



Foothills Unitarian

LOVE UNITES US ALL

FOOTHILLS UNITARIAN CHURCH
Notice of Meeting 2021

Notice of Meeting Annual Congregational Meeting 2021

FOOTHILLS UNITARIAN CHURCH WILL CONVENE ITS 2021 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, MAY 23, 2021 AT 10:15 AM VIA ZOOM.

Agenda

1. Call to order & chalice lighting
2. Announcement of quorum
3. Approval of standing rules (vote)
4. Adoption of agenda (vote)
5. Approval of minutes from previous congregational meetings (vote)
 - a. Annual congregational meeting, 6/14/20
 - b. 2021 Budget approval congregational meeting 11/15/20
 - c. Special congregational meeting revised Phase 1 building project, 02/21/21
6. President's Report
 - a. Thank you to elected leaders
 - b. Update on the board's major goals and the Bylaws Revision project
7. Ministry Report
8. Adopting the Eighth Principle in our congregation (vote)
9. Resolution in support of Improved Medicare For All (vote)
10. Election of the slate of nominees (vote)
11. Closing Words
12. Adjournment

Table of Contents

Congregational meeting standing rules and Covenant of Right Relations		pg. 4
Congregational meeting minutes to approve (click on links to review)		4
	Annual meeting, 6/14/20	
	Special meeting, 11/15/20	
	Special meeting, 2/21/21	
Reports from Board Committees		5-10
	President's Report	5
	Governance Committee	7
	Nominating Committee	8
	Candidate bios 2020-21	10
Reports from Ministry		11-18
	Senior Minister's Report	12
	Financial Report	14
	Building Expansion Update	17
The 8th Principle	Background and Motion	19
Resolution Supporting Improved Medicare for All		21

Congregational Meeting Standing Rules and Covenant

Standing Rules

1. Members shall abide by the Foothills Unitarian Church Covenant of Right Relations.
2. No member shall speak more than once in debate on the same question until all members wishing to speak have done so.
3. No member shall speak more than twice in debate on the same question.
4. Comments made in debate shall be limited to a maximum of two minutes.
5. Any motions to amend must be in writing and in the hand of the President before the motion is made from the floor.

Our Covenant of Right Relations

We covenant to build a religious community guided by love and sustained by respectful relationships, which work towards the greater and common good. Believing that building healthy relationships is a spiritual practice, we aim to listen appreciatively, speak with care, express gratitude, honor and value our differences, and assume good intentions. We will communicate directly, honestly and compassionately, particularly when we are in conflict, and we will not expect to always get our own way. When we feel hurt or when we hurt others, we will try to forgive, make amends and connect in a spirit of love. In celebration of the common purpose that unites us, we will do our best to abide by this covenant.

Congregational Meeting minutes to approve

With three sets of minutes to approve we have chosen to include links to the minutes rather than the full text here. Please click on each link (underlined in blue) to review the minutes.

[Minutes from Annual Congregational Meeting, June 14, 2020](#)

[Minutes from Special Congregational Meeting to Approve Annual Budget, November 15, 2020](#)

[Minutes from Special Congregational Meeting to Authorize Revised Building Expansion Plan, February 21, 2021](#)

Reports from Board Committees and Task Forces

Board President's Report

Sue Sullivan

When we look back at 2020-21 and tell the story of how Foothills lived, learned, and courageously loved through this extraordinary time, we will all agree that we fully inhabited [our guiding values and the bold vision](#) of this congregation. We whole-heartedly lived out our joyful resilience, our collective courage, our deepening belonging, and our transcendent wonder in the face of historic challenges.

- We redefined community and worship and connection while doing our part to blunt the pandemic with the social distancing that public health experts pleaded for.
- Foothills continued helping to feed hungry neighbors through our twice-a-month mobile food pantries.
- We offered our empty church rooms to house homeless families through our community partner Family Housing Network of Fort Collins.
- We put our structural privilege and our resources to work for the greater community by helping speed the early rollout of vaccines to seniors and by network-building to help marginalized communities get access to vaccines when the eligibility broadened.
- We continued the work of examining our own internalized racial conditioning and white supremacy programming with book groups and other small group gatherings and began the work of making an explicit, accountable commitment to becoming an anti-racist congregation in a faith movement that has too often failed to live up to its promises to be an anti-racist, anti-oppression, multi-racial organization.

I am truly and without exaggeration in awe of what our incredible congregation, our exceptional ministers, and our amazing staff have accomplished this year.

And looking ahead, we have so much more we are ready and eager to give, to build, and to live into in the year ahead.

After spending the early months of the pandemic wondering exactly how much the world was changing for us and whether we could responsibly move forward with our long-needed campus expansion, the building expansion teams have revised the project phasing and made cost-saving design changes, and we are now tremendously excited to be breaking ground this fall on our new sanctuary building and phase 1 of our campus upgrades.

