

**First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Congregational Meeting - January 11, 2009
Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 12:20PM by Sue Schiess. As the first order of business, Carol Johnson was nominated to be parliamentarian. Rules for speakers at the meeting were established:

- There is a two minute limit on speeches.
- No one may speak for a second time until everyone has had a chance to speak the first time.

The preliminary agenda for the meeting was adopted and attendees delegated approval of the minutes of the meeting to the Trustees.

Sue Schiess spoke briefly about the need for this special congregational meeting to approve changes to the First Universalist Bylaws that enable the church to officially and fully adopt Policy Governance. Policy Governance is encouraged by the Unitarian Universalist Association as a desirable governance model for large congregations and is being successfully used by most large churches in our denomination. Under Policy Governance, the Board delegates the day-to-day operation of the church to the senior minister. The Board governs through the church through its policies. Church leaders began looking at the feasibility of adopting Policy Governance 6 ½ years ago because the Board at that time felt the church was not as effective as it could be. There followed a period of study, workshops with consultants and a vote two years ago to work toward the adoption of Policy Governance. Since then, the Governance Task Force has worked on drafting a Governing Policy Handbook and changes to the church Bylaws that will make the final transition possible. The Board as a whole has reviewed the proposed Bylaws in detail and recommends their approval. It is in the process of reviewing and adopting the Governing Policy Handbook and will continue to work with that document as its instrument of governance. Nothing being considered this morning is frivolous or impulsive. However, these Bylaws are not perfect. If the congregation votes to approve them as they stand, we will be able to change them in the future. The regular June meeting of the congregation presents a good opportunity to make amendments.

Laura Cooper made a motion to adopt the Bylaws. She noted that she was part of the Board of Trustees in 2002 when the process to move to Policy Governance was begun. She believes that Policy Governance will be a tool to unleash our enormous potential as a congregation. Laura strongly endorsed adoption of the Bylaws.

Nancy Gaschott seconded the motion. Nancy is part of the Settled Minister Search Committee and noted that the four finalists ministerial candidates are all excited by the prospect of working under Policy Governance.

The proposed Bylaws were discussed and several possible amendments were briefly mentioned. Sue Schiess would like to have all proposed amendments, whether discussed at the meeting or not, sent to her in writing before March 1 so the Board can review and discuss them well in advance of the Annual Meeting. Chris Bremer has volunteered to coordinate proposed amendments and prepare them to be submitted to Sue. To do this she needs to receive proposed amendments by February 15th. While it cannot be guaranteed that the Board will recommend all proposed Bylaw amendments submitted, it will give them careful consideration.

Sue briefly described the changes to the Bylaws and the rationale that has led to the changes. Attendees voted for the Bylaw changes in sections to allow for thorough understanding and focused discussion. In the end the Bylaw changes were all approved by a large margin.

Sue read a list of congregants who served recently on the committees that have contributed to the successful transition to Policy Governance.

All Church Council

Ben Cooper, Duane Peterson, Ginny McAninch, Greg Hoelzer, Jody Beresford, Judy Broad, Judy Goebel, Julie Howard, Lane Ayres and Mary Weeks

Personnel Committee

Andrea Johnson, Bette DeMars, Judy Goebel, Karin Wille and Marcia Wattson

Finance Committee

Dave Arnold, Dick Kain, Gene Link, Jill Andersen, Joe Sweet, John DeMars, Larry Gottschalk, Paige , Winebarger, Riley Owens, Ted Thompson, Tom Atchison and Umesh Berry,

Communications Committee

Pamela Vincent and Paul Riedesel

Stewardship Committee

Barry Johnson, Bette DeMars, Eric Cooperstein, Jane Hallas, Joan Niemiec, John DeMars, Kathy Coskran, Kimberlee Wagner-Adams, Kristin Siegesmund, Margit Berg, Nancy Atchison, Steven Mosborg Suzann Willhite and Velma Wagner-Adams

SPIFF Committee

Lynne Stanley, Bette DeMars, Janet Chandler and Ruth Arnold

Governance Task Force

Bill Elwood, Dave Arnold, David Lauth, Doug Smalley, Laura Cooper, Marcia Wattson, , Paige Winebarger and Sue Schiess

Transition Team.

Andrea Johnson, Bill Elwood, Carol Johnson, Chris Bremer, Laura Cooper, Lucy Swift and Paige Winebarger

The audience offered a round of applause for their contributions. Certificates of appreciation were available for pick-up after the meeting or delivery by mail.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Goebel

Secretary, Board of Trustees