



Foothills Unitarian

LOVE UNITES US ALL

FOOTHILLS UNITARIAN CHURCH
Congregational Meeting Packet
June 5, 2022

Notice of Meeting Annual Congregational Meeting 2022

FOOTHILLS UNITARIAN CHURCH WILL CONVENE ITS 2022 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2022 AT 11:00 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, 5/23/21
 - b. 2022 Budget approval congregational meeting 12/5/21
6. President's Report
 - a. Update on the board's major goals and the Bylaws Revision project
7. Ministry Report
8. Building Expansion Project Update
9. Election of the slate of nominees (vote)
10. Closing Words from Walter Nash as incoming Board President
11. Adjournment

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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 two 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, May 23, 2021](#)

[Minutes from Special Congregational Meeting to Approve Annual Budget, December 5, 2021](#)

Reports from The Board and Its Committees

Board President's Report

Sue Sullivan, President of the Board of Trustees

When we began the 2021-22 board year, we knew this would be an unpredictable and changeable year, with the pandemic shifting into a new phase and the construction of our new sanctuary building looming, and the year was all that, and more.

Unexpected pandemic waves kept requiring flexibility and shifts between in person and on-line services, the board meetings returned to Zoom for much of the year, and the sanctuary ground-breaking date crept further and further out into the year, as construction permitting and other wheels of bureaucracy ground more slowly than expected.

But the goals we set at the start of our board year are in progress or completed, and we are proud of the work we pushed forward in yet another challenging year.

In a deeply appreciated partnership with our Governance Committee, we completed an 18 month project of writing a draft of new church bylaws that are updated to reflect our current size and governance structure. Month by month and Article by Article, we passed the emerging draft back and forth between the governance committee and the board. The committee's detailed research, discernment, and writing made this long-needed update to our foundational document possible; the board served as... well, a sounding board, asking questions and suggesting changes based on our lived experiences with policy-based governance.

Later this summer, the next board will begin holding congregational conversations and informational sessions to finalize the draft bylaws, which as our highest-level-of-authority governing document, must be voted on by the congregation as a whole to take effect. The board intends to take as much time as necessary to allow for congregational review and feedback, before bringing the draft to the congregation for a final vote of approval.

The board of trustees is profoundly grateful to Brian Woodruff, Larry Watson, Sarah Parrish, and Tim Pearson for all the work they have done to help the last several boards transition fully into our new governance role.

A second major board goal was to revise our monitoring schedule and create monitoring tools that not only measure compliance with our board policies, but also generate useful information and feedback for the board and for the Ministry.

In the process of better understanding how we should monitor the board and ministry's compliance with our various policies, we realized we needed to revise many segments of policies throughout the book -- mostly to make them truly monitorable, but also to be explicit about the values we want to be guided by in various potential decision-making circumstances. We are pleased to report that a fully revised monitoring schedule was approved in December and the policy book revisions should be finalized at our June regular board meeting. You will be able to find our updated board policy book on [our board's governance page](#), once it is approved.

Our third goal for the year was to deepen our understanding of our linkage role under policy governance, and begin inhabiting that fourth responsibility we hold as a policy governance board.

For background, in 2017 Foothills began a transition to a policy governance model of congregational governance, a model that better serves large congregations like ours. It frees the board from active management of the day-to-day life of the church and allows it to focus instead on the future needs, growth, and impact of the congregation.

It's been a long and complex journey for the past five boards of trustees, this understanding and living into our four new roles, which are: **to articulate the vision** of the congregation; **to govern through written board policy**; **to monitor compliance with those policies**; and **to conduct linkage** conversations, which can be defined as the art of asking big, future oriented questions and listening to our sources of accountability and authority -- those on whose behalf we live out our mission and vision as a congregation.

This too, will be work that continues to unfold into the next board year -- the convening of meaningful, future-focused conversations with our congregation and with others to whom we are accountable and from whom we derive our authority to govern as a board. These include our community partners, those we serve with our ministries, Fort Collins and Northern Colorado, and the larger UU faith community.

Our board also continued to respond to events that unfolded from past misconduct. When a neighboring congregation, Namaqua UU in Loveland, informed us they were planning to hire the music director we fired in 2017 for professional misconduct, we consulted with our church attorney and our Unitarian Universalist Association staff, to understand our responsibility to share information with them that we had not disclosed outside our walls these past five years.

We communicated to their board about the scope of the original misconduct, which involved multiple, simultaneous and secret affairs with congregants, including two under his direct supervision. We told them of the secondary damage that he caused our congregation by denying the relationships for months, by the false narrative he told to explain his firing, and by not acknowledging the professional boundaries and codes of conduct he broke. We named that their hire would cause fresh harm and confusion in

our congregation. We named that restorative justice involves centering the victims, accepting responsibility, and attempting to repair harms, and that this had not occurred yet.

After their congregation moved forward with the hire, we began what remains an ongoing dialogue with Namaqua's board, facilitated by an outside UU minister specializing in restorative conversations. This facilitation is intended to seek common understanding and points of possible repair and healing between our two congregations.

We are committed to staying open to and engaged in restorative justice and repair of covenant with our closest congregation, and we understand that this is a process that will unfold across successive boards and in its own time. We recognize the deep interconnections between our congregations and the covenantal responsibility we share as UU congregations to [support, admonish](#), and repair with each other when there are breaks in covenant and harms occur.

Lastly, our fiscal stewardship responsibilities are always a big part of our year's work. We refined financial oversight policies and increased our required cash reserves to allow for a better cushion to manage the ebbs and flows of pledge payments and one-time donations. Our contributions that fund the work of this church come in more heavily towards the end of the year, but our staff must be paid every two weeks, so managing that seasonality of giving is always a challenge for churches generally.

This was our second full year of pandemic budgets, and we did well compared to what other churches report nationally, but the extra costs of safely reinventing church and providing online and in person options has taken its toll on our finances. The disengagement of some members who never made the shift to online church and the influx of many new families has also had an impact, and requires a renewal of our stewardship drives and engagement efforts, and we are busy helping to plan those for the coming months as well.

