

November 2023 Board of Trustees Meeting Packet

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89722686555>

Meeting ID: 897 2268 6555 passcode: love

One tap mobile +13017158592,,89722686555# US (Germantown)

Covenant of First Parish Brewster UU Board of Trustees

“Entrusted by the congregation, we recognize that ours is a sacred duty and we will bring our highest selves to all work on their behalf. We promise to arrive on time, come prepared, speak gently and respectfully with each other, and allow everyone time to speak. We will operate by majority vote, trying whenever possible to work toward consensus and support a decision once it has been made.

We pledge to use one-on-one communication to express concerns or resolve conflicts with each other. When communicating with the congregation and community at large, the Board speaks with one voice. Our primary commitment is to the long-range health of First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist congregation.”

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**FPBUU Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda
November 21, 2023, 6:30 PM Hybrid/Zoom Meeting**

Welcome Board, Staff and Visitors - [1 minute] - Jim

Chalice Lighting & Opening Words [3 minutes] - Rev Kaaren

Focused Check-in [10 minutes] – Rev Kaaren

Read Board Covenant [1 minute] –

Policy Committee Approvals [5 minutes] - Jim

Endowment Approvals [5 minutes] - Jim (if any are requested)

Personnel Committee Report [5 minutes] – Gail

Committee Expo Report [5 minutes] - Gail

Stewardship Committee Report [5 minutes] - Diane

Treasurer's Presentation [10 minutes] - Karen

Consent Agenda [5 minutes] – Jim: Minister's Report; Lifespan Religious
Education Director's Report, Administration and Finance Director's Report,
President's Report, Treasurer's Report; Minutes

Transition & Goals [30 Minutes] – Rev Kaaren

Common Read [20 minutes] – Twinks

Executive Session [20 minutes] – Jim (Personnel matters)

Check out [5 minutes] – Jim

Adjourn

FPBUU Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

September 19, 2023, 6:30 P.M., Hybrid/Zoom Meeting, Winslow House

Present: Jim Lieb (Board President), Gail Webb (President-Elect), Karen Witting (Treasurer), John Kielb, Leslie Rennie-Hill, Irie Mullin (Clerk).

Staff Present: Rev. Kaaren Anderson.

Visitors: Elenita Muniz, Susan Smith.

- 1. Welcome to the Board, Staff, and Visitors.**
- 2. Chalice Lighting, Spiritual Opening.**
- 3. Focused Check-in.**
- 4. Read Board Covenant.**
- 5. Actions by Written Consent since July Board Meeting**

Jim said that email votes were in a short turnaround time, and going forward he will try to have more than one day to respond. Suggestion that if anyone votes no, then we should discuss it in person. Jim said that perhaps we should do that only if someone responds that they want to talk about it in a meeting. Suggestion that we should have a deadline for a response.

See attachment for votes taken (nota bene: the attachment contains a scrivener's error as to Gail's last name—it is Webb, not Webber).

- 6. Common Read Announcement**

Jim suggested we start with Proposed Article 2. He will check with Twinks whether she would be willing to lead that and what other materials we should read. The Proposed Article 2 will replace the 7 Principles.

- 7. Additional Board Liaisons**

- a. Social Justice—Leslie
- b. Religious Education/CYM—John
- c. Policy—Jim
- d. Board Blast & Time Keeper—Liz
- e. All-Committee Expo—Gail
- f. Stewardship—Diane

- 8. Transition & Board Goals—Jim & Rev Kaaren**

Elenita submitted a draft charge to the Transition Team (TT), it will be discussed by the Transition Team before the next board meeting.

Rev. Kaaren described the SWOT analysis the TT undertook at its first meeting. It is a tool, it doesn't make definitive statements one way or the other. It was more complicated to do it with both the board and the TT at the same time. There is a definitive role for the TT—the inquiry aspect, engaging the congregation, gathering information, thinking through things. But this differs from the board's role, which is taking that information and figuring out the goals for the next two years. Rev. Kaaren feels that she will be most helpful if she has more time to observe how we interact with each other and what we think about different aspects, before she can tell us what she sees and whether we want to address particular things. She would like to come up with a list of transition goals for herself that the board would pick from at the next meeting, so that she wouldn't be picking those on her own. Rev. Kaaren passed around the SWOT analysis notes. Not every issue had enough time to be completely explored. The board

spent 5 minutes reviewing the document of the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities, and each board member responded as follows.

Feels happy that 25 people put in all this work to come up with these responses. The process had some anxiety in it, and it brings up all kinds of things about the church. It was a big group, a lot of information coming in. It was a lot. Focusing on just the weaknesses, the following things stand out. Making a lot of headway but that people's belief in church has not caught up with that (i.e. involvement with the outside community). Capital campaign related things—aging buildings, repairs, building maintenance, etc. Major priority is minister's housing, unless we can solve that problem, we won't find a quality settled minister. Another major priority is lack of a strategic plan, this affects building maintenance planning and could be applied productively to many other aspects of future development. List of "doable" priorities: no statement of who we are, no UU identity; adult spiritual development; lack of coherent social justice structure; age/racial homogeneity may work itself out with outreach and more religious education with Fellowship Hall; vision statement.

A strength is our community, it's an amazingly welcoming congregation, people can be themselves and be accepted. This is the key to everything else that is said. Financial sustainability is our big weakness. We have a lot of staff and a lot of buildings—these things compete for resources and we don't have any left over, both are underfunded. The congregation tends to believe that staff are here all the time and have unlimited time, producing a lack of boundaries for staff. Our organizational structure means our staff are supervised by one person, the minister, which can be a challenge if that person isn't fully present, because there is no backup. The way we manage staff is risky and challenging, and very dependent on the minister as sole in-charge. Not sure how to support all the financial issues we have. Surprised at the comment that CYM program is a weakness. Had a not great experience when volunteering with the CYM program, but thought it was an individual experience. It seems that others have had a similar experience too. Think we have a problem with communication, lack of explanation. We have a core set of amazing volunteers who are always overworked. Finance committee is down to two members plus Karen W., this is stressful. Don't agree with trying to do everything in the list, just because it is doable doesn't mean we should do it. We should make decisions about what is the right thing to do rather than just what we are able to do.

