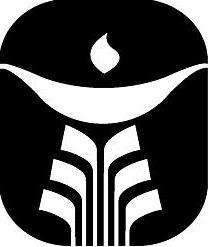
First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor

**UUAA ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015**

**May 31, 2015**

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# Board of Trustees

Ken Clein President  
Beth Hospadaruk Vice President  
Roberta Allen Treasurer  
Priscilla Spencer Secretary  
Ginny Creasman Board Trustee  
Allen Duncan Board Trustee  
Tricia Mooney Board Trustee  
Paul Morris Board Trustee  
Julie Voelck Board Trustee  
Elizabeth LaPorte Past President

# Ministers

Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer Senior Minister  
Reverend Mark Evens Associate Minister

# Program Staff

Sandy Garges Director of Spiritual Growth and Development  
Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout Director of Music  
Maria Thomas Programs Coordinator  
Hannah Hotchkiss Welcomes Ministries Coordinator  
Meredith Ley Pastoral Care Program Coordinator  
Allison Halerz Pianist-in-Residence  
Debra Golden Spiritual Growth and Development Program Assistant  
Julie Dybdahl Lead Young Religious Unitarian Universalists Advisor  
Sanne Krummel Lead Nursery Teacher  
Erin Dixon Childcare Coordinator and Lead Preschool Teacher  
Brianne Boyd Chalice Sparks Director

# Building and Office Staff

Thom Bales Executive Director  
Deborah Casamatta Office Administrator  
Venus Gregory Building Attendant  
Robert Klingler Friday Night Building Attendant  
Arthur Whigham Weekend Custodian  
Dewon Lewis Weeknight Custodian

# **Agenda**

**First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor  
Annual Congregational Meeting  
Sunday, May 31, 2015**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chalice Lighting:** Responsive Reading  **Opening Hymn**  **President’s Chalice:** Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer  **Call to Order:** Ken Clein, Board President  **Declaration of Quorum** (15% of Voting Membership): Priscilla Spencer, Secretary  **Adoption of Agenda, Rules and Procedures** , and **Minutes from 2014 Annual Meeting (Motion/Vote):** Ken Clein, Board President   * Motion/vote to allow members who signed the book within the last four months to vote. Per By-laws section 2.1 the four-month requirement may be waived by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at a duly called Congregational meeting.   **Introductions:**   * Members of the Board of Trustees - Ken Clein, Board President * UUAA Staff - Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer   **Proposed UUAA By-Laws Changes (Motion/Vote):** Ken Clein, Board President and Elizabeth LaPorte, Past President  **Elections (Motion/Vote):** Ken Clein, Board President   * Board Officers and Trustees * Leadership Development Team Members   **Announcement of General Assembly Delegates (Information):** Ken Clein, President  **Capital Replacement Planning Update (Information):** Jim Gallas and Thom Bales  **150th Anniversary Update:** Terry Madden and Sandy Simon  **Senior Minister’s Update:** Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer  **President’s Report:** Ken Clein, Board President  **Questions for the Board:** Ken Clein, Board President  **Passing the Torch:** Ken Clein, Board President and Beth Hospadaruk, President-Elect  **Adjourn:** Beth Hospadaruk, Board President  **Closing Hymn** | 11:30am    11:45am  12:15pm  12:30pm  12:45pm  1:00pm  1:15pm |
| **Proposed Rules of Procedure** |  |

For each matter coming before the Congregation for discussion and/or action at this meeting:

1. Individuals may speak for up to two minutes.
2. No individual may speak twice on the same matter unless there is time remaining and all who wish to speak have spoken.
3. A time allotment for matters being presented for a Congregational vote or discussion appears on the agenda. Time for discussion may be extended by a majority vote of those present and voting. Any motion for extension on discussion must include the length of time proposed for extension.

# Board of Trustees and Leadership Development Team Nominees

Listed below are the biographical sketches of our nominees for positions on the Board of Trustees and the Leadership Development Team.

Nominees for Board of Trustees - Officers

For Vice President: Sandy Simon

“I first attended UUAA on Washtenaw as a university student in the wild and crazy late 1960’s. When my husband Dick and I moved from Denver to Ann Arbor in 1981 we started our children Sarah and Matt in the RE program, which they attended through high school. As an active member since 1982, it might be easier to name the committees I have not served on rather than those I have. But here’s a try: I taught Religious Education classes for many years. I served on the Board of Trustees in the 1990s, first as Religious Education liaison and then as the Involvement Coordinator. As a lifelong computer nerd, I have been active on the web committee since its founding in 1999. And, for almost that long, I have served on the Habitat for Humanity committee. Three UUAA projects have been deeply rewarding for me and taught me so much -- chairing the Sankofa project in 2005-2006, serving on the Strategic Planning Task Force in 2011, and co-chairing this year’s enormously fun 150th Anniversary Celebration Task Force. With all of the Congregational input gathered during those three projects, it seems like a good time for me to represent the Congregation on the Board of Trustees.