I am grateful for my time serving on the board of trustees, and I'm grateful that it comes with an expiration date as well. There is always so much to do and the work rarely comes to a tidy ending point, especially in a congregation with a vision as ambitious and expansive as the one we cast in those dozens of congregation-wide workshops in the fall of 2018, my first year on the board.

I feel profoundly transformed by this lay leadership experience and the covenantal way we approach it. The way forward is often not clear, but the values that guide our discernment and actions are. I have learned so very much about being in a covenantal community with a profoundly higher purpose. I'm in awe both of what we can achieve together and how well-supported we are as a community with clear and healthy boundaries, shared vision, and heartfelt engagement.

Early on in the board year, president-elect Richie Nelsen realized that the demands of his life and board presidency were not congruent -- that a career, a consulting business, and a toddler would not leave enough room for the work of board presidency.

And so I am very glad for the congregation that Walter Nash has felt called to take on the next board presidency. He brings such a deep and open engagement, thoughtfulness, and commitment to this lay leadership work, and I look forward to the year of expansion and engagement that is ahead of us all at Foothills!

In faith and courageous love,

Sue Sullivan

Governance Committee Bylaws Report

WHY AMEND THE BYLAWS OF FOOTHILLS UNITARIAN CHURCH?

Brian Woodruff, Chair of the Governance Committee

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

The Board and its Governance Committee have prepared a draft bylaw amendment for review and discussion by the congregation. In the drafting work we relied upon guidance from the Unitarian Universalist Association and upon example bylaws from several UU churches of comparable size that use policy-based governance.

The next months are a time for interested members to review the draft and engage the BOT with questions and feedback. Although a vote on the bylaw amendment could take place at a congregational meeting in Fall 2022 at the earliest, the review process may take longer – the final vote will not be rushed.

So, what changes are needed? In a word, streamlining. The current bylaws contain matters that may now be incorporated into the Board's written policies, so those have been removed in the draft amendment. Examples include details of the church vision, mission and values, job descriptions of Board officers, and description of church committees.

What must stay in the bylaws? In essence, our bylaws comprise a legal document associated with Foothills charter as a Colorado non-profit corporation. They inform the public how the church intends to operate as a corporation governed by its members.

Therefore the bylaws should include those matters reserved for action by the full membership, such as:

- 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?
- What is the composition of the Board of Trustees: how many, and how long do they serve?
- How will the Board and its officers be nominated and elected?
- How shall ministers be called or dismissed by the full membership?
- How will the annual budget be approved?

Streamlining means, in short, that if a matter is not required to be in the bylaws of the church 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.

The Board looks forward to engaging with interested members to review the proposed draft amendment and to hear your feedback and questions. An initial question is, “How would members prefer to process this decision prior to a formal vote?”

Nominating Committee Report

Susan MacQuiddy, Chair

The Nominating Committee worked with the Ministry and past lay leaders to develop a slate of qualified candidates with areas of expertise that complement the skills of the current Board of Trustees. This year there are two vacancies on the Board of Trustees, as well as two assignments of current Board members to new roles.

The pandemic has interrupted our leadership development process, which is instrumental in supporting the path to leadership at Foothills. As a result, the slate we are presenting today includes candidates for reassignment of their current roles and a candidate for one of the two open board positions.

We have been unable to identify a qualified candidate for the second open position, and need to spend the next six months doing additional leadership development work to recruit and provide training and other support for a new wave of congregants to move into our many lay leadership roles.

As an interim solution, an consistent with past practices and our bylaws, the Board of Trustees will work with the Nominating Committee in the next two months to identify someone to fill a one-year appointment. The congregation will then be able to elect someone for the remainder of that term at our May 2023 congregational meeting. If you are interested in learning more about lay leadership, please reach out to Rev. Gretchen at gretchen@foothillsuu.org.

The Board job descriptions and committee charters were revised last year, and they continue to reflect the current work of the Board and committees. The Nominating Committee, with the consent of the Board, recommends that the Endowment Committee continue with its current three members, leaving two vacant positions. Work is continuing on an update to our church bylaws and re-aligning the oversight of the endowment fund to fit more effectively into our policy governance structure. When this restructuring process is complete, the Endowment Committee positions will be filled.

I am happy to present to the Congregation the 2022 slate of candidates for the Foothills Board of Trustees. All are highly qualified and able to make significant contributions to the work ahead.

Slate of Candidates for the Board:

1. Diana Hutchinson, who joined Foothills several years ago, and brings her background as an engineer, project manager, and small business owner to the Board.

In addition, the Nominating Committee recommends the following changes to duties for two existing Board Members:

1. Walter Nash, who has served one year as an at-large board member, to move to the position of board president
2. Mary Klecan, who served the remainder of Debbie Gentry's position as an at-large member this past year, to fill the remaining year of Doug Powell's at-large position on the board. Doug resigned last month due to his wife Jenn joining the staff at Foothills.

Current roster of elected lay leaders

Current Board of Trustees (2021-2022)

Sue Sullivan, President

Walter Nash, President-elect and Treasurer

Andrea Delorey, Secretary

Mary Klecan

Linda Kothera

Richie Nelsen

Doug Powell (through April 30, 2022, when he resigned to avoid any potential conflict of interest after his wife Jenn Powell was hired into a staff position.)

Continuing Board of Trustees (2021-2022)

Walter Nash - two years remaining, both as president

Andrea Delorey - one year remaining of a three-year term

Richie Nelsen - two years remaining of a three-year term
 Mary Klecan - serving one year to complete the third year of Doug Powell's term
 Linda Kothera - two years remaining in a three-year term

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

Diana Hutchinson - for three year term

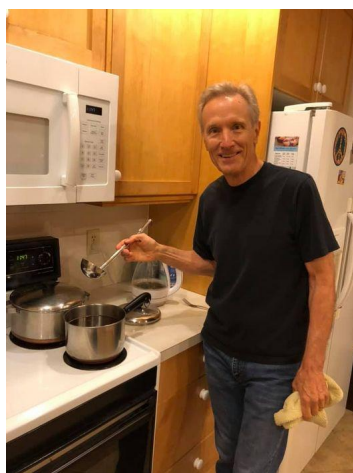
A second open board position will be filled by board appointment over the summer for a one-year term. the remaining two years of that term will be filled by congregational vote at next spring's annual congregational meeting.