Finances were not as strong as expected initially coming in. The bigger picture is that we have weaknesses to address, finances, minister's housing, but our strengths exceed our weaknesses and believes we can make it all work. Short term situation is that cash is tight, but we have a lot of financial resources and we make it work when we need to. We are in a lot better shape than a lot of places like us. Focused on concrete things: parking, lack of certified kitchen, larger gathering space. Dinners at different people's houses may actually work better than a large gathering.

Key strength is our staff, who are wonderful and competent. But do we offer them enough support? Staff members didn't take a lot of vacation, was the barrier to that related to volunteer support so they have confidence in what is done when they are absent? Also, what can we do to address the threat of the cost of living on the Cape for the staff?

Housing for a minister is important, but also resource support in some form for our staff members. Some staff are in a precarious living situation. We want strong staff and housing has to be looked at as a whole. We should ferret out resources amongst ourselves as a church. It should be priority #1 in any strategic plan. Share some concerns with the CYM program for the same reasons, love working with kids but there didn't seem to be continuity in the curriculum

and content-based focus in the activities provided. The UUA has so many curriculum resources that we can use that are under-utilized. Young adults and bridging were so moving in the past, but it doesn't feel the same, worry about that. Surprised that adult spiritual development came up a couple of times, would be interested in hearing more about that. The archival/historical preservation is a big problem, our reputation is as a historical part of Cape Cod. No history work done since 2001. Spirit of volunteerism—it's a strength for the people who volunteer all the time, very talented people, but we don't have enough people to step up to be mentored, we need to pass on institutional and community knowledge. New people on committees help pass on knowledge. A strategic plan is critically important. Any type of plan or committee work should develop a way to report out success or results, this is a way to measure our progress and how well we achieved goals. We don't have any hard data, it's very time-consuming for staff to gather and store that data. We need to find ways to make it easier to gather data on various things. This will help communication to the congregation—how many people come to the speaker series, how many families come to church, what is the daily CYM attendance. That data collected over time and looked at analytically can give you lots of direction within a strategic plan, shows trends and plans to improve. With a system in place, data can be gathered very efficiently. There are weaknesses in the administrative structures. Time on different committees makes it clear that there are differences in the approaches in different boards and different ministers, this is hard on staff. We need more collaborative processes that provide more continuity for staff and amongst board chairs. It is hard for employees to have so many big shifts in what they expect day to day. Personnel systems have been through a lot of changes in the past few years, and that probably has a relationship to staff issues: hiring processes, onboarding.

Our status as a Welcoming Congregation is a strength. Have done SWOTs before but with less people, like 15 total. Interesting that so many of the issues raised were both strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities, but people in the room identified strongly with one perspective or the other. We aren't there yet on identifying the problem, need a better sense of how all this fits together. Overall, the church has a lot of identities depending on who you are, but no sense of common identity. It is very hard to figure it out what our identity is from the website or different committees. Would love to see some "glue" that is common which is easy to relate to about what this church is about—deeds not creeds, what are we about. There are some insiders here (staff, committee chairs, volunteers, etc) who are doing good work, but it's hard to know how to join them. Not a criticism of the people, but it's hard to have a process to join and contribute. Looking for what is the way in—how do you get information, how do you contribute? Can you participate at a low level in multiple things, or do you have to go 'all in' on one single thing? Not the same level of welcome at the volunteering level (serving on committees) that there is in our in-person welcoming in church on Sundays. Rather than rush to easy fixes or what someone thinks we should do, we should take the time to work things through and figure out what we really want. A certified kitchen can mean events which means income which solves other problems. Can we stay open to how else we might be able to address problems through creative ways? SWOT was really helpful and very surprising in terms of the energy with which some people named weaknesses. Glad we are doing this process, looking forward to clarity.

Housing is a priority, but is a complicated issue—ownership versus rental versus church-owned. We should prioritize increasing age and racial diversity in the congregation, but this may take more than just outreach. We need self-reflection as to established majority groups and how to make minority groups feel welcome. The age issue is more than just young families.

Younger folks in general lack opportunities for connection on the Cape as a very small minority group in an elder-dominant area. Website accessibility/transparency can be improved. This can link us to more people, and is very doable. Personnel, on-boarding, HR systems need work.

Rev. Kaaren asked for each board member to send the top 5 things the board could address in the next two years, and the list of what Rev. Kaaren could be helpful with.

9. Establishment of Disability Justice and Inclusion Committee–Irie

Irie proposed a committee addressing Disability Justice and Inclusion in the congregation, to be organized under and reporting to the board. Irie has consulted with the UUA Disability Access coordinator. The general sense is that the UUA and congregations broadly have strengths in working on racial and gender justice issues, but there has been less focus on disability justice. The UUA is looking to change that, and is focusing funding on this area through the new access coordinator and the EqUUal Access organization. The purpose of a DJI committee at FPB would be to assess current access resources and strengths, as well as unmet needs in the congregation, and later, in our interactions with the public. The committee would survey the congregation and reach out by tabling at coffee hour and individual conversations. The UUA has many resources to help this assessment–detailed checklists to guide assessments of many different areas of congregation life, beyond just building infrastructure (i.e. communication, worship focus, etc). As finances allow, the DJI would suggest changes that could be made in our current resources to increase access and equitable inclusion, in consultation with relevant committees. Another major component of the work would be anti-ableism education through seminars, worship services, and other activities centering the experience and perspectives of disabled people. Some online seminars are offered through the UUA, and services can be organized either by worship associates or with a visiting speaker. A change to anti-ableist thinking is very low cost, and will not place any significant further burdens on church finances–this is “low-hanging fruit” that we can easily address to increase our alignment with our spiritual values of equity, inclusion, and celebration of diversity. Irie is willing to chair the committee if approved, and members can be recruited. The committee would be seeking both disabled members and non-disabled allies to share the work.