Outside of Church, I keep trying to be retired as a partner in a small medical imaging software company; I visit my two granddaughters in California and my son and his soon-to-be-wife in Connecticut; I hike, kayak, swim, and through snow and rain and heat and gloom of night, walk my dog, Sophie.”

For Treasurer: Jeff Poliner

“I have attended and been a member of this Congregation since arriving in Ann Arbor in 1996. Since then, I have been active in a number of aspects of church life. I was an active participant in the 20s/30s group in the late 1990s. My Men’s Circle formed in 1999 and still meets regularly. I was on the Green Sanctuary committee from 2000 to 2004 and was one of the co-chairs as we obtained the Green Sanctuary certification from the UUA. In youth religious education, I have taught nearly every RE/SGD level from pre-school to 7th grade, been a mentor for Coming of Age for many years, and co-facilitated the class for two. In addition, I served on the previous RE Advisory Committee and YRUU Advising Committee for two years each. Other years, I served on the previous Board Nominating Committee, as well as the Auction committee. I have recently completed a three-year term on the Men’s Council and have been part of the planning of several Men’s Retreats and Men’s Dinners.

Outside of church, I am an engineer, working for manufacturers of medical devices. I enjoy cycling, cross-country skiing, reading, cooking, and playing board games and euchre. My two children, Justin (12th grade) and Megan (9th grade) have been coming to the Church since they were born. I am honored to be considered for a position on the Board of Trustees.”

Nominees for Board of Trustees - At Large (Two year Term)

Hayley Boyse

Hayley Boyse is a relatively new member of the Church, joining in 2012 and attending since 2011. She grew up in southern New Mexico, but has been coming to Ann Arbor her whole life to visit family. She decided to settle in Ann Arbor after finishing graduate school in Bowling Green, Ohio. She didn’t grow up in a church, but being in southern New Mexico was surrounded by welcoming Catholic and Mormon families and always wanted to be part of a church community. After coming to a few sermons in 2011, she quickly signed up to go on the Partner Church trip to Transylvania and learn the history of UUAA and get to know her own extended family in Transylvania.

Since joining the Church, Hayley has been involved in Challenging Racism, ushering on Sundays, the auction committee, the 20s/30s (+/-) social group, and the Social Justice Council. She cares about the long-term health and sustainability of the Congregation because she will be here in the next 20, 30, 40 years assuming life doesn't throw a major curveball.

Outside of Church, she is a flutist, nature lover, crafter, enthusiast of all things home improvement, and works at Thomson Reuters. She is humbled and grateful to be considered a leader for this Congregation and looks forward to the opportunity to serve our community.

Lissa Oliver

Lissa and her husband Gregg Peterson joined UUAA in 2010 after moving to Ann Arbor from Chicago in 2008. In Chicago, they were members of Second Unitarian Church of Chicago. They have a daughter currently participating in the YRUU program. Lissa has spent most of her volunteer time at UUAA in Spiritual Growth and Development, serving for three years as a member of the Children and Youth Committee and helping organize the annual Teacher Appreciation Brunches. More recently, Lissa has been spending one Sunday a month as a Newcomer Welcomer.

In her earlier professional life, Lissa was a freelance film and video editor--editing many documentary and educational programs as well as independent narrative programs. She is a master gardener and has been a volunteer and mentor for the Tappan Middle School garden for several years.

Nominees for Leadership Development Team (LDT):

Tom Reischl

“I joined the Congregation and a Men’s Circle in 2002. I served on the Stewardship Committee from 2004 to 2006, the Men’s Fellowship Council from 2007 to 2009, and the Board of Trustees from 2009 to 2013. I recently joined the Reflective Conversations Task Force, joined another Men’s Circle, rejoined the Men’s Fellowship Council, and participated as a mentor for the Coming of Age program. My wife, Cathy, and I have enjoyed attending Worship Services, watching our two children being nurtured by our SGD programs, taking adult education classes, and building close friendships with other Congregants.

