



2027 Elected Leadership Slate

Introducing the First Unitarian
Church of Dallas elected leadership
slate for 2027.



Emily Gould (President)

Emily's career is centered around connecting people with the information and resources they need to thrive. Within our church, she's served in several volunteer roles: implementing Love Beyond Belief principles with Rev. Thandeka, leading the Nominating Committee, and as a Trustee on the Board for the last three years, two of which she served as Clerk.

Professionally, Emily is Senior Director of Technical Content at GitHub, the industry-leading platform for software development. Emily leads a global team focused on developer and enterprise needs. Emily's focus as a leader is empowering her teams to thrive and create and have fun.

Emily started her career by serving in AmeriCorps in Baltimore, connecting schools and communities. She then facilitated programming and raised funds for a nonprofit library that provides wraparound services, like after-school programs, to the local neighborhood. Emily transitioned into the tech industry as a writer and content strategist before moving into leadership.

Emily values service and social justice, and our faith of action is one of the things that drew Emily to Unitarian Universalism. She's been attending First Unitarian Church of Dallas since 2011 and believes in the power and opportunity of our congregation to make both individual, immediate, and systemic, long-term impact in the world. She's grateful to have the opportunity to support our congregation and its mission as an officer of the Board of Trustees.



Jordan Michel (Vice President)

Jordan Michel and his wife, Donnice, came to First Unitarian Church of Dallas in 2007, seeking a choir. They found a choir and eventually a church home, joining the church in 2009. Since then, Jordan and Donnice have added three children (ages 16, 12, and 8) to their family. They value the community that the church provides for their family and see the church as an integral partner in the spiritual development of their children.

Professionally, Jordan works in the electric utility industry and has spent the last eight years in his company's Center for Excellence and Innovation, supporting enterprise-wide continuous improvement efforts. He has enjoyed finding ways to apply this process improvement mindset to the work of the board. Jordan is also a Texas Master Naturalist and enjoys spending time outdoors, learning about and supporting native ecosystems.

Jordan's past service to the church includes participation in the Sanctuary Choir, facilitating children's and adult religious education classes, Social Action Council, and a two-year term on the Nominating Committee. Having started his current board term in 2025 and taken on the role of Clerk this year, Jordan looks forward to becoming even more engaged in church leadership next year.



Carolyn Smith-Morris (Treasurer, 3-Year Term)

I've been attending First UU since 2002. I've raised my daughters here, taught in the Sunday School program, written letters on the Quill Team, been an usher, and even filled a brief replacement position on the Board. I rely on this church not only as a spiritual community but as a place to understand and respond to events in the world. Indeed, I think First UU is one of the most important institutions in Dallas because it gathers and concentrates the energy of people who are willing to work toward a better, kinder, more humane city. I count it a privilege to serve this community in any way that I can.

Our current Treasurer and the Nominating Committee declare that a critical eye for the church's mission and strong attention to detail are most important traits for the role of Treasurer. These I do have. I am a medical anthropologist whose training for this role has been in my management of an academic department at UT Southwestern Medical Center (O'Donnell School of Public Health) and oversight of my career's varied research grants, budgets, and reporting obligations. I will rely on my strong communication, good math skills, and readiness to serve to make up for the accounting degree I lack.

When not visiting my coast-residing daughters, I teach, research, and write about health and culture, particularly among Indigenous peoples and Mexican im/migrants. Not surprisingly, I enjoy cross-cultural immersion and especially appreciate our church's initiatives to promote connections across diverse people both within and outside our Preston Road campus.



Lynne Walters (3-Year Board Term)

Lynne has been a member of First Unitarian Church of Dallas since 2004. She first came to the church when her 6-year-old son began asking lots of questions about religion and she was searching for a place where those questions could be answered openly. Having grown up in a small Congregational church in Connecticut, she was drawn to First Unitarian's emphasis on the inherent worth and dignity of every person and its openness to different beliefs and perspectives. She especially valued that her children could ask questions freely and develop their own understanding of faith and values.