The congregation is actively rebuilding its leadership development processes after the pandemic disruption. Please contact Rev. Gretchen Haley if you are interested in exploring leadership as a path of engagement!

Continuing Nominating Committee Members (2021-2022)

Susan MacQuiddy- one year left of a three-year term
 Ben Manvel - two years left of a three-year term
 Christine Engelen - two years left of a three- year term

Biographies of Candidates

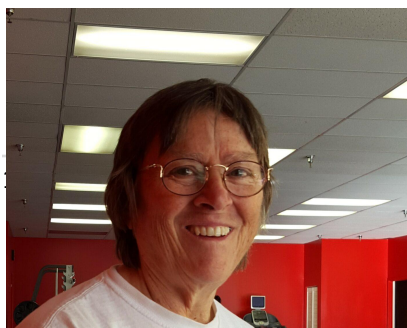


Walter Nash

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

Walter's 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. Walter and Patti 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. They both knew that this was their group and decided to get more involved. They were both on the committee for Sean's installation, and Walter had been in choir for over a year until Covid hit last spring.



Mary Klecan

Mary and her wife, Loretta Bailey joined Foothills in the Fall of 2017. Mary grew up in a large Catholic family in

Albuquerque, New Mexico and joined the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati after high school. She spent the next ten years teaching at the elementary and high school levels primarily in special education in Pueblo, Denver, and Loveland. Upon returning from a seven-month hike of the Pacific Crest Trail, she became the executive director of the Namaqua Center in Loveland, a residential treatment center for abused children. Mary retired after 20 plus years and opened a home repair and painting business in Fort Collins. She loves to hike mountains and canyons, especially the Grand Canyon, where she has planned and led groups up and down (actually, down and then up) the canyon over the last twelve years. Mary loves and feels right at home at Foothills with its triple focus on spirituality, activism, and community.



Diana Hutchinson

Diana Hutchinson wants to help create a world where everyone sees themselves and others as worthy of love, belonging, and redemption.

Her career has included service in the Air Force and work as an engineer and project manager. Currently, she and her husband Chris have a small business, Trebuchet Group, where their team helps people work together better. Diana has roots in the Lutheran church, and she joined Foothills a few years

ago after realizing she was really a closet Unitarian. She has 4 children, two of whom are still at home. Her latest personal mantra is "how might we?"

Reports from Ministry

Senior Minister's Report

Rev. Gretchen Haley

Note:

Since 2019, when our budget year changed to align with the calendar year, we have now held two annual congregational meetings - in spring and winter. The spring meeting is our governance annual meeting - as we continue to operate board terms and board business on a July - June schedule. The spring meetings include elections of new officers, a thorough board update, and any major governance business. The winter meeting, on the other hand, functions as a ministry annual meeting. The focus includes reviewing the strategy for the coming year, passing the budget, honoring the deaths, celebrating the births, and receiving a thorough report and review of the impact of our shared ministry from the prior year. If you missed our December meeting (or would like a refresher), please be sure to check out [this slide presentation](#) for a review of our 2021 shared ministry. Paper copies are available in the office by request. This ministry report

the spring Congregational Meeting packet is a mid-year check rather than a full-year review.

May 26, 2022

Dear Foothills Community,

I write this just a few days after another tragedy of gun violence in our country, this time in an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas. I am grateful to Lauren Farley, our Family Ministry and Engagement Coordinator, who stepped up with words of comfort, grief, and anger in our social media and church communications immediately following the news.

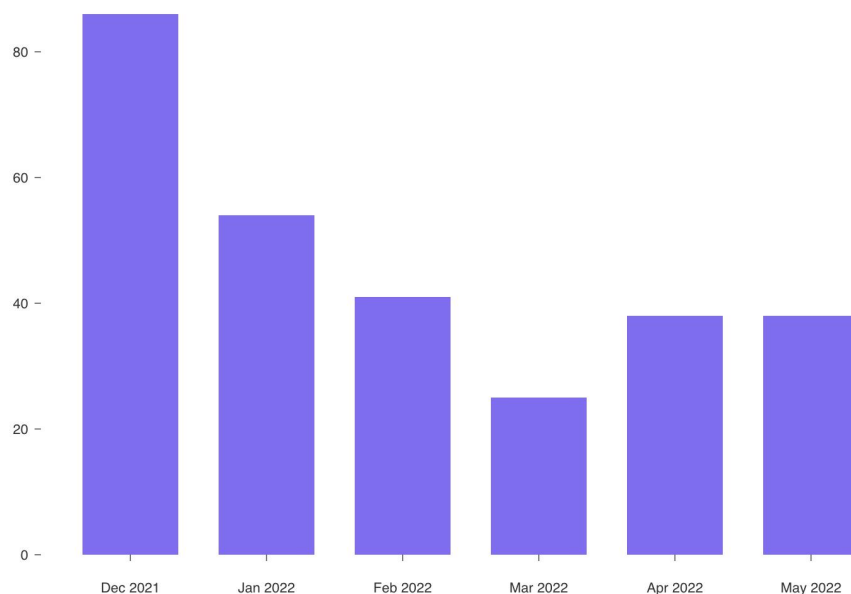
I am grateful, especially because a part of me just could not bring myself to go through the cycle of heartache and helplessness once again. It is the pattern of our age - not just with gun violence but also with attempts to address climate change, racial injustice, economic inequality, and the COVID19 pandemic. If you feel like it is too much, you are right.