The board and visitors had the following comments. John Kielb volunteered to be a member of the committee. We have a volunteer issue, lots of people volunteer for other committees, would it be possible to wrap this project into an existing committee? Other groups might be able to take this on, but no suggestion as to which group it would be. Problem with asking an existing committee to add a task. This may appeal to people who are not yet volunteering on a committee. Wanted to make sure that it is clear that a DJIC would interact with other committees about committee-specific issues. Building maintenance thinks about accessibility in their projects, but this goes beyond that. We had an accessibility committee before, but it was focused on physical access. This is about ableism, shifting a perspective, like anti-racism. It’s a different kind of consciousness raising. It’s necessary to change the way we think, and doing an ableism program is about that. There has been a problem with masking compliance in designated areas, and it shouldn’t fall on disabled people to enforce it. Covid is coming back, we need to change our thinking. Unless that leadership comes from the pulpit and board, it won’t change. A committee like this is essential to opening our minds, we have to start thinking about it, it’s important, and we’re not doing enough. This is an interesting initiative, totally support it. In the past, these kinds of initiatives have come out of the Social Justice Committee, would rather it be a committee under social justice rather than under the board. Take

time with new initiatives, engage as wide an audience as possible. Bring the information to the whole congregation, work on communication issues. If we went ahead with this, the first thing to do would be reach out to the congregation. The UUA disability access coordinator can provide seminars/training for the board and congregation. Having a table at coffee hour can generate interest, explain what it is about. Start with a survey, get some information. No downside to forming the committee, see if there is interest in getting this going.

ACTIONS TAKEN

Jim made the following motions:

RESOLVED, that there is hereby established, as a Committee of the Board of Trustees, a Disability Justice and Inclusion Committee to assess FPB's existing disability accommodations, identify unaddressed needs, and promote anti-ableist thinking and work in the congregation and community.

RESOLVED, that Irie Mullin be the initial Chair of the DJI Committee and that she report back to the Board of Trustees with recommendations for members of the DJI Committee to be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Gail seconded. Vote: unanimously approved.

10. Treasurer's Presentation–Karen

Karen discussed the June financials—they were as she had predicted. The approximately \$15,000 proceeds will be put in the sustainability fund. We are converting our financial systems to the online version of Quickbooks. We are not transferring old information, just starting July 1, 2023 and going forward. We can access the old information, but won't transfer it. What that means is that there won't be a comparison to prior year in the monthly financial report. We will do a manual comparison for the 6-month report and for the end of the fiscal year, but not in the intervening months. Once we get past July 1, 2024, we will go back to having prior year comparisons. Great news, the thrift store came through for us and some expenses came in under budget. Winter expenses can vary with weather. Regarding fund tables, is there a better heading than the term "spent"? Karen said she was thinking of replacing it with the term "actual," as suggested.

11. Consent Agenda–Jim

a. Minister's Report

Pastoral care training will probably be opened up to interested people. The minister will focus on staff using their vacation time.

b. Administration and Finance Director's Report

c. Thrift Store Manager's Report

d. President's Report

e. Treasurer's Report

f. Minutes

Question whether there is a process for getting back to things that say "we will get back to this" in the minutes? Yes, the president reviews several months before each meeting.

12. Check Out

13. Meeting Adjourned at 9:03 P.M.

Minutes submitted by Irie Mullin, clerk.

FPBUU Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2023, 6:30 P.M., Hybrid/Zoom Meeting, Winslow House

Present: Jim Lieb (Board President), Gail Webb (President-Elect), Karen Witting (Treasurer), John Kielb, Leslie Rennie-Hill, Diane Willcox, Gail Webb (Past President), Carol Yerby, Liz Cable, Irie Mullin (Clerk).

Staff Present: Rev. Kaaren Anderson, Twink Hastings, Kaeza Fern

Visitors: Elenita Muniz, Mary Jo Jollett.

- 1. Welcome to the Board, Staff, and Visitors.**
- 2. Chalice Lighting, Spiritual Opening.**
- 3. Focused Check-in.**
- 4. Read Board Covenant.**
- 5. Actions by Written Consent since September Board Meeting**

Email Vote 9/22/2023 to Approve hiring of Office Assistant

RESOLVED, that Sue Weber be retained as FPB's Office Assistant on the terms presented to the Board of Trustees.

Vote unanimous in favor.

Email Vote 9/27/2023 to Approve hiring of temporary Bookkeeper

RESOLVED, that a temporary replacement for FPB's Bookkeeper be hired at a cost not to exceed the budgeted salary for the position.

Voting in favor: Leslie Rennie Hill, John Kielb, Jim Lieb, Irie Mullin, Gail Webb, Diane Willcox, Karen Witting, Carol Yerby. Not responding: Liz Cable

6. All Committee Expo

Gail presented about the All-Committee Expo on Nov 5 after church during coffee hour. We want to support all committees and highlight their work. We want to make people aware of what the committees do, motivate people to sign up and participate, leave expo being proud of how much work and talent there is in this congregation. So far, Gail has contacted the sexton to set up tables, and sent out notices a month in advance to each committee. Displays will be kept at a minimum because the space will be tight. For people who are coming to see the committee expo, Gail is trying to group committees into large groups for each table. The 'standing' committees are those that are open to join without anything other than contacting the committee. 'Governance' committees are personnel, finance, etc, those will be grouped at one table to answer questions. The lay and pastoral ministry committees are grouped together, and the staff ministry committees are grouped together (thrift store, etc).

A question whether people could wear t-shirts with committee names so that space won't be a concern. It is up to each committee. Board liaisons are meeting with committees, including Social Justice. Liaisons are working to be helpful and in listening mode, passing info back to the Board. Question about logistics, is it all in the parish room. Yes. We need to notify other regular tables/areas of the change and let them know to move. The café area may be moved to the alcove. Building Maintenance committee will be at the expo. Disability Justice and Inclusion will be at the expo also.

7. 501(c)(3) Application

Mary Jo Jollett presented on the non-profit application. She met with Karena, this process will help get grants. Should Mary Jo continue, and what role should Karena play: power of attorney, fiduciary, or just tax information authorization. Reporting requirements: churches are not required to file any tax returns, so there are none. However, the application has a few questions that need to be answered, Karena didn't know them.

- Is FPB a charter church, do we pay a fee to the UUA to be a charter church? We are a member church of the UUA, but we are not part of the denomination (like a Methodist congregation would be). Charter church description online, it's a question for the UUA, but sounds like probably no. If other UU churches are 501c3s, how did they do it? There was a historical charter from the founding that was discovered in the archive, it may be relevant.
- The HEED fund description?
- Purpose and how is it treated for income purposes—split plate, thrift shop?
- Are donations (inc. cars) accepted without restrictions? Yes, some things are accepted with restrictions.
- How is staff compensation decided? How are non-fixed payments (bonuses) decided?
- Is FPB entered into any joint ventures?
- Financial data from the last five years?
- Descriptions of religious history, type of services, org structure, form of worship, religious ed, ordination requirements, plus other info.

