DRAFT
Annual Congregational Meeting
Unitarian Universalists of South Bend
17 May 2026

1. The meeting was called to order at 12.05pm by Gail deSomer, board president.

2. Fern Hamlin, board secretary, confirmed the existence of a quorum. [For the official record, there were a total of 55 members, including proxies and those on zoom.]

3. Opening words--Gail deSomer. Tribute to the work of the board members and committees.

4. Volunteer of the Year Award went to Megan Sulok.

5. Approval of Congregational Meetings Minutes. Francisco Gomez-Dossi moved, and John Mitchell seconded, to approve the minutes of the last three congregational meetings (5/18/25, 6/8/25, 4/12/26). Motion carried by voice vote, no opposition.

6. Proposal to Become a Welcoming Congregation. Eli Williams explained the background of this proposal (see pp 37-38 in the Annual Report). Francisco Gomez-Dossi moved, and Ann Hoewing seconded, the proposal to become a Welcoming Congregation. Motion carried by voice vote, no opposition.

7. Treasurer's Report and Operating Budget. David commented on our finances with the use of some A/V graphics. The 2026-27 operating budget was carried by voice vote, no opposition. [This budget predicts a $94,901 deficit.]

8. Elections for Board Officers, Endowment Committee, and Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee (Chuck Leone, Megan Sulok, Eli Williams) presented the following slate of officers for the Board:

Vice-President	Francisco Gomez-Dossi
Secretary	Fern Hamlin
Trustee	Ben Tovar
Trustee	Cat Rambo

For informational purposes only, the continuing members of the Board are Karen Dickson (President), David Mayfield (Treasurer), Justine Backus (Trustee), and Ann Hoewing (Trustee) with terms expiring June 30, 2027.

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

John Mitchell, term expiring June 30, 2029.

For informational purposes only, the continuing members of the committee are Barbara Williams (term expiring June 30, 2027) and Linwood Bailey (term expiring June 30, 2028).

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

Chair	Jim Ward	1 year
Member	Dawn Nye	2 years
Alternate	Cat Rambo	1 year

For informational purposes only, Eli Williams is a continuing member of the committee with a term expiring June 30, 2027.

Vicki Stevens noted that she was the retiring member of the Endowment Committee.

The full slate of nominations was carried by voice vote, no opposition

9. Proposal to Modify the Resolution to Implement the Endowment Fund. Explanation and details on pp 18-21 of the Annual Report.

Francisco Gomez-Dossi. If we are accepting grant applications twice a year, and awarding them requires a congregational meeting, will it become standard to schedule two congregational meetings every year? **Gail deSomer** noted that we would only have a second meeting if there were actually grants to award.

Megan Sulok. In Part B, #1, paragraph 4: why the change from the word "shall" to the word "may"? **Chuck Leone**, main author of the changes, explained it as improved clarification, the concept of "may" signifying permission (or, in this case, lack of permission).

Dr Louise Williams. If there is only one total amount of grant money for an entire year, will that amount have to be divided in half, to allow for the second round of grant applications? **Barbara Williams,** Endowment Committee, responded that this would depend on the requests received and that allowing for two rounds of grant applications would provide the necessary flexibility if and when new priorities arise.

The proposal was carried by voice vote with no opposition and one abstention.

10. Endowment Grants. Barbara Williams presented the list of recommended endowment grants. **Francisco Gomez-Dossi** made a friendly amendment increasing the outdoor signage grant to $5500; the Endowment Committee accepted this friendly amendment.

Lynn McDonald asked if the exterior signs would still include office hours. **Dr Louise Williams** noted that this will depend on what is in the new Personnel Policy, which is still under review.

Voting on the friendly amendment carried by voice vote with no opposition. This changed the outdoor signage line item to $5500 and the total grants amount to $20,820.

Voting on the grants recommendations carried by voice vote with no opposition and one abstention.

