Inland Northwest Unitarian Universalist Community

GOVERNING CIRCLE

Help hold the whole of INUUC in view.

No special experience required, just a willingness to show up, listen, and help our community keep the promises it's made to itself.

The Governing Circle (GC) is INUUC's elected board of trustees, acting under our bylaws and accountable to the congregation. Its job is to make sure our congregation lives out its mission and keeps faith with our bylaws and our covenant. Five to seven trustees serve at a time, elected by the congregation to two-year terms, and every one of them started out exactly where you are now.

WHAT THE GC ACTUALLY DOES

- Sets and evaluates our shared Vision of Ministry each year
- Oversees the budget and supports our minister and staff
- Protects INUUC's finances, property, and long-term stability
- Makes sure every circle has a clear lane, and none has a gap
- Takes on the big, mission-level questions, not day-to-day programming

HOW WE DECIDE

Within the Governing Circle and every circle, decisions are made by **consent**, good enough for now, and safe enough to try, rather than majority vote. The congregation itself still votes on the budget, large expenditures, property matters, and bylaw changes. It's called Dynamic Governance, or Sociocracy, and it's built so every voice actually counts.

SIZE	5–7 trustees
TERM	2 years, renewable once
MEETS	Twice a month, evenings, open to all members except executive session
PAY	None. It's a labor of love
ELIGIBLE	Any INUUC member

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

You already have what it takes.

Sociocracy was built to spread leadership out, not concentrate it in a few experienced hands. Roles are clearly defined, decisions are made by consent rather than credentials, and every new trustee is welcomed in, not thrown in.

Clearly defined roles

Leader, facilitator, secretary, delegate: distinct jobs assigned each church year, so no one trustee carries the whole load alone.

Decisions by consent

Every voice is heard and weighed before anything moves forward. No steamrolling, no rubber stamps.

Real onboarding

A growing handbook and orientation to help you find your footing in your first few meetings.

People who remember being new

Current trustees were new once too, and are glad to show you how it all works.

A GLIMPSE OF A REAL MEETING

> *Meetings open with a lit chalice and a round of check-ins, and close with gratitudes. In between, the questions range from the deeply important, like whether to sign a new lease or how to support our minister, to the deeply human, like whether a camp scholarship should come with a thank-you card, or whether that's a lot to ask of an eight-year-old. This year, the Governing Circle ran its entire Annual Congregational Meeting on consent, start to finish, with no fallback to Robert's Rules. That's not nothing.*

WHY IT FITS US

Worth & dignity

Lives in consent: no one's real concern gets steamrolled because it's inconvenient.

Justice & equity

Lives in "mattering, not marginality": every voice counts, not just the usual ones.

Right of conscience

Lives in how we treat objections: as a gift that improves a decision, not a threat to it.

Interdependence

Lives in leadership that's distributed and shared, not held by the same few hands.

Interested in serving?

Talk with any current Governing Circle member, or email the Leadership Development Circle at leadershipdevelopment@inuuc.org with questions, any time of year. Ready to serve? Email the Governing Circle directly at gc@inuuc.org. New trustees are elected at our June Annual Congregational Meeting, and every conversation starts with just that: a conversation.