Which is why I have never been more grateful for our church community or more proud of the work we do. Because in the midst of heartache and helplessness, you, the Foothills community, continue to open your hearts with generosity and find ways to act with integrity and imagination.

Caring Ministries

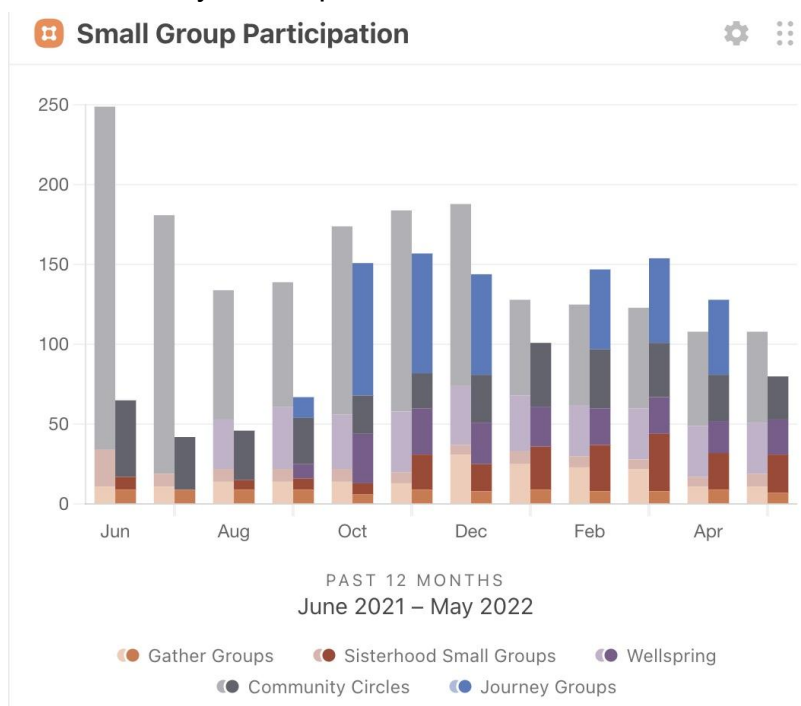
So much of this response remains mostly invisible as it happens in small, intimate acts of care. Especially through the work of our Caring Team - a network of people overseen by Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink and including our Caring Listeners, our meals providers, and those who create and deliver our Caring Kits. It also includes those who support our memorials, which has been an active team this spring as we have held a number of memorials that were delayed during the pandemic.

Although we aren't able to capture all of our caring-related moments in our congregation, this graph provides a small snapshot of this ministry over the last six months. It counts the individual people our caring team reaches through direct listening outreach, meal provision, or caring kits delivered within a given month.



Small Groups

In addition to this one-on-one care, our congregation has also been caring for one another through the practice of small groups. These groups have included: Journey groups, Wellspring groups, Sisterhood circles, Gather Groups, and small groups of the Circles still meeting. Over the holidays, it also included our grief-focused support group, Tangled Blessings. Many of our members report that these groups have made all the difference over the last two+ years of pandemic.



Journey groups were a new group we added last fall as an experience that would be less intensive than Wellspring but still allows for deeper connections and reflections than the conversations that happen at events or on Sundays. Since they began, over 100 people have participated in a Journey group.

These groups were also held in a wider community of support through events such as the Senior Supper, the Sisterhood Luncheons, and gatherings for Parents. These gatherings came back in full force in April and May - which has been a much-needed boost of joy and connection for all.



Justice Ministries

Even as we cared for each other, we also continued to extend our reach and ministries out into our wider community through the work of our justice teams. These ministries currently include: Climate Justice, Racial Justice and Healing, Immigration Justice (especially through the work of Sanctuary Everywhere), Peace and Global Justice (especially with Partners for Peace and UUs for Justice in the Middle East), as well as our serving teams, Faith Family Hospitality, Habitat for Humanity, and Food Bank.

These ministries each work in partnership with a wide network of community organizations to extend the reach of our mission. We are especially grateful for the partnership of La Cocina, La Familia, ISAAC, Fuerza Latina, Alianza NorCo, Homeward Alliance, Food Bank for Larimer County, Habitat for Humanity, Family Housing Network,

Interfaith Power and Light, Trees, Water, People, and most of all the BIPOC Alliance, with whom we have been most directly investing in partnership over the past year.

We began our relationship with the BIPOC Alliance as they formed in the wake of George Floyd's murder in June 2020, when they asked Foothills to be their fiscal sponsor. We agreed to provide this support and have continued to develop our relationship since then. BIPOC Alliance now utilizes Foothills' building as their primary office and event space. Anyone from the community - including Foothills - is welcome to join in their healing ceremonies with their leaders each month, held on Foothills' campus, and you may see their staff in our shared office space throughout the week. We also continue to provide fiscal management and oversight, and consultation for their growing organization as they request.

Starting in February 2021, our justice teams have been growing their capacity to coordinate across their particular focus areas and to consider an intersectional lens. Intersectionality allows us to consider the interdependence and interconnectedness of the various efforts toward justice and the ways any one issue is often deeply intertwined with all of the other issues. The leaders of each team have been meeting regularly since last year in a group called Intersections. This coordinated work of our justice teams led to a strategic planning day in May, where the teams identified specific work and goals across our justice efforts for the remainder of 2022.



Change, Challenge, and Growth

All of this good and ongoing work does not mean these days have been without challenge or that our congregation has been untouched by struggle. Church is an institution that works especially because it invites people into steady habits of relationship, service, and giving. And over the last two and a half years, nearly everything at Foothills has been, in one way or another, in flux. And this comes after a longer period of ongoing transition and change that our congregation has experienced over the last decade.

Sometimes in churches, we speak about growth numerically - the increased numbers of people we are reaching and serving. We have experienced numeric growth in the last decade. But even more significantly, this has been a period of profound spiritual and emotional growth - the sort of growth that comes from experiencing discomfort, struggle, and loss. Or at least, it does when we are able to stay in relationship, carve out new meaning, and discover new purpose and possibility on the other side of struggle. This is the great challenge and opportunity in these times.

