

# First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

## Governing Policies Handbook

Updated:  
October 15, 2009

Yellow highlighted text recently modified

# First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

## Table of Contents

I.	Ends Policies .....	3
	<b>A. Global Ends Policy (Mission)</b> .....	3
	B. Vision .....	3
	<b>C. Core Values</b> .....	4
	D. Strategic Outcomes .....	4
II.	Governance Process Policies .....	4
	A. Board Responsibilities .....	4
	B. Governing Style .....	5
	C. Officer's Roles .....	6
	D. Board Members' Code of Conduct .....	7
	E. Committee Principles .....	9
	F. Grievance Policy .....	10
III.	Board-Senior Minister Relationship Policies .....	10
	A. Delegation to the Senior Minister .....	10
	B. Senior Minister Responsibilities .....	11
	C. Monitoring Senior Minister Performance .....	11
	D. Disciplinary Policy .....	13
	E. Ministerial Compensation .....	13
IV.	Senior Minister Limitations Policies .....	14
	A. General Constraint .....	14
	B. Treatment of Staff and Volunteers .....	15
	C. Communication to the Board and Congregation .....	15
	D. Public Statements .....	16
	E. Compensation and Benefits .....	16
	F. Financial Planning .....	16
	G. Financial Condition .....	17
	H. Asset Protection .....	18
	I. Emergency Succession .....	18
	<b>J. Core Values</b> .....	18
V.	Standing Committee Charges .....	19
	A. Finance Committee .....	19
VI.	Community Norms .....	19
	A. Congregational Covenant .....	19
	B. Disruptive Behavior Policy .....	19
	C. How We Work Together .....	21

# First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

---

## I. Ends Policies

---

These policies define who the church is here to serve and in what ways.

### A. **Global Ends Policy**

As a liberal religious and spiritual home, First Universalist Church attracts, educates, nurtures and inspires people who seek:

- Comfort, meaning, and joy in our message of love and hope;
- Transformation through spiritual exploration and growth; and
- Engagement with the greater community as we work for peace and justice

### B. **Vision**

*The following Vision Statement is intended as an aspirational statement of how we identify ourselves and what we hope to become. It looks ahead 5 years but is designed to be reviewed every year to make sure that the vision remains a current reflection of the congregation's identity and aspirations and that we are progressing toward that vision.*

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, founded in 1859, is a large, dynamic religious community where congregants, including members and friends of all ages, draw spiritual inspiration from the principles of Unitarian Universalism to work together to make our world a better place.

Congregants of all ages joyously learn and work together to understand and live the values and principles of our faith. Children and youth are guided and mentored by spiritually grounded adults.

We seek lifelong spiritual growth. Individually, with others, and in community, we participate in religious education, spiritual practice and self-reflection. We join in inspirational worship that interweaves the intellect, the spirit and the arts to create an experience of the sacred, including rituals of blessing and celebration.

We warmly welcome newcomers into our community. We are enriched by the diverse identities and perspectives of all who join their personal spiritual journeys with our common vision. We offer meaningful opportunities for participation to all and invite deep interpersonal connections. We care for one another in times of need.

Our ministers' and congregants' prophetic voices inspire courageous transformational actions to further peace, justice, and environmental stewardship. As leaders and participants, we join in this work and in service to others with other Unitarian Universalists, with those of other faiths, and with secular organizations.

Our distinctive history, our Universalist heritage, and our hopes for the future inspire us to give generously of our time, our talents and our resources to further our common congregational mission and vision.

We are a well-governed congregation whose democratically empowered leaders earn the trust of members by being responsible stewards of our facility and our human and financial resources so that we may, together, realize the congregation's vision for today, and for times we shall never see.

# First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

## C. Core Values

In all programs, activities and relationships, First Universalist Church will operate in compliance with the core values of our community, which are rooted in the power of living, learning and loving and include the belief:

- That every person is sacred and has the potential for spiritual growth.
- In the power of community to further spiritual growth.
- In honoring the interdependence of all creation.
- In the Universalist message of love and hope.
- That spiritual needs can be fulfilled in a liberal religious tradition.

## D. Strategic Outcomes

While continuing to work toward implementation of all aspects of the church vision particular focus shall be applied to the following Strategic Outcomes through the June 2012.

1. First Universalist Church will be a dynamic force to spread the Unitarian Universalist message of love and hope by implementing truly radical hospitality. Success will be indicated by:

- Increased visibility in the community as a welcoming liberal congregation.
- Increased numbers of visitors.
- Visitors find their welcome warm and meaningful so they return.
- Increased membership.
- Increased involvement in church activities by newcomers.
- Youth follow a welcoming path to transition from religious education to adult church membership.

