

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lawrence  
January 15, 2026

Our Mission is to **love** inclusively, **nurture** spiritual growth and connection,  
freely **explore** life's big questions, and **act** for justice.

Goals for 2025-2026

6:00	Chalice Lighting- Board Member Check-In - What is on your heart/mind?	
	Congregational Comments: (3 minutes per person)	
6:20	Approval of Consent Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● December Minutes</li> <li>● Treasurer's Report and Financial Reports</li> </ul>	
<b>Information Items/Reports</b>		
<b>6:30</b>	Board Member UUCL Updates  Minister December Follow Up Review	
<b>Discussion/Action Items:</b>		
6:45	Consider/Approve recommendations of Refresh and Renew Committee  Credit card update -  Initial budget planning  Stewardship Kick off - February 22 -tentative date  Annual Meeting - June 14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Awards</li> <li>● Nominations</li> <li>● Schedule</li> </ul> Spring work day in memory of Graham Kreiker Tentative date April 11  Possible capital request (driveway marker and/or playground enhancement) in a way that doesn't detract from the stewardship campaign	

	<p>Process review, follow up and Board Member Closing Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Is there anyone you would like to give appreciation to for tonight's meeting?</i></li> <li>● <i>Is there anything you would like to repair/resolve from tonight's meeting?</i></li> </ul>	
Next Board Meeting: February 19 - zoom		

## Minutes

- **Bathroom Renovation:** Remodeling into gender-neutral stalls; focus on privacy, locking doors; one toilet per bathroom to reduce confusion.
- **Lobby Enhancement:** Adding seating (couches, armchairs) for better interaction; moving welcome desk for improved flow and visibility.
- **Implementation Team:** Multi-group team formed for project oversight; clear directives to prevent delays and manage costs effectively.
- **Membership Growth Target:** Aim to double pledging members from 50 to 100–250; tracking visitor engagement and retention is crucial.
- **Stewardship Campaign:** Budget sessions led by finance committee; campaign kickoff set for February 22, priority on boosting contributions.
- **Annual Meeting Rescheduled:** Moved to May 3rd for better preparation; workday event on April 11th planned for community involvement.

## Bathroom Renovation and Accessibility

The committee decided to remodel the bathrooms into fully gender-neutral single stalls, prioritizing privacy and clarity of use, with a focus on locking doors and functional fixtures.

- Bathroom redesign includes removing walls and reducing toilets to one per bathroom to avoid awkward layouts and confusion, with Jeff's plumbing skills considered insufficient, prompting the search for skilled volunteers or contractors.
- The east bathroom will undergo aesthetic updates such as painting, new light fixtures, and possibly new flooring, which is optional and may be deferred to reduce upfront costs.
- The urinal in the west bathroom will be retained due to user preference and the complexity of removal

- The team acknowledged that the reduced bathroom capacity (two users total) is acceptable currently, given low observed concurrent usage and anticipated congregation size, but will verify local code requirements and consider surveying members for feedback.
- Heating systems are working well, preventing frozen pipes, which supports infrastructure reliability without added expense.
- Lighting challenges in the west bathroom limit options for expensive full-enclosure stalls, so simpler privacy solutions are preferred to balance cost and user experience.

## **Lobby Enhancement and Congregational Engagement**

Efforts to revamp the lobby focus on creating welcoming, casual seating areas to improve social interaction during services, based on member feedback collected via surveys.

- The plan includes adding couches, love seats, armchairs (approx. \$200 each from Facebook Marketplace), and small tables near the front and back doors to create cozy gathering spots
- A tall pub table with stools will be installed under the lobby TV to offer standing or casual seating options, particularly appealing to younger attendees.
- The welcome desk will be reduced to about half its current length and relocated to better utilize space between the bulletin board and coat rack, improving flow and function.
- A new name tag system with numbered slots will replace the existing string tags, improving organization and ease of use, with Kristin leading communications and rollout
- The bulletin board will be moved from its awkward current location near bathrooms to a better-lit hallway area, enhancing visibility and accessibility for announcements
- The committee emphasized creating a more colorful, lively atmosphere at the entrance to foster warmth and vibrancy, moving away from the previous beige tones

## **Implementation Governance and Communication Strategy**

The board agreed to approve the Refresh and Renew report and form a multi-group implementation team, including members from Buildings and Grounds and the Refresh and Renew committee, to oversee execution without altering approved plans.

- The implementation team will coordinate with Buildings and Grounds, which will handle contractor decisions and cost management, recognizing unknown expenses and possible scope changes during the project.
- Funding for this project will come from a separate budget, not Buildings and Grounds' regular funds, ensuring clarity on financial responsibility.
- To keep the congregation informed, the team will issue a special E Blast announcement and place a "hard hat" station with a QR code at the front door to share updates and engagement opportunities .
- The board stressed the importance of a clear handoff with specific directives and limits on decision-making authority to prevent delays or unilateral changes during implementation.