We need pros and cons for deciding what role should Karena take, how do we decide that? Mary Jo said IRS Form 28-84 explains what each of those designations are for. Those explanations should be distributed to the Board. Would like the finance committee to have an opinion first and then go to the Board. What is the cost-benefit of this process? Do we need to pay a lawyer to do this process with us? Finance committee presented a document of pros and cons of the process to the Board a year ago. The downside of not having the designation is that we can't get grants that require it. It also helps for receiving donations were people expect we have the designation. On balance, the finance committee felt it was a positive. Rev. Kaaren's experience is that all other grants she has applied for automatically designate a church as a 501c3. Looked at law and churches are automatically 501c3 and churches don't have to apply. Yes, that is true, but you can apply for the official acknowledgment certificate from the IRS that says we are in fact a 501c3, which we don't have and that's what we are applying for. We need that for grants outside the UUA. Karen volunteered as the contact point for Mary Jo.

8. Minister Housing Task Force & Strategic Planning Committee

Jim discussed how housing is a big challenge for finding the next minister. Multiple options on how to approach this, but we need a task force to pull together a presentation of pros and cons of each alternative so we can make a decision and move forward. We need a committee to do a strategic plan. That will take even longer, and we need to move on housing pretty quickly. But it should be in that context, with people working on a strategic plan coordinating with people working on housing alternatives. Different people within the task force will look at different options, then the task force will look at the option information. The intent is to look at a 3-year rolling strategic plan.

Question as to whether we already have a strategic plan group? No we don't. It would be useful to have the Strategic Planning Committee be a committee of the Board, because it would be responsible to the Board and we would want the Board to have input. Rev. Kaaren suggested that we talk to the UUA about the best way to set up the interface. She is meeting with Barry early next week, she will ask him about it. The Strategic Planning Committee is envisioned as comprised of some Board members and some non-Board members. Could it have representatives from some key committees? Building maintenance, endowment, etc. Question as to how this will be publicized to invite participation from the congregation? It would be in the Angle, announced at a service, and publicized by directly reaching out to people. There is an opportunity to publicize the seriousness of the issue and get broad congregational involvement. There was a meeting last April about this issue, and the issue was talked about in depth to the people that showed up. But that those people were just a small slice of the congregation. The Board talked about doing a Board Blast in prior meetings, but it hasn't happened because Liz has been overwhelmed on other bandwidths. Liz will work on getting that going. Strategic planning needs people that can see the big picture and help facilitate the discussions. We probably have people in the congregation that have planning experience and can facilitate. It's an opportunity to pull a lot of things together in a way that builds momentum. We need more bite-sized opportunities for engagement, that would better serve families who would like to get involved or other people who have time commitments. We can get a broader base of people that way. We saw that with the Fellowship Hall renovation project—people could come for a short period to help and enjoyed it. Same thing with SNO-UU. That's the thought with the Housing task force—split it into individual tasks and then come back together to review.

Jim made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that there be established a Minister Housing Task Force and a Strategic Planning Committee, those each to be a committee of the Board of Trustees with members appointed by the Board. Leslie seconded. Voted unanimous in favor.

9. Treasurer's Presentation

Karen has a person willing to join the Finance Committee, Carol Anne Yeaple. She used to be a member of the Board (twice), and she has a lot of experience in the congregation.

Karen made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that Carol Anne Yeaple be appointed to the Finance Committee. Diane seconded. Voted unanimous in favor.

10. Consent Agenda

- a. Education Director's Report**
- b. Administration and Finance Director's Report**
- c. President's Report**
- d. Treasurer's Report**
- e. Minutes**

September minutes: Typos in names in PDF attachment of prior votes to Minutes. Jim will correct on his end.

- f. Endowment Board Report**

11. Transition & Goals

Rev. Kaaren presented what she thought she can help with. The focus is what she is doing already, and what we would like in addition to that. The Board should consider what to do in the first year, what to do in the second year. Some of the things Rev. Kaaren is raising are things that were identified in the SWOT analysis, some are not, but are issues Rev. Kaaren is seeing and hearing from multiple contexts. Summary of issues below: the Board will take these and review them this month and talk about it more next month.

- **Housing:** Should we be looking at that in the first year?
- **Policies:** This is not Rev. Kaaren's strength, so the Board should work with the UUA to look at the policies in place for the size of the congregation in the next two years. Take a look at the policy committee, this is the only time Rev. Kaaren has seen a separate committee rather than the Board. A Board member noted that policy is not a separate committee, it's a committee of the Board: they don't create policy, they just develop it and submit it to the Board for approval.
 - Example of the accompanist position: It's in the budget, Kaeza finds him, Rev. Kaaren approves, Kaeza talks to Karena who does all the HR and onboarding and tax things. Then it has to go to the Board for a second approval, which doesn't make any sense. We need to figure out what lanes everyone is in. The Board should be responsible for policy and finances. The minister should be responsible for staff and hiring.
 - Another example: Rev. Kaaren got a request to hold a peace vigil in front of the church in support of Palestine. In most churches there would be a much larger structure as to whether you could do it. But the policy in place says that the minister or the Board president can approve, with no broader Board involvement. If the president and the minister disagree, it would be impossible. There should be a broader social justice structure where the congregation decides what they want to work on, and then once it is under that rubric, you don't even have to talk to the minister or the Board to put on events. The current set up puts the minister in a challenging position, as it can appear that the whole congregation is in support of a position which we haven't discussed.
- **Structure:** Rev. Kaaren is trying to recommend things to the Board that she has seen from multiple people several times, and seeing how miscommunication is happening.
 - Example: Social Justice should probably have about 4 things to work on in a congregation this size, rather than as many things as we currently have. That will create more buy-in from the congregation, and greater participation. Under Jim Robinson, there was a lot of people doing whatever they were interested in. He wasn't a systems guy. There are numerous structures that can be put into place for Social Justice. We can put our energy into three or four things rather than twelve, which would increase the collective effect of power. Such as: efforts around housing, homelessness, and hunger could combine into a single group with more collective power. In this structure, every task force that wants to be voted on by the congregation has to have seven members that want to commit to it, but it can't just be the same seven people in each one. Each proposed task force would write up what they want their advocacy work to be for the year, their education goals for the year, etc. Then the congregation votes on whether it should be a task force for the year. This increases buy-in, available money, and the minister's support. It solves the existing accountability problem. Rev. Kaaren plans to run it by a few people who are enthusiastic about this work, sit with them to relay her idea,

and get their feedback before anything comes from the Board. This avoids the perception that the Board is telling groups what to do, rather than a grass-roots way to have the congregation decide what they want to work on.