I am employed as a research faculty member at the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health, where I conduct program evaluation studies of community-based public health programs. I am honored to be nominated for the Leadership Development Team, and I feel excited to work on expanding leadership opportunities and empowering Congregants to succeed as leaders.”

Mary Lynn Stevens

“I’m terrifically honored to be asked to contribute to UUAA through the Leadership Development Team and look forward to learning and serving well. I discovered this Congregation in 2008 and, after participating in and facilitating Chalice Circles, staffing the Involvement Table, and working on the auction, I joined in 2011. This is also roughly the timing of meeting, courtship, and marrying of my husband, congregant Ed Rutherford—so UUAA is truly the object of my affection.

I’ve had two careers—the first in history museums, the second in University fundraising. I’ve served in leadership roles in both arenas, and worked extensively with volunteer boards, both official and advisory. I hope that my skills of listening, recognizing talents and matching them to work, and communicating clearly will be of use to the Team. And I really look forward to building new relationships with other Congregants.

In my spare time I love to get outside, to sing, to read medical non-fiction, to cook, and to fix up our 100-plus-year-old house in Chelsea.”

# **Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes**

First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor

Congregational Meeting Minutes

Sunday, June 1, 2014

Reading: Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer led the Congregation in a reading of #453 in the hymnal (from Passover Haggadah) as a blessing on the meeting.

Opening Hymn #95 “There Is More Love Somewhere”

President’s Chalice

Reverend Geisenhainer explained the history of the Arthur Buckminster Fuller President’s Chalice, which President Elizabeth LaPorte will light when calling the meeting to order.

Declaration of Quorum (15% of Voting Membership)

A quorum was declared by Board Secretary Priscilla Spencer. There were 92 members present, more than the required 15% of the full membership.

Call to Order

President LaPorte began the meeting at 11:40am and lit the chalice. She recognized Jim Lee as parliamentarian for the meeting.

Adoption of Agenda, Rules and Procedures

President LaPorte proposed a friendly amendment to the agenda to add Jim Lee to speak about the Annual Budget Campaign and noted the meeting rules and procedures printed on the back of the agenda.

Motion 14.06.01.01 Gayle Steiner moved to approve the agenda as amended, with the rules and procedures on the back page. Carolyn Roberts seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from Annual Meetings in May 2012 and May 2013

Motion 14.06.01.02 Barbara Lynn moved to approve the meeting minutes from the Annual Meetings in May 2012 and May 2013. Colleen Crawley seconded. Motion carried.

Introductions

President LaPorte introduced the members of the Board of Trustees: Roberta Allen, Ken Clein, Ginny Creasman, Tom Darnton, Becky Hoort, Paul Morris, Priscilla Spencer, and Julie Voelck. Past President: Dixie Hibner. She also introduced members of the Leadership Development Team (LDT): Royla Furniss, Kathy Edgren, Vilma Mesa, and Connie McGuire. She expressed much gratitude for the work of these people.

Reverend Geisenhainer introduced members of the UUAA staff:

Administrative Staff

Arthur Whigham, Weekend Custodian; Dewon Lewis,

Evening Custodian; Venus Gregory, Evening Building Attendant; Deborah Casamatta, Office Manager; Thom Bales, Executive Director.

Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) Staff

Erin Dixon, Lead Preschool Teacher, Childcare Coordinator; Sanne Krummel, Lead Nursery School Teacher; Julie Dybdahl, Lead YRUU Advisor; Debra Golden, SGD Program Assistant; Maria Thomas, SGD Program Coordinator; Sandy Garges, Director of Spiritual Growth and Development.

Ministry and Pastoral Care Staff

Meredith Ley, Pastoral Care Coordinator; Hannah Hotchkiss, Welcome Ministry Coordinator; Mark Evens, Associate Minister; Gail R. Geisenhainer, Senior Minister.

Music Ministries

Allison Halerz, Pianist-in-Residence; Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout, Director of Music.

Reverend Geisenhainer spoke of the honor she feels in working with this staff team, and how although the team members are rarely in the building at the same time they find ways to coordinate and collaborate to help bring alive the Congregation’s aspirations and goals.

Also, she was pleased to announce that effective today; Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout is on the staff full-time as Music Director.

Elections

President LaPorte offered the list of candidates for Board of Trustees Officers and Trustees:

* Vice President: Beth Hospadaruk (one-year term as Vice President, one year as President, and one year as Past President)
* Secretary: Priscilla Spencer (two-year term)
* Trustees at Large: Tricia Mooney, Allen Duncan, and Ginny Creasman (all two-year terms)

Motion 14.06.01.03

Barbara Pickett moved to adopt the slate of candidates for Board of Trustee officers and trustees. Vilma Mesa seconded. Motion carried. One opposed.

