



**UUSS Congregational Meeting
In person, and via Zoom
Sunday, October 18, 2026, at 11:45am**

AGENDA

1. Welcome – Andy Cramer, Board of Trustees President
2. Establish Quorum– Andy Cramer
3. Invocation and Chalice Lighting – Sophia McKean
4. Review agenda and meeting procedures – Andy Cramer
5. Approve May 2026 Congregational meeting minutes
6. President's Report – Andy Cramer
7. Treasurer's Report – Victoria Owens
8. Ministers Report– Rev. Lucy Bunch
9. Program Council Report – Sean Fountain / Joyce Ownbey
10. Social Justice Coordinating Council - Fred Pannek
11. Community Partners Proposal- Fred Pannek
12. Community Partners vote
13. UUSS Unsung Hero Award –Program Council
14. Closing –Rev. Lucy Bunch

UUSS CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, May 17, 2026.11:45 am, via Zoom and in person

MINUTES

11:56 AM WELCOME

Andy Cramer, Board of Trustees President, welcomed members and guests, introduced the Board of Trustees, and established a quorum. Andy's remarks are included in these minutes.

Welcome to the Spring Congregational Meeting. I am Andy Cramer, the president of the Board of Trustees.

Welcome to our members, friends, and visitors. Thank you especially to our members for attending here in person and online so that we will have a quorum. In a moment, we will verify that. We will be monitoring the Zoom chat throughout the meeting in case any questions come up.

Is this your very first congregational meeting at UUSS? If you are on Zoom, please type, "first timer", and if you are here in person, please give us a big wave. It's great to have you with us on Zoom and here in the room.

I'd like to introduce the other members of your Board of Trustees. Our secretary is Fred Pannek. My gratitude to Fred. In addition to preparing meeting minutes each month and for Congregational meetings, he also did much of the work to prepare for our meeting today. Our Treasurer is Victoria Owens. As a reminder, what is that that we say to Victoria every time that you see her? Thank you! Being the Treasurer of a UU congregation of this size is a heavy lift.

Our Vice-President is Janet Lopes. Our Members at Large are Dawn Huebner, Patty Innes, Emily Moran-Vogt, Mathew Espinosa-Castro, and Carl Crain.

Thanks to all the Board members for their service to the congregation. I'd like to acknowledge, those Board members whose terms will be ending in June and will be stepping off the Board – Janet Lopes, Dawn Huebner, and Carl Crain. Last year, Janet agreed to complete the second year of the Vice President's term after I was elected as President. I am grateful to Janet for her in-depth knowledge of the congregation and her steadiness and dedication as a leader. Similarly, Carl Crain agreed to complete an at large position that became vacant last summer. Carl had been on the Board in years past and brought his experience to bear at a time

when we needed him. Dawn is completing her two-year term as an at large member. I am grateful to each for their contributions to the Board of Trustees and this congregation.

We will hear more about the activities of the Board in a few minutes.

Quorum

At this time, let's confirm that we have a quorum. Our constitution identifies a quorum as 20% of the membership. With 400 total members, the quorum is 80 people. For those online, please enter the number of members present with you at your computer in the chat. For those members in the room, please raise your hand so that you can be counted. You may need to leave them up for a minute.

A quorum of members was established at 12:00 PM

12:01 PM: Invocation and Chalice Lighting

Rev. Dr. Roger Jones: Welcome. About a quarter of a century ago, this congregation under the leadership of Rev. Doug Craft created a mission statement which many of know by heart. So, if you don't know it yet, listen along. Let's say it together and then have our chalice lit. *We come together to deepen our lives and be a force for healing in the world.* Rev. Lucy Bunch lit the chalice.

12:02 PM: Review Agenda and Meeting Procedures – Andy Cramer

We have several informational items for you today, and we have three items that members will be voting on. The first will be the approval of the minutes from the October 2025 Congregational Meeting, the second will be for candidates for open positions for the coming church year that starts in July for the Board, the Program Council, the Nominating Committee, and the Endowment Trust. Lastly, we will have a vote on our budget for the 2026-2027 church year. Before each vote, I will provide specific instructions for those of you on Zoom and those of you here in person.

Approve October 2025 Congregational Meeting Minutes

The agenda for this meeting and the minutes for the October 2025 Congregational Meeting were posted to the Web site. You can also go to the Board of Trustees page on the website and find a link there.