- Comment that there may be push back. Some people are proud of the work but also feel they are out there alone.
- By doing a process like this, people may feel more emboldened to do the work they are doing. There should be a shared understanding of the focus for the year, but not excluding the other things. It may be something that is too hard to pull off, but Rev. Kaaren would like to try to convince people that doing it this way will increase our impact. Funding can be raised for specific task forces by having a special plate for that project one Sunday, etc.
- Concern that people/projects that don't get picked would feel rejected and that would create stress. Rev. Kaaren observed that in the past, people respond to an emerging current event by creating a committee, but then it lives forever. Comment that some of the groups have a special fund (UU the vote and Building a Better Table), what happens if they don't get voted on? Rev. Kaaren noted that we are trying to empower people rather than disempower people. If it's voted every year, it doesn't feel final or exclusionary.
- Example: there are committees that aren't accountable to anyone. One of the problems with that is if it's addressed, people get reactive about being told what to do. There is also a problem with people wanting to start a committee right away. In the past, accountability has been addressed as a group needing to be under a staff person or the Board. There is a way that it can be structured so staff and volunteers work together as a shared ministry team. This might work better and have more structure without the conflict.
 - Comment that we have a lot of people wanting the rights without the responsibilities. That's human nature, but we have to have both.
- **RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consult, Inform):** Each staff person has that when they make a big or program decision. Rev. Kaaren will start this with staff, but the Board and all committees should think through this.
 - Example: We wrote a grant to redo the CYM space and got it approved by the Board, but because we didn't have a RACI model, we didn't consult with Building Maintenance. Although they don't have authority over project, they are an interested group. There is a difference between advising authority versus authorizing authority. It didn't occur to Rev. Kaaren to consult Building Maintenance, because we don't have RACI in place. It enhances communication and will make people feel less taken by surprise.
- **Strategic Plan:** This could be addressed this year or next year.
- **Leadership Development:** This is a task that may make sense for the second year, because the Transition Team has their own goals and work this year, which will help the Search Team out in the long run.

General Comments: RACI makes sense regarding the issues of structure. In another church, social justice was all over the map, so the church eventually hired a staff person to run it, which reduced the sense that people had to fight hard for their territory. As the work moved forward, they felt like they

could relax. That made more space to see more possibilities to collaborate. Not a stated goal but a wonderful side effect that allowed movement in other places.

Rev. Kaaren updates on the Transition Team's work. The TT will address three things the first year: who we've been, who we are now, and where are we going. The reason we want to do that is to answer the questions: what is the DNA of this place? what matters to us? Knowing the answers to those questions avoids us ending up saying we want a "CEO minister" when that's not who we are here, for example. A shared ministry model makes a lot more sense here, but you need structures in place. The TT will also do a history wall to understand what was dysfunctional after Jim left. The history wall will help identify what are we best at and what do we want to be best at. Then the TT does appreciative inquiry: small groups with lots of questions in a positive way to get lots of feedback, so that the TT can see and report the commonalities. This gets clarity on who we actually are and why we come to the congregation. Those results are shared with the whole congregation, and create accurate priorities for the Search Committee. The TT will also do a new mission that is portable and practical. The church is not the minister, not the Board, not the bylaws, not the committees. The church is individual people out in the world living the mission of the church. We need to theologically ground the mission in Unitarian Universalism. How do we spiritual connect "in," "among," and "beyond." Connecting with self, with other people, and with needs greater than your own. We will discuss the things that are Rev. Kaaren's priorities next month.

12. Common Read

Twinks discussed the Article 2 proposal and associated materials. Love is going to become central in Article 2. Twinks read the Art. 2 proposal. What's interesting is that the 7(8) Principles don't have Love anywhere. In doing the Article 2 work, love came out on top. Twinks read questions for the reflection.

Spiritual discipline of love: Love is the power that holds us together that is at the center of our shared values. Love is a term that is used a lot, but what is the discipline and living out our values. Listening comes to mind as a discipline of love. Empathy is a discipline that you can use while in a disagreement or conflict with someone. Love can be really fierce, it doesn't have to be soft & squishy & nice. In reality, love isn't always nice and sometimes it means standing up for yourself and your loved ones, doing hard painful things because it is the right thing to do and right in the world. Love is sometimes standing out in protest of what is not right in the world, leaving an unsafe situation even though it's where you have been. That is the discipline of love, having the strength to stand up for what is right even when it feels impossible. Love is the conscious awareness that you can be in situations where an immediate response is not immediately positive, but then it becomes necessary to recognize what is happening, so you need to listen and have your heart and mind open and deal with what is happening objectively. Acting out of love for self and others, takes patience. There are so many triggers, you need to first know who you are and then act, you don't want to be a reaction to someone else. Love is listening, empathizing, and taking a step back. Thinks of love as a very private, internal force, but is struck by the language that love empowers us. Love has to be seen as a systemic force, just like oppression is systemic. Justice is what love looks like in action. Establishing fair, transparent, and accountable structures in your relationships and communities fosters love and builds upon it. Boundaries are the distance at which one can love both another and themselves. If our values aren't rooted in love, what

are we advancing them for. If the structure for love is in place, we can create the fertile ground for love to grow.

Any examples of values where a story centers love in that value? When ending up in the hospital while uninsured, receiving generosity centered in love to pay medical bills. Transformation, when leaving an abusive marriage, was rooted in love for the self, to ensure safety.

Each person wrote a word that is a thing that represents something they love about FPB.

13. Check out

Adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

FPB Board of Trustees August & September Email Votes (with Corrections)

Email Vote 8/24/2023 to Approve Endowment Board funding

RESOLVED, that the funding by the Endowment Board of \$5,000 for the Fellowship Hall improvements described to the Board of Trustees by Rev. Kaaren at our last Board Meeting is hereby approved.

