

Minutes

Board of Trustees, First Unitarian Church of Oakland
November 25, 2008 – 7:40 to 9:40 p.m.

Trustees Present: Dan Goss, Jon Greer, Noemi de Guzman, Claire Eustace (Vice President), Chris Palm (Secretary) and Mark Savage (President).

Others Present: Eva Bunce (scribe), Rev. Kathy Huff (Senior Minister), Charles Masten and Charla Weiss (Executive Team).

1. Noemi de Guzman led the opening.
2. **Consent Calendar** – The monthly financial statement was removed from the consent calendar and will be included in the budget discussion. Noemi de Guzman moved, Dan Goss seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the October, 2008 meeting. Approved with one abstention.
3. **Follow-up to “Balloons” Exercise** -- The entries board members placed on their “hot air balloons” at the Board retreat in early November were used to facilitate more discussion around the vision and work of the church.

Dreams included: financially sound; building open at all hours to become a hub for the community; fully transformed lives; Unitarian/Universalist principles in evidence beyond our walls; involvement in social justice; all individuals seen as welcomed and worthy; the congregation laughing, smiling, even raucous, and diverse; the congregation healed and individuals speaking and listening; welcoming to queer and transgender people; all engaged with the ends; some services in Spanish.

“Fuel” to achieve dreams included: balance in programming; regular attendance; understanding of large group dynamics; to be heard; reflect on and clarify statements; faith.

The “basket of sustainable values” contained: curiosity and friendship; learning, study and friends; working together and accepting failures; well-intentioned faith and hope; integrity, relationships and truth; love, respect and caring for others with commitment.

“Sand bags” (what we need to let go of) contained: details; ego; attachment to tradition without reason; privilege, righteousness and tendency to make others wrong; the music director controversy; anger, attitude and unrealistic expectations.

Minister's Report – Submitted in writing. Additional presentation by Rev. Kathy Huff included information about structures of accountability as they relate to the role of senior minister in a large church structure under policy governance. One model (based on All Souls in Washington, DC) is that the senior minister (as CEO) reports to the board in relationship to the church accomplishing its ends while not violating church policies. The committee on ministry has less of a role in policy governance and functions more like a ministerial relations committee. It is the “eyes and ears of the clergy” and gives more personal and specific feedback to aid the minister's professional development. All Souls has tried a couple of ways of using their ends statements in their board meetings. One way was to look at a single end statement every other month. Another was to focus on all the end statements once a year.

2009 Budget – Rev. Kathy and Charles Masten presented the Executive Team's revised 2009 budget assumptions and a draft budget, and discussed the areas that will need to be reduced to achieve a balanced budget in December and the impact those reductions will have on programs and the overall ministry of the church. Due to the terrible economy, this will be a very tight budget year with many painful cuts. The Executive Team will ask the Board to approve a 5% cut in salary and benefits for both the Senior Minister and Church Manager. This is not something that the board wants to do. The ET will continue looking at the budget to see if there is any way to avoid these cuts. The ET will meet with the Steering Committee to discuss this again in December. Final budget approval will happen at our next board meeting. Many other cuts were also discussed.

Respectfully submitted,

Eva Bunce, Scribe