We are continuing to live into [our bold vision](#) statements, every single one of them. But two stand out especially for me: we are actively engaging in a process of lifelong spiritual deepening that allows us to live lives of meaning and purpose in a world that needs our Unitarian Universalism; and we recognize and dismantle prejudice and oppression in all

their forms, including within ourselves, allowing us to be more effective and trusted partners to marginalized communities in Northern Colorado and beyond.

Foothills has become the fiscal sponsor of the [BIPOC Alliance of Larimer County](#), which means that we receive and hold tax-deductible donations and grant monies for this new organization. We also added a part-time position to our payroll dedicated entirely to their operational needs. We are able to give their staff member the benefits and payroll services our system provides, and the Alliance reimburses us for all of the associated costs.

We are excited to be holding a vote in this congregational meeting to adopt the [8th principle of Unitarian Universalism](#), to renew our commitment to accountably work towards dismantling systemic racism and oppression and building the multicultural beloved community that we have yearned for and promised, but not yet delivered as a faith movement.

Among the other [goals](#) that we set for ourselves last August, the board of trustees has been working in collaboration with the governance committee to revise our church bylaws, our foundational governing document, to reflect the congregation we have grown to be.

The members of the committee have researched bylaws advice from the Unitarian Universalist Association, gathered examples from similar UU congregations, and made their own recommendations to the board. Article-by-article, month-by-month, the board and the governance committee have been drafting revised language that we feel is the best fit for Foothills' culture, size, and current governance structure.

We expect to have a completed draft of these revised bylaws for the congregation by the fall, to begin discussing and considering in advance of a congregational vote later in the next board year. Our congregation, like all UU churches, is self-governing, and the ultimate responsibility for approving revised bylaws rests with the membership.

This board year we also completed our [Restoring Wholeness archival work](#) and board [policy revisions](#). This was our commitment to the congregation to be compassionately transparent about Foothills' history of misconduct so that we speak our truth clearly, establish and support healthy boundaries through policy and monitoring, and communicate our commitment to maintaining a safe congregation.

Much of our meeting time this year was devoted to numerous policy book revisions as we continued to deepen our understanding of how to govern through policy and monitoring. Board member and past president Sara Steen devoted many, many weeks of her life to preparing these revisions for our discussion, and the board as a whole came to understand policy governance at a far more meaningful level, as a result.

Lastly, the board took a deep, embodied dive into *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies* by therapist Resmaa Menakem. We added a monthly book group meeting to process this ground-breaking book's

mindfulness exercises and perspectives on racial trauma as part of our journey towards becoming an actively anti-racist board.

We are energized to begin a new board year July 1 and look forward to continuing our amazing online experiences, being able to gather in person once again, and discovering who and how we will be together as a post-pandemic church.

Governance Committee Report

Brian Woodruff

Sarah Parrish

Larry Watson

Tim Pearson

Doug Powell (Board Liaison)

The role of the Governance Committee is to assist the Board in researching and amending its policies. We are currently working on the Board's project to update the church's bylaws.

For many churches, including ours, the bylaws have been the principal way the congregation governed church affairs. Since 2017, however, our congregation has switched to policy-based governance. Policy-based governance delegates most church decision-making to the Board of Trustees, who then promulgate written policies that guide church members, ministers and staff. The bylaws are now out of date and need to be made to fit our current governance style.

Policy-based governance is much more flexible and responsive than the old bylaws approach. It reduces the need to convene a meeting of the full congregation, with formal prior notice, first determining who may vote, counting the quorum, and then following Robert's Rules of Order to process proposed bylaw changes, including voting on amendments and amendments of the amendments. In contrast, policy-based governance empowers the Board of Trustees to make most decisions while assuring accountability to the congregation.

Here are some factors we are taking into account throughout the revision process:

- Our bylaws are essentially a legal document associated with Foothills' charter as a non-profit corporation granted by the State of Colorado. Along with our Articles of Association, the bylaws inform the public how we intend to operate as a membership-directed non-profit corporation.
- Because the Board handles most decision-making, the bylaws may be streamlined to include only those matters reserved for action by the full membership. For example:
 - How does one become a member or resign from membership?
 - What rules are used to call meetings of the full membership, how are meetings conducted, and who is permitted to vote?

- o What is the composition of the Board of Trustees: how many, and how long do they serve?
- o How will the Board and its officers be nominated and elected?
- o How shall ministers be called or dismissed by the full membership?
- o How will the annual budget be approved?
- Other matters contained in the current bylaws may be withdrawn and may become part of the Board's written policies. For example:
 - o Detailed job descriptions for Board officers
 - o Standing committees and other organizational structures
 - o Adopting formal statements of moral or social concern
- In short, we want to streamline the bylaws: if a matter does not need to be in the church's bylaws as a non-profit corporation, then that matter may be safely removed and transferred to the Board of Trustees for incorporation into its written policies.

