

April 3, 2018

Pre-Congregational Meeting Packet

The attached documents are drafts of the agenda and applicable documents proposed for the May 20, 2018 Congregational Meeting. For the pre-congregational meeting to be held at 1:30 on April 15, 2018, we will move through the agenda and these topics for discussion but without a vote.

Agenda – Congregational Meeting
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin
Sunday, May 20, 2018, 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm in the Sanctuary

1. Welcome and Call to Order, Jairy Grisaffe – 10 min
 - a. Unison Reading of Covenant and Lighting of Chalice P. 2
 - b. Adopt Consent Agenda
 - Rules of Procedure Pages 3-4
 - Minutes December 2017 congregational meeting Pages 5-6
 - c. Adopt Agenda
2. Update: State of the Church, Rev. Meg Barnhouse – 10 min
3. Congregational vote on Board of Trustee slate – 15 min pp. 7, 8-11
4. Congregational Vote on Nominating Committee Member(s) – 5 min Page 7
5. Joys and Concerns – 10 minutes
6. Closing Reading and Extinguish Chalice – 5 minutes
7. Adjourn

A COVENANT OF HEALTHY RELATIONS

As a religious community, we promise:

To Welcome and Serve

- By being intentionally hospitable to all people of good will
- By being present with one another through life's transitions
- By encouraging the spiritual growth of people of all ages

To Nurture and Protect

- By communicating with one another directly in a spirit of compassion and good will
- By speaking when silence would inhibit progress
- By disagreeing from a place of curiosity and respect
- By interrupting hurtful interactions when we witness them
- By expressing our appreciation to each other

To Sustain and Build

- By affirming our gratitude with generous gifts of time, talent and money for our beloved community
- By honoring our commitments to ourselves and one another for the sake of our own integrity and that of our congregation
- By forgiving ourselves and others when we fall short of expectations, showing good humor and the optimism required for moving forward

Thus do we covenant with one another

Approved at congregation meeting May 5, 2013

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin Congregational Meeting Rules of Procedure

1. Order of Business

The order of business will follow the meeting notice unless the order of business is changed by a majority vote.

2. Means of Voting

As long as a quorum is present (ten percent of voting members of the congregation), voice votes, uncounted standing votes, or an uncounted show of hands will be used, unless the bylaws specify otherwise. Two or more people shall be designated as vote counters by the chair at the outset of the meeting in the event that a vote count is needed. Written ballots will not be used without a two-thirds vote. All matters will be determined by the number of votes cast by members present and voting, as long as there is a quorum, unless the meeting notice allows absentee voting.

3. Presentation of Items

A Board Member or the appropriate Committee Chair will move the action items as printed in the meeting notice.

4. Amendments

No one may offer an amendment until there has been at least ten minutes of debate on the main question as moved, unless no one else wants to speak to the main question or it is a clarifying amendment. Anyone making an amendment must give it to the chair in writing before it is discussed. Paper and pencil will be provided; those requesting assistance will be provided assistance.

5. Time limits

These time limits will apply to all the business of the meeting. If no one objects, the Chair may grant minor extensions. Time limits may be extended by a two-thirds vote.

- a. No one may speak on any motion for more than two minutes or more than once as long as anyone else is waiting to speak, except that persons with special

information may answer questions with the Chair's permission.

- b. No item will be discussed in the meeting for more than 30 minutes. Discussion time will be divided equally by alternating between speakers at microphones designated pro and con. One microphone will be designated for point(s) of clarification or amendments.
- c. No one may call the previous question if there are persons waiting to speak at both the pro and con microphones and the time for discussion is not over. If the Chair sees no speakers at the con microphone, then the Chair may call for a vote.
- d. Every person must speak at a microphone.

6. Budget Motions

Anyone making a motion concerning the budget must give it to the Chair in writing and must provide for reduction in specific categories equal to any increase in spending in the motion. A simple majority vote is required to adopt motions concerning the budget.

7. Items Not in the Meeting Notice

Items of a substantial nature which are not in the meeting notice shall not be considered. Committees with items of substantial importance must have the item prepared far enough in advance for inclusion in the meeting notice.

8. Amending the Rules of Procedure

These rules of procedure will be adopted by a majority vote and may be changed during the meeting by a simple majority.

9. Adjournment

The meeting will adjourn no later than two hours or at such time as a quorum is no longer present after the Chair has called the meeting to order. The meeting may be extended in 15-minute increments by a simple majority vote for as much as one additional hour.