Sunday Services and Music Ministries

Most impactfully, the last two and a half years of pandemic shut-downs, pivots, and plans made and remade have repeatedly disrupted our ways of gathering. After 18 months of being entirely online, we returned to in-person services in September 2021. While the early days of being online in 2020 saw strong attendance, the arrival of the vaccines saw a major drop in online engagement all around, as people focused on reunions with family and friends, delayed travel, and other IRL (in real life) activities.

Additionally, the great return to in-person services in September was not exactly as triumphant as we would have liked. The Delta wave of COVID hit at that same time, impacting both attendance and our precautions (e.g., we waited for group singing, and for shared coffee hour).



September through December, we worked to re-build systems and volunteer teams to create and lead Sunday morning in-person services, even as we continued to produce and lead entirely online services. It took us a while to get the building ready and then ensure the setup, take down, and cleaning were back in place. Not to mention getting the A/V system back and ready to go. There were a few bugs along the way, but we are proud of the innovations in the three distinct in-person services we held in the fall and then again in late February through April in 2022 (after the omicron wave).



These services provided extremely responsive ministry for particular populations in our extended community - the 8:30 provided a “traditional” UU service, the 10:00 provided a more relational and intergenerationally friendly service, and the 9:00 online service continues to meet those who prefer or need to remain all online.

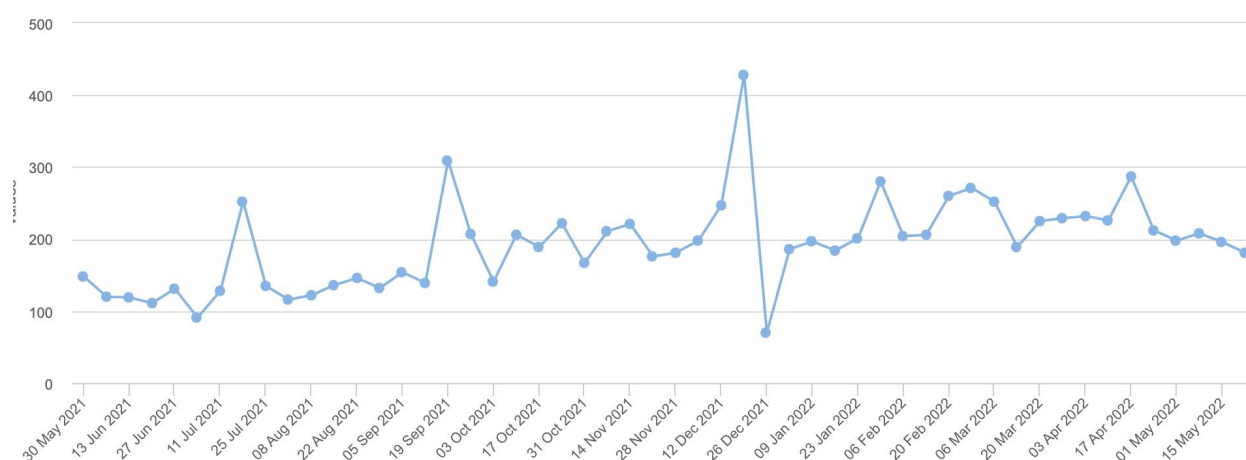


Throughout the pandemic, nothing was more inhibited in their regular patterns than our Foothills choir. While many of our regular singers gave online recording a solid effort and produced some beautiful music for us, most would agree that this experience is not why they participate in choir. Choir is, at its best, an experience of being in the same room together, hearing each other's voices, and creating music in community. It was a huge loss for our choir members personally and collectively when this was not possible. This loss was compounded by the loss of two longtime beloved choir members in the last year: Wayne Phillips and Bob Mollison.



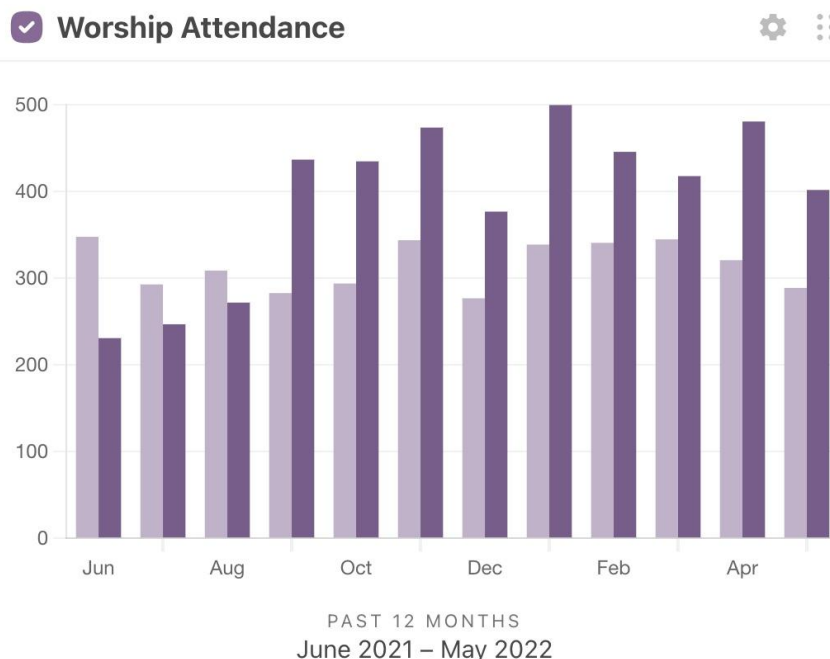
These experiences made the return to in-person singing - even while masked and distanced - all the more important for our choir over the last eight months. And it made their return to in-person singing on Sunday that much more powerful on Easter Sunday.