2. First Universalist will provide a rich array of program offerings which encourage active participation by newcomers and existing members and friends. Success will be indicated by:

- Increased participation in rich and meaningful program opportunities that are consistently provided for all to find satisfying roles in church activities.
- Congregational program needs and interests are targeted based on solicited staff and congregational input.
- Increased accessibility is provided by scheduling programming at a variety of convenient times with daycare and other expressed needs are also addressed.
- Programming interrelates the spiritual, the intellectual, fellowship and living our faith through service.
- Leadership skills are built within the staff and congregation through increased training.

---

## II. Governance Process Policies

---

The policies in this section address how the Board conducts and monitors its own work.

### A. Board Responsibilities

It is the Board's responsibility to articulate the congregation's vision, mission, and values, and to develop ends and policies that ensure accountability in achieving those ends.

The job of the Board shall be to:

1. Actively and deliberately link with its moral ownership, which is determined by the board to be: Present and future seekers who are attracted to First Universalist as a spiritual home.

## **First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook**

2. Connect to its stakeholders as needed and desired to assure relevance, viability and sustainability. Those stakeholders are identified by the board as primary and secondary as follows:

### *Primary*

- Present youth and adults (members and friends).
- Ministers and staff.
- Active volunteers/Lay leadership/future friends and members (seekers).
- First Universalist Foundation.

### *Secondary*

- Unitarian Universalist Association (U.U.A.).
- Affiliated Organizations (e.g., M.U.U.S.J.A, Eco-Minds).
- TRUST organization of South Minneapolis churches.
- Faith in Action beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.
- Neighborhood and wider community.
- Association of Universalist Women (A.U.W.)
- Church building tenants.
- Artists who display/perform here.
- Unity Summer program.

## **B. Governing Style**

The Board will approach its task in accordance with its covenant and with a style that emphasizes strategic leadership more than administrative detail, clear distinction of Board and staff roles, the future rather than the past, and proactivity rather than reactivity.

In this spirit, the Board will:

1. Direct and inspire the organization through the careful deliberation and establishment of policies. It will be an initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives.
2. Focus on intended long term outcomes, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those outcomes.
3. Enforce upon itself and its individual members whatever discipline is needed to govern appropriately. Discipline will apply to attendance, policymaking principles, respect for the distinction between Board and staff roles and respect for Board decisions.
4. Monitor and annually evaluate the Board's own process and performance to systematically insure continuity of Board improvements.

# First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

## C. *Officer's Roles*

The following Board officers are part of the shared ministry of the church. As such, each officer has a special leadership role to play.

### 1. President

The primary function of the President is to assure that the Board behaves consistently within its own rules and norms and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.

It is the responsibility of the President to:

- Prepare agendas for and preside over official Board meetings and meetings of the congregation with all of the commonly accepted powers of that position (e.g., ruling, recognizing), while observing Robert's Rules of Order except where the Board has suspended them.
- Focus Board discussion on issues that, according to Board policy, are the Board's to decide, not the Senior Minister's.
- Ensure that Board deliberation is timely, fair, orderly and thorough.
- Delegate work, as appropriate, to different Board members and/or other individuals or groups.
  - Communicate regularly with the membership including an annual report to be delivered at the Annual Meeting.
  - Perform all duties assigned by the Bylaws.

The President is also authorized to:

- Speak on the Board's behalf and represent the Board at official functions such as new member ceremonies, ordinations, and installations as well as occasional outside gatherings and meetings.
- Make any decision on behalf of the Board that falls within or is consistent with Board policies on Governance Process and Board – Senior Minister relationship. This authorization does not extend to any other type of Board policy.
- The President's authority does not extend to supervising, interpreting Board policies to, or otherwise directing staff.

### 2. Vice President

If the President is absent the Vice President shall perform all the President's duties and, when so acting, shall have all the President's powers and be subject to the same restrictions.

The Vice President may also have other such powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe.

### 3. Secretary

The job of the Secretary is to assure the integrity of the Board's record. The Secretary is responsible for:

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

- Recording and archiving of the minutes and appended documents of Board meetings and official meetings of the congregation.
- Maintenance of the master copy of this Handbook and archiving of older versions.
- Overseeing publication/dissemination of all official Board documents on the Internet and other media as appropriate.
- Public announcement of any official meeting of the congregation and other duties as assigned by the Church bylaws.