Nominating Committee Report

Linda Kothera

Susan MacQuiddy

Glenn Pearson(Board Liaison)

The Nominating Committee started its work last fall with the goal of developing a slate of qualified candidates for elected Committee and Board of Trustee positions. Because of the transition to policy-based governance, the number and kinds of elected positions were revised several years ago to encompass three groups: Nominating Committee, Endowment Committee, and the Board of Trustees. Other committees or task forces are now appointed as per the board policies of Foothills. Our work included reviewing job descriptions and committee charters to reflect the current work of the Board and committees. The Board, Endowment, and Nominating Committee outlined existing needs that would be addressed by filling vacancies with appropriately qualified candidates. We worked closely with the Leadership Development Team, which identifies the talents and interests of congregants and works with those interested in serving in leadership positions.

With respect to the Endowment Committee, work continues on a process to update committee responsibilities that align with our policy based governance. During this restructuring process(involving a bylaws revision that will come to a vote by the Congregation within the next year), it is recommended that we continue with the three Endowment Committee members as shown below and not fill two vacant seats, as there is no active work for the committee to do in this time.

Current Members and Nominees for Elected Leadership in 2020-2021

Current Board of Trustees (2020-2021)

Sue Sullivan, President
 Glenn Pearson, Vice President
 Debbie Gentry, Secretary
 Brendan Mahoney, Treasurer
 Sara Steen
 Andrea Delorey
 Doug Powell

Continuing Board of Trustees (2021-2022)

Sue Sullivan - one year left as President
 Debbie Gentry - one year left of a three-year term
 Andrea Delorey - two years left of a three-year term
 Doug Powell - two years left of a three-year term

Nominees for the Board of Trustees for a three-year term

Richie Nelsen as President-Elect
 Walter Nash
 Linda Kothera

Continuing Nominating Committee Members (2020-2021)

Susan MacQuiddy - two years left of a three-year term

Nominees for the Nominating Committee for a three-year term

Ben Manvel
 Christine Engelen

Endowment Committee Members (2020-2021)

Jennifer Crane
 Julie Pass
 John Busby
 Steve Tenbrink
 Joan Woodbury

Continuing Endowment Committee Members

Jennifer Crane - one year left of a three-year term
 John Busby - two years left of a three-year term
 Steve Tenbrink - two years left of a three-year term

Biographies of Candidates



Ben Manvel

I have been involved with Foothills since the late 70's. Over the years I was most invested in the choir and fundraising (medieval faire, rummage sale, canvass) although I have also served on the board and in R.E. My three careers involved mathematics (at CSU), local government (city council), and caretaking (for my wife Anne, who had Alzheimer's), but now I am retired. I am proud of all my progeny, including my daughters Sara (Steen, a past president of our board) and Emily (a UU minister in Bloomington IN), but at the moment I only dote on my two youngest grandchildren, who live in Salem OR. When possible I garden, bike, hike, read, and volunteer.



Christine Engelen

Hello Foothills! I first attended services at Foothills soon after moving here from Northern Virginia in 2012, and became a regular attendee in 2017. I have been teaching high school English since 2000, and currently teach at Mead High School near Longmont. I love hiking, travel, and paddle boarding, and am currently pursuing an MFA in Creative Nonfiction Writing at CSU. I grew up Episcopalian and have ties to the Church of the Brethren and the Disciples of Christ, but since coming to Foothills, I find that I love the way that UUs embrace the pursuit of truth and goodness along all pathways and from all peoples.

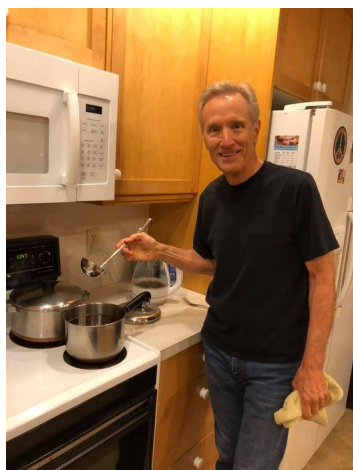


Linda Kothera she/her

I joined Foothills in 2006, wanting to give my then young son an opportunity for spiritual grounding. Like a lot of UUs, I was raised Catholic and had drifted away from any particular denomination as an adult. Since joining, I have been an RE volunteer, a small group facilitator, and am on the team that runs the sound booth and slides for Sunday services. I am finishing a term on the Nominating Committee and have served there as a member and most recently the chair.

One of the things that I love about Foothills is the variety of opportunities for me to put my values into action. I love how our church is a progressive advocate for marginalized groups in our community and beyond.