Can I have a second on the motion to approve the minutes? Before the vote, are there any other comments, questions, or corrections to the minutes? *Check online chat also.*

Because it takes just a little longer, we will conduct the on-line voting first and then have a voice vote in the room. For those of you here, please be patient for a minute or two. For those of you online, we are voting to approve the minutes. Please type in the chat Yes to approve the minutes, “No” to reject the minutes, or abstain. Again type, yes, no, or abstain. You may do that for as many members as are present with you.

We have overwhelming approval of the minutes on-line. Now here in the room, all in favor of approval of the minutes please say ‘yes’. All opposed, please say ‘no’. If you abstain, please say abstain. Thank you, the minutes are approved.

12:04 PM: President’s Report – Andy Cramer

I’d like to highlight several milestones and accomplishments since our October Congregational meeting:

- The fund-a-need item for the 2024 Auction was kitchen appliance upgrades. That work was completed last Fall with a new convection oven, refrigerator, and warming ovens. You will also see the new passthrough from the kitchen to the patio coming to fruition. That was funded by the Endowment Trust.
- We had a very successful 2025 Auction. The fund-a-need item from that auction was the memorial wall. The first phase of that was the installation of the cinder block wall on the other side of the labyrinth. You will see the next phase of that project proceeding soon with the installation of the stucco and mosaic on the wall. Thanks again to the leaders and volunteers for the auction and for the memorial wall.
- In March, the Annual Pledge Drive kicked off. Thanks to the stewardship committee for all their hard work making that happen, led by co-chairs Celia Buckley and Lue Bishop. And our gratitude to you, our members and friends for your continued generosity. You rocked it. With a few more pledges trickling in, we are at 99% of our goal in support of the 2026-2027 budget. Wow! Collectively, the total of pledges increased about 9% over this year. That reflects the ongoing generosity of you, our members and friends, with the many new members among us pushing us over the top. Thanks to all of you.

- Your generosity shows up in so many places. In recent months, our Community Partner's share of the Sunday collection has exceeded \$4000 per month. Let's hear a collective "yeah" for that! Yeah!!!!
- With your generosity, we will continue to implement our multi-year compensation plan. As you will hear from the Treasurer, the ministers and staff will all receive a cost-of-living adjustment, and we will make additional targeted adjustments as we work to bring compensation levels to UUA guidelines or other local benchmarks.
- And also, because of your generosity, we will add a half-time staff position focused on engagement with newcomers and members. We are very excited about this. You'll be hearing more about this, as we hope to have this position filled by September.
- In April we hosted the first Pacific Western Region regional assembly. Yeah, to us! And thanks to Janet Lopes for her leadership, our staff that pitched in, and all the volunteers that made it happen. Related to that, we received a Chalice Lighter grant to upgrade technology. The RE, meeting rooms, and offices had new wire pulled for internet, and here in the sanctuary, we have a new camera, a new rear projector and screen for better clarity of the slides that you will be seeing soon, and new assisted hearing devices.

That's a lot of great things happening here! I hope you share our pride and gratitude.

I want to update you on the goals that the Board developed for this church year. These are in addition to all the other tasks that we need to accomplish each year. Our goals directly relate to implementation of the Strategic Plan that you approved in May 2025. Our goals are as follows: First, to replace the UUSS website software; second, to prepare a multi-year Staffing Plan and update or Facilities Master Plan; and third, to evaluate our overall progress in implementing the Strategic Plan.

So, the first of those, while our web site is still functional most of the time, because the software is getting older, we have had periods where it fails because it cannot be easily updated. A task force, led by Mathew Espinosa-Castro, is working on procuring technical support and a new website platform with reorganized content to make it more intuitive. For the Staffing Plan, a task force evaluated the current division of responsibilities for our ministers and staff and

how that might evolve over the next several years as we grow and implement the strategic plan. One outcome of that task force was the recommendation to create the newcomer and member engagement position that you have now supported for the coming church year. A facilities Master Plan was prepared in 2011. That document guided the renovation of this building including the sanctuary. We are in the beginning stages of updating that document, with a focus on improvements to the three buildings that include RE space, meeting rooms, and offices. You'll be hearing more about this process over the coming year.

The last goal, evaluating our progress on implementation of the strategic plan is still pending for this church year.

Lastly, I encourage all of you to mark your calendar for June 7. After the service we will have a special program to present results of the Pulse Survey that was completed about a year ago. The survey was focused on your experiences of welcoming, belonging, and inclusion. You will hear about the themes that emerged from the survey, and you will have an opportunity to discuss what that means for us as we envision the next steps for our congregation. I encourage you to attend here in person or on zoom. Childcare will be provided.

Before we move onto the minister's report, are there any questions. (Emily Moran-Vogt took the microphone to members that had questions.)