### 4. Treasurer

The job of the Treasurer is to lead the Board's efforts to ensure the integrity of the Church's financial procedures and practices and the health of its financial position. In particular, the Treasurer will:

- Chair the Finance Committee and ensure that it performs its role in accordance with the Governing Policies.
- Report monthly to the Board any concerns held either individually or by the Finance Committee regarding Church financial matters.
- Report annually (at the Annual Meeting) to the Membership on the financial status of the Church.

## ***D. Board Members' Code of Conduct***

While carrying out its duties, the Board commits itself and its members to ethical, professional and lawful conduct, proper use of authority and appropriate decorum.

### 1. Conflicts of Interest

A "conflict of interest" may arise at any time this board is taking action on an issue, and that issue involves in any way another entity with which a board member or a member of his or her immediate family is associated.

Hypothetical situations under which there could be a conflict of interest would include cases where a board member or a member of his or her immediate family:

- Serves as an elected or appointed official or as an employee of a federal, state, or local governmental entity; or
- Serves as an officer or director or as an employee with another nonprofit or community organization; or
- Is employed or affiliated with a business organization AND
- That organization or entity has some financial business dealing with First Universalist, or common issues affecting the goals and mission of this organization.

It shall be the policy of First Universalist that where there is a conflict of interest, or where the potential for a conflict of interest may exist, each Trustee shall be expected to:

- Disclose, at the earliest practicable opportunity, to the other members of the board that a conflict of interest may exist and the nature of the conflict; and

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

- Abstain from voting on any matters for which there is or may be a conflict unless the other board members present when a vote is being taken unanimously agree to waive the conflict and authorize the board member to vote notwithstanding the conflict.

The Secretary will record in the minutes the disclosure of a conflict by any board member, and whether or not a board member then abstains from voting.

### 2. Authority

Individual trustees may not attempt to exercise authority over the organization. The Board will speak with one voice through its adopted policies.

- Trustees' interaction with the Senior Minister or staff must recognize the lack of authority in any individual trustee or subgroup (e.g., committee or task force) of trustees.
- Trustees' interaction with the public, media or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the similar inability of any trustee, except the President, to speak for the Board.
- Trustees are encouraged to continually self-monitor their individual performance as trustees against policies, against the qualifications listed in the current trustee position description, and against any other current Board evaluation tools.
- Trustees are encouraged to participate as individuals in Volunteer Committees, but all authority and accountability of Volunteer Committees and their Working Groups, as far as the Board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Senior Minister.

### 3. Board Norms

Seeking to embody our religious principles and to create a culture in which all are encouraged to participate fully, we covenant to:

- Promote and maintain a trusting, safe and fun environment in which all are empowered to utilize our strengths and speak our truths, including hard truths, in the service of the congregation's mission, vision and goals.
- Seek out, encourage, celebrate and welcome diversity among board members.
- Welcome and build relationships with all board members, actively including all new board members.
- Actively participate in the board and congregation's decision making process and respect the outcome when due process has been followed.
- Communicate board decisions with 'one voice' once a decision has been made, maintaining confidentiality regarding individual positions and comments on issues.
- Follow all appropriate policies and procedures when in disagreement with a decision of the board.
- Remain in community through conflict and the work towards resolution.
- Hold ourselves and each other accountable to our commitments.

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

- Express genuine appreciation to all board members for their commitment of time, energy and effort.
- Be supportive of board members' needs for self-care and step up, when possible, to take on responsibilities to balance the load.
- Be open to new ideas and to new ways of doing things, including a commitment to change our position on issues.
- Be knowledgeable about the congregation's bylaws, policies and procedures and actively seek means to align the congregation's governance with its vision and mission.
- Remember, always, that no one is perfect, that everyone makes mistakes.
- Honor the sacred nature of our time together, our covenant and our shared purpose by illuminating and promoting the hopeful, helpful and enjoyable ways we can engage in the work of this church together.

### ***E. Committee Principles***

The Board may establish standing or temporary committees to help carry out its responsibilities.

This policy applies only to committees that are formed by Board action, whether or not the committees include non-Board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Senior Minister.

#### 1. Purposes

Committees will assist the Board chiefly by preparing policy alternatives, recommendations, and implications for Board deliberation.

Committees will be used only when other methods have been deemed inadequate so as to minimally interfere with or confuse the wholeness of the Board's job.

#### 2. Authority

Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Such authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Senior Minister.

#### 3. Staff Relationship

Board committees are to help the Board do its job, not to interfere with the staff doing its job.

Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff and in keeping with the Board's focus on the future, Board committees will not ordinarily have direct dealings with current staff operations.

Further, the Board will not impede its direct delegation to the Senior Minister by requiring approval of a Board committee before a Senior Minister action. The Senior Minister works for the Board, never for a Board committee or officer.

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

### ***F. Grievance Policy***

It is the intent of the Board to be responsive to staff and the congregation, but it is not the function of the Board to resolve complaints or grievances that are not directly related to the Board's policy-making and policy-monitoring functions.

When individual Board members receive complaints from members of the Congregation, the following guidelines will be followed.

#### 1. Complaints about Board Policies

Complaints and inquiries concerning these policies shall be handled in accordance with the church's vision, which encourages direct and open communications. Such matters brought to the Board's attention will be the welcomed basis for on-going revisions to these policies.

If a request for Board action is received, the complaint or inquiry will be communicated to both Board members and the Senior Minister. After discussion with the Senior Minister, the Board will determine if a policy change is required. If not, the Senior Minister will resolve the matter directly with the initiator.

If a policy change is required, the Board will make the required change and communicate the resolution to the initiator.

#### 2. Complaints about Violations of Policy

If a staff member believes that there has been a violation of policy s/he may bring it to the attention of the Senior Minister. If the issue is not resolved, the next step is to follow the grievance procedure outlined in the Employee Handbook.

If a congregant believes a policy is being violated by staff or the Senior Minister, s/he should first discuss it directly with the appropriate staff or Senior Minister. If this is not possible or if the issue is not resolved through direct conversation, it may be brought to the President or Vice President for consideration by the Board. The Board may consider clarifying the policy or treating the issue as disciplinary.

---

## **III. Board-Senior Minister Relationship Policies**

---

The policies in this section address how authority is delegated to the Senior Minister and how the Board and Senior Minister should work together.

### ***A. Delegation to the Senior Minister***

The Board's job is generally confined to establishing topmost policies, leaving implementation and subsidiary policy development to the Senior Minister.

All Board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Senior Minister, so that all authority and accountability of staff can be phrased, insofar as the Board is concerned, as authority and accountability of the Senior Minister. The Senior Minister reports to the Board on behalf of the staff for overall achievement of Church mission, vision, ends and goals.

- 1) The Senior Minister is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions and develop all activities that are true to the Board's policies. The Board may,

## **First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook**

by extending its policies, “undelegate” areas of the Senior Minister’s authority but will respect the Senior Minister’s choices so long as the delegation continues.

- 2) No individual trustee, officer, or Board committee has authority over the Senior Minister or staff. Information may be requested by any individual trustee, officer, or committee, but if such request in the Senior Minister’s judgment requires a material amount of staff time, it may be refused with explanation.
- 3) The Senior Minister may not perform, allow, or cause to be performed any act that is contrary to explicit Board constraints on Senior Minister authority.
- 4) Should the Senior Minister become aware of a violation of Board policy, he or she shall inform the Board President or Vice President. Informing is simply to guarantee no violation is intentionally kept from the Board, not to request approval. Trustee response, either approving or disapproving, does not exempt the Senior Minister from subsequent Board judgment of the action nor does it impede any decision.
- 5) Senior Minister authority does not extend to supervising or otherwise directing individual trustees or Board subgroups regarding Board policy or interpreting Board policy to such individuals or subgroups. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with mutual interaction about individual understanding of policies.

### ***B. Senior Minister Responsibilities***

As the Board’s official link to the operating organization, the Senior Minister is accountable for all organizational performance and exercises all authority delegated by the Board’s governing policies.

The Senior Minister’s job contributions can be stated as performance in three areas:

- 1) Accomplishment of organizational ends as stated in board policies.
- 2) Organization operation within the boundaries of prudence and ethics established by the Senior Minister Limitations policies.
- 3) Appropriate use and delegation of power.

### ***C. Monitoring Senior Minister Performance***

#### **1. Evaluation Criteria**

The standard of evaluation shall be whether the Senior Minister has made reasonable progress toward achieving the Ends, while remaining within the boundaries of the established Board policies.

The Board will make the final determination as to whether the Senior Minister’s interpretations of the Ends Statements are reasonable and whether reasonable progress is being made toward their achievement.

#### **2. Methods**

- 1) The Senior Minister will annually prepare a work plan describing how achievement of the Strategic Outcomes and other Ends Policies of the Board are to be advanced in the following church year. This plan is to be submitted along with the proposed annual budget and should link proposed budget expenditures to the ends to be achieved.

