

Annual Meeting Minutes  
May 22, 2022

*Note: The 2022 Annual Meeting was held as a hybrid meeting, with some participants attending in person in Lyon Chapel and others participating via videoconferencing (Zoom) to accommodate the continuing health threat posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.*

**Welcome and Orientation**

In Moderator Jami Jordan's unanticipated absence, Alternate Moderator Marilyn Tressell welcomed in-person and virtual attendees to the Annual Meeting beginning at 12:45pm. Parish Board Chair Bob Williamson explained how the hybrid meeting would be conducted, and previewed the agenda.

At approximately 1:00pm. Clerk Karla Baehr confirmed that more than 31 members had joined the meeting, the minimum number required to achieve a quorum which is 15% of active members. She explained that a larger quorum would be required for the vote on the Annual Budget because the budget as proposed will require a withdrawal from the endowment. First Parish Bylaws require that any vote to withdraw funds from the endowment requires a one-third quorum, or in this case, 67 of our 202 members.

Rev Lisa offered a Land Acknowledgment, lit the chalice, and read *We are Connected* by Leslie Jordan. Together, members read the First Parish Mission Statement and Ground Rules:

- One speaker at a time
- Listen with an open mind
- Speak for yourself ("I")
- Tell your truths and let others tell theirs

**Routine Business**

Parish Board Chair Bob Williamson presented the Annual Report for 2021-22. Members of the Board and Rev Lisa recognized continuing and out-going Board members and other long-time members who have stepped down from leadership positions this year:

- Continuing Board members: Alfred Brownell, Jen Guillemin, Jody Leader, John Mignano, and Margaret Williams
- Departing Board members: Karla Baehr, Micaela Coady, and Bob Williamson
- Other longtime leaders: Sue Andrews, Jeff Cadow, Ann Dinsmoor, Elizabeth McIntire and Kristin McIntire

After discussion, members voted to approve the following actions:

- Approve the Agenda for this Annual Meeting
- Accept New Members:
  - Grace Huang
  - Luciano Lima
  - Amelia Szymkowicz

- Mark VanDerzee
- Sasha VanDerzee
- Kiara Zani
- Elect Officers and Committee Members, as required by Bylaws
  - Parish Board:
    - Nancy Clark
    - Lori Day (one-year term)
    - Kathryn Kirshner
    - Ed Page
  - Officers:
    - Jami Jordan (Moderator)
    - Marilynn Tressel (Alternate Moderator)
    - Margaret Williams (Treasurer)
    - Nancy Clark (Clerk)
  - Nominating Committee
    - Jeff Cadow (Member-at-Large)
- Approve Minutes from the May 23, 2021 virtual Annual Meeting

### **Budget for 2022-23**

Treasurer Margaret Williams presented the Parish Board’s 2022-23 budget, highlighting changes from last year, including:

- Increased rental income and decreased pledge income
- Funds for a two-year intern minister
- Funds to support the minister’s sabbatical
- A 7% raise for our Music Director as recognition of his exceptional long-term service
- Creation of a new position of Director of Family and Community Engagement

Nathan Freitas presented the rationale for the new position of Director of Family and Community Ministries.

Members discussed and took votes on whether or not to have the small group budget discussions called for in the agenda. Ultimately, members decided to forego small group discussions and proceed directly to a vote.

Some members expressed concern that the meeting format and process was not meeting the congregation’s aspirations for inclusion. Some concluded that in-person participants’ voices were being privileged. And some participants felt they were being valued as “votes” not as participants in meaningful dialogue. At one member’s suggestion, it was agreed that the chat entries from online participants be included with the minutes.

After discussion, members voted to adopt the budget and permit a 5.8% draw from endowment: 73 in favor, 4 opposed, 1 abstention (including 5 early ballot “yes” votes)

## Resolution on Repair and Reparations

On behalf of its co-sponsors, the Parish Board and Racial Justice Action Committee, Board member Jody Leader presented *A Resolution on Repair and Reparations*:

*To learn, acknowledge and work to repair the harm done to Black and Indigenous people, we the community of First Parish in Brookline covenant to continue to learn about, acknowledge and work to repair the historic and ongoing moral and material harm to Black and Indigenous people and communities. This harm has resulted from centuries of subjugation and systemic institutional policies and practices that have led to significant racial gaps in wealth, health, criminal punishment, education, and enfranchisement. During this journey, we commit to be guided by and be in relationship with the leadership of Black and Indigenous organizations and individuals.*

RJAC member Ron Wilkinson led the ensuing discussion which focused what obligations First Parish could be incurring if the resolution were adopted. Members then voted to adopt the resolution, as presented: 70 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions (including 5 early ballot “yes” votes).