Question from a congregation member: *Will the new website be compliant with the web content accessibility guidelines for blind and low vision users?*

Mathew Espinosa-Castro, chair of the Website Task Force replied: Yes! We are using the most recent guidelines for accessibility in the industry.

Question from a congregation member: *If somebody has interest to join the task force, how would they apply?*

Andy: If you have interest, skills or experience, have a conversation with Mathew.

Question from a congregation member: *I am Steven Conklin and I have a disability. I do not enjoy walking long distances, so I always look for a disability parking space adjacent to buildings and there aren't enough. We could use more parking spaces designated for disability parking.*

Andy: Thank you for pointing that out. And you'll hear on June 7th, and

you may see if you've popped open the survey summary that came to you via email that disability and access issues have come up in the congregation and it is an area that we need to address. And so, you know, join us on June 7th to begin that conversation on how we can do better.

12:15 PM: Ministers' Report

Rev. Lucy Bunch: Hello. Andy asked how many members are attending their very first congregational meeting. For how many people, is this only your second congregational meeting? All right. Thank you for coming back. And how many people have lost count of how many congregational meetings have you been to? Okay. Thank you for coming back.

One of the goals of your ministry team this year has been to focus on member engagement and our welcoming process for newcomers. And it's been kind of amazing. We're here at a time when a lot of people are looking for what we have. Since July one of last year, 202 people have filled out a newcomer form or attended an event where they recorded their contact information. That is 200 people. It's a very impressive number. We have 43 new members so far this year. The year is not over yet. Forty-three people will be welcomed as new members at the May 31st service. So please come for that.

Roger and I began a process of meetings called "Meet the Minister" that's intended for newcomers to be able to have a chance to interact with us and for us to learn their names and we've done two of those. Now, we also have a considering membership class for people that we think are at a point where they're interested in becoming part of the community, and last time I invited 15 people and all 15 people decided to join. So, you guys are doing something right around here.

I wanted to talk about our Soul Matters program. I hope everybody knows about our Soul Matters small groups. We're in our 13th year. We have seven active groups this year. They run from September through May. In a congregation of this size, you must find a way to connect with others. It's not going to happen just on Sunday morning. And so, our Soul Matters small groups, we do the monthly themes, and it's just a way of really connecting deeply. And how many of you have been in a Soul Matters group? Yeah, thank you very much. So, my pitch plan is that we'll be a lot nicer to each other if you've been in Soul Matters groups because we're connected. We're deeply connected and we learn how to listen. So, please consider that.

I want to turn to the administrative matters of the church. I function as the chief of staff in most ways. Roger supervises the religious education staff, and I really want to extend gratitude and I know you do as well to our staff which are everything from our childcare workers, our AV, and the custodians, and then our office staff and our amazing facilities and communications manager Krystal Gallagher, Elaine in the office, Debrah, our bookkeeper. I'm going to forget somebody. Oh, our musicians. Of course, Anthony was thanked. So, let's share some appreciation for our amazing staff. And I'm very grateful that the congregation pledged at a level that allows us to really compensate them fairly. I think that's a real milestone for our congregation. So, you should be very proud.

I also want to just introduce our newest staff. I mean, not physically because she's not here today, but this past year we brought on Kayla Lucero. She's our calendar coordinator and she also helps me with web posting and communications materials, and she's just been a great asset, and I know that many of you have interacted with her and she's doing a great job managing the brand new calendar that we put up. It has been

a good year in so many ways and I'm very grateful to serve this wonderful congregation.

Andy talked about regional assembly and the amazing things that came out of that for us. I have a huge thank you to our technical staff, Dirk Tuell, Joe Piper, Abi Bristow. Within a three-week period, they had to install cameras and projectors, Joe had to wire all the way back here. They just really stepped up, and Dirk led the team to really do great stuff. And you're going to be seeing a new screen and a new projector coming up. And I hear that it's amazingly vivid. So, thank you to regional assembly and thank you to our tech staff for their work.

Regional assembly had people from congregations from 13 states in person here and online, and they really appreciated the graciousness and support of our staff and our volunteers and want to thank Janet Lopes for many sleepless nights until it was over, then she slept for a week. It was great, and our musicians really did a great service that morning and one of our members said that he talked to somebody from another church afterwards and that person said, "Wow, is it usually like this?" And that member said, "Yeah, pretty much." So, that was a regional gathering.

Rev. Dr. Roger Jones:

The denomination which includes a thousand congregations is the UUA and it has a general assembly every year, and next June it will be in person and close by, in San Jose, California. This June it will be virtual with some satellite sites if people want to go watch the computer together. And we will have at least one watch party for part of it. And it is a real general assembly although it's mostly virtual and so we do have lay delegate slots as well as the clergy delegate positions. So, if you're interested in being a delegate or otherwise attending GA, you can talk to Janet or any member of the board.