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

- 2) The Senior Minister will make brief monthly reports to the Board reflecting progress toward the established ends and any deviation from the limitations policies.
  - 3) Ends and governing policies will be monitored on a regular basis. The Board will acquire evaluation information by one or more of three methods:
    - a) By internal report, in which the Senior Minister provides information to the Board.
    - b) By external report, in which an external, disinterested third party selected by the Board assesses compliance with policies.
    - c) By direct Board inspection of information, documents, activities, or circumstances, in which a designated member or members of the board assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.
  - 4) At the Board's discretion, any policy may be monitored by any method at any time. However, each Ends and Senior Minister Limitations policy of the Board will be classified by the Board according to frequency and method of regular monitoring (see below).
  - 5) As often as possible, these reports should be included in the Board mailing for regularly scheduled Board meetings so that trustees may thoroughly review them prior to the meeting.
3. Frequency of Regular Monitoring Activities

Frequency of Regular Monitoring Activities

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>When</u>
Governance Process	Direct Inspection/ Board Survey/Internal Report	January/May
Board-Sr. Minister Relationship - Board Performance	Direct Inspection/Board Survey/Internal Report	January/May
<b>Senior Minister Limitations</b>		
General Constraint	Direct Inspection/Staff Survey	January/May
Integration of Volunteers	Direct Inspection	January/May
Treatment of Staff/Volunteers	Direct Inspection/ Staff/Volunteer Survey	January/May
Communication to Board and Congregation	Direct Inspection	January/May
Public Statements	Internal Report	Monthly
Compensation and Benefits	Internal Report	February
Financial Planning (Budget)	See Financial Monitoring Committee Schedule	April (Board)
Financial Condition	See Financial Monitoring Committee Schedule	Monthly (Board)
Asset Protection	See Financial Monitoring Committee Schedule	

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

Emergency Succession	Internal Report	September
Core Values	Direct Inspection	June
<b>Assessment of Ministry</b>		
Work Plan	Internal Report	Monthly
Ends Policies/ Strategic Outcomes	Board Survey/Internal Report	May
Semi-Annual Summary	Congregational Survey/ Direct Inspection/ Board Survey	September/January/June

### ***D. Disciplinary Policy***

The Board will pursue the following process in the event that it determines a policy violation has occurred and it judges the degree and seriousness of the violation warrants initiating a disciplinary process:

- 1) Verbal warning (noted as such in writing to establish appropriate documentation of said step). The Senior Minister will present to the board at the next board meeting (via the board mailing prior to the meeting) his or her plan to remediate the violated policy. The Board may institute more frequent monitoring of the violated policy as it deems necessary.
- 2) First written warning. This step will be taken if there is no noticeable improvement in the Senior Minister's willingness and/or ability to refrain from the policy violation following a reasonable period of time for the Senior Minister to implement changes and for the board to monitor them.
- 3) Second written warning. This step will be taken if the policy violations continue. The board at this point may also determine whether to notify the congregation, the means of doing so, and the content of the communication.
- 4) If policy violations continue, the board will:
  - a) Make known to the congregation the nature of the ongoing policy violations as well as the ongoing efforts to address the issue at every point and will call a meeting of the congregation in compliance with church bylaws regarding selection/removal of the minister.
  - b) Recommend termination of the called minister for continued policy violation. The board will meet with the minister to determine how to address his or her departure.

### ***E. Ministerial Compensation***

- 1) Ministerial compensation consists of salary (including housing allowance) and benefits. Professional expenses are not considered part of the minister's compensation.
- 2) The Board will annually review each ordained minister's salary and benefits and may adjust as appropriate to current financial conditions.
- 3) Compensation increases for ordained ministers may include:
  - a) A cost of living adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) estimate for the current year.

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

- b) A merit increase above the adjustment for cost of living as appropriate depending upon current financial conditions. The Board will compile the results of an ordained minister's performance evaluation for the time period since the last merit increase and use these to assist in determining such merit increase. A merit increase is compensation related to the degree of accomplishment of organizational ends as stated in Board Policies.
- 4) The Board will maintain records of ministerial salary and benefit changes and review this policy annually.

---

### IV. Senior Minister Limitations Policies

---

The policies in this section address constraints on the Senior Minister's authority.

#### A. General Constraint

The Senior Minister shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is illegal, imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not fail to operate with a procedural policy against misconduct and dishonesty that meets accepted business practices.