I work as a mosquito biologist for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention here in Fort Collins. I have a goldendoodle named Rex and a 20 year old son who is home for the pandemic while attending CU Denver. In my spare time I garden, work on various crafty things, and like to find garage sale treasures and resell them.



Walter Nash

I have worked as a computer program developer from my home office since moving to Fort Collins in 2007 with my spouse, Patti, and our two children. Before that I was in restaurant management for ten years, owned my own restaurant and published a local newspaper for new homeowners in San Diego.

My hobbies and interests are being in nature, reading, movies, time with friends, cooking, puzzles, studying astrology and in general trying to be present and authentic. Patti and I have been going to Foothills UU on and off for several years but decided to get serious with this group and have been consistent attendees for the last three years. We both knew that this was our group

and decided to get more involved. We were both on the committee for Sean's installation and I had been in choir for over a year until Covid hit last spring.



Richie Nelsen

I grew up in Colorado and was raised Catholic. I found Foothills when my wife Erin started attending and telling me what she was learning about Unitarian Universalism. Curiosity quickly turned into belonging and I have been a member since 2018. Shortly after, we had a UU wedding at Red Feather officiated by Sean. Foothills, the principles of Unitarian Universalism, and the growth our community encourages, have been an integral part of how we have formed our family system and how we raise our children, Vienna(7) and Jasper(1).

Within Foothills, I have been able to provide some assistance with AV technology and estimating anticipated IT costs for the building expansion project. My wife and I have also found great meaning helping the Mobile Foodbank and the Family Housing

Network.

In the community of Fort Collins, I am the Director of IT for the College of Business at CSU. I am also the cofounder of a conservation consulting company, Gaia Environmental, working primarily in National Parks throughout the US. I strive to create space where everyone feels safe to be their whole selves and I believe the answer is in the room if you take time to listen. I lead with integrity, authenticity and sustainability.

I am grateful to be a part of Foothills and look forward to giving back to the community that has given so much to me and my family.

Reports from Ministry

Senior Minister's Report

Rev. Gretchen Haley

Since [the report we made in November 2020](#), as we continue to work towards [fulfillment of our shared Vision](#), we have moved forward in the following strategic areas:

- Highly relevant and impactful Sunday Services and Series Content that drive community and personal growth in our everyday lives:
 - 26 additional Sunday services, plus 2 Christmas Eve services, bringing our total online-only services to 64! Series have included: [Awakening the Magic](#), [Tiny Revolutions](#), [Tough Love](#), and [The Play Button](#).
 - Opportunities to engage with Sunday materials - through Monday emails, gatherings on Wednesdays, and on social media.
 - Series-connected programs and [resources](#) for families, youth & children.
 - Creative and meaningful music, including series songs like: [Changes](#), [Magic Season](#), [Hold Us Together](#), [Resilient](#), and [Happy](#), as well as three choir pieces ([Christmas Melody](#), [Connected](#), and [Children's Choir](#)), and fun videos like [Everything's Not Awesome](#).
 - Series-connected programs, such as the Winter Solstice guide, the Tiny Shifts practice, the Year Compass, [Caste book groups](#), the [8th Principle workshop](#), and the [Foothills Ultimate Fun Face-Off \(FUFF\)](#).
- Re-defining how we “do church” in a post-pandemic and multi-platform environment:
 - Developing our Caring network with the partnership of our Caring Listeners. They have received training with the Rev. Karen Hutt, and since Dec 2020, we have provided over 350 documented instances of caring outreach.
 - Continuing to build on the lessons and successes of our Circles, especially through the formation of 4 Learning Communities with focuses including Stories, Relationships, Networks, and Neighborhoods.
 - Identified and began experimenting with a new online learning platform, Mighty Networks using two beta tests: (Fully Revised) Online BaseCamp and the FUFF. BaseCamp has had over 40 newcomer participants with robust engagement, and FUFF has had over 100 member participants.
- More clearly defining our path for spiritual development across both age and stage:
 - Revised our Base Camp curriculum for an online-only experience that prioritizes relationship-building and setting a strong foundation of Unitarian Universalist practice at Foothills.
 - Our Leadership Development team identified qualified candidates for the annual elections, and has developed a robust training program (also using Mighty Networks) to ensure their success in their new roles.