I want to thank several people around here including our caring committee, our pastoral visitors team, and the volunteers who provide receptions for memorial services that we hold here. It really makes a difference in reflecting the care and love of this community. Thank you.

And I mentioned our denomination. Is Sophia here? Hi. Sophia McKean is our intern about to wrap up their semester at Meadville Lombard Theological School and about to wrap up their first year of a two-year halftime internship and look forward to the next year. We appreciate the internship committee that supports and gives feedback to Sophia. To tell you that the fact that we have a funded internship is a significant way that we contribute to the larger movement of liberal religion in this country.

Religious education, family ministry, and adult enrichment are part of my area. Our Sunday morning religious education programs are growing. We have had about 75 total children and youth who at various times throughout the year have participated in RE and that represents about 55 families. And as you know we have youth groups that meet on the first and third Sunday, including today. And so, when we include the youth groups as well as soul kids and the nursery, we have as many as 35 children attending on a given Sunday from infants through 12th grade.

We have a family ministry program and your volunteer support of that is welcome. Last fall we had a picnic that was co-sponsored by the young adult group and others at Hagen Park in Rancho Cordova. We have our annual tree trimming party here in December. We have an Easter egg hunt on Easter with a brunch afterwards and photo ops with the Easter Bunny. And every year we have the all-ages camp. You probably have seen the signup table. You can sign up there or you can just do it through our website. Is Alicia Taylor here? I don't think so. Um, but we really appreciate Alicia's leadership and it's the last weekend. It's from July

31 to August 2.

And this year we added to our nursery staff. Madeline and Barbara have joined Tiya on our nursery staff, and we also appreciate the volunteer members who help in the nursery. And thanks to the dedication of our teams of trained volunteers, we offer Our Whole Lives (OWL). That is a sexuality education program based on UU values and this year we offered it from kids from kindergarten through grade three, and in the coming year we plan to offer OWL for those in grades 7 to 9. And then in the fall we will be hosting training for volunteers in OWL and that will be on a weekend in October and there will be people coming from various congregations in the region for that training. If you have taught OWL, you're going to teach OWL, would you raise your hand so we can see and thank you. Thank you for your service.

And I want to mention that during regional assembly we had religious education and we had nursery care for the children and infants and toddlers of people who came to regional assembly. And the RE program was created and led by Crystal Fountain, our RE coordinator, and volunteers. And we appreciate that.

And I want to thank our adult enrichment volunteers. You know them as the people that staff the connections table on Sundays and they always welcome other hospitable people to take a shift there one Sunday a month. I also appreciate that they provide a whole bunch of after-church forums and on a variety of topics which are led by members as well as guest presenters. Andy thanked our auction volunteers and donors and our pledgers and our pledge drive leaders. And I just want to add my thanks. It's great to work with those groups. I appreciate the creativity and enthusiasm and the responsiveness of all of you.

Rev. Lucy Bunch

I just want to mention a little bit about some of the social justice activities. You know, in our strategic plan, two of our goals are focused

on engagement in the work of social justice in the world. I am just so delighted that after years of tilling the soil, we now have an amazing Social Justice Coordinating Council under Karen Gunderson's leadership. We have been active in legislative work around housing and homelessness. I know that many of you have participated in lobby days and in other ways. And our refugee team is doing great work, and Rev. Roger is the lead minister for that. Reverend Roger has been part of vigils at the federal building monthly with our partner SacACT. We're also starting to build relationships with some of the Indivisible groups in the area, and I know many of you are involved in political work and social justice work in many ways in your lives and that's how we really make a difference.

In the coming year we're really hoping to focus on the city and the county and get more engaged with issues because you know they say all politics are local. So, look for some opportunities to engage deeply in that.

Rev. Dr. Roger Jones

Religious education in the summer will be various arts and crafts things which we invite volunteers to help with as well as building towards a special circle service for all ages at the end of the summer. Is Elizabeth here? Elizabeth is going to be involved with that. She's the puppet person. So if you're curious about helping with either that or with religious education in the summer, you can see Elizabeth, me or Crystal Fountain. Thank you. We are happy to serve here, happy to serve together, and happy to be part of this congregation.

12:31 PM: Program Council Report – Sean Fountain

Hello. So, Program Council, this is my third time doing this. I'm still nervous, so give me some forgiveness here. I am Sean Fountain. I'm an elected member and the chair of Program Council. We have four other

current members: Joyce Onby, Jim Glidden, Michael Feliciano, and David Paul. And our sixth position is currently unfilled due to a resignation.