For purposes of this policy, misconduct and dishonesty must include but not be limited to:

- 1) Theft or other misappropriation of assets, including assets of the corporation or others with whom First Universalist Church has a business relationship.
- 2) Misstatements and other irregularities in corporation records, including the intentional misstatement of the results of operations.
- 3) Forgery or other alteration of documents.
- 4) Fraud or other unlawful acts.

First Universalist Church specifically prohibits these and other illegal activities in the actions of the Senior Minister, all employees, and all others responsible for carrying out its activities.

#### B. Integration of Volunteers

Much of the work of First Universalist Church is accomplished by and through volunteer committees, task forces and other groups. It is central to the vitality of the Church that members participate in its ministry, one aspect of which is working collaboratively with paid staff and other volunteers.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not fail to:

- 1) Ensure that they operate in ways that are faithful to the Church's vision, mission and policies.
- 2) Establish such committees as the Senior Minister deems necessary and appropriate to accomplish the Ends.
- 3) Ensure that committees understand their roles, objectives and lines of authority and have the necessary resources, financial and otherwise, to accomplish their tasks.
- 4) Take into consideration the need for diversity, to the extent feasible.
- 5) Coordinate the work of compensated staff and Church committees to facilitate communications, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 6) Integrate members and friends into Church leadership and service.

## **First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook**

- 7) Maintain a church committee member handbook that clarifies the lines of authority and support within the church; general committee member expectations; communication policies and procedures; and how committees and individual volunteers should relate with staff.
- 8) Instill in Church committees and their members a sense of empowerment, encouragement, and the value their work has to the Church.
- 9) Ensure that the work of Church committees is fully consistent with First Universalist's legal and contractual obligations.

### ***B. Treatment of Staff and Volunteers***

With regard to treatment of paid staff and volunteers, the Senior Minister may not cause or allow conditions which are inhumane, unfair, disrespectful, or otherwise contrary to Unitarian Universalist principles and values.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not:

- 1) Illegally discriminate (as defined by city, state and federal laws) among existing or potential staff or volunteers.
- 2) Subject staff or volunteers to unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
- 3) Withhold from staff or volunteers a due-process grievance procedure, able to be used without bias.
- 4) Prevent staff or volunteers from grieving to the Board when:
  - a) Internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and
  - b) The individual alleges either that Board policy has been violated to his/her detriment or Board policy does not adequately protect his/her human rights.
- 5) Neglect the staff and volunteers' need for supervision.
- 6) Fail to ensure that staff are provided and comply with updated employment policies.

### ***C. Communication to the Board and Congregation***

The Senior Minister shall insure that the Board and Congregation are fully informed concerning important issues, and that the Board is, to the degree possible, supported in its work.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister shall not fail to:

- 1) Inform the Board in a timely manner of any relevant trends, issues, or events affecting the health of the organization.
- 2) Submit monitoring information required by the Board in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion.
- 3) Gather as many staff and external points of view, issues and options as needed for fully informed Board decisions.
- 4) Develop and maintain a calendar for the Church year that is publicly accessible.
- 5) Advise the Board of any deviations from established policy or to recommend changes in such policies whenever the need for revision comes to their attention within 30 days.

## **First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook**

- 6) Ensure that a complete and current set of all Church operating policies is readily accessible to all Church members at all times.

### ***D. Public Statements***

The Senior Minister shall not make public statements about the official position of the Congregation or Board on controversial social, political, and/or congregational issues beyond what the Members or Board has formally and explicitly adopted as positions of record.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to infringe upon the fundamental principle of "freedom of the pulpit".

### ***E. Compensation and Benefits***

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers and volunteers, the Senior Minister may not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister may not:

- 1) Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.
- 2) Establish current compensation and benefits that:
  - a) Deviate materially from the nonprofit or geographic market for the skills employed.
  - b) Create obligations over a term longer than revenues can be safely projected, in no event longer than one year and in all events subject to losses of revenue.
  - c) Fail to align compensation with accurate measures of employee performance.
- 3) Establish deferred or long term compensation and benefits that:
  - a) Cause unfunded liabilities to occur or in any way commit the organization to benefits that incur unpredictable future costs.
  - b) Provide less than some basic level of benefits to all full-time employees.
  - c) Allow any employee to lose benefits already accrued from any forgoing plan.

### ***F. Financial Planning***

With respect to planning fiscal events, the Senior Minister may not jeopardize either programmatic or fiscal integrity of the organization.