- Our Wellspring programs continued to expand with a Braiding Sweetgrass focus group, in addition to our introductory level groups.
- Our History Project team has continued to do their deep dive into our congregation's history, with an intent of publishing their book of our history by 2022, in time for our congregation's 125 year anniversary.
- Growing our congregational capacity for and commitment to an anti-racist culture:
 - We held two 8th Principle workshops with over 80 people attending and grew in our understanding of and commitment to anti-racism.
 - We held 6 fully attended book groups on *Caste*, taking a deep dive into Isabel Wilkerson's incredibly insightful book on race and racism in the U.S.
 - The Board of Trustees and the staff team have been regularly meeting for anti-racism and mutual accountability using the book *My Grandmother's Hands* by Resmaa Menakem.
 - Our Justice Team leaders began meeting bi-weekly to reflect on intersecting elements of social change and to coordinate future collaborations.
 - Our Sanctuary Everywhere team is relaunching their work in companioning asylum seekers and doing so with an explicit anti-racism commitment.
 - Our Climate Justice team launched Earth Week with a commitment to intersectionality, with a specific initiative to bring more trees to the north side of town, actualized in a partnership with La Familia.
 - Our Food Bank team continued to provide food for about 100 food-insecure families twice each month, and our building continued to house families through our partnership with Family Housing Network, resulting in Foothills' recognition as FHN's community partner of the year.
 - After four years of fiscal sponsorship of ISAAC's Emergency Immigration Fund, we have begun to transfer this fund to ISAAC's direct control. This is a sign of success as we were able to incubate this project until ISAAC secured its own 501c3 and established sufficient infrastructure to support this critical initiative for immigrants in our community.
 - Our partnership with BIPOC Alliance was further strengthened through the hiring of a Program Coordinator, Johanna Ulloa, specifically focused on leading their initiatives.
 - We were a key leader in vaccine equity efforts in Northern Colorado, initiating and leading the conversations that eventually led to the campaign #NoCoSeVacuna and the leadership of Fuerza Latina, La Cocina, and BIPOC Alliance described in [this video](#).

After 14 months of all-online ministry, we are all so grateful that the availability of vaccines has made it possible for us to begin to imagine what's next. Core to this imaginative work is our belief that we are not "going back," but rather we are moving forward into the new version of our church. This year has taught us that it is possible to be a member of our congregation in ways not at all tied to our building, or even our geographic area, but is simply a matter of the promises that we make to each other, and the practice we take up of unleashing courageous love. These lessons inspire us to imagine a community that is

vibrant and accessible both in the building and online and where you can find community, meaning, care, and connection regardless of where and how you are showing up. We are excited to see where all this learning takes us and how we can allow the joy, the resilience, and the sense of belonging and connection at the heart of our congregation to grow and evolve and to surprise and inspire us as we discover the Foothills of our shared future.

Financial Report

Rev. Gretchen Haley, Senior Minister

Katie Watkins, Director of Finance and Operations

The 2020 year ended close to our projections. However, we were slightly over budget due to some errors in compensation and benefits that were discovered during a thorough audit of our Human Resources systems and accounting. There were both underpayments and overpayments of salary and benefits to past and present employees. We rectified the underpayments, and the Board of Trustees made a decision to not pursue repayment of the overpayments. We have corrected and rectified the errors for 2021, and we have implemented new systems to ensure they do not recur.

The roughly \$10k gap between income and expenses was transferred from reserves to end the year whole. In February, we worked with an outside Accounting Executive to conduct a thorough external review of our finances to ensure accuracy.

In April of 2021, we received official notice that our Paycheck Protection Loan was completely forgiven with nothing owed. While we did not qualify for the second round of loans, we are working with outside support to pursue the possibility of an Employee Retention Credit, for which we may be eligible due to partial/full shutdown as a result of government orders.

The first quarter of 2021 has gone well, overall. We have received 120% of our budgeted income and spent 103% of our budgeted expenses. One significant area of concern is that our actual pledges are approximately \$80k under our budget for the year. In the coming weeks, we will be doing outreach to new members, regular congregants, and current pledgers to work on closing that gap. (Continued on next page.)

2020 Reconciled Yearend Financials



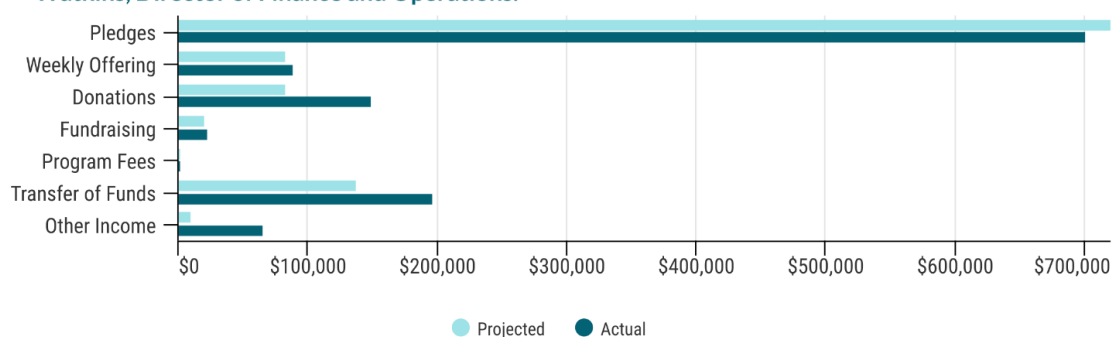
Income

Source	2020 Projected	2020 Actual
Pledges	\$720,000	\$701,463
Weekly Offering	\$84,000	\$88,717
Donations	\$84,002	\$150,112
Fundraising	\$21,000	\$23,548
Program Fees	\$1,850	\$1,850
Transfer of Funds*	\$137,548	\$196,947
Other Income	\$10,289	\$65,804
PPP Loan***	Not Budgeted	\$106,737
Income Totals	\$1,058,689	\$1,335,179