A question we're often asked is what is program council? In the congregational governing documents, we're charged with caring for congregational life, which is this wonderfully vague requirement, but we're also empowered with the ability to create groups and committees like but not quite the same as the Board in all cases. Some of those groups we have, to give you examples, our identity affinity groups like the Crone Connection, young adults, people of color caucus, and the men's group. We also have more general groups that are not around a restricted identity. Saturday Stitchers is a big one. We have a ukulele group. You see many of them out on the table that adult enrichment largely runs. The connections table out there in the welcome hall every Sunday. We also oversee some internal committees like adult enrichment. So, it's a pretty big role. And you know it's a committee, so we meet and do committee discussions and stuff like that but it's a big task and we are always appreciative of your suggestions for groups, help and feedback.

Another big thing we do is the activity fair. You can see some pictures from the past activity fair. The last couple years now, we've been able to have it entirely on the patio, which has been much better than splitting it up into different rooms. Great energy, amazing attendance. And we look forward to having another activity fair at the next in-gathering service this year.

And then the Affinity ribbon. So, you may start to see these ribbons on a few of the groups. Those Affinity groups I mentioned based around identity, we now have these ribbons so that someone walking in the door who feels like "I don't know, is there any group or thing like that for me here?" This is to help encourage both those present and

newcomers to see that that welcome exists.

The main way we work with groups has been through liaisons. We assign a liaison to a group, and we are starting to shift that process. It's still an ongoing effort so that new groups that are forming will just communicate directly with the program council and we haven't worked out the exact details of that, but your feedback is welcome.

Our plan for the next year. We will have a retreat that will be after the new members come in in July and finalize more of the plan. But our major plan points are going to be the activity fair. We have been working for a long time on updating the Pathway cards. They were three bookmark style cards. We have a trifold design. It's being finalized on the graphic design efforts so that we can print it here. There's also one sheet with a summary of all the group information that's on that that you'll find at the adult enrichment tables.

We are continuing to review our policies, improve communication, but a big goal we've had since our last retreat was to try and create better food fellowship here. So, Soup Sunday is amazing and we have recently gotten two volunteers to take up the mantle of that which is wonderful. But we are going to try and expand food fellowship if possible. There's been a lot of interest in that. So, I'm asking you all to consider transferring interest into action. We are hoping to create a sort of narrowly targeted food fellowship committee. We haven't nailed down those details, so please volunteer suggestions. When would you like additional food fellowship events to occur, that's not just Soup Sunday? Would you like to help? We're open. Otherwise, we're just going to come up with something, right? So, give us your ideas. That would be great.

And we need to appoint someone to the empty sixth position because that's not up for election this time. We have an appointment opportunity there. All right. And that's it for me. Thank you very much.

12:37 PM: Endowment Trust Repot – Tom Derthick

The USS Endowment Trust was established in 1980 to *safeguard* and *strengthen* our congregation's mission and long-term vitality. The trust receives gifts from members and friends, invests such gifts in a prudent and diversified manner, and annually uses a percentage of the trust's value for special and non-recurring needs of USS.

<https://www.uuss.org/endowment>

The Endowment Trust Committee met on three occasions this fiscal year: November 17, March 10 and April 21. The deadline for grant applications from the trust for FY 2026 was March 31.

In addition to our duties of administering the endowment and the review and approval of grant applications, the Committee revamped the application to make it an easy online document rather than a paper one and streamlined the application calendar to allow for timely review of applications for approval. Our work continues on marketing the endowment grant opportunity better to increase participation in the application process across the Congregation, and we will be working with the Program Council this coming fall to get the word out for next year's grant cycle. The Committee remains in contact with past grant recipient Pink Haven regarding administration of their FY 2025 grant.

Current Endowment

Financial Information:

Balance (as of 1/1/2026):

\$231,056

Amount available for Disbursement for FY 2026: \$10,699 (5% of the rolling average of the Endowment balance over the previous four quarters), plus \$4,173 in funds not disbursed in the previous year

Grant to be disbursed for FY 2026:

Application by the Administrative and Property Management Committee for installation of new kitchen doors that open directly to the patio, for ease of access to the Brew Crew for Sunday services, in the amount of \$11,680.

Anticipated Fund Availability for FY 2027:

We anticipate having 5% of the rolling average of the Endowment balance over the past four quarters, plus approximately \$3,192 in funds not disbursed in FY 2026. The final amount will be calculated at the end of the second calendar quarter (after June 30th). The Committee anticipates that available funds should be an amount like the current fiscal year.