Congregational Meeting - December 2017

Opening Reading - Singing 450
Closing Reading - Singing 679

December 17, 2017

Jairy Grisaffe - President
Sean Ramsey - President-Elect, Secretary Pro-tem
Parliamentarian - Kirk Overby

Quorum / Start Time: 1:37pm CDT

Welcome / Call to Order

Opening Reading - Nancy Ditmar
Chalice Lighting - Phil Hewitt
Reading of Congregational Covenant
Introduction of Parliamentarian
Rules of Order Reconfirmed

Approval of Minutes:

- Correction will be made to the May 21, 2017 Minutes to reflect the correct date.
- Question regarding the bridge load math addressed by Chris J.

Consent Agenda Approved.

Update: State of the Church - Rev. Meg Barnhouse

- Strange year: Awaiting construction which has seen continuous delays.
 - Sr. Minister was out for a period of time, utilizing sabbatical and sick leave to mend.
 - Congregation expressed gratitude expressed for Chris Jimmerson for covering while the Sr. Minister was out.
- Mission: Another guest was welcomed into sanctuary. Proud of congregation for taking the lead on sanctuary and a leader in the denomination.
- Fundraising: Congregational struggles with raising money continue. We are not alone - denomination-wide phenomena.
- Volunteers: Drop in engagement in volunteers with certain programs has dropped, including R.E. teachers.
- Construction: Will begin within the month. Starting with the pads and framing and the bathrooms.
 - Water main will be the first development in the construction project.
 - Construction will be chaotic, messy, inconvenient, etc. and will ask a lot of us.

- All concerns or events should be taken to Chris, Meg or Brian to be addressed with the Construction group.
- Faith Development: Laine will be departing in 2018 and a search for a D.R.E. will begin at the beginning of the year.

Questions:

- How much parking will be missed during construction? unknown

Call for return of ballots for 2018 Monthly Special Offerings - Peggie Morton (on behalf of the Social Justice Ministry)

- Reminder to return the ballots for the monthly special offerings

2018 Proposed Budget - Rev. Chris Jimmerson

- Stewardship: Outstanding pledge balance of \$26,000, have made up \$13,000 and are working getting the remaining balanced. Currently at \$723K of \$736K.
- Budget: Reorganized budget to reflect a 'best practice' in non-profit financials.
 - Increased UUA giving amount.
 - Working with Treasurer of the Board to bring in a CPA to help get document standard procedures and prepare for a future audit scenario.
 - Funding for the Change Team for anti-racism work in 2018.
 - Funding for the Search Committee.
 - Question: Paradox Players budget item in question though without revenue will also not have the expense.
 - Question: Fundraiser and special plate were decreased based on real numbers for 2017.
- Motion to Adopt: Gay Phillips made motion. Michael Kersey seconded. No discussion.
- Budget Adopted by majority vote (1 opposed)

Joys & Concerns

Closing Reading & Extinguishing the Chalice - Nancy Dittmar / Phil Hewitt

Meeting concluded at 2:13pm CDT

Nominating Committee Slate 2018/2019

Board of Trustees	
President	Sean Ramsey
President-Elect*	Tomas Medina
Trustee (2016–2019)	Dan Griffiths
Trustee (2016–2019)	Scott Butki
Trustee (2016–2019)	Phil Hewitt
Trustee (2017–2020)	Matthew Kressin
Trustee (2017–2020)	Erin Gaines
Trustee (2017–2020)	Gay Phillips
Trustee (2018–2021)*	Leena Batra
Trustee (2018–2021)*	Maria Medina
Trustee (2018–2021)*	Elias Ponvert

**Nominee*

New Nominating Committee Members	
Member (2018–2021)*	Mohan Rao
Member (2018–2019)**	Jairy Grisaffe
Member (2018–2019)**	Wendy Kuo

**Nominee*

***Board Appointed*



Tomas Medina

Tomas started attending First UU shortly after moving to Austin from NYC in January 2014. On his first visit to the church, Rev Mari Caballero was preaching. When Rev Mari finished the service by breaking into song in Spanish, Tomas thought this was a church that he could love. He became a member shortly thereafter.

Raised Catholic, Tomas stopped attending mass when he moved away from home to go to graduate school. Years later, while living in NYC, Tomas read the book *God Revised*, and it changed his life. When he googled the author, Rev Galen Guengerich, Tomas learned that Rev Guengerich was a minister at All Souls, a UU church just a few miles from Tomas' apartment. Tomas began to occasionally attend All Souls, and decided, when he moved to Austin about a year later, that he'd check out a UU church.