*Transfer of Funds is the release of restricted funds (PPP, MDF, Courageous Love, etc.)

**Other Income includes Rentals, Grocery Cards, Misc., Interest

***The Accounting for the PPP Loan is complex. If you have questions, please contact Katie Watkins, Director of Finance and Operations.

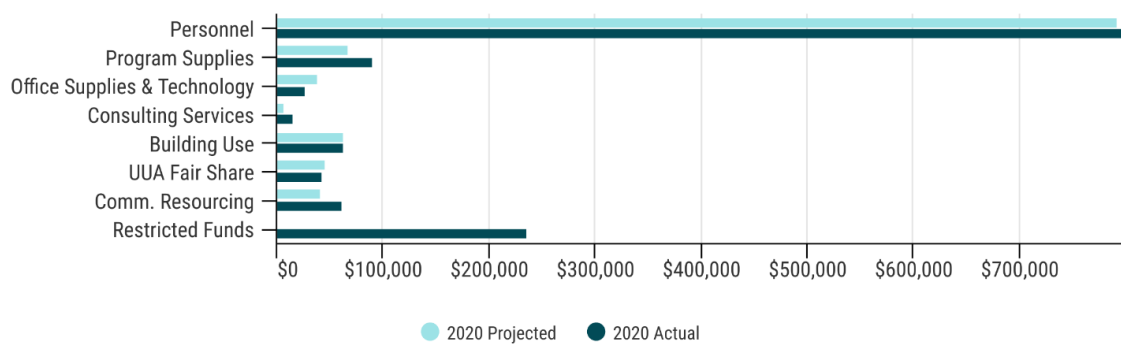




Expenses

Expense	2020 Projected	2020 Actual
Personnel	\$792,565	\$805,506
Ministry Programs	\$67,626	\$91,225
Office Supplies & Technology	\$38,344	\$26,672
Consulting Services	\$7,325	\$16,372
Building Use	\$63,554	\$63,697
UUA Fair Share	\$46,758	\$43,764
Comm. Resourcing	\$41,611	\$61,551
<i>Restricted Funds*</i>	<i>Not Budgeted</i>	\$236,746
Expense Totals	\$1,057,783	\$1,345,534
Income v. Expense Totals	\$906	(\$10,355)

*There is a difference in the totals presented in this chart and the actual P&Ls include accounting to rectify previously reported information for clarity sake. This adjustment is rectified with the complex PPP loan accounting, shown here, but not on the prior 2021 Budget Presentation. The collection and release of restricted funds are not reported elsewhere but are on this document.



Building Expansion Report

New Sanctuary Design

On Sunday, April 26th, Rev. Gretchen announced a revised sanctuary design based on feedback from you, our beloved congregants! As you can see in the images below, the new design rotates the sanctuary 90 degrees, preserving the mountain view and minimizing noise from Drake Road. The new sanctuary design also includes paneling along the windows, which will ensure light is well-balanced throughout the day while still allowing sunlight into the sanctuary. The new design allows for a seating arrangement that creates better visibility of the stage, and there is now additional space for a mural or other art.