12:41 PM: Social Justice Coordinating Council – Karen Gunderson

Good afternoon. You may not be familiar with the UUSS Social Justice Coordinating Council or the SJCC because we like our acronyms, and we are kind of stealthy.

We started up about three years ago to work on some of the strategic plan objectives in our congregational strategic plan. We don't really organize events or actions, but rather we help build capacity in the congregation's infrastructure to make it easier for UUSS folks to participate in and support efforts consistent with our values. This means expanding social justice efforts, building more coordination among the social justice programs in the congregation and having more meaningful and robust partnerships with our community partners.

The community partners program of which we have 13 community partners now has grown over the last year so that as a congregation, we've collectively donated about \$50,000 to our community partners over the course of the year. And that's not to mention the thousands of personal hygiene products, socks, diapers, foodstuffs. Thank you for your generosity.

Many of UUSS's social justice programs involve service, rolling up one's proverbial sleeves, serving meals with Loaves and Fishes, Family Promise workdays, handing out personal supplies through Mercy Peddlers, making sandwiches for our unhoused neighbors through the sandwich brigade, or supporting several local Afghan refugee families with transportation, tutoring, and other concrete needs. But our mission calls us for more. To be a force for healing in the world, we want to do

justice work to impact the systemic level through advocacy, action, and organizing people. However, such efforts often require more infrastructure or capacity and know-how than we have traditionally had. So rather than build our own wheel so to speak, we are following the lead of many of our trusted community partners like SacACT and NorCal Resist to join their justice-making efforts in the public arena.

Maybe you're one of the dozens of UUSS members that have shown up for a legislative lobby day, attended the City Council or Board of Supervisors meetings on housing and homelessness, or even joined Reverend Roger at the prayer vigil at the Federal building. These are events created by our community partners that we can join in on and be part of.

There are UU connected efforts that have also afforded us capacity to further our justice reach: UU the Vote, through which UUSS members and friends have literally sent thousands of postcards across the country to get out the vote. Pink Haven, an organization assisting trans folks and families fleeing hostile parts of the country to relocate to safer situations in our area is another effort our congregation has connected with.

Lastly, we're anticipating how we might prepare for what's coming in the next couple of years. What do we need in place to mobilize ourselves to action more quickly when more serious protests and resistance might be called for? In this vein, we'll be working to identify members and friends that agree to receive text alerts for UUS activities so we can build a rapid response system. Stay tuned for more on this.

A more fun next step in this direction will be July 11th and 12th when UUSS will host a prep rally featuring performances by local resistance choirs, opportunities for sign making, to learn new songs for resistance, and for some of us old-timers, Peter Paul and Mary sing-along. Stay tuned for more information on both these events. I didn't cover everything, so be sure to check out the Justice Works newsletter and

uuss.org for more information on what's going on and activities around social justice. And don't forget in the fall to attend the social justice activity fair. Thank you.

12:47 PM: Slate of Candidates – Marion Randall

Let me start by saying that one should always read the agenda ahead of time. Because I didn't know I was on the agenda, I had a minor freak out, but I'm good. First, I am the current and outgoing chair of the nominating committee. And the nominating committee is the group of people who work with the congregation to identify candidates to fill roles associated with the board of trustees, the nominating committee itself, the program council and the endowment trust group. Those are the positions in the church sphere that require elections. But don't forget there are many important committees and work that happens in the church of which you can participate without needing to be elected. But for today and let me just say also a big thank you from the nominating committee to the congregation for your willingness to step forward and identify yourself as a leader and want to participate in that way. It really means a lot. Thank you so much.

This year we had 13 positions that required filling and I am happy to present the slate of candidates. In the role of Board of Trustees Vice President, we have Ted Scott Feminella. In the role of Treasurer Victoria Owens and members at large Lou Bishop, Karen Smith, and Matthew Espinosa Castro. For Program council Michael Feliciano, Joyce Ownbey, Danielle Vickers.

Moving on to the nominating committee. We have Bobby Kiell, Linda Osborne, Michael O'Neal and Susan Davis James. Finally on the endowment trust, we have Randy Webb. Okay. And that is it for me. Thank you so much. And don't forget about next year when the nominating committee is calling. Please answer.

12:51 PM: Election – Andy Cramer

We now have a motion from the Nominating Committee for the slate of candidates. Can I have a second? Are there any questions on the motion (in person or on chat)?