The Board must review and approve the annual budget, with sufficient information to permit reasonable Board evaluation in the light of the Church's policies, priorities, and resources, by the April Board meeting of each year. The Senior Minister will present the draft budget to the finance committee for review and comment in March of each year. Accordingly, the Senior Minister may not cause or allow fiscal projections that:

## **First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook**

1. Contain too little detail to enable reasonably accurate projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow and subsequent trails, and disclosure of planning assumptions.
2. Plan the expenditure in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period.
3. Do not separately present a plan for capital expenditures and the means to pay for them. Capital expenditures are all repayments of debt and any building additions or equipment purchases over \$2,500.00 each.
4. Deviate materially from board-stated priorities and requirements (see Ends policies) in its allocation among competing fiscal needs.

### **G. Financial Condition**

With respect to the actual, ongoing condition of the organization's financial health, the Senior Minister may not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy, loss of allocation integrity, or a material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Ends policies.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister may not:

1. Expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date unless the debt guideline (next item) is met.
2. Indebt the organization in an amount greater than can be repaid by certain, otherwise unencumbered revenues within 90 days.
3. Allow cash to drop below the amount needed to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.
4. Expend any endowment or designated funds other than for the purposes determined at time of receipt or designation.
5. Conduct inter-fund shifting in amounts greater than can be restored to a condition of discrete fund balances by certain, otherwise unencumbered revenues within 30 days.
6. Allow actual allocations to deviate materially from board priorities in Ends policies.
7. Borrow funds on other than the short-term basis as defined and outlined in these policies.
8. Make unbudgeted transfers or "loan" between the general funds and the endowment funds without Board approval.
9. Fail to provide cash reconciliations or to inform the Board in writing concerning actual revenues and expenditures, for appropriate comparison and projections, at a frequency specified by the Board
10. Deny reasonable access to financial records by the Board, its committees, and authorized outside advisors.

# First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

## **H. Asset Protection**

The Senior Minister shall not allow the assets of the church to be unprotected, inadequately maintained or unnecessarily risked.

Accordingly, the Senior Minister may not:

1. Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses at replacement value less reasonable deductible and/or co-insurance limits.
2. Fail to insure against corporate liability and personal liability of Board members and staff, taking into account pertinent statutory provisions for indemnification and exemptions applicable to Minnesota non-profit organizations.
3. Allow un-bonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.
4. Subject plant and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.
5. Unnecessarily expose the organization, its board, or staff to claims of liability or risk the nonprofit status.
6. Make any purchases not provided for in either the capital expenditure or operational projections.
7. Make any planned purchase of over \$10,000.00 without at least two competitive bids.
8. Receive, process, or disburse funds under controls insufficient to meet generally accepted accounting standards.
9. Fail to invest foundation and church capital in accordance with the investment policy
10. Fail to protect intellectual property, information, and files from significant damage.
11. Endanger the church's public image or credibility, particularly in ways that would hinder its accomplishment of Ends.
12. Solicit funds from members or external sources for purposes that deviate materially from Board stated priorities and requirements.
13. Fail to honor documented donor and source restrictions placed on foundation, legacy and opportunity funds.

## **I. Emergency Succession**

In order to protect the church from sudden loss of the Senior Minister's services, the Senior Minister may not:

1. Have fewer than two other staff members familiar with board issues and processes.
2. Fail to have a plan in place for the continuation of full ministerial services in the event of the Senior Minister's absence.

## **J. Core Values**

In all programs, activities and relationships, the Senior Minister shall not operate out of

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

compliance with the core values of the First Universalist community as expressed in Section I.C. of this handbook.

---

### V. Standing Committee Charges

---

The policies in this section specify the guiding principles and charges for standing Board committees.

#### A. Finance Committee

This Committee shall monitor all financial governing policies established by the Board of Trustees, engage annually a qualified professional advisor and stipulate the scope of work to be completed, present a balanced budget to the Board of Trustees based on the recommended budget prepared by the Senior Minister. This Committee may have additional duties as defined in the governing policies.

The Board delegates to the Finance Committee responsibility for monitoring compliance with the Board approved policies in the areas of Financial Planning and Budgeting, Financial Condition and Activities, and Asset Protection.

---

### VI. Community Norms

---

#### A. Congregational Covenant

#### B. Disruptive Behavior Policy

While openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the prime values held by our congregation and expressed in our denomination's purpose and principles, we affirm the belief that our congregation must maintain a secure atmosphere where such openness can exist. When any person's physical and/or emotional well-being or freedom to safely express his or her beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly, even if this ultimately requires the expulsion of the offending person or persons.

There have been times when the disruptive behavior of an individual within the church building has led members to voice their concerns about one or more of the following:

1. Perceived threats to the safety of any adult or child;
2. The disruption of church activities;
3. Diminishment of the appeal of the church to its potential and existing membership.