Given all that has happened in the last three years, we decided as we moved into 2022 to stop comparing our Sunday attendance to pre-pandemic numbers and instead focus on moving forward, taking 2021 as a baseline. It is too complicated to make comparisons and fails to take into account the significant progress we are making in doing this often-totally-new thing we are trying to do on Sundays. With that in mind, the news of Sunday participation as compared to 2021 is good. The graph below shows weekly participation both online and in person from May 2021 through May 2022. While we are seeing some predictable reduced attendance as we move into the summer months and have fewer service times, we still see steady participation on Sunday.



We also continue to see a high number of newcomers every Sunday, and at least one person arriving to the building every Sunday saying it's their first time since before the pandemic.

The graph below shows each Sunday's count cumulative across a month without duplicating any individuals. So, for example, in April, nearly 500 people attended at least one Sunday either online or in person.



Alongside all of this good news, we have recognized that producing and staffing these distinct services has been taxing our system. We completed the year realizing we needed to shift around resources to meet the ongoing needs better. Especially with both Eleanor VanDeusen and Rev. Sean Neil-Barron taking sabbatical, we realized we needed to shift to one in-person service and one online service a little earlier than usual - the first Sunday in May. This helped with the workload and makes the ministry more sustainable - but it also means that families with children at home are much less likely to attend. As a result, we look forward to re-starting our 10:00 service as soon as we have sufficient resources, either in August or September.



We also realized that we needed to re-invigorate our volunteer base for Sunday mornings. We have begun re-thinking how we recruit and better support the team of people who show up to make Sunday morning services happen - both in person and online. We are eager for new, regular partners in greeting, so if this is something you can help with, we hope you will contact Jenn Powell at jenn@foothillsuu.org and let her know.

Staffing Shifts

Speaking of Jenn, her transition from longtime lay leader to staff member was a major event in our staff team in the last six months. Especially as we have learned important lessons about boundaries in staff and membership over the last five years, we did not take this transition lightly or without consideration. You can find the full details about this transition in [this post](#) in case you missed it. Ultimately we are incredibly grateful for Jenn taking over as Operations and Events Manager, reporting directly to our Director of Operations and Finance, Katie Watkins. Jenn is adding a key layer of support in coordinating all events, managing the building, and recruiting and supporting volunteers as we move through this stage of our transition.



This is one of a few key staffing shifts we've made in the last few months. We have also been grateful for Lauren Farley, who took over Engagement and Newcomer Coordination after Amy Gage resigned last December. This brought her to full-time employment, as she continued as the half-time Family Ministry Coordinator. We are especially grateful for her leadership and presence while Eleanor VanDeusen is on sabbatical through mid-July.

Rev. Elaine Aron Tenbrink has also joined us - temporarily in her case - in a full-time role, while Rev. Sean is on sabbatical through September. During this time, Rev. Elaine - in addition to her regular role as lead for pastoral care, is now overseeing groups and working with Lauren on membership engagement.

Note that Eleanor VanDeusen's sabbatical was awarded to her in recognition of her 20 years of service to Foothills, and runs from mid-April through mid-July. Rev. Sean's sabbatical, which is earned as a standard part of ordained minister's work at the rate of one month per year of service, runs from May through September. Here they are on their last Sundays before sabbatical began.



We have also been very grateful for Jennifer Jolly who has been serving as an interim Music Coordinator after Christopher Watkins Lamb resigned his position to serve as the full-time lead chaplain at Poudre Valley Hospital. Jennifer has provided key communication across our music participants, especially with choir and individual vocalists and musicians during Sunday services. She has also brought her beautiful voice and musical talents to our Sunday services!

Music Director Hire

After a series of interims in our music leadership staff role since early 2017, we are thrilled to have finally moved forward on a permanent full-time hire. After working with a consulting firm to gather feedback from the congregation in late 2021, our staff project lead, Kelsey DiAstra worked with me to convene a search team filled with people who had expressed interest as a part of that feedback. Gretchen O'Dell, Chris Hutchinson, Georgia Peebles, Jack Morgan, and Kara Shobe began meeting in early 2022 and worked with us to create a job description and to screen and interview candidates. From this process, we narrowed our candidates to two finalists who will be visiting Foothills and Fort Collins in early June. Our hope is to have an offer to one of these candidates by late June with a projected start date of late August or early August. Please be sure to look for more information about these visits and participate in helping us select this important position for our congregation!

Holding Complexity and Seeking Healing

This music director hire is important not just because music is a key part of our Sunday services and overall church culture but also because it will mark a turning point in our congregation after the 2017 disclosure of misconduct by our former music director. While we have done a lot of really good healing work since that time, some of the pain of the past was opened again in late 2021 when our nearby UU congregation, Namaqua

UU in Loveland decided to hire this music director. There's a lot of complexity in this conversation that can't be properly contained in a document like this, but I don't think it would be a full picture of the last few months without saying something about these challenges.

Most of all, I want to acknowledge the five different boards who have been involved in the extremely difficult work of learning about and responding to professional misconduct over the last five years. These are Foothills members, and this is their church, and this work is more than they should ever be asked to sign up for. At the same time, they have met this complex, often extremely difficult work, with integrity, courage, and care in every case. I have borne witness to their discernment over these years with gratitude, awe, and profound respect, as they have each determined the best way to proceed in line with our values and with an unshakable sense of duty for the care entrusted to them. This includes their work, as they have been in conversation with our sister congregation since last December.

Over these months, I have seen five main values at work in the board's conversations and direction:

1. The health of our Unitarian Universalist movement as a whole - across and beyond congregations.
2. Foothills' long-term relationship with Namaqua, and the importance of keeping an eye on the bigger picture past this single moment.
3. The impact of this hire on the victims of this particular misconduct, as well as any of our members who have been victims of misconduct in other settings, especially in other churches.
4. Protecting our congregation from liability, especially as advised by our attorney and our insurance carrier.
5. Transparency within our congregation, while balancing the desire not to keep congregational focus on this issue which has already taken up so much of our time.

