

Covenant of the First Parish Brewster Board of Trustees

Entrusted by the congregation of First Parish Brewster, we recognize that ours is a sacred duty and we will bring our highest selves to work on their behalf. Each of us commits to:

1. Applying professional best practices to our work as Board members.
2. Be willing to do things differently and experience discomfort in the process.
3. Develop an awareness of our own biases and prejudices. Be self-reflective.
4. Strive to create healthy partnerships; effectiveness to be measured by positive impact on FPB systems.
5. Be curious and listen to understand others.
6. Respect our collective wisdom.
7. When we disagree, we will remain committed to the mission, work hard to realize it, and speak with one voice once a vote has been taken and a decision made.
8. When lost trust is experienced, we will use this Covenant to guide an intentional effort to repair trust, including whatever amends or actions are appropriate.

Our primary commitment is to the long-range health of First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

At the beginning of each Board meeting the first and last statements of the Covenant will be read with the intent that the eight detailed actions in the full Covenant will be honored.

Covenant of the Elected Members of the First Parish Brewster Board of Trustee

- Bulleted items are intended to clarify intent and collective understanding of the numbered statement.

Entrusted by the congregation of First Parish Brewster, we recognize that ours is a sacred duty and we will bring our highest selves to work on their behalf. Each of us commits to:

1. Applying professional best practices to our work as Board members.
 - The UUA and research by other nonprofit groups provide guidance on best practices for effective church governance. Apply RACI model and evidence to review/assess actions taken by the Board and its committees.
2. Be willing to do things differently and experience discomfort in the process.
 - Challenge ourselves to interact outside of our usual habits and comfort zone. For example: Listen more if you talk a lot, speak up if you tend to hang back, etc.
3. Develop an awareness of our own biases and prejudices. Be self-reflective.
 - Before speaking, we will consider whether our words are truthful, helpful, and kind.
4. Strive to create healthy partnerships; effectiveness to be measured by positive impact on FPB systems.
 - Reach out to individual church members and committees to support their work as well as to gain their help/support for Board projects.
5. Be curious and listen to understand others.
 - *'Most people listen to respond instead of listening to understand.'*
6. Respect our collective wisdom.
 - No one knows everything, each of us knows something, and together we know a lot. What we each contribute IS enough.
7. When we disagree we will remain committed to the mission and work hard to realize it. We will speak with one voice once a vote has been taken and a decision made.
 - We will persevere when there are conflicting opinions and seek ways to find common ground; after a reasonable time has passed the Board chair will call for a decision or vote after each member has stated "their last word".
8. When lost trust is experienced, we will use this Covenant to guide an intentional effort to repair trust, including whatever amends or actions are appropriate.
 - Any amends or actions will also be in compliance with any applicable By-Laws and Policies of FPBUU.

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First Parish Brewster Board of Trustees Organizational Procedures

Board Procedures

1. Board members will attend all meetings and arrive on time. The Board President will be notified in advance if a member will miss a scheduled meeting. Three absences and/or a lack of availability to complete Board assignments may result in a vote by the Board requesting that the member resign.
2. Board meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of each month from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm and be held in the living room at Winslow House. From time -to -time meetings may be held on Zoom and individual members may join meetings on Zoom in a hybrid format.
3. Board members will receive written reports a minimum of 48 hours before the meeting and will read the reports before the meeting.
4. Board decisions will be made only after everyone present has been heard. Decisions made by the board will be supported by every Board member after a reasonable effort to reach consensus has taken place. Final decisions will be made by majority vote and recorded in the Minutes.
6. For decisions that are not expected to require deliberation the Board President may choose to request a board vote by sending an email to all board members requesting their response. Only the Board President can request a vote via email and that email must include a) subject stating this is an email vote b) proposed resolution and any supporting background. Approval votes should be sent only as a reply to the Board President and do not need to include the rest of the board.
7. Respectful meeting communication means listening without interrupting, ensuring balanced dialogue, and giving everyone a chance to contribute throughout the discussion—not just after dominant speakers finish. Be patient, let others complete their thoughts, and pause to create space for contributions. While moderators guide respectful communication, all participants share responsibility for valuing and practicing it. The results of an email vote shall be included as an item on the agenda of the next Board meeting.
8. No ex officio member may propose motions or vote on proposed motions.
9. The board will review the covenant at its first meeting after any new member(s) join the board. Revisions may be made by majority vote.