



**First Unitarian Church of Rochester  
Annual Congregational Meeting  
Sunday, December 15, 2024  
11:45 am in person and by Zoom**

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1. **Establish a Quorum** — Tim Farnum Moderator  
(87 people in person and 2 people online) and call meeting to order at 11:56 am

2. **Opening Words/Chalice lighting** – Barbara Gawinski

3. **Approval of Minutes from Last Congregational Meeting**

**MOTION:** To approve minutes of June 9, 2024 meeting

Moved: Jonathan Kyle Seconded: David Pinto

The motion was approved with three abstentions

4. **President's Remarks** - Lynn Kinsman, President of the Congregation

- Our congregation's Mission and Ends were crafted in 2018 during the "Our Road Ahead" process while Rev. Joel Miller was our interim Lead Minister.
- It is recommended we revisit the Ends every 5-7 years.
- This year's Linkage Committee, a subcommittee of the Board of trustees, has written simplified language for the Ends statements and we have been soliciting feedback on them.
- Today we're here to focus on social justice, or End 4:  
*We act in partnership with others to end racial, social and economic injustice within our own community, in greater Rochester and the world.*

5. **Social Justice grounding and context** - Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan, Lead Minister

- The things our congregation does for the community are a group effort involving the contributions of many hands.
- Rev Shari, some members of the Board, and some staff members visited Dallas this fall to observe the way our colleagues there are engaging in social justice activities. This trip raised a number of questions about how we should be doing this work at First Unitarian.
- We understand Social Justice as an integral component of this congregation's identity. Over the past 200 years, this work has taken on many forms, and our congregation has a long history of not entirely agreeing on the Social Justice activities we undertake.
- At this moment in history, it is imperative that this congregation discuss our Social Justice aims and activities. Today's activities are aimed at taking the temperature of the congregants and gathering feedback about what our congregation's Social Justice might look like in the future.
- It is important that we follow the lead of the people who are most directly impacted by the work we are doing in the community, grounding our work in humility and a commitment to following the lead of those we hope to assist.

- Big questions before us: What do we want to do? What are we good at? What resources do we have to offer? What is the leadership of the people most directly impacted asking for? What is the context we are working within? How do we weigh the balance between participation and impact? What expectations do we have for our members? What is the role of our church in supporting Social Justice organizations and efforts in our community?
  - Current Framing: Social Justice work from this point on will be led by the people most directly impacted. We must be flexible and agile in our activities, showing deep cultural humility in our work and relationships with other organizations.
6. **Facilitated table discussions** on the topic of “Our Social Justice Identity”
- Table discussions: Each table has an assigned facilitator to take the groups through two exercises, one about our church’s identity and one about each person’s individual preferences.
7. **Wrap-up and closing**
- Feedback on how the session went - many thumbs up from the participants
  - Next steps
    - The Board will be collating and synthesizing the responses from the groups
    - Once the information is compiled, it will be communicated to the congregations through the Board Planks newsletter.
    - Thanks to the Linkages Committee, table facilitators, AV team, and lunch coordinators
  - Information available at the exit: Simplified Ends language, Legacy giving brochure
8. **Adjourn**
- Moved: Lynette Blake Second: Jan Miller

There being no further business and with no objection, the meeting adjourned at 1:03pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Emily E. Clasper, Clerk