Reverend Geisenhainer congratulated the newly-elected Board members and presented them with their Board name tags.

President LaPorte offered the list of candidates for the Leadership Development Team: Kathy Friedrichs; Dee Dishon.

Motion 14.06.01.04

Kathy Edgren moved to elect Kathy Friedrichs and Dee Dishon for a second two-year term on the Leadership Development Team. Margaret Pekarek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Marriage Equality Affirmation

Royla Furniss, Victor Hola, and Margaret Pekarek came forward to read the Marriage Equality Affirmation statement:

“As Unitarian Universalists, we affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person. As individuals, we speak out to ensure equal justice for all who live and love in Michigan and beyond. As a Congregation, we support efforts to strengthen families and protect children. As a Welcoming Congregation, we support an end to discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. And, because marriage is held in honor among the blessings in life, we, the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, stand on the side of love in support of Marriage Equality.”

President LaPorte read the words of the commitment UUAA has made as a Welcoming Congregation, and then invited a motion to approve the Marriage Equality Affirmation.

Motion 14.06.01.05

Margaret Pekarek made the motion (text below) and Leigh Robertson seconded the motion.

“As we look ahead toward our 150th anniversary, we are reminded of our legacy captured so well in the phrase “reason and compassion in action.” We have stood for justice, stood in support of marginalized people everywhere throughout our history.

At this time our fine state of Michigan, once a center of progressive thought and action, is failing us. It needs our help. It is of critical importance, now, today, that this Congregation takes a stand on the side of love- affirming marriage equality.

In accord with our first principle regarding the inherent worth and dignity of every person, I hereby move that the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor adopt the statement just read by Royla, Victor, and me affirming Marriage Equality.”

President LaPorte invited anyone to speak to the motion or ask questions. Sandy Simon asked if there are plans to do anything with the affirmation statement. Carolyn Madden, co-chair of Social Justice Council, responded that it will be sent out, including to Randy Block, Director of the Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network (MUUSJN). She noted that according to Randy, UUAA would be the first UUA Congregation to vote to support Marriage Equality in Michigan. She also noted that both Interweave and the Social Justice Council strongly support the affirmation. Joan Burleigh, a founding member of Interweave, added that

1) The statement will be shared with Inclusive Justice, an interfaith organization that helps religious communities become more inclusive and helps with advocacy in Michigan,

2) This will be a part of Equality Michigan’s new “Marriage for Michigan” educational campaign, and

3) Through such activities, UUAA will become a model for churches of all denominations.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Announcement of General Assembly Delegates

President LaPorte announced that the following Congregants will be attending UUAA 2013 GA as a UUAA delegate: Carolyn Madden, Terry Madden, Els Nieuwenhuijsen, Larry Cooper, Diane Cooper, Laura Bollettino, and Ken Clein.

She thanked these delegates and noted that UUAA can send an additional six delegates. Those interested in being a delegate were invited to contact Royla Furniss.

150th Anniversary Celebration Update

Terry Madden and Sandy Simon, co-facilitators of the 150th Anniversary Celebration, briefly reviewed their charge by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the Congregation. They spoke of the opportunity this year to reflect on past Congregational decisions and decision-makers, to imagine our predecessor’s dreams, doubts, and aspirations, and to consider how the ebb and flow of people and events have led to today’s Congregation. Sandy commented on how the Congregation’s various changes of buildings, ministerial leaders, and Congregational names all involved difficult Congregational decisions. She mentioned eight other significant Congregational decisions, each guided by reason and compassion. Terry spoke of how “looking back” is a re-orienting process that reinvigorates us, allowing us to move forward.

Sandy thanked those who have contributed thus far to the 150th Anniversary Year celebration, including Nic Sims for guidance in the logo and slogan development, the 150th planning committee (Terry Madden, Sandy Simon, Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer, Dixie Hibner, Nancy Schewe), Colleen Crawley, Margaret Pekarek, and Margie Teall for the commemorative tile work, Pat Kuessner for her 150th Story Catcher work, and others. She encouraged everyone to find ways to make the celebration fun, engaging, and meaningful.

UUAA Accessibility Initiative

Els Nieuwenhuijsen, chair of the Accessibility Team, reviewed the purpose of the UUA EqUUal Access certification pilot program that UUAA is engaged in, mentioned the team accomplishments outlined in the annual report, and reviewed plans for upcoming activity. She encouraged everyone