Voting in favor: Leslie Rennie Hill, John Kielb, Jim Lieb, Irie Mullin, Gail Webb, Diane Willcox, Carol Yerby

Not responding: Liz Cable & Karen Witting

Email Vote 9/6/2023 to Approve Choir Accompanist

RESOLVED, that the contract for FPB to hire Dan Anthony as Accompanist, in the form presented to the Board of Trustees on September 6, 2023, is hereby approved.

Vote unanimous

Email Vote 9/8/2023 to Fill Vacancy on Endowment Board

RESOLVED, that the appointment ,by the President of FPB's Board of Trustees, of Susan Flaws to fill the vacancy on FPB's Endowment Board, is hereby approved.

Vote unanimous

Email Vote 9/12/2023 to Approve Endowment Board funding

RESOLVED, that the funding by FPB's Endowment Board of the payment of \$8,818 on account of the Winslow House Shower and Parish Hall Ramp Door repairs and overruns on the Barn Exterior Door replacement and the Pew Change is hereby approved.

Voting in favor: Leslie Rennie Hill, John Kielb, Jim Lieb, Irie Mullin, Gail Webb, Diane Willcox, Karen Witting, Carol Yerby

Not responding: Liz Cable

E mail Vote 9/12/2023 to Authorize Payment of Barn Elevator Repair

RESOLVED, that the \$4,995 cost for the FPB Barn Elevator repair be paid from FPB's Sustainability Fund.

Voting in favor: Leslie Rennie Hill, John Kielb, Jim Lieb, Irie Mullin, Gail Webb, Diane Willcox, Karen Witting, Carol Yerby

Not responding: Liz Cable

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

During the past two years, since beginning to gather again in person following the worst of the pandemic, I have not thought of the Parish Room as a particularly attractive space. So I was blown away when I attended the Friday evening opening of the first Meetinghouse Gallery photographic installation. The room both looked and felt like an art gallery.

I believe that how a space looks affects attitudes about the space and love the feeling that the proper hanging of photographs (now into our second show) brings to the Parish Room. Which raises two questions in my mind. First, what can be hung on the walls when we do not have a third-party installation to display. Second, how does using the walls for art affect any needs we may have for posters or other displays of activities at First Parish. I encourage everyone's thoughts on this, preferably by email to the whole Board of Trustees.

Further to the topic of my report last month on the formation of both a Minister Housing Task Force and a Strategic Planning Committee, following the announcement of the Task Force by Rev Kaaren at the Service on November 12, I have begun to accumulate names of people willing to work on one of the four working groups that will make up the Minister Housing Task Force. Those four working groups are:

- 1) building housing on our property,
- 2) converting either the Winslow House or Barn to housing,
- 3) acquiring off-site housing, or
- 4) providing a loan for part of the funds for a minister to buy their own housing.

As I envision it, each person on a working group will be able to focus on a couple of the issues that must be addressed to determine the pros and cons of each possible solution to minister housing. So more members are needed for each working group to reduce how much must be done by each member. I hope each of you will consider joining whichever group most interests you so the work can be well spread.

I will have more next month about the status of the Strategic Planning Committee.

Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Twinks Hastings

Board Report November 2023

Overview

I felt so loved both upstairs and downstairs on my birthday this past Sunday, thank you all! I feel like the whole congregation is getting into a good groove with Rev Kaaren's ministry and I look forward to seeing where this interim period takes us. We are seeing visiting/new families almost every week right now which is a great sign. The move to the front of the sanctuary is really working well for our families, and we are working on tweaking a few things as we continue to help everyone get used to worshipping together.

CYM Committee

The CYM committee is focusing on prepping for the pageant and hosting an early December movie night for families. Each month they also reflect on the upcoming monthly topics to help shape the activities for the month.

Summer Program

I am starting to work on SNO@UU year two. I have been talking with Rev Kaaren about staffing this program, and how realistic/sustainable it is to add directing and creating an entire summer program on top of my already full job description. A large majority of the time I spend on SNO@UU is administration for the program. There are so many positives that have come to FPB through this program, both financially and social justice wise, and it has so much potential. That said it is a herculean effort not only for me but for all of the volunteers involved and I want to create a program that will be sustainable for the future and whoever comes after me. In talking with LREDA and other colleagues with summer "camps" at their church there is either a director hired solely for the camp program (for a month or so) or a stipend for the DRE as a lot of the work is done after they have worked the hours for their normal job.

Professional Development

I am currently participating in a class with the Guild of Interim Religious Professionals about supporting congregations in transition time. I am learning a lot and hope that we are able to make the best use of these 2 years as possible.

Email

I hope you have seen my weekly email, I switched from sending an email just to families, to the whole congregation in order to address some of the misconceptions and mysteries about CYM and everything else in my job. I have had a lot of very positive feedback and will continue to do this for the next few months at least.

Pastoral Care

I supported 1 youth and their family this month.

Youth Advisors

We found the dream team: Margaret Emmett, Marie Hartley, Jon Emmilian, and Irie Dunn.

Office

I'm all moved in and appreciating the door more than I knew I would. I am so glad we made this move.

Adult Education

I have offered 4 programs in the next two months, 2 of which I have given multiple time options, I will report back next month.

In conclusion

I am as busy as ever! but feeling grateful to be solely focused on Religious Education after the last couple of years.

Report from Administration and Finance Director – November 2023

Financial Highlights & Pledges (see the Treasurer's report for more info)

- For FY23-24, we have received, as of 11/13/23, 180 pledge units for a total of \$422,325.

Property Management

- A reminder to fill out a Sexton form if you see anything around campus that needs attention.
- We had no responses to our request for someone to service as our recycling coordinator, so we will be unable to recycle on campus until someone volunteers to help with this.

Administration as Ministry

- November is open enrollment month for the UUA insurance plans, and I have sent all the information about making changes or signing up for the plan to our employees.
- I continue to meet with the 4 employees I supervise. For those employees that have been with us for over a year, we will be performing our annual employee evaluations and reviewing the goals that were set last year as well as looking forward to what we want to accomplish.
- Our migration to Quickbooks Online is progressing, and we are slowly but surely making our way through the checking all the details of the entries. I am starting to see light at the end of the tunnel for this project, and I look forward to how this investment of time will streamline many financial aspects of our operations.
- I am hoping to get to the financial details that are needed for the 501c3 application in December.
- Onboarding our new Interim Bookkeeper is going well. Sue Weber has been extremely helpful with this process, and Victorea is eager to learn all the details of her new position.