### Closing

Bob Williamson applauded the online presentations from the team developing the FY 2022-23 budget and the plan for the new position of Director of Family and Community Ministries.

Officers offered to stay online for an additional 15 minutes after adjournment as a post meeting opportunity for those interested to “chat”.

After Rev Lisa extinguished the chalice and offered a closing reading, members voted to adjourn the meeting at 2:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karla Baehr  
Clerk of the Parish

### Addendum: chat entries from online participants

#### Welcome and Introduction

From Kiara Zani (she/her/hers): Link to Annual Report with Agenda  
<https://firstparishinbrookline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/2022-fpb-annual-report-rev1.pdf>

From numerous people: Sound problems

From numerous people (10 minutes later) Sound much better

#### Budget

From Kristen Mcintire : I'm not sure where best to direct questions in this format but I would like to ask when the last time was that the

membership #/congregation size was assessed to ensure we are still within the salary ranges set by the UUA. Based on the numbers just shown we have moved from Midsize 2 down to Midsize 1 between 2019 and now, which means the ranges have changed. I am happy to see an increase for Keith but by the UUA salary guidance he is still extremely underpaid for his position in comparison for the ministerial salary, as an example, and this is not equitable. Are there plans beyond this 7% increase to continue to bring the music director salary within fair ranges?

Additionally, how is time off determined for our music director?

Here is the UUA file that lists compensation for all positions within our geo index: [https://www.uua.org/files/2022-01/salary\\_recs\\_22-23\\_geo6.pdf](https://www.uua.org/files/2022-01/salary_recs_22-23_geo6.pdf)

- From Kiara Zani (she/her/hers) : I think it is very important to have small group discussion today
- From Kristen Mcintire : agreed, advocating for the people online here
- From Kiara Zani (she/her/hers) : those of us attending virtually are having a real hard time hearing
- From Elizabeth : I agree
- From Kristen Mcintire : we also tend to try to squash discussion opportunities as a trend, we need to stop doing this
- From George & Melinda Maryniuk : No need for breakout
- From Elena Garofoli (she/her) : I think we should have breakout
- From Tara Washburn (she/her) : no need for breakout
- From Elena Garofoli (she/her) : it has been hard to hear online
- From Sally Dwyer : I'm OK without a small group discussion.
- From Tara Washburn (she/her) : I agree with Sue! I would vote in favor of the budget. Less time is better.
- From Eliza Blanchard : I also feel that we can do without a small group discussion given all the opportunities to discuss this issue.
- From William Dwyer : I agree with Sue. I can't hear most of the presentation.
- From Ann Eldridge Malone she/her : is it a simple majority that decides this?
- From Elizabeth : We need to think carefully about equity and inclusion here. When we vote to eliminate the small group with a majority of people in person, and we don't have a majority of people voting that way online, it strikes me that we have privileged those in person over those attending remotely.
- From Margie Beal : Please raise your physical hand for the next vote instead of using the zoom hand raise feature. Thank you!
- From Sue Andrews : Can't hear what she is saying
- From Margie Beal : Can't hear the speaker at all
- From Margie Beal : And no idea who is speaking
- From Prilla S Brackett : I can't hear this speaker.
- From Kristen Mcintire : I agree with Elizabeth, the people joining online may as well leave and then we won't have a quorum to vote anyway at this point. If you are literally asking people to attend just so that votes can happen, I would advocate to remove this entire virtual experience as it is not equitable.
- From Gene TG (she/ her's) : I can hear the speaker but don't know who it is

From Sue Andrews : Can you summarize what she is saying once she is finished?

From Eliza Blanchard : I agree with Sue.

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : About sustainability and the endowment

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : She's worried about financial sustainability and declining membership - doesn't see how that is accounted for in the budget

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : Eleanor Clarkson was the speaker?

