

Nominations for Officers, Trustees and Nominating Committee

Below is the slate of nominees submitted by the Nominating Committee for election to serve in Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (July 2024 – June 2025):

BBUUC BOARD:

Cindi Jorgensen

President (1-year term, limit to 2 consecutive terms, this would be Cindi's first term)

Diane Freeman

Vice President (1-year term, limit to 2 consecutive terms, this would be Diane's first term)

Kristina Altes

Secretary (1-year term, limit to 2 consecutive terms, this would be Kristina's first term)

David Prohofsky

Treasurer (1-year term, no term limits, this would be David's first elected term)

Elizabeth DeCoux

Trustee (2-year term, limit to 2 consecutive terms, this would be Elizabeth's first term)

Don DeStephano

Trustee (2-year term, limit to 2 consecutive terms, this would be Don's first term)

Nathaniel Samuels

Trustee (2-year term, limit to 2 consecutive terms, this would be Nathaniel's first term)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Helen Meatte (2-year term)

2-year term open for nominations, limit to 2 consecutive terms

(The other two Nominating Committee members, Kris Kines and Linda Mowers, will be completing the second year of their 2-year terms)

Respectfully submitted by the 2023-2024 Nominating Committee:

Kris Kines, Claudia Marshall, and Linda Mowers



Buckman Bridge Unitarian Universalist Church Board Nominees for 2024-2025



President: Cindi Jorgensen
(BBUUC member for 6 years)
Nominated for a first term as President
(limit to two consecutive terms)

The **President** presides over Church meetings, presides over Board of Directors meetings, is responsible for the integrity of the decision-making process, and ensures that the duties of the Board are carried out as specified in policies and these Bylaws.

It is an honor to be nominated to serve as Board President of BBUUC. My connection to this church has been the focus of my life, second only to family, since I joined six years ago.

My "conversion" to Unitarian Universalism happened twelve years ago, when I first attended a UU service and realized that the community engagement – on a local and nationwide level – supported my own ideas about the world. I quickly became involved, and was the Chairperson of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach (UUFVB) Council for four years, and sat on the nominating committee for two years. I was also the co-runner of our very successful fair trade shop.

My professional life included nursing and teaching in a high school. Both of these professions are people-centered. Besides the knowledge required to be a skilled practitioner, my experience included advanced leadership training. My roles in the hospital included Chairperson of recruitment and retention for Indian River Memorial Hospital and quality management for the Intensive Care Unit.

My wonderful years as a high school teacher afforded me the opportunity to become educated in generational poverty. I was also allowed to use my leadership skills and knowledge of our school system and cohorts involved by chairing our committee to renew our accreditation. Perhaps my most notable leadership accomplishment there was chairing the School Advisory Committee for four years, which brought together 25 various stakeholders involved in our school, which had 3,200 students.

In the community, I have served as a poll watcher for the last four presidential elections and have been an active Guardian ad Litem for six years.

I consider BBUUC my community. I am joyous every Sunday to be with our members and guests. We are a haven for like-minded folks who want to be partners in life – whether it be for Sunday services, giving support during challenging times, or forging friendships. We are a group that depends on the talents and work of many to keep us a healthy congregation, with the goal of celebrating what we have in common and working through our differences, all with respect and kindness. I have served as chair of Membership, and presently I serve as Chairperson of Caring Committee, a position that is authentic for me. Again – people-centered, I have been the lead person for social events and social action activities, and I presently help when possible with RE.

If chosen to serve, I promise that I will do whatever I can to forge relationships, rely on experts on our team, facilitate discussions to find consensus, manage when necessary, and lead responsibly. Our Buckman Bridge Unitarian Universalist Church is, in many ways, my home away from home. I will work to keep it that way for our present congregation and make it that way for those who are following.