The following shall be the policy of the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis in dealing with these issues:

1. If an immediate response is required, this will be undertaken by the Minister(s), if available, and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the offending person or persons to leave,

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

- or suspending the meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed. If further assistance is required the Police Department may be called. Anytime any of these actions are undertaken without the Minister(s) present, the Minister(s) must be notified. A follow-up letter detailing what steps must be taken before returning to the activities involved will be sent by the Minister(s) to the offending party or parties.
2. Situations not requiring an immediate response will be referred to an ad hoc committee appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Committee will respond in terms of their own judgment observing the following:
    - a. The committee will respond to problems as they arise. There will be no attempt to define "acceptable" behavior in advance.
    - b. Persons exhibiting disruptive behavior will be dealt with as individuals; stereotypes will be avoided.
    - c. The committee will collect all necessary information.
    - d. To aid in evaluating the problem, the following points will be considered:
      - i. DANGEROUSNESS - Is the individual a source of a threat or perceived threat to persons or property?
      - ii. DISRUPTIVENESS - How much interference with the church functions is going on?
      - iii. OFFENSIVENESS - How likely is it that prospective or existing members will be driven away?
    - e. To determine the necessary response, the following points will be considered:
      - i. CAUSES - Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
      - ii. HISTORY - What is the frequency and degree of disruption caused by this person in the past?
      - iii. PROBABILITY OF CHANGE - How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
    - f. The committee will decide on the necessary response on a case-by-case basis. However, the following three levels of response are recommended:
      - i. LEVEL ONE - The committee shall inform the Minister of the problem and either the minister(s) or a member of the committee shall meet with the offending individual to communicate the concern.
      - ii. LEVEL TWO - The offending individual is excluded from the church and/or specific church activities for a limited period of time, with reasons and the conditions of return made clear.
      - iii. LEVEL THREE - The offending individual is permanently excluded from the church premises and all church activities. Before this is carried out, the committee will consult with the Board of Trustees and minister (s). If it is decided that expulsion will take place, a letter will be sent by the Minister (s) explaining the expulsion and the individual's rights and possible recourse..

## First Universalist Church of Minneapolis Governing Policies Handbook

- g. Any action taken under item f. (above) may be appealed to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees and/or the Minister(s).

First Universalist Church of Minneapolis strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions and life experiences. However, concern for the safety and well-being of the congregation as a whole must be given priority over the privileges and inclusion of the individual. To the degree the disruptive behavior compromises the health of this congregation, our actions as people of faith must reflect this emphasis on security.

### ***C. How We Work Together***

#### **A Commitment to Leadership at First Universalist Church**

As lay and staff leaders of First Universalist Church, we seek to work together in ways that exemplify our spiritual values as we carry out the work of the congregation. We honor Unitarian Universalist principles, abide by the policies of the Church, and maintain a community of safety, security and trust. Recognizing that each of us has strengths and weaknesses, we seek to work together in ways that help all leaders to be successful and to contribute to our common vision. As we work together to better accomplish our common objectives, we honor both the value of constancy and the need for change.

**Respect** We work together to clarify and understand our own roles and to respect the roles and responsibilities of others. We treat one another with respect, even in times of confusion, misunderstanding or disagreement.

**Listening** We actively listen to one another and to congregants with openness and a desire for genuine understanding. We listen with the desire and intention to recognize and accept good ideas and to change our perspectives accordingly.

**Communicating** We communicate kindly and effectively, offering generous thanks and encouragement and thoughtful criticism and constructive options, when appropriate. We share our own views with candor and tact. We speak directly to others when we have concerns. We freely share information relevant to the life of the congregation except when precluded by legitimate bounds of confidentiality. We avoid gossiping. To the best of our ability, we deal with the issues that arise -- including those that are complex, awkward or difficult to resolve.

**Decision Making** In making decisions, we seek out reliable information, use critical thinking, consider alternative viewpoints, contemplate intended and unintended consequences, and apply our Unitarian Universalist principles. We honor the democratic process and the decisions of the group.

**Leadership** When we accept a leadership role we do so with a commitment to doing high quality and timely work. As we work together, we appreciate each other's contributions and recognize that each of us will sometimes fall short, failing to do and be all that we would wish. We support each other and come together as a team when one of us encounters difficulties meeting these commitments. We ask for help when we need it. Through living our values we come together as an evolving, vibrant and caring learning community in which we work together to achieve our congregation's common vision.