Because it takes just a little longer, we will conduct the on-line voting first and then have a voice vote in the room. For those of you here, please be patient for a minute or two. For those of you online, we are voting to approve the slate of candidates from the Nominating Committee. Please type in the chat “Yes” to approve the slate, “No” to reject the slate, or abstain. Again type, yes, no, or abstain. You may do that for as many members as are present with you.

We have overwhelming approval of the proposal on-line. Now here in the room, all in favor of approval of the slate of candidates please say ‘yes’. All opposed, please say ‘no’. If you abstain, please say abstain. Thank you, the slate of candidates is approved.

Congratulations to our new leaders, and many thanks to the Nominating Committee led by Marion Randall for their many efforts to develop and encourage leadership of this congregation.

12:53 PM: Treasurer’s Report – Victoria Owens

Before we start with next year's budget, I just want to say two things. The first is everyone else has said thank you, but I say from the bottom of my heart, thank you very much to all the people who pledge, to all the people who pay their pledge, to everyone that helps this community so much be the wonderful thing that it is. Now the second thing I wanted to say is about the budget for the year that we are in that will end June 30th. And the answer is it's all good. We are 10% ahead of our projected income and 3% ahead of our projected expenses. So, you see we're doing better than we hoped and we'll end the year with a surplus. Yay you.

This is the proposed budget for next year that starts July 1st. On this document you can see on the leftmost column is the budget we're

proposing for next year. The middle column is the one for the year that we're in and the third column the difference between the two.

Let's look at the income first. We have increased in this budget we increased our pledge contributions by 6% this year. We have exceeded that 6% in the pledges received during the stewardship drive. So, yay, we don't have to worry about that one. Plate continues to rise. Everyone has been very generous and as Karen said has allowed us to be very generous to our community partners. All these figures are based on historical information projected for the next year and have been approved by whoever... for example the building use is approved by Krystal Gallagher and Rev. Lucy that are mostly dealing with that. Fundraising is mostly the auction and investment income.

Investment income for next year. I feel solid about this number because we do have most of our money that we're not currently using in CDs, but in this world, you just never know. So, altogether we're anticipating an increase in income of 6.7%.

Compensation and benefits. We are following the compensation plan that was laid out last year. This will be the second year of it. And the support staff compensation is increased due to the new position for the newcomer and member engagement person which we're going to be hiring. Yay. Building expenses encompasses utilities, repairs and taxes.

We set aside the capital outlay fund every year, 2% of our annual expense, that is required by our constitution. And otherwise, we put a little bit into a sabbatical fund. This leaves us with a net revenue of \$20, which is what I always strive for.

Question from a congregation member: *I wonder if you could clarify under benefits there is a decrease of 4%. I wonder what that represents?*

Victoria: Well, some members of our staff reached eligibility for Medicare and therefore their health insurance costs decreased.

Question from a congregation member: *Victoria, do you know why the investment income went down?*

Victoria: The investment income went down because banks who put out CDs were nervous at the time that we bought them. Our first ones were 4.3% and 4.5%. The highest ones I was able to get this last time were at 3.8%. So, you know, it's just nerves in the market.

This is what I'm going to be asking you to vote on in just a minute. But before then, we will go to my lovely pie chart. This is just to show where our money comes from. And then the next will show our expenses, what it is spent on. But as you can see, the big blue wedge, 75% of all our revenue comes from pledges, which is one of the reasons we're also very, very grateful. Plate is also a large percent and the rest of it is smaller but important. Did anybody have any questions about my beautiful chart?

Comment from Stewardship Committee Co-Chair, Celia Buckley:

As co-chair of the pledge drive for the last couple of years, we have raised that \$700,000 in a 3-week window, a three Sunday window. And it only happens because of the generosity of members, and we are so grateful that there are very few direct phone calls that must be made to achieve that. We are renaming ourselves from the Stewardship Committee to the Annual Pledge Drive Committee to really reflect that this is an annual pledge drive. We have a couple of people who've been long serving on this committee that are stepping down. So, we have a couple of openings and really put your time and your heart here by helping us do this hard work that needs to happen.

Question from a congregation member: *My question is how many members have donated money to the trust? What percentage of the Endowment funds have been donated?*

Victoria: You mean the endowment trust, that is not included in here at all. The endowment is run separately, has its own board and manages its own investments. This is just the operating fund of the church. Okay.

So now we go to the next beautiful chart. These are expenses. Once again, the big blue wedge is compensation and benefits. It's risen. It used to be, you know, 64, 65, 66%. Now it's up to 70 as we increase everyone's salaries to get equity with their targets and now, we're adding a new position. So really in this budget everything is important, but pledges and compensation really have the biggest say. Otherwise, community partners are 5%, reserves 2%. It's pretty much the same every year with different numbers, but the percentages stay about the same.