It is my privilege to serve and lead in partnership with these lay leaders and learn with and from them as they continue to seek not quick resolution but deeper and fuller healing for our congregations and our faith.

The other thing I want to acknowledge is that this whole situation brings a lot of pain and grief for some in our congregation, regardless of the details. There are friendships across our communities that are impacted. There are members that no longer attend

Foothills that we miss. There are a lot of rumors that - especially in the context of our wider culture's addiction to fast half-truths - can be confusing, off-putting, and hurtful.

There are no quick fixes, and the only way out is through - *and* my best sense of our way forward is to keep moving forward. If you have questions about what has happened, please talk to the Board or to Rev. Elaine, who is holding this process as the lead for pastoral care. If you have questions about me, or my role, please talk to me.

The other invitation I make is for us to keep our eyes on the ministry needed in the world right now - which is enormous. The work of tending to trauma and pain in the greater interdependent web of life - in whatever small or big way is our piece to tend to - will also have an impact on tending to our own pain. Finding joy and gratitude in the work that is ours will help transform pain into meaning and hope.

Ministry for the Future

Given the rise of anti-LGBTQ legislation and rhetoric, the continued rise of white nationalism and the cracks in our democracy, as well the threat of the climate crisis - all within the context of the global pandemic that has caused so much loss and pain - I believe that the world has never needed Unitarian Universalism's message and mission more.



From this sense, our congregation has initiated new and bold ministries, including the Be More Gay campaign, the implementation of the 8th Principle task force, and the Green Sanctuary task force, over the last few months. We are also seeing the beginnings of a Reproductive Justice team and conversations about how best we can

respond to gun violence. These teams - all still seeking additional members, so please let me know if you are interested in joining! - are part of a future-oriented move, focused on creatively and positively responding to the degrading forces of our days.

We are also exploring what it means to do ministry both online and in-person and to create a church where you can belong and serve and grow, even if you do not live in Northern Colorado or never visit our physical campus.

This multi-platform exploration is a part of our next-stage work to welcome and integrate all the many folks who have been joining us online and, more recently, in person since March 2020. We have scheduled a long-overdue welcome ceremony for new members and hope all of you who love what we are doing and are ready to join in more officially - will talk to us about membership. Please connect with Lauren Farley at lauren@foothillsuu.org for more information!

We continue to look for new ways to support families as they emerge from the challenges of the pandemic. With this in mind, we are also excited about our new support group for parents of disabled and/or neurodivergent kids that will kick off this month, and we are looking forward to offering two weeks of day camp for younger kids over the summer months.

These ministries are all a part of the foundation on which we can build our future. This is especially fitting in this year, where we will finally build our new, beautiful sanctuary. The Groundbreaking ceremony on May 17th was a wonderful mark of the start of a new era. For as long as I've been at Foothills, we've talked about how much we need a new building, and how much the building inhibits what we can do. It is hard to imagine what it will be like when that is no longer the case, but that is the great opportunity of our age. We are a people that need not be caught in cycles of heartache or helplessness. We can work together to bring more love and courage into the world - one small step at a time. Let's keep moving forward, together.

With love, and gratitude,

Gretchen

Financial Report

Rev. Gretchen Haley, Senior Minister
Katie Watkins, Director of Finance and Operations

2021 EOY Financials

Our expenses were mostly in line with our budget in the first 3 quarters. In the 4th quarter, we had some unexpected and unavoidable expenses due to launching in-person church, rentals, and staffing. We ended the year with a net loss of \$45,000.



We also funded the History Project as needed to finish their job, bringing our total loss to approximately \$50,000.

As such our operating reserves were reduced to \$115,000, which represents about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a month's expenses and is below our internally set policy for 2 months minimum reserves.

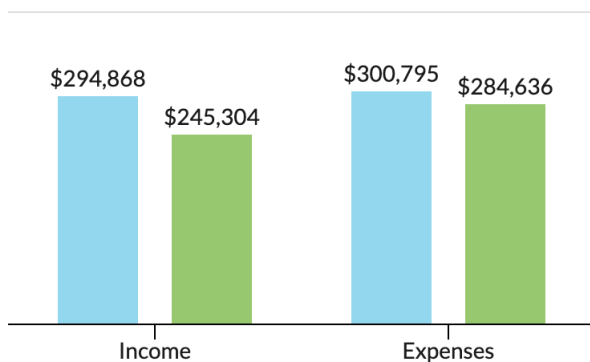
2022 First Quarter Financials (January - March 2022)

2022 is proving to be a tight year from a budget standpoint. While our expense management has been good so far, we are **currently \$60,000 underfunded in pledges**. Because we are nearly six months into the year the value of that as a monthly pledge has a bigger impact, almost double.



Budget vs. Actual

Jan-Mar Budget January-Mar Actual



*Excludes Capital Campaign Income.



Pledge Giving

Year	Received YTD	Pledged
2022	\$155,964	\$619,771
2021	\$171,863	660,905

10% UNDER BUDGETED PLEDGE COMMITMENT

25% PLEDGE BUDGET FULFILLMENT

While we expect to receive about \$100k in the Employee Retention Credit in the next couple of months, those funds have already been budgeted. We are grateful for these one-time funds, but it is important to recognize the role they have played over the last 3 years in stabilizing our budget during the pandemic. We need to increase annual giving by approximately \$250,000 to maintain current programming and staffing in 2023 and beyond.

Historically, there has always been a decrease in donations over the summer, so if you are already pledging, we appreciate your faithfulness in giving. We will be launching a fundraising campaign over the summer and fall to close the gap - but if you have not yet pledged or set up recurring giving, we'd love your support as soon as you are able. Similarly, if you are able to increase your giving, please let us know.

If you are interested in seeing our Profit and Loss Reports, Balance Sheets, or any additional financial reports, please reach out to Katie Watkins at katie@foothillsuu.org.

Finally, we want to thank our Finance Team, Erik Martinson and Tom Rhodes. Tom and Erik have been supporting in improving our financial reporting and practices in the best interest of the church, as well as providing important oversight of quarterly financials.