Sustainability, Professional Development and Serving the Larger Community

- I hope to be able to do some more professional development in the winter or spring but haven't had a chance to plan that yet with all the other projects going on right now.
- A special thank you to all who helped me celebrate my birthday in the office. From the streamers in my office to the custom song to the yummy cake, I feel so blessed.

Kind regards, Karena Stroh, Administration and Finance Director

First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist Policy

Policy Title: Animals on FPBUU Property

Last Reviewed: 20 Sept 2017

Policy Number: 4.1

Congregations' Review Period:

Purpose: To describe the conditions and guidelines for bringing Personally-owned Animals on FPBUU property

1 Jun 2017

Effective Date: 20 Sept 2018

Revisions: Revision 1, 20 Sept 2018

Board Review: 20 Apr 2017; 20 Sept. 2017

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy determines the limitations and procedures for Personally-owned Animals on FPBUU property.

Personally-owned animals are not allowed within FPBUU buildings with three exceptions. (1) In conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Service Animals are allowed within FPBUU buildings. (2) Animals, properly restrained, are welcome in the FPBUU sanctuary only for special Sunday services (such as a *Bless the Animals* church service). The special service exception must be approved by The Board of Trustees President or Minister. This exception must be announced well ahead of time to alert members and visitor that animals will be present in the FPBUU sanctuary. (3) A personally-owned dog is allowed at Winslow House if (a) the dog is properly restrained and a sign in the office reads "dog present" and (b) staff present are comfortable with this arrangement. This exception applies to the Winslow House only.

Personally-owned Animals are allowed on FPBUU grounds as long as the animal is well controlled and does not cause any disruption to activities happening on the grounds. Animals must be on leash or controlled within a car or crate. As part of the control of a personally-owned animal the animal is limited to elimination only on appropriate surfaces, avoiding all buildings and property of FPBUU as well as property of visitors of FPBUU. All solid waste must be removed from FPBUU property by the person managing the animal.

The Board of Trustees (BOT), at its discretion, may grant a waiver to this Policy, but before granting such a waiver the BOT shall consult with such staff and volunteers who may be affected by its so doing.

PROCEDURES

1. Incidences of violation of this policy will be reported to the FPBUU Board of Trustees President or Minister who will determine what, if any, action is needed.

2. Requests for Special Events which will allow Personally-owned Animals within FPBUU buildings must be submitted to the Board of Trustees President or Minister at least one month prior to the event and will include a publication plan for notifying the participating public that animals will be present during the event. The Board of Trustees President or Minister will consider the request and its impact to the overall church population and decide whether to approve the request.
3. Emotional Support Animals do not qualify as a Service Animal under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and are not generally granted access to public places. Requests for use of an Emotional Support Animal within FPBUU buildings may be submitted to the Board of Trustees President or Minister for consideration. Approval is strictly on a case-by-case basis.

GUIDELINES

No guidelines are recommended at this time.

STANDARDS

No standards are recommended at this time.

DEFINITIONS

Personally-owned Animal – Any animal residing on a person’s property and fully controlled by that person with regards to its welfare.

Service Animal - Defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as “dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities”. See the ADA Requirements for Service Animals (https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm) for the full definition of a Service Animal and restrictions and conditions related to use of Service Animals.

FPBUU Grounds – The portion of the property owned by FPBUU which is not within a building. This includes lawn areas and parking lots.

Treasurer's Report

A) October Financial Report

The October Financial Report is below, all data for this fiscal year has been transitioned to the online QuickBooks. Percent of Budget should typically be at 33%. There are still many issues with the data, although to the best of our knowledge the large issues have been resolved. But many small discrepancies remain, and the team is working diligently to resolve them.

B) 501C3

I reviewed with the Finance Committee and Karena the 501C3 concerns brought by Mary Jo to the last Board meeting. The Finance committee recommends that this application specify Karena Stroh as Fiduciary and the application should be signed by the President of the Board. I've included below descriptions of the three designations that were considered with descriptions of each.

C) Change in Health Insurance Costs

The Finance Committee was notified that the Personnel Committee will be making a recommendation to the Board regarding increases in Health insurance Costs beyond the current Budget amount. The Finance Committee reviewed the increase and recommended that whatever increase the Board approved be applied as an update to the budget, with the consequential larger amount used from the Sustainability Fund in order to balance the budget. The Finance committee also suggests that it might be prudent to review the choice of Health care plan, in particular to consider whether a Health Savings Plan may be more cost effective.