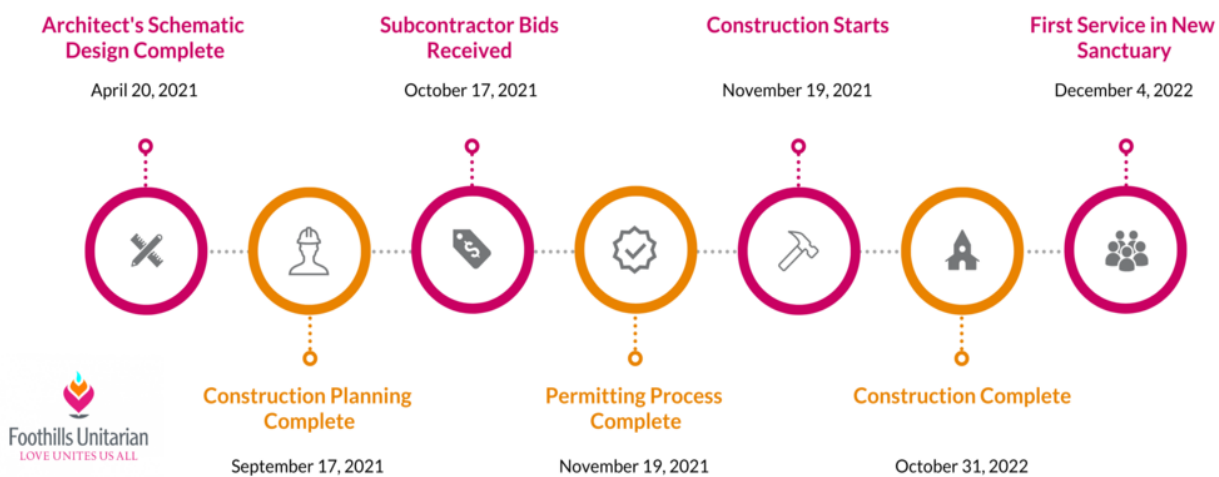


Updated Building Expansion Timeline

Building Courageous Love...day by day!

UPDATED TIMELINE OF MAJOR EVENTS

Learn more about the latest in the project at www.foothillsuu.org/building-expansion



Please note: all dates are estimates and subject to change based on project progression, updates and logistics.

[Please click here to view a larger image of the timeline!](#)

Building Expansion Finance Update

We have begun work with our potential lenders to determine the best fit for our needs. We expect this process to last 3-6 months so that we have our loan in place for the start of construction in November.

Learn more about our building expansion project at foothillsuu.org/building-expansion/!

The 8th Principle

The 8th Principle Task Force:

Sue Taylor and Sarah Parish, co-leads

Jody Anderson, Nikki Roe Cropp, Lauren Farley, Rebecca Parish, Ticie Rhodes

The 8th Principle states:

“We covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by building a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”

Quick Summary:

The 8th Principle, or the antiracism principle, is:

1. A reflection of our understanding that none of us are free until all of us are free. To reach collective liberation, we must intentionally and specifically work to identify and eradicate deeply embedded systems of oppression.
2. A recognition that we must specify our commitment to anti-racism as one of our Principles because white supremacy is so prevalent in every aspect of our society and culture. Targeted and highly visible work is required to identify, disentangle, and remove white supremacy from ourselves and our community.
3. A commitment to do the work required to be truly anti-racist and to move toward our vision for the Beloved Community - a multicultural community free from all forms of oppression.

Our Process to this Point

The 8th Principle Task Force, a sub-task force of the Racial Justice and Healing Team, began the process for our congregation to adopt the 8th Principle in January 2021. Since then, they have been working with Rev. Gretchen to introduce this Principle to our congregation and engage us all in considering its adoption.

Here are a few of the highlights of the process:

- Sunday, March 7th - Service focused on the launch / introduction of 8th Principle.
- March 27th (repeated April 17th) - Workshop with Paula Cole Jones, primary author of the 8th Principle and longtime UU leader in racial justice and multicultural commitments - over 85 members of our community attended.

- Throughout March and April - Small groups (particularly Sisterhood groups) took up discussion of the 8th Principle in their gatherings, and the 8th Principle Task Force offered additional small group opportunities.

History / Background of the 8th Principle

The movement to add the 8th Principle grew out of a grassroots effort by UUs of color and their allies immersed in antiracism work in UU churches over the past two decades. In 1997 UUs voted at General Assembly to become an Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppression, Multi-Cultural Organization (ARAOMC) and started with great enthusiasm to educate our congregations through Journey Towards Wholeness and Jubilee workshops.

But in the early 2000s, UUA funding and support waned, our accountability mechanism failed. As a covenanted community of congregations, we largely stepped back from the commitment to dismantle racism. The current 8th Principle movement reminds us of our previous commitment to each other and across our congregations, encourages us to build the church to which we want to belong, to live into our promise, and to make building the Beloved Community central to who we are.

The United States has long denied people of color justice, equal opportunity, and freedom. The 8th Principle is our acknowledgment that white supremacy insidiously shows up in every facet of society, including Unitarian Universalism. It is our commitment to do the necessary individual and collective work to disentangle white supremacy from ourselves, our congregation, and our denomination and to ensure Unitarian Universalism and Foothills Unitarian more specifically reflect our vibrant multicultural community.

2020-21 underscored the long history of systemic racism in the United States and, for many, brought to light the need for immediate action. The 8th Principle is one way our Congregation can commit to that action in our core principles.

Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU) and Diverse Revolutionary UU Ministries (DRUUMM) have endorsed the 8th Principle. Nearly 50 congregations have adopted the 8th Principle, and many more are currently in the process, including Jefferson Unitarian in Golden and two Denver congregations (First Universalist and First Unitarian). The UUA aspires for 100 congregations to adopt the 8th Principle before General Assembly 2021 to demonstrate the energy supporting this principle on a national level.