Vice President: Diane Freeman
(BBUUC member for 7 years)
Nominated for a first term as Vice President
(limit to two consecutive terms)

*The **Vice President** assists the President in the performance of that office, performs duties of that office in the absence of the President, performs duties of that office if the President shall become unable to fulfill the duties of the office, and carries out other duties as assigned by the Board.*

I currently serve as a BBUUC Board Trustee and have been a member since 2017. Born in Ocala and raised in Orlando, I attended the University of Florida and received my bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees in Counseling Psychology there. I had a private practice in Ocala where I was also the President of Altrusa, a service organization of professional women and men. I was also a Charter Board Member of the Marion County Literacy Coalition. Before becoming a UU, I was raised as a Presbyterian and was active in the church for much of my adult life, serving in many leadership roles. I am an avid nature lover and love to visit our country's national Parks. My favorite is Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska. In addition to playing the Native American flute, I am also a weaver. In early 2022, I was declared as legally blind. My adaptable nature has led me to embrace the challenges and utilize the tools that I have explored to engage and live my best life.



Secretary: Kristina Altes
(BBUUC member for 3 years)
Nominated for a first term as Secretary
(limit to two consecutive terms)

*The **Secretary** holds overall responsibility for the integrity of the non-financial documents created by the work of the Board, maintains all non-financial confidential records, ensures creation of accurate minutes of all official meetings of the Church and the Board of Directors, ensures an accurate roster of the Members of the Church is maintained, ensures an accurate list of Committees, Task Forces, Teams, and Ministries is maintained and available to the membership, and carries out other duties as assigned by the Board.*

I have lived in north Florida for over 15 years but have only lived in Jacksonville for about seven years. I work as a contract archaeologist and live in the Avondale neighborhood with my husband and dog. I started attending BBUUC at the beginning of 2020 and have watched this community adapt and respond to the massive events that have shaped the world since then. I am excited to contribute my organizational and written communication skills to the secretarial position for the coming year.



Treasurer: David Prohofsky
(BBUUC member for 1 year)
Nominated for a first elected term as Treasurer,
appointed as Treasurer in July 2023
(no term limits)

*The **Treasurer** disburses funds under the direction of the Board of Directors, keeps a complete account of the finances of the Church in books, which shall remain the property of the Church, keeps the confidentiality of all personal pledges and payments, renders a current statement at each regular meeting of the Board of Directors, makes such statement available to Members of the congregation, and in absence of the Treasurer, the Finance Committee Chair will assume the duties of this office.*

I have been attending BBUUC for two years and have been a member for one. During my first year attending BBUUC, I was an ICARE network member. I stepped in as Finance Chair upon joining the church. I then slid into the position of Treasurer after my predecessor unfortunately had to resign. I have been practicing law for 25 years, and bring my analytical skills and knowledge of financial markets to my role as Treasurer.

How will I serve? I feel that I have learned a great deal this past year, and am excited to bring that experience to next year's Board. Being new to BBUUC has led me to be very active in my listening, hoping to learn more than I need as I integrate into the community. At the same time, I bring a new perspective and active mind to the challenges we face as we grow, and believe I can maintain the high standards of financial openness and probity that have served BBUUC throughout its history.



Trustee: Elizabeth DeCoux
(BBUUC member for 4 years)
Nominated for a first term as Trustee
(limit to two consecutive terms)

The **Trustees** keep abreast of the business and programs of the church, participates in meetings of the Board of Directors, and carries out other duties as assigned by the Board.

I have been a member of BBUUC since 2019. I have served since 2020 as Chair of the church's Rainbow Welcoming Ministry, working with our church's leaders and members each year to successfully complete the Five Practices of Welcoming Renewal, to maintain our status with the Unitarian Universalist Association as a Welcoming Congregation. Other RWM activities during my tenure have included each year's River City Pride; creation of a memorial quilt; and a 2022 "Senior Prom" celebrating BBUUC's LGBTQ+ members. In my capacity as Chair of RWM, I have served on BBUUC's Council since 2020.

Another area of my participation has been as a member of the Worship Committee. I regularly serve as a Worship Leader for our Sunday services. I have given the sermon on several occasions; my sermon "Seeing Animals" was selected by the Unitarian Universalist Animal Ministry to receive the Schweitzer Prize for the best sermon on our responsibilities to animals.

