried.

VII. Endowment grants. Chuck directed attention to page 24 of the annual report where the endowment grant recommendations are listed. There are six grants:

- \$2000 for an archivist to continue our archival work
- \$1000 for All Church Retreat, August 23-24, 2025, at the Mishawaka Res
- \$3500 for sound system upgrade
- \$1800 for conference room technical improvements
- \$3800 for ADA compliance improvements for at least one door
- \$5000+ for patio sun covering device

Kathy Platt explained the All Church Retreat, something we haven't done for at least 10 years. David Mayfield moved, and John Mitchell seconded, to approve the endowment grants. Motion carried.

VIII. Elections

The Nominating Committee (Bill Stevens, Karen Dickson, Megan Sulok) presented the following slate of officers for the Board:

Karen Dickson, vice president

David Mayfield, treasurer

Justine Backus, trustee

Ann Hoewing, trustee

The following members will remain on the Board next year: Gail deSomer, president; Fern Hamlin, secretary; Eli Williams, trustee; Francisco Gomez-Dossi, trustee. There being no nominations from the

floor, Melanie Smith-Guillaume moved, and Marilyn Shaul seconded, to approve the slate as presented. Motion carried.

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate for the Endowment Committee:

Linwood Bailey, term to expire in 2028

Francisco Gomez-Dossi moved, and John Mitchell seconded, to approve the slate as presented. Motion carried.

The Board of Trustees recommended the following slate for the Nominating Committee:

Chair Chuck Leone, outgoing Board President, for 1 year

Member Eli Williams, for 2 years

Alternate Melanie Smith-Guillaume

(Megan Sulok is a continuing member of the committee with a term to expire in 2026.)

Bill Stevens moved, and Francisco Gomez-Dossi seconded, to approve the slate as presented. Motion carried.

IX. Update on name change process. Chuck explained that the Board of Trustees proposed a separate meeting with the single agenda item of the church name change, in order to devote adequate time to discuss the options in detail, said meeting to take place 3 weeks from today, 8 June 2025, 12noon. So moved by Dan Holm, seconded by Dawn Nye. Subsequent discussion emphasized that the meeting would be to discuss and vote on the name change; Dan and Dawn both agreed with that. Chuck explained that the discussion process would include several straw votes, in an attempt to clarify what church members were thinking about such a change, culminating in a final decision. Dr Louise Williams commented that such a process should be fully explained before the meeting, Chuck agreed that possibilities for this would be explored. He also explained the rationale for making the change a Doing Business As rather than replacing our incorporation documents with a new name. The results of our internal church conversations about a name change will also be made available. Motion carried.

X. Review of committee reports. Committee reports are contained in the Annual Report. Additionally, Florence Klecka moved, and Dr Louise Williams seconded, that the minutes of this meeting reflect the inclusion of the Administrative Committee's report in the church's Annual Report, which will be available on the church's website by tomorrow (5/19/25). Motion carried.

XI. Volunteer of the year award. Chuck pointed out that our volunteer of the year award does not always result from big and flashy contributions to the church community, but rather for someone who is frequently there when needed, doing whatever needs to be done, quietly getting things done. In this spirit, the volunteer of the year award is gratefully presented to John Mitchell.

XII. Adjournment. Chuck Leone invited a motion to adjourn. Francisco Gomez-Dossi and Bill Stevens obliged. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 1pm.

Submitted by
Fern Hamlin, Board Secretary