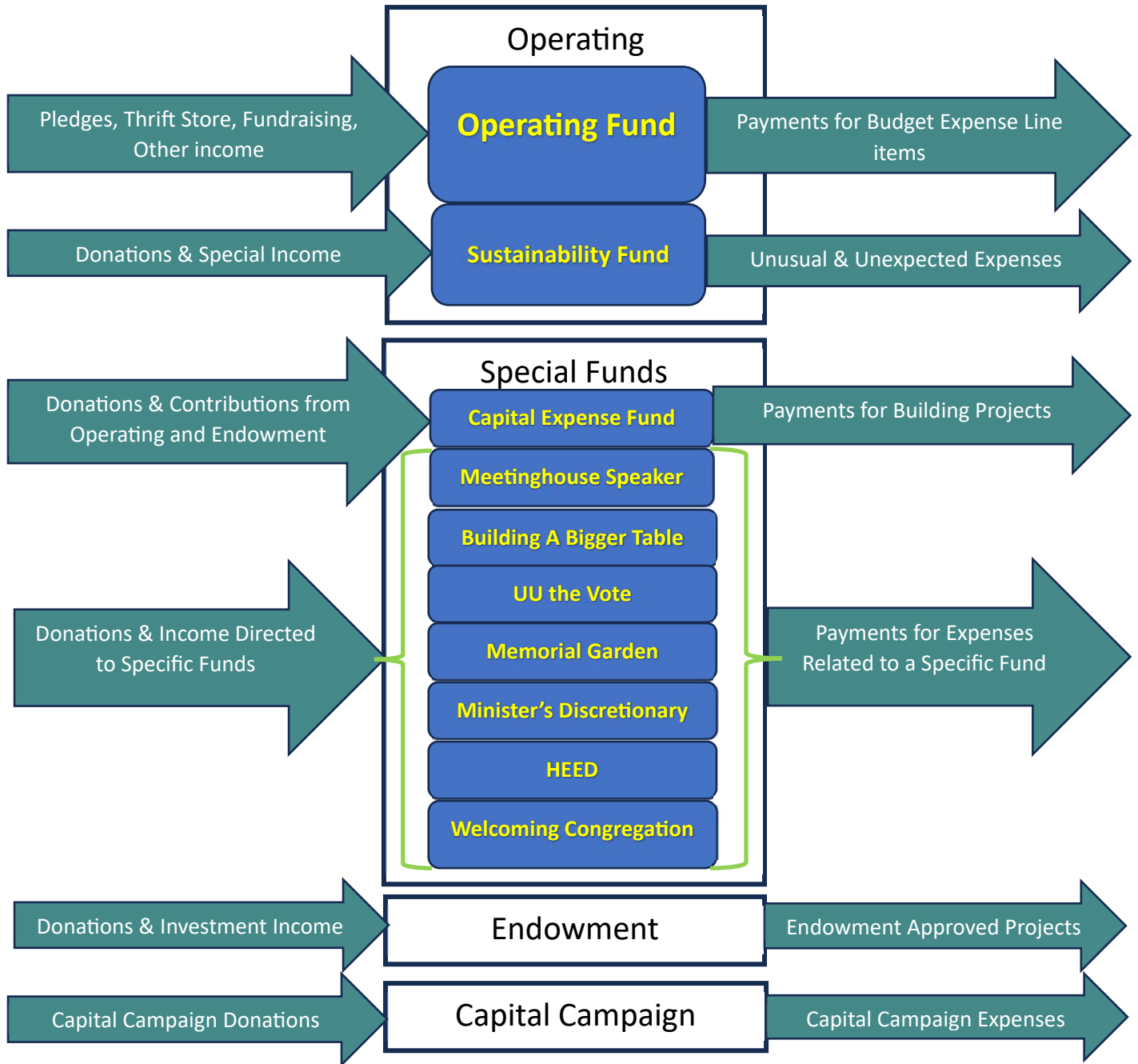
D) Financial Overview

I've included a one-page diagram below which provides a pictorial overview of how our financial systems operate. I welcome your thoughts and feedback. I will share this with the congregation through the Financial Committee FPBUU web page coming soon.

Role of Karena as Power of Attorney/ Fiduciary/Tax Information Authorization

- Power of Attorney allows for an individual to represent FPB before the IRS. (can be full time employee)
 - IRS statement of Authority Granted: authorizes the listed representative(s) to inspect and/or receive confidential tax information and to perform all acts (that is, sign agreements, consents, waivers, or other documents) that you can perform with respect to matters described in the power of attorney. Representatives are not authorized to endorse or otherwise negotiate any check (including directing or accepting payment by any means, electronic or otherwise, into an account owned or controlled by the representative or any firm or other entity with whom the representative is associated) issued by the government in respect of a federal tax liability. Additionally, unless specifically provided in the power of attorney, this authorization does not include the power to substitute or add another representative, the power to sign certain returns, the power to execute a request for disclosure of tax returns or return information to a third party, or to access IRS records via an Intermediate Service Provider.
- Fiduciary - a fiduciary (trustee, administrator, executor...) stands in the position of the taxpayer and acts as the taxpayer, not as a representative.
 - IRS Definition: A fiduciary is any person in a position of confidence acting on behalf of any other person. A fiduciary assumes the powers, rights, duties, and privileges of the person or entity on whose behalf he or she is acting. Examples of fiduciaries include administrators, conservators, designees, executors, guardians, receivers, trustees of a trust, trustees in bankruptcy, personal representatives, persons in possession of property of a decedent's estate, or debtors-in-possession of assets in any bankruptcy proceeding by order of the court.
- Tax Information Authorization – if you want to authorize an individual to inspect/or receive confidential tax information, but do not want to authorize an individual to represent you before the IRS.
 - IRS Purpose: Authorizes any individual, corporation, firm, organization, or partnership you designate to inspect and/or receive your confidential information verbally or in writing for the type of tax and the years or periods you list on Form 8821. Doesn't authorize your designee to speak on your behalf; to execute a request to allow disclosure of return or return information to another third party; to advocate your position regarding federal tax laws; to execute waivers, consents, closing agreements; or represent you in any other manner before the IRS.

The following diagram shows the flow of money through our financial systems. We have four checking accounts: Operating, Special Funds, Endowment and Capital Campaign. Money flows in from the left and out through the right of this diagram.



First Parish Brewster

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY24_P&L - FY24 P&L Classes

July - October, 2023

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Revenue				
Fundraising	67,275.74	139,500.00	-72,224.26	48.23 %
Investment, Interest, Misc	3,467.88	7,550.00	-4,082.12	45.93 %
Offertory	8,469.53	20,000.00	-11,530.47	42.35 %
Pledges	175,546.73	438,013.00	-262,466.27	40.08 %
Rental	2,061.00	8,000.00	-5,939.00	25.76 %
Total Revenue	\$256,820.88	\$613,063.00	\$ -356,242.12	41.89 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$256,820.88	\$613,063.00	\$ -356,242.12	41.89 %
Expenditures				
Administrative	4,806.74	19,200.00	-14,393.26	25.04 %
BldgGrounds	37,204.49	88,827.00	-51,622.51	41.88 %
Committees	803.98	4,260.00	-3,456.02	18.87 %
Lifespan Religious Education	55.80	6,150.00	-6,094.20	0.91 %
Mortgage Loan Payments	571.63	7,200.00	-6,628.37	7.94 %
Music	1,101.20	5,600.00	-4,498.80	19.66 %
Staff	162,597.30	524,273.00	-361,675.70	31.01 %
UUA/NER Dues	3,336.00	10,000.00	-6,664.00	33.36 %
Worship	2,188.69	5,500.00	-3,311.31	39.79 %
Total Expenditures	\$212,665.83	\$671,010.00	\$ -458,344.17	31.69 %
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$44,155.05	\$ -57,947.00	\$102,102.05	-76.20 %
NET REVENUE	\$44,155.05	\$ -57,947.00	\$102,102.05	-76.20 %