October 2024 Parish Meeting Summary

At the parish meeting this past fall the FUS Board of Trustees gathered with the congregation to explore and discuss answers to our open question and share board goals for the year. The goals were cultivated by keeping our vision and mission in mind and informed how we developed the open question.

The board goals are:
1. Support each other by practicing deep listening and cultivating authentic relationships.
2. Deepen our shared ministry by embracing the unique gifts of every person in the responsibility to contribute to our congregation.
3. Mobilize to dismantle racism and other forms of systemic oppression to create a world fueled by love and justice.

The open question this year was: What does authentic connection mean to you? What do you need to feel authentic connection and what can you offer to help create this for others at FUS?

From the small group discussions several themes emerged from answering this question, including:

- **The need to engage in and build authentic connections** – finding ways to better foster interpersonal connections and integrate newcomers to our community
- **Acknowledging Communication Challenges** – finding ways for the congregation to share their voices and be heard with leadership at FUS, including the staff and the board.
- **Healing and Reconciliation** – recognizing the impacts of the departure of our former minister Michael Schuler, the uncertainties by staffing changes and financial difficulties.
- **Volunteer Engagement and Skills Sharing** – strengthening processes and organizing for engaging the congregation in offering their time and talents to support FUS operations going forward.

Reflecting on these goals and themes from the open question responses, the Board is working on opening new channels of communication within the congregation. This includes in person at coffee hour the first Sunday of each month and with an online form to submit questions and comments. You can also find a paper version of the form in the Commons.

In addition, as we move forward, a Task Force on Volunteer Activities is forming to improve and build engagement and shared ministry, create authentic connections, and help in embracing the unique gifts of every person. Stay tuned for more information of how you can get involved!