## Membership Growth and Tracking

The board prioritized membership growth with a target to double pledging members from around 50 to 100–250 over the next period, emphasizing the need for better tracking and engagement strategies.

- The minister committed to adding a membership section in monthly reports detailing visitor counts, retention, and membership activity, with more robust quarterly trend analysis planned after the next certification.
- A membership team is being formed to organize outreach efforts and schedule new member classes quarterly, aiming to improve visitor follow-up and integration.
- The team is exploring technical solutions like using Breeze software with QR code check-ins and text messaging to capture visitor data and facilitate personalized follow-up communications.
- The board recognizes that accurate membership data is critical for stewardship and financial planning, with ongoing efforts to reconcile active members versus inactive or lapsed accounts.

## Budget Planning and Stewardship Campaign

The finance committee structure will remain with Mary, Nori, and Rilie leading budget work sessions, focusing on detailed line item reviews and spending projections to prepare for the stewardship campaign kickoff scheduled for February 22.

- Board members were invited to join budget work sessions, but only the key finance team will lead, ensuring efficiency and continuity.
- Coordination with committee chairs will gather input on budget needs and priorities ahead of the campaign.
- HR-related budgeting and employee raises will be managed separately from ongoing HR operations, with support volunteers preparing necessary documentation.
- The stewardship campaign remains the highest priority, with a clear target to boost contributions and engagement starting with the planned February kickoff.

## Annual Meeting Scheduling and Organizational Planning

The board discussed and moved to reschedule the **annual meeting to Sunday, May 3rd**, aligning with historical timing and avoiding conflicts with graduations and holidays.

- May 3rd allows for better preparation and transition between old and new boards ahead of the summer, facilitating retreat planning and onboarding.

- The new board election and chair-elect designation will occur at or before this meeting, with discussions underway to confirm candidates.
- A workday event is planned for April 11th to engage congregation members in the Refresh and Renew projects, honoring the spirit of community action.
- The board considered but deferred additional fundraising projects for driveway markers or playground additions to avoid diverting funds from the stewardship campaign.

### **Action items**

#### **Kristin**

- Coordinate with Buildings and Grounds on April 11 workday and Refresh and Renew implementation team formation
- Assist with credit card application and bank coordination for UUCL employees including chair credit card discussion
- Facilitate membership team meeting and prepare updated membership report for next board meeting
- Communicate stewardship campaign kickoff plans and ensure alignment with board priorities

#### **Bill**

- Communicate and report on annual meeting date approval and board member transitions
- Follow up with minister, membership team on visitor tracking and membership engagement progress
- Assist with budgeting work sessions and liaise with finance committee as needed

#### **Mary**

- Manage name tag system implementation and relocation of bulletin board
- Coordinate art exhibit updates and communicate with board about aesthetics input as Refresh and Renew moves forward
- Move forward with the approval and handoff of Refresh and Renew report; create formal implementation team including members from Buildings and Grounds and Refresh and Renew committee

#### **Unassigned**

- Prepare communications (EBlast, signage with QR codes) to inform congregation about Refresh and Renew project status and participation opportunities
- Continue monitoring use of credit cards and debit cards and report status at next meeting
- Begin collecting data on visitor and membership activity along with anecdotal observations for minister's monthly report

## **Decisions**

### **Bathroom Renovations Focus**

- Focus bathroom renovations on creating single-stall, fully gender-neutral bathrooms with locking doors.
- Minimize confusion and enhance accessibility, using existing newer toilets and maintaining the urinal in the east bathroom.

### **Refresh and Renew Report Acceptance**

- Accept the Refresh and Renew Report and establish an implementation team.
- Include members from Buildings and Grounds and the original refresh committee to execute tasks while coordinating with the board.

### **Lobby Welcome Desk Relocation**

- Move the main lobby's welcome desk to a smaller footprint with a new location between the melting board and coat rack.
- Reorganize name tags into a streamlined system for easy member use.

### **April 11th Workday Scheduled**

- Schedule the April 11th workday for Refresh and Renew projects.
- Encourage congregational participation in improvement efforts.

### **Annual Meeting Date Confirmation**

- Set the Annual Meeting date for May 3rd, 10:30 AM.
- Align with historical timing and avoid conflicts with graduations and holidays; confirm this allows for new board preparation and retreat planning.

### **Stewardship Campaign Planning**

- Continue stewardship campaign planning aiming for a February 22 kickoff.
- Prioritize this over other fundraising projects like driveway markers or garden items.

### **Minister's Monthly Membership Report Updates**

- Plan minister's monthly membership report updates to include visitor traffic, retention, and anecdotal membership activity.
- Support growth goals targeting doubling pledging members from roughly 50 to 100-150 in the near term.

### **February Board Meeting Format**

- Make the February board meeting Zoom-only to accommodate members with scheduling conflicts.