Lynne received her Master of Social Work from New York University and her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Middlebury College. Her professional work focused on case management for children with HIV in foster care, as well as in special-needs adoptive services. Lynne has been active in the community, particularly in roles involving children, families, and education. She served on the board of the Dallas Children's Advocacy League and volunteered as a reading tutor. She was also deeply involved in her children's schools and youth activities, including serving as her daughter's Girl Scout troop leader, volunteering with her son's Boy Scout troop and marching band.

Lynne participates in the Women's Day and Evening Alliances and in a Spiritual Connect group. She volunteered alongside fellow church members at the Stewpot food pantry. In 2024, she and her husband Jeff attended the church's Boston Heritage trip to learn more about Unitarian Universalist history. Lynne values the sense of community, openness, and service she has found at First Unitarian and looks forward to serving the church as a board member.



Brian McAulay (1-Year Board Term)

Brian McAulay is the immediate past president of Life University in Atlanta and recently retired following a 30-year career in higher education, also serving as president of Parker University in Dallas, and as provost for several institutions. With a Ph.D. in management, he has helped organizations fulfill their missions by focusing on strategic planning, talent development and prudent management of resources. He has served on several higher education and non-profit Boards and has consulted with several organizations related to effective Board governance.

Brian and his wife Jean have been active members of Unitarian Universalist churches in South Carolina, Georgia and Iowa, as well as at First Dallas UU church, where they have been members for 10 years. Brian has served the church in multiple ways during that time, including the Capital Campaign, strategic planning and the Nominating Committee.



Monty Moore (3-Year Board Term)

Monty and his wife Rachael Robinett began attending First Unitarian in January 2025 and immediately knew they had found a place for community with people who shared the same values. After participating in all sessions of the Inquirers Class, they joined the church in April 2025. Since joining, Monty has participated in meditation classes, the live theater group, the men's retreat, the stewardship advisory committee, and many educational classes including Unitarian Universalist Roots and Behind the Chalice. Professionally, Monty has worked in the nonprofit sector since 2005 and currently serves as the Director of Finance for the Dallas Area Rape Crisis Center. He and Rachael have four grown children and live in Downtown Dallas.



Katelyn Miskimins (2-Year Board Term)

Katelyn was born and raised at First Unitarian, where she was an active part of the community throughout her youth. Over the years, she returned to volunteer with Religious Education programs and work in the nursery before officially becoming a member in 2020. After participating in numerous online courses and receiving a gentle nudge from Rev. Kanter, she finally made it official!

Since 2021, Katelyn has served as a YRUU advisor, so on most Sundays, you can find her in the RE building. She was also a member of the inaugural Spiritual Leadership Path cohort in 2022 and served on the Nominating Committee in 2024. She looks forward to continuing to support the First Unitarian community through her service on the Board.

Professionally, Katelyn works in the Special Services department at Dallas ISD. She has worked in special education for more than ten years and is passionate about advocating for equity in education. When she isn't working or volunteering at church, Katelyn enjoys volunteering with North Texas Master Naturalists, traveling, and spending time with friends and family.



Regina Nippert (3-Year Board Term)

Mrs. Nippert holds a Bachelor of Architecture from Texas Tech and a Master of Design and Innovation from SMU. She co-founded The Budd Center at SMU, served as President of the Board at Unity of Dallas, and on numerous local boards and committees. She is married to Jim Nippert, both are members of First UU Dallas. Together, they are the parents of five wonderful men and women, of whom they are insanely proud.



Kevin Rachel (1-Year Board Term)

Kevin brings over three decades of professional experience in media strategy, communications, and civic leadership to his candidacy for the Board of Trustees at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Dallas. As an Account Executive at Cumulus Media and a Certified Digital Marketing Consultant (CDMC), Kevin partners with regional organizations to develop strategic outreach, sustainable growth, and accountable operational planning. He holds a B.S.B.A. in Management Information Systems from Ashland University.

Kevin and his wife, Monica, have attended First Church since 2017 and formally became members in June 2025. They are actively engaged in congregational life through several Connect Groups, including Fellowship for Men (Kevin), Foodies & Friends, and Live Theater Exploration. Beyond church life, Kevin has a deep track record of governance and fiduciary stewardship across North Texas. He serves as the Dallas City Representative on the Transit-Oriented Development Tax Increment Financing (TOD TIF) Reinvestment Zone Board, serves as Treasurer of the Dallas Civic Accountability PAC, and is the Past President of the Forest Hills Neighborhood Association and the Cleburne Pregnancy Resource Center Board.