I should have mentioned that the UUA dues are a request put out by the national denomination, the UUA, every year and it's a calculation they make based on a congregation's amount of expenses, size, and geographical location. So, it's adjusted for all those things, and it helps the national denomination, its staff, its programs and the way it helps all our congregations.

Question from a congregation member: *This may have been revealed before, but now we have a 13-state convention of UUUs and we participate in that. Does that come out of our operating budget?*

Victoria: Well, yes, they send us one bill, and they divide it out themselves between the regional organizations and the national. We used to have two different dues but now they have combined it.

For anyone maybe that's new... program expenses. Well, you heard Sean talk about the program council. Some of these programs like the art exhibits bring in money, others bring in money and have expenses or just have expenses, like membership or memorial receptions or religious education things like that. And that's what those are and the social justice efforts expenses are included in there.

Question from a congregation member: *This is a good question. So, our building expenses are at 9%. We've put on solar. We've put in a new*

induction stove, which has decreased our energy expense. Do you anticipate that going down or is it just going to be a wash?

Victoria: 9% is already less than it was before. Our solar panels decreased our electricity costs by approximately 40%. And that continues, I mean I look at it every month, that has continued to be a stable decrease. Gas has gone down also because of the new range. So, we probably see a little bit but not a lot. You know, gas has gone down, PG&E rates have gone up.

1:08 PM Budget Vote – Andy Cramer

We now have a motion from the Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees for the proposed budget for the 2026-2027 church year. Can I have a second? Are there any questions on the motion (in person or on chat)?

We will conduct the on-line voting first and then have a voice vote in the room. For those of you online, we are voting to approve the budget. Please type in the chat “Yes” to approve the budget, “No” to reject the budget, or abstain. Again type, yes, no, or abstain. You may do that for as many members as are present with you.

We have overwhelming approval of the proposal on-line. Now here in the room, all in favor of approval of the proposed budget please say ‘yes’. All opposed, please say ‘no’. If you abstain, please say abstain. Thank you, the budget is approved.

1:10 PM Closing – Rev. Lucy Bunch

In closing, I am going to read our shared intention for which we close our services because I think it's a powerful statement of how we want to be in the world. As we extinguish our flames, let us say, may the power of this gathering light our way forward with courage. In the days to come, let us remember that fear is outworked by hope and that hatred is no match for the power of love. You should be very proud of yourselves and this fabulous budget. Let's have a great year. Thank you.

**Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento
Draft Budget Fiscal Year 2026-2027**

Account	Draft FY2027 Budget	Approved FY2026 Budget	Variance
Pledge Contributions	704,900	665,000	6.0%
Plate Offerings	85,000	75,000	13.3%
Non-Pledged Contributions	17,000	15,000	13.3%
Building Use	47,000	40,000	17.5%
Fundraising	45,000	43,000	4.7%
Program Income	21,725	19,885	9.3%
Investment Income	19,490	22,858	-14.7%
TOTAL INCOME	940,115	880,743	6.7%
Ministry Compensation	338,348	323,407	4.6%
Supp Staff Compensation	232,461	194,790	19.3%
Benefits	91,563	95,407	-4.0%
Compensation & Benefits	662,372	613,604	7.9%
General & Admin Exp	47,772	46,625	2.5%
Building Expenses	129,822	129,021	0.6%
Fundraising Expenses	3,000	5,000	-40.0%
Board Expenses	1,200	1,200	0.0%
Program Expenses	27,540	28,180	-2.3%
Social Justice Expenses	6,600	4,100	61.0%
UUA Dues	45,028	41,745	7.9%
Community Contributions	42,500	37,500	13.3%
Reserves	19,433	17,278	12.5%
Endowment Loan interest	2,600	2,600	0.0%
TOTAL EXPENSES	940,095	881,228	6.7%
NET REVENUE	20	(485)	

2026/2027 SLATE OF CANDIDATES

Board of Trustees – Vice President	Ted Scott-Femenella
Board of Trustees - Treasurer	Victoria Owens
Board of Trustees – Member at Large	Karen Smith
Board of Trustees – Member at Large	Lue Bishop
Board of Trustees – Member at Large	Mathew Espinosa-Castro
Program Council	Danielle Vickers
Program Council	Joyce Ownbey
Program Council	Michael Feliciano
Nominating Committee	Bobbie Keill
Nominating Committee	Linda Osborne
Nominating Committee	Michael O’Neil
Nominating Committee	Susan Davis-James
Endowment Trust	Randy Webb