

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana
Seeking the Spirit, Building Community, Changing the World



Board Minutes
January 21, 2026

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Board members attending in person:

Jane McLeod, President

Linda Pickle, Vice President

Bill Lonnerberg, Treasurer

Regina DiLavore, Secretary

Mary Craig, Board Member at-Large

Pam MacLaughlin, Board Member at-Large

Steve Mascari, Board Member at-Large

Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray, ex officio Board Member

Submitted by: Regina DiLavore

Attached Documents:

- A. Consent Agenda
 - President's Report

- Lead Minister's Report

I. Call to Order and Chalice Lighting

Jane called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. The chalice was lit, and a quorum was in attendance.

II. Check-in

III. Approval of the Consent Agenda

The consent agenda consisted of the following items:

- December 2025 Fiscal Dashboard and Statement of Cash Flows
- President's Report
- Lead Minister's Report
- December 2025 Draft Board Meeting Minutes
- December 2025 Draft Congregational Meeting Minutes
- Vision Discernment Working Group Report

Jane moved to approve the consent agenda, the motion was seconded and carried. See Attachment A for the consent agenda reports.

IV. Unfinished Business

A. Proposal to Increase Ministerial Support

Ministerial Intern

The Board engaged in a discussion regarding the hiring of a ministerial intern. The primary focus of the discussion centered on the structure of the position, with consideration given to both a one-year and a two-year part-time appointment. Following a recommendation from Reverend Susan, the Board reached a consensus to establish a one-year appointment, which would encompass nine months of full-time service. The budgetary implications for the 2026-2027 fiscal year were reviewed, noting that the draft budget would be adjusted to include a new line item under Ministerial Support, estimated at \$40,000 to cover stipend, benefits, and professional fees/dues. It was also observed that the church is eligible to apply for UUA grant funding to potentially offset a portion of these costs.

Jane moved that one full-time intern minister be added to the 2026–2027 fiscal year budget. The motion was seconded by Pam. Following no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

To facilitate this program, a Ministerial Internship Committee will be established by Spring 2026. This committee will be responsible for interviewing and working alongside the ministerial intern to provide evaluation, feedback, and emotional support to the intern throughout their tenure. The internship is projected to begin in August or September 2026.

Linda volunteered to serve on the Ministerial Internship Committee. The Board subsequently discussed several other potential candidates with the aim of ensuring a balanced committee membership. Jane will take the next step of reaching out to the identified individuals to ascertain their interest and confirm their participation.

Seed Fund

Reverend Susan and Bill presented a financial spreadsheet outlining a proposed Seed Fund, designed to bolster long-term ministerial support. The Board reached a consensus on establishing a \$400,000 fund to be utilized over a five-year period. This fund is structured to provide tapering support, covering 100% of costs in the first year and decreasing incrementally to 20% by the fifth year. The budget projections account for an estimated 3% annual salary increase. The \$400,000 total allocated for the fund includes anticipated 2026 Search Costs, with the understanding that the current Search Reserve Fund, which still holds a balance, will be utilized to supplement these efforts.

The Board discussed a timeline for the upcoming ministerial search. This timeline includes the launch of the fundraising campaign and the formation of a Hiring Committee during Summer/Fall 2026. The UUA portal opens in January 2027 for the submission of recruiting materials, and the interview phase follows in Spring 2027. The start date for the new minister is targeted for Fall 2027, coinciding with Fiscal Year 2027–2028.

The Board emphasized the critical need for clear communication regarding both the Seed Fund and the long-term vision. The plan for the Seed Fund will be presented to the congregation during the Spring 2026 Pledge Drive. To ensure a successful rollout of these initiatives, the Board is considering adding new members to the Pledge Drive Committee to assist with these specific objectives.

B. Policy Regarding Emeritus Title

Jane led a discussion regarding the draft policy for the Emeritus/Emerita title. After reviewing the document, Jane moved to approve the policy as drafted. Linda seconded the motion. Following further discussion, the motion was approved by all.

V. New Business

A. Midyear Assessment of Progress Towards Goals

Jane led a review of the actions associated with each of the 2026 goals provided in Attachment B. The Board discussed progress and specific action steps to accomplish each goal.

B. Planning for Growth

The Board engaged in discussion regarding long-term planning for congregational growth. The conversation focused on identifying the necessary infrastructure and staffing levels required to sustain our expanding congregation.

The Board considered whether the current building would suffice for future needs or if a larger facility might be required. Alternatively, a "multi-community" model was discussed, wherein the church would develop into multiple smaller communities connected to a single larger mission.

To accommodate more members, the Board explored the possibility of adding additional services beyond the current two-service Sunday schedule.

The discussion further highlighted a growing need for more robust financial management and increased facility support for increasing usage of the building.

The Board then discussed the potential need for additional staff members and more formalized staff management structures to ensure operational efficiency as the congregation scales up.

VI. Executive Session

The Board did not enter executive session.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:58.

**UUCB Board Meeting
President's Report
January 21, 2026**

If you would like this report, or any other items from the consent agenda, to move to the regular agenda, please let me know by Tuesday, January 20 at 5pm.