Married for 15 years, Kevin and Monica live in Kessler Park with their two (2) very loved rescue dogs, Missie and Izze. Also, they are proud parents and grandparents of four (4) adult children - Andrew, Lauren, Jake, and Natalie - and three (3) grandchildren - Brooklyn, Parker, and Sloan. When not engaged in civic and church activities, Kevin pursues lifelong learning through Spanish study, improv, sports, and live music. He looks forward to offering transparent, collaborative, and grounded leadership to the Board of Trustees in service of First Church's mission and future.



Brooke Etie (Endowment and Memorial Gift Fund)

Brooke Etie began attending First Unitarian Church of Dallas with her wife, Jeanie, in 2018, and became a member during COVID. Since then, she has participated in a variety of church activities and taught children's religious education for two years. Brooke and Jeanie are raising three boys, and the church community has become an important part of their family's life.

Brooke has 20 years of experience in affordable housing and is a director at Quadel Consulting & Training. Before joining Quadel, she spent 15 years at the Dallas Housing Authority, including 10 years as Vice President of the Housing Choice Voucher Program. She is a licensed clinical social worker and is studying Digital Transformation in the AI Age through MIT.



Kristin Holland Shear (Nominating Committee)

A lifelong Unitarian, Kristen grew up primarily in the Corpus Christi UU church before finding her spiritual home at First Unitarian Church of Dallas, where she began attending in the fall of 1997 and officially joined in 2003. It was also at the church that she met Mark, her husband. Together, they have built a family and added three children —Connor (19), Cora (16), and Benjamin (13) who have grown up immersed in the life and community of the congregation.

Over the years, Kristen's engagement with the church has spanned many facets of congregational life. She spent numerous years teaching Sunday religious education for 3–4-year-olds, helped lay groundwork in the early iterations of Deepening Groups, sang in the intergenerational choir, played on the church softball team, and served on the fundraising committee for the new playground. While demanding professional and community commitments have required her to step back at times over the years, her deep roots in the community remain constant.

Professionally, Kristen is a proud SMU alumna and executive communications leader with two decades of experience guiding enterprise strategy, reputation, and complex organizational narratives across health care, academic medicine, and civic institutions—including leadership roles at Children's Health and UT Southwestern Medical Center, as well as early experience as a staff writer and reporter for The Dallas Morning News.

A dedicated civic leader, Kristen brings that same strategic rigor and collaborative spirit to the broader community. Her extensive board and governance experience includes several terms on the Board of Directors and leadership team for the Junior League of Dallas, as well as for Richardson Reads One Book. Her local civic footprint also includes leadership with the Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas, the Richardson ISD District Bond & Planning Steering Committees, and Leadership Richardson (Class XL).



Michelle Touchet (Nominating Committee)

Michelle Touchet became a member of First Unitarian in 2011 along with her wife, Kassie McLaughlin, and their two children, Jake (29) and Sloan (26). They came in search of a great place to raise their children--and boy did they find it! Both children went through Our Whole Lives (OWLs), Coming of Age, and YRUU. It was a transformative experience for the entire family.

Over the years, Michelle has served the congregation in a variety of roles. Beginning as a supportive parent for youth activities and fundraisers, she went on to serve on the capital campaign committee and the ministerial search committee that welcomed Rev. TJ. She also co-led a Racial Equity Small Group. Currently, Michelle serves as a First-Grade OWLs facilitator, a SumFun Counselor, and writes cards with the Caring Community Quill Team. One of her favorite joys is when she and Kassie share their story on the 8th-Grade OWLs LGBTQIA+ Panel (as "Lesbian #1 and Lesbian #2").

A recently retired Dallas ISD school librarian, Michelle also spends her time as a CASA advocate and as Board Secretary for Truth Pregnancy Resource Center. She is honored and excited to continue serving First Unitarian as a member of the Nominating Committee.