I completed my training with the Association for Veterinary Pastoral Education in 2022 and became a Certified Animal Chaplain. I have served as BBUUC's Animal Chaplain since then, providing animal-related spiritual care.

I served as a delegate to General Assembly in 2023 and will serve again in 2024. I have followed the work of the UUA's Article 2 Study Commission and have participated in BBUUC events related to the proposed revisions to Article 2.

I spent my career practicing law and then teaching law. I have spoken on animal rights law at conferences throughout the U.S., in Canada, and in Europe. My scholarly articles on evidence law and animal law have appeared in numerous law reviews and journals. I volunteer at Jacksonville Humane Society. I have served on the Board of Directors of the Indianapolis Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Clinic, the Indiana University LGBT Alumni Association, and C.J. Acres Animal Rescue Farm. I am grateful to have found my spiritual home at BBUUC.



Trustee: Don DeStephano
(BBUUC member for 12 years)
Nominated for a first term as Trustee
(limit to two consecutive terms)

I have been a member since 2011, and previously served as Board Trustee for 3 years. I am a long-time member of the Finance Committee, and have been involved in many projects and task forces, including Minister task force twice; Committee on Ministry; Property Acquisition Task Force; Long Range Planning Task Force; Capital Campaign/Note Payoff Task Force, and Endowment Policy Task Force. I am the moderator of the Buckman Bridge Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship and will represent the Congregation at the General Assembly this year.

I am a retired physician with many years of experience managing a medical practice, including retirement plans and investments. I am married to Patty (45 years this year), and have 3 children and 7 grandchildren. I discovered Unitarian Universalism shortly before joining BBUUC and it has become the center of my spiritual journey. My interests include gardening, enjoying nature on my small farm in Clay County, and studying the historical Jesus and early Christianity. If elected, I hope to explore ways for the Board and Congregation to be more aware of and involved in the national Unitarian Universalist Association, since I believe there are matters that may be important to our Congregation.



Trustee: Nathaniel Samuels
(BBUUC member for 6 years)
Nominated for a first term as Trustee
(limit to two consecutive terms)

I was born in the country of Panama but I've lived in the Orange Park/Middleburg area for the last nearly 25 years since the age of 5. I currently work online in the fields of SEO (Search Engine Optimization) and AI-assisted content generation. I currently share an apartment with my parents. I've been a member of the BBUUC community since 2018. Ever since I first entered the sanctuary out of curiosity six years ago I was welcomed with open arms and made to feel at home. I early on gravitated towards getting involved with the AV tech team and have spent most services ever since then listening from the AV room. I'd like to say I've got a fair degree of tech savvy that I'd love to further leverage for the good of our community.



Nominating Committee: Helen Meatte
(BBUUC member for 5 years)
Nominated for a first term on the Nominating Committee
(limit to two consecutive terms)

Nominating Committee Members Nurture the long-term health and vitality of the congregation's leadership pool, identify potential leaders, identify support resources for leaders, and perform other duties as specified in these Bylaws.

I was born in St. Louis, Missouri. My husband was a fallen away Catholic and I was a fallen away Jew. We joined the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis in 1979 while we were pregnant with our first child. In my late husband's words: "We needed a religion that our children could ultimately reject." In truth the UU faith felt comfortable the moment we walked in the door. I immediately became active in their Religious Education program.

In 1987, my husband was asked to open a branch office in Jacksonville, Florida for the architectural firm that he worked for and we left family and friends and made a new start. We joined the Unitarian Universalist Church of Jacksonville that year, but to my disappointment children's religious education was a low priority. I then became active in selecting a new minister as the existing one was retiring and fortunately the new minister saw the need for a religious education director and the program was re-born. Once our youngest graduated from high school we felt that our job was done (and yes, our children ultimately fell away from the UU faith) and we quietly left the church.

I decided that I needed a religious home once again in 2018 and joined the BBUUC. It was an excellent decision and I am so grateful for this church and the congregation, as I feel that I have found a spiritual home here.