Since joining First UU in 2014, Tomas has become a member of the POC (People of Color) group, a facilitator of the Alphabet Soup group for LGBTQ members, served on the usher and lay leader teams, canvassed during the stewardship campaign, participated in a Chalice Circle and the Wellspring class, and was a member of the internship committee for Rev. Susan Yarborough. Tomas very much appreciates the communities he has been welcomed into as he has participated in each of these activities.

Tomas has a law degree and a MFA in theater management but uses neither in his work as a business analyst for a software company. He is, however an avid theater goer, and has recently discovered a passion for immigration law. Tomas was very honored to work with Alirio in seeking a stay to his deportation. Tomas also volunteers with American Gateways to provide legal services to women who have been detained by ICE and are seeking asylum.

Tomas is honored to be nominated to serve on First UU's board, and is especially excited at the opportunity to serve at this time that we have updated our mission to explicitly include growing the Beloved Community.



María Medina

María found her way to First UU in March of 2017. After browsing the makeshift walls that hold the Mission and end goals in Howson Hall during a volunteer voter deputy registrar training, she made it a point to start attending First UU. Once she heard the passionate and deeply moving sermons of Rev. Chris, she knew she had found unique spiritual home. She became a full member in July of that year.

At the late end of that month, María had also become active with First UU Social Action by bringing the school supply drive for Counter Balance ATX to the congregation. Since then, she has become the Social Action Outreach Coordinator and a facilitator for the Courage and Wonder workshops that helped shaped the congregation's new mission and ends. In 2018, she joined the People of Color group and the Change Team.

María is a local activist and organizer who co-founded the group, Voces Tejas, in December 2017. She also regularly supports other local organizations Counter Balance ATX, Texas Progressive Action Network, and Women's Racket Club. She is slated for the Board of Directors at the League of Women Voters for 2018-2019, and she is a founding member of the local market and community event committee for Frida Friday ATX.

She enjoys photography, non-traditional board games, and miniature painting. María brings to the board her work in creating and supporting intersectional equity. Her constantly expanding and evolving knowledge on what it takes to be truly inclusive and just at every level of society is a vital motivation for why she has considered bringing her passion to the First UU Board of Trustees.

Portrait by Leandra Blei Photography



Leena Batra

Leena Batra was raised as a Hindu in Texas and first attended a UU church with her parents and sister at age nine. This experience was pivotal in shaping her own spiritual journey. She attended UU churches in college and graduate school, while continuing the personal search for truth and connection between Hinduism, Buddhism, and Unitarian Universalism.

After adopting her daughter as a single mom, Leena moved to Austin to work as a Staff Psychologist/Asian American Specialist for the Counseling and Mental Health Center at UT. In 2012, Leena opened her private practice in Austin, specializing in women's reproductive health. She has been a passionate advocate for reproductive and maternal justice since her college years.

Leena began to search for a welcoming community that was spiritually and intellectually engaging, and would support her and her daughter's personal spiritual growth. They found First UU Austin and became members in 2014. First UU Austin is the beloved, nurturing community that Leena had long been searching for. She enjoys giving back to the community by serving as a member of the Pastoral Care Associates at First UU Austin. She is often moved to tears by the talent of our musicians and artists. She brings to the Board her compassion, energy, and dedication to social justice. She is delighted and honored to serve the First UU Church of Austin.



Elias Ponvert

Elias and his family—his spouse Candace and children Katharine, Jasper, Chester and most recently Duncan—joined First UU in 2013 and have been active in the community since. Elias has helped with the 3rd Monday sack lunch crew since joining First UU, and is in his third year of leading the first service 2nd-5th grade section of our Religious Education program. Since the 2016 election, Elias has become politically active, serving as an organizer for TX-10 Indivisible (covering Texas’ 10th Congressional district, which includes the First Unitarian Universalist grounds and sanctuary) and Indivisible Austin; since 2017 he has also been active with the Austin Sanctuary Network, and helped arrange Indivisible Austin joining the ASN as an active member.

Elias grew up in Rhode Island and attended university at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. After university Elias moved to Austin in 2000 and has lived here since. In 2005 Elias started the graduate program in Linguistics at the University of Texas, earning a PhD in 2011 with a specialization in computational linguistics. Elias returned to industry after graduate school, and was a data scientist and developer at several software startups before joining Indeed in 2017 as a data scientist. In addition to the four kids, Elias and Candace are the proud caretakers of Moonshine, a cat, and Marvin, a purebred American mutt.

Religiously, Elias was baptized and confirmed Episcopalian Christian, then attended the Benedictine Catholic Portsmouth Abbey School for high school. He has found a happy home in Unitarian Universalism, and draws inspiration daily from the sources of the UU faith, most especially the first, “the sense of wonder we all share.”