What the 8th Principle Means for the UUA

The 8th Principle process is a congregational, grassroots effort and has no explicit relationship to revisions to the official Seven Principles of the UUA. However, the UUA By-laws require a review of the Principles and Purposes (which are a part of the By-laws) every ten years. The latest round of this cycle has recently begun with the establishment of the Article II Study Commission. They will be doing a thorough review of all our Principles and take into consideration the congregational / grassroots endorsements of the 8th Principle. However, when this process was last conducted a decade ago, after all of the conversations, the revisions were not adopted by the body of the UUA General Assembly as

it is very difficult to get that body to agree on changes to our Principles and other by-laws. As a result, we believe the best way to demonstrate broad support of the integration of the ideas of the 8th Principle into this revision is through this grassroots process congregation-by-congregation. That this process is distinct, however, is one reason why we need not get too wrapped up in the particular wording of how this Principle is stated at this point, as it may undergo additional edits through the Article II Commission process. Their proposal will come up for a vote at the UUA General Assembly in June 2023.

What the 8th Principle Means for Foothills

The 8th Principle is a natural outgrowth of the study and action in which many in our congregation are already engaged. The 8th Principle asks us to be accountable for being a fully Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppression, Multicultural Organization. It affirms our commitment to dismantling racism and building the Beloved Community as a collective so that we integrate this work into everything that we do - in much the same way that we integrate all of our Principles. It would ask us to examine and align our personal and collective values and actions with the commitments of anti-racism and building the Beloved Community. The Board, our Worship Team, our path of spiritual deepening, our Family Ministry, our other justice and serving teams, and every other part of our congregation, would all commit to assessing our programs and priorities and ensuring that they align with these commitments. The 8th Principle would be our covenant to embrace antiracism, confront oppression in all forms, and commit to the continuous work of building the Beloved Community.

For more information on the 8th Principle (including our congregational video), please visit foothillsuu.org/8thprinciple.

What We Will Vote On

"We the congregation of Foothills Unitarian Church covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by building a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

Resolution Supporting Improved Medicare for All

Initiated by Katy Kohnen and Rich Shannon

Submitted by Petition by over 10% of the membership for vote by the whole congregation

At the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, May 23rd, the congregation will vote on a statement of social conscience in support of Improved Medicare for All (IMFA) or a similar not-for-profit, single-payer universal health care program.

Background of this Proposal

The sponsors of this resolution, led by member Katy Kohnen, believe it fits well with our covenant to “help one another” and our vision for building the Beloved Community. Foothills Unitarian has previously had a subcommittee committed to social concerns around healthcare. Members of this earlier committee (including Jennifer Dunkle, Bonnie Inscho, and Dr. Glenn Pearson, MD) have also worked with Colorado Care and the Colorado Foundation for Universal Health Care. [In 1992, the Unitarian Universalist Association passed a general resolution recognizing healthcare as a human right and urging Unitarian Universalist congregations and individuals to support publicly funded universal healthcare.](#)

Rich Shannon, former Assistant City Manager and Fort Collins health care activist with the Colorado Foundation for Universal Health Care, is our area’s coordinator for a national movement encouraging local governments to pass resolutions supporting universal healthcare. Rich’s team has already approached the newly elected Larimer County Commissioners to pass such a resolution. [We invite you to click here to read the Larimer County draft resolution.](#) It lists many facts, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting not-for-profit universal healthcare. The Larimer County Commissioners indicated a willingness to support a resolution, such as the draft linked above, if groups within the community demonstrate support. Nationwide, there is a clear trend that the likelihood of local governments passing such resolutions increases significantly when the request comes from multiple entities, particularly churches. In our area, The Fort Collins Mennonite Fellowship, the League of Women Voters of Larimer County, and other groups have already indicated their support. Rich and his team would also point to our endorsement when approaching other local governments in the Northern Colorado area.

Significant social change always starts from the grassroots. Supporting this resolution is one way we at Foothills Unitarian can be part of reforming the current high-cost, rationing, and unjust health care system and ensuring all Coloradans have access to healthcare as a human right.

What We Will Vote On

“The Foothills Unitarian Church affirms it is a moral imperative and basic human right that all people have access to comprehensive health care, and we encourage the Larimer County Commissioners and other local governments to formally endorse and advocate for a not-for-profit, single-payer, universal health care such as Improved Medicare For All.

The Foothills Unitarian Church calls on the Larimer County Commissioners to advocate for the Governor of Colorado, our state legislators, and our congressional representatives to actively support legislation, such as HR 1976, the Medicare for All Act of 2021, or subsequent versions of the legislation, to ensure comprehensive and affordable health care coverage for all residents of the United States.”