Building Expansion Report

Katie Watkins, Director of Finance and Operations

The Building Expansion Project continues to move along. We are hopeful that in the next couple of weeks we will finally get our permit to build from the city, and expect on-site action to begin at the beginning of July. In the meantime, we have had plenty of projects to keep us busy, including planning our groundbreaking that took place on May 17th! We had over 150 people in attendance and it was a really special occasion.



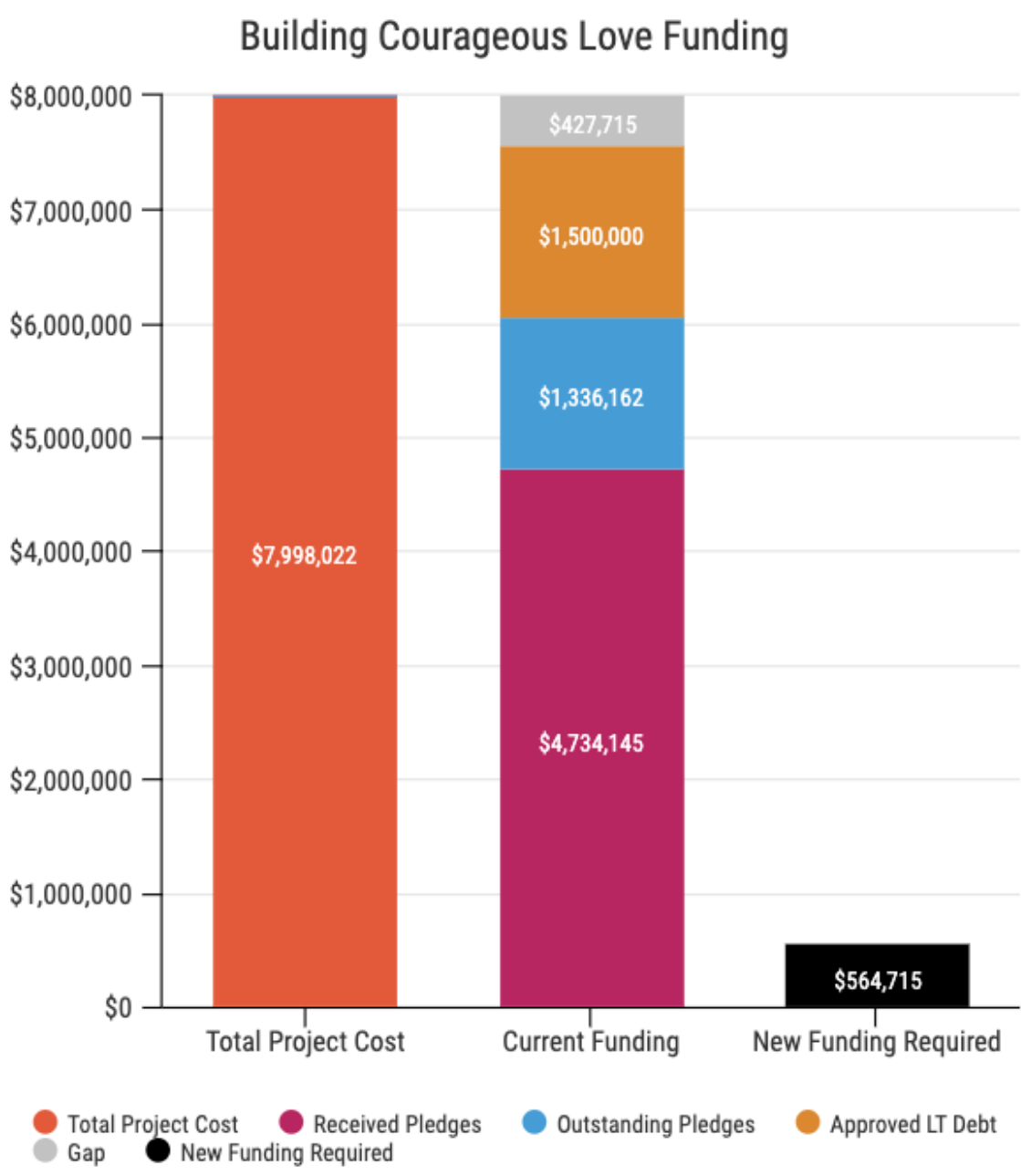
Budget & Loan

We have worked hard to manage the budget during the unprecedented market reactions to the pandemic, and are proud of a remarkable job well done by the Building Expansion Team in this area. However, there are some expenses that have significantly impacted the budget.

Approved Budget: \$7.8M

Current Budget w/out required contingency: \$7,800,00

Current Budget w/ required 5% contingency: \$7,998,022



\$564,715 represents a net loss on invested funds (\$137,000) as well as the increase in budget.

Primary Cost Increase Areas:

- \$90,000 over AV Budget, due part to inflation, part to expanded needs for simulcasting
- \$140,000 increase in City of Fort Collins Fees over budget
- \$660,000 increased construction costs

Progress/Timeline

We are moving through the final stages of permitting, and while an actual timeline is not available, Ewers Architects has suggested the following timeline as a realistic timeline:

- May 6 – completed the recording process
- May 27 – completed the Zoning Dept review for the building permit process
- June 1 – Gas line relocation (required before start of build)
- June 5 – receive comments from other departments (building dept will be complete by this time)
- June 12 – design team resubmits, addressing any comments from the other departments
- June 15 – receive final approval from all departments, securing the building permit

Once the permit is received, our General Contractor will move in within a few days, setting up their trailers and fencing. Early on work will begin with ground prep, dirt work, etc. We do not expect the building to be impacted until the beginning of July, however, the patio space may be affected earlier.

Many thanks to the Building Expansion Team who manages this project diligently behind the scenes. Thanks to Chris Bettlach, Margaret Cottam, Jerry Hanely, and Peg MacMorris for all of their hard work!