From Keira Cronin : Yes

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : Laura is speaking now about outreach and building community as a path toward sustainability

From Sasha Abby VanDerzee and Mark VanDerzee : We can hear you.

From Elena Garofoli (she/her) : Bob, you are the only person I can hear clearly

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : Laura says that is reflected in the budget

From Eliza Blanchard : Yes, Bob is very easy to understand.

From Margie Beal : bob - we had a majority of online people on that last vote

From Ann Eldridge Malone she/her : But it was a majority online, too. I did not vote yes but 22 voted yes I recall hearing out of 34

Eliza Blanchard : Thanks, Ann, for those facts.

From Sue Andrews : I don't feel in any way that those present in person are privileged.

From Elizabeth : I didn't hear the count, Ann. Thank you.

From Madeline Fine she/her : Marge said it was a majority and it was on line people voting

From Kristen Mcintire : The amount of time spent talking about eliminating the small groups could have just been a discussion that would have been done by now. The trend of this congregation even when it is 100% in person is to squash discussion, which is what I am trying to point out

From Eliza Blanchard : We're forgetting all of the opportunities before this meeting to meet and discuss the budget. I don't understand.

From Prilla S Brackett : what are we voting one??

From Tara Washburn (she/her) : I only see 8-10 raised hands online for 5 minutes of discussion

From Ann Eldridge Malone she/her : and we should learn and grow from this. I appreciate Kristin's comments very much

From Rev. Lisa (she, her) : That vote was to reinstate the small discussion groups.

From Rev. Lisa (she, her) : It failed.

From Madeline Fine she/her : can someone repeat what Martha's muffled comment was?

From Ann Eldridge Malone she/her : can this document be put on the screen, please?

From Kiara Zani (she/her/hers) : Martha was advocating for Keith to get some time off, which I whole-heartedly support! She said "he has been the glue" for us through many changes and he has been!

From Eliza Blanchard : Martha was affirming Kristin's observation of the value and loyalty Keith has shown and that he deserves more recompense in money and time.

#### Repair and Reparations Resolution

From Kiara Zani (she/her/hers) : Here is the resolution:  
<https://firstparishinbrookline.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/resolution-repair-restore.pdf>

From Paul McLean (he/him/his) : Thank you Ann. I couldn't agree more. Well said.

From Prilla S Brackett : Brava Ann!

From Sue Andrews : Can someone summarize what Betsy is saying? Can't hear very well.

From Ann Eldridge Malone she/her : Thank you for the support I feel for my heartfelt comments... <3

From Kiara Zani (she/her/hers) : Is there a monetary commitment woven into this resolution? I am curious what will be the quantifiable impact of making this resolution.

From Ann Eldridge Malone she/her : "guided" does not compel us abandon our responsibility to decide for our community, but doing so after being open to being "guided by...". I disagree with breaking it up or changing the language

From Kiara Zani (she/her/hers) : In other words, how are we insuring this is not just lip service?

From Sue Andrews : Thank you Ron. Whatever you did with the mic, it worked well for the sound!

From Elena Garofoli (she/her) : I find Betsy's comments unnecessary. It almost feels to me insulting to people of color said, of course, from a privileged white women

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : I am 100% + supportive of this resolution and am grateful to the group that has brought us to this place and to the board for supporting them

From Margie Beal : Everyone please raise your physical hands for the vote, not the zoom hand, thanks!

#### Assessment and Appreciation

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : Hybrid is always clunky - at least in my experience to date - and requires that we all extend grace

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : Thank you Elena - I had a similar feeling deep in my being

From Ann Eldridge Malone she/her : What Gene said!!

From Eliza Blanchard : Well done to everyone who put this together! I agree about the need for grace, GT.

From Gene TG (she/ her's) : The presentation by Nate and the group recommending the new position was one of the best presentations I have ever read. I urge you to go to the FPB website and look at it!

From Prilla S Brackett : I think the hybrid worked OK. We really need to improve how those of us online can HEAR. Thank you so much!!

From Madeline Fine she/her : Have a blessed day everyone

From First Parish : Here is the presentation on the Director of Family and Community Engagement that Nate prepared and Gene recommended  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/lbVI8HrpMchgdUBeYsLPk0BX-Q2VS5Raw/view>