$400	Emerging Leaders Gathering
$5500	Outdoor signage
$500	LGBTQ+ quilt
$750	Aluminum signs and printed inserts
$820	Ecology activities
$4900	Natural playground addition
$7500	75th anniversary celebration

$450 Adjustable height tables for RE room

11. Proposal to Repay Our Endowment. The Board of Trustees recommends that $126,268 from the Barbara Boyd funds be repaid to the Endowment Fund.

Megan Sulok. No plan yet for a major meeting to discuss and decide what to do with the Boyd Legacy? **Gail deSomer**--not yet.

Dr Louise Williams. What part of the entire Boyd legacy does this amount represent? **David Mayfield**--about 10%.

Jim Ward. What were the provisions of the legacy? **Gail deSomer** explained about the $50,000 that was allotted towards paying off the mortgage, but since the mortgage had already been paid off, the board directed that money to the Rainy Day/Building Fund, since it had originally been intended for the building, and this was seen as an appropriate use of it. The $1.3 million was left for the board to decide its use, but because of our tradition of congregational polity, we seek direction from the congregation. In addition, our bylaws require congregational approval for unbudgeted expenditures (any single item over 3% of our annual budget, or cumulative increase in overall church expenditures of more than 5% of the annual budget).

Ann Mannix. Will we have some serious meeting in which to make decisions, rather than chipping away at the fund. **Gail deSomer** noted no such meeting is yet planned, but the board is indeed asking for congregational approval for several items.

David Mayfield. Supports the proposal because there are significant restrictions on how the money in the Endowment Fund can actually be used. He also supports using the money to improve our building.

Proposal carried by voice vote with no opposition and one abstention.

12. Funding to repave parking lot. The Board of Trustees recommends that up to $69,000 be approved to repave our parking lot, $50,000 from the Rainy Day/Building Fund and $19,000 from Unrestricted Savings. **Gail deSomer**

noted that, when the funds in Unrestricted Savings run out, the Boyd legacy will have to provide the rest of the money.

Jeremiah Cox. Is this conventional or semi-permeable paving? **David Mayfield** explained that it is non-permeable but the dry wells will collect water which will then go into the ground.

Francisco Gomez-Dossi. It will be a 4 inch layer (including scraping the current surface), and includes fixing the dry wells.

Ann Mannix. Why not permeable paving? **Francisco Gomez-Dossi** explained that the cost for that would probably be MUCH higher.

Dr Louise Williams. Will the Rainy Day/Building Fund be healthy if we use it for this project? **Gail deSomer** acknowledged the current need to be able to cover our $25,000 insurance deductible, but there may be a change in insurance companies, since we are not the only congregation being hit with such an increase by Church Mutual. But yes, the fund might go down to $8000 with the projects being considered today.

Proposal carried by voice vote with no opposition.

13. Funding to install four automatic doors. The Board of Trustees recommends that up to $20,000 be approved for automatic opening doors from the Rainy Day/Building Fund to supplement the $3800 grant money from the 2025-2026 Endowment dispersal. **Kathy Vetter** made a friendly amendment to note that this is for all four ADA doors and a security system upgrade. The Board accepted the friendly amendment.

Dr Louise Williams. What is included in the security system upgrade? **Kathy Vetter**--different company, possibly different mode of entering the building.

Dr Louise Williams. No cameras included in the security upgrade? This would be very important for her, since she is the person here alone the most. **Kathy Vetter**--cameras possible if there's enough money, or an Endowment grant could be sought.

The proposal carried by a voice vote with no opposition.

14. Review of Task Force Reports, Committee Reports, and Congregation Wide Project Reports. **Gail deSomer** noted that these could be read by the congregation as they chose.

Thanks were offered to **Gail deSomer** for her work as board president this year.

15. Adjournment. Motion to adjourn made by **Francisco Gomez-Dossi,** seconded by **Justine Backus.** Meeting was adjourned at 1.12pm.

Fern Hamlin
Board secretary