

**First Universalist Church Auburn, ME, Unitarian Universalist
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
RE Classroom
(board@auburnuu.org)
December 10, 2025**

Present:

Angela Foss
Mary Kay Weisenberger
Chip Gustavson
Holly Cooney
Linda Greathouse
Rev. DC Fortune

Not Present:

Ed Bell
Jane Pentheny

Guest:

Anne Perron

5:30 PM OPENING

- The meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm
- Chalice Lighting and Opening Words - Widening the Circle of Concern - shared by Angela re: organizational structures, objectives, and parameters and how it applies to Auburn UU
- Brief sharing by all
- Gratitude – Thank you notes will be sent to the Gingerbread Fair team, the Greening of the Sanctuary crew, and the AA group for saving us from a water leak recently.
- Board Welcome Sign-ups - for upcoming weeks - Mary Kay, Linda, Mary Kay, Angela, Chip, and Holly.

MINISTER'S REPORT – Rev. DC

- Worship is going well.
- Administrative assistant applicants have been interviewed; the Board will go into executive session later in the meeting to discuss.
- Christmas planning is happening, and we are looking forward to Christmas Eve.
- 150th Anniversary plan is underway.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Going forward, the Treasurer's report will be completed ahead of both the monthly Financial Committee meeting and the Board meeting. The information YTD (12/15/25) was presented and reviewed.

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Some items not accounted for at this time are minister's moving expenses, increases in the church property insurance, minister's health insurance, and the anticipated 150th anniversary dinner expense.

Discussed rental opportunities.

RE COORDINATOR REPORT – submitted by Sam McCune

Over the past month or so, we have seen a noticeable increase in the number of children and youth attending Sunday services and Religious Exploration (RE). At this time, our age range in Sunday services spans from birth through age 15. Our RE class ages range from 4-13. Not all children in attendance to Sunday services are participating in RE each week, but we are consistently welcoming a broader range of ages than we have in previous months. We have a total of about 10 children and youth that attend RE class off and on.

RE classes themselves have been going well. The children who attend are engaged, enthusiastic, and responsive to activities and discussion. However, the wide age span in the current all-ages RE classroom continues to raise concerns about providing age-appropriate learning experiences for everyone. Ensuring that each child receives a developmentally appropriate curriculum remains a priority, which is why I am currently exploring additional options for engagement. I'm considering the possibility of offering different opportunities for various age groups. This may involve restructuring RE or adding periodic breakout options to better meet the needs of older and younger children. I am hoping for the Nursery upstairs to be used more for families with children under 5 years old. I am also in the process of drafting a letter to families to communicate the potential shift and gather feedback.

We have one parent who is new to visiting our church that has expressed potential interest in helping teach RE. This could be an important step toward expanding what we're able to offer and providing more age-specific opportunities as we really only have two background checked teachers available, not including myself.

Overall, things have been running smoothly, and the increased energy in the program has been very positive. Looking ahead, I plan to launch a junior youth group in the new year, which will give our youth a space tailored to their needs as they continue to grow within our community. Lastly, I hope to host a Family Game Night again soon, possibly in the new year. This will allow for more multigenerational programming and interaction.

Please let me know if you would like any additional details or if there are specific areas you'd like me to expand on in future reports.

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Signed,
Samantha McCune
Religious Education Coordinator
12/05/25

PRESIDENT’S REPORT - Angela

- In the future, if weather or other unforeseen circumstances arise, the Board President, Angela, will make the decision to have Board meetings via Zoom vs. postponing the meeting to a later date. Communication to the congregation will be sent for access to the Zoom call should that be the option.
- Committees are doing work and people are showing up.
- Angela has had several meetings this month with Ellen, Maureen, and Nicole re: financial issues.
- The UUA EPA retirement paperwork has been submitted.
- Momentum is good.

BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS (Congregational, UUA/NNED, etc.)

None at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of November 12, 2025 Minutes - motion to approve from Chip, seconded by Mary Kay.

OPEN SESSION – Anne Perron reported on the following on behalf of Building and Grounds

- Building and Grounds is preparing the choir office to be the location for the tech booth.
- Roof repair has been delayed because the copper expert is on a medical leave.
- Remediated the water leak quickly.
- Keypad door has been repaired.
- Church Mutual continues to be demanding of new requirements. We are responding to requests as efficiently as we can.

DISCUSSION & DELEGATION

1. **150th Anniversary Task Force Update** - Chip reported Rev. DC found papers to be scanned for historical data. May 31, 2026 is the date of the official celebration, but other events will take place throughout the year. Dignitaries will be invited in the next

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month to give them time to plan and RSVP. Our UUA rep, Erica Baron, will be attending. There will be a long service, and the task force anticipates there will be one hundred people for the celebration followed by a catered luncheon from 12-2. Holly suggested contacting Lewiston High School's Green Ladle program to see if they would be interested in catering. A suggestion was also made to make a commemorative book and have local businesses sponsor it.

2. **Church Naming Convention Reminder** - The official name of our church is The First Universalist Church of Auburn, Maine, Unitarian Universalist, and it is also referred to as Auburn UU. **Do not use UUA** to identify the church because that also represents the Unitarian Universalist Association.
3. **UUA/NER Communication Workshop Review** - Was held on 11/1/25 at Allen Avenue UU., Erica Baron was the leader from the UUA. There were five participants from our board and Rev. DC, in addition to members from other UU churches in the southern part of Maine. The focus was communication in our congregations. It is common to hear that "herding cats" is used to describe UU congregations, but from the workshop we learned that the UUA considers it "herding border collies" as sometimes we all tend to try to herd each other! No wonder some things appear to be challenging!
4. **Square (for credit cards) Proposal** - The Gingerbread Fair test case was successful, and much simpler to use than PayPal. Finance is working on a policy for use and will provide to the board when it is ready.
5. **Board Expectations** - Minister and president reports were not provided ahead of time this month, but it is a goal to have those prior to the meeting to allow for us to review prior to the meeting and just address questions during meeting time.
6. **Policy Review Work** - Angela provided a Guide for creating a Board Policy Book. Inventory of documents we have and what high level categories they fall into. The online UUA Leader Lab has a wealth of information about any and all topics and all are encouraged to log into that and look around if you have not been there. Despite the fact that we are celebrating our 150th year in existence, we sometimes feel like we are "starting over." And in many ways, we are. So how do we wrap our arms around that and figure out what we focus on? We have a lot of operational needs and committees, but some items are not handled by any designated committee, i.e., human resources issues. How do we get all this done?

Consider how does Maslow's hierarchy apply to church as we approach building a structure that allows us all to continue to organize and thrive.

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Board members are asked to look at the documents distributed, research other church structures, policies needed for a church, etc., to inform our next conversation. In our January board retreat and the town hall, we will have some discussions about this.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 7:48 PM Linda made a motion to go into executive session to discuss the administrative assistant position. Rev. DC and Linda interviewed three applicants, all who were highly skilled. Discussion ensued.

A motion was made to end the executive session by Linda, seconded by Holly. Executive session was ended at 8:30 pm.

ACTION ITEM FOLLOW-UP ITEMS STILL OPEN

- Auburn UU documentation gathering and filing for future retrieval.
- Explore methods of communicating social justice activities/opportunities to the entire congregation.
- Evaluate the use of the Square application for receiving credit card payments.
- Review/revise all building rental pricing, contracts, policies, and procedures and update by June 30, 2026

ACTION ITEMS:

- Prep for church policy work, including creating a standard template for Auburn UU policies.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mary Kay made a motion to adjourn. Chip seconded the motion; meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Next Meeting Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 5:30 PM, RE Classroom

All are welcome to attend!