Since our last meeting:

- I revised our Bylaws per the December 2025 congregational votes; Jo posted the updated Bylaws to the UUCB website.
- With Amanda Waye's assistance, we submitted two of the amendments to the Articles of Incorporation to the Indiana Secretary of State; they have been approved. After the congregational meeting, I learned that the Indiana Articles of Incorporation no longer include reference to the number of Board members. I did not submit that revision because there was nowhere on the amendment form to do so. I will prepare a brief history of the amendments for the Board files in case there is any question about this matter in the future.
- Rev. Susan and I finalized her revised contract. The updated and signed contract is in the Board files.
- Rev. Susan reminded me that it is time to solicit applications for GA delegates. A call for applications was included in the January 16 *Friday Update* and will run in the next few *Friday Updates* and the next *Perspectives*.

Two of our committee/working group chairs will submit their monitoring reports in writing this month: MJ Wallaker on behalf of the Vision Discernment Working Group and Corrin Clarkson on behalf of the Pledge Drive Committee. If you have any questions about those reports, we can elevate the reports to the regular agenda and I will forward the questions to the chairs.

One of our agenda items is to consider how we will address growth in our congregation. I am thinking of an open-ended conversation more than a strategic planning exercise. What do we have to think about as we grow in terms of our infrastructure, the health of our community, etc.? I look forward to your thoughts on the matter.

A reminder that it is not too early to think about the 2026 service awards. You can find a spreadsheet that carries over last year's nominations [here](#).

The January Perspectives article slot is [open](#). Please sign up for it if you are able. There are also many Sunday Board [representative](#) slots available in spring, especially for the 11:30 slots. Here, too, please sign up if you are able. We have a Cookies and Conversation event

coming up between services on January 25. I can bring along a couple dozen cookies.
Anyone else?

I look forward to seeing you soon!

January 2026 Lead Minister's Report to the Board
Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington
Submitted by: Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

General Reflections: The next several months will be busy with the addition of budget planning and the pledge drive. As I said last month, I continue to struggle to find time to do more long term planning, to get projects and ideas off the ground. I continue to have new ideas for programs and ways to integrate new people but no capacity to implement them. I think I have to adopt a posture of patience until we have more program staff capacity. The theme of courage couldn't be more timely given the challenges in our country since the start of the year.

February's Theme: Community of Truth

Calendar highlights:

Just a reminder that I have back to back clergy programs in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and will be away from this Friday, Jan 23 through Monday, February 2nd. Sarah Gettie McNeill will preach on 1/25 and Judson Webb, the ministerial intern at the UU Congregation of Columbus, Indiana, will be preaching on 2/1.

Updates and Highlights from Ministry:

Childcare Coordinator: I am thrilled to share that we hired Beth Kaylor as a Childcare Coordinator and already the nursery is looking so much more inviting. I am hopeful that this will help us better welcome more families with young children into the congregation - to have a regular lead in the childcare room and alleviate some pressure on Stephanie to have someone else handling scheduling, training and managing of childcare volunteers.

Review of FY 2025-2026 Annual Goals: I reviewed the goals I set in August for this year, and here is a brief mid-year update on the goals. I left the details subgoals for brevity.

Be a partner to the Board and Congregation in discernment around our Mission/Vision and name change consideration

Both these processes have gone slower than expected. I have not been as involved with the Name Change team. However, I did think this was the expectation. I would support Name Change as needed; but be a sitting member of the Mission/Vision team. The name change group has struggled with participation as members have had

personal things interfere. I don't have a strong read on how it is going, but the first listening session went well.

Vision Discernment Group is doing behind the scene prep work while the Name Change process goes forward.

Improve Administrative Functions: Specifically around pledge drive, Personnel manual, and Financial manual.

These are all in process. Amanda, Jo and I created a calendar of tasks that the staff does for the pledge drive and will be reviewing that soon as we move toward the pledge drive. I am hopeful we will have changes to the personnel manual ready for the Board to review by the end of the fiscal year. Amanda is taking point on the Financial Manual.

Create avenues to expand ministerial capacity/staff this year and next

I was not very successful in putting in place additional ministerial support in the fall; but am speaking with a colleague about potential contract support for pastoral care, memorial services and preaching for the next six months.

The Board and I are currently discussing funding for an intern minister through the pledge drive and a fundraising campaign to fund a full time second minister in FY 28.

Invest in and support staff development

This is in progress. Not sure what the outcomes will be yet.

Create worship and ministry that helps all of us find ways to lead, resist, protect and nurture our community and values.

My personnel assessment is that worship continues to be a strength. The feedback I get is that it is helping people navigate these difficult times with hope and courage. The monthly themes and the wider focus on Courage, Sanctuary and Imagination, have been resonating and helpful to connecting worship to our values, our mission and our advocacy and organizing efforts.

Ongoing Goals that continue from last year/always

Continue Building Trust in Congregation, with Staff and Board

This seems to be going well. With respect to staff, it is clear that I have some different expectations than Connie had and we will be navigating this as we make changes to the personnel manual.

Support the Board in its goals and work plan

Overall, I think this is going well and am grateful for the practice in January to review our goals.

Take my time off; take my Sundays out of the pulpit; continue working toward a better balance in my schedule to avoid burn out.

I have done a far better job of taking one Sunday out of the pulpit this month and had some extra support in the pulpit in the early fall. I still find myself needing to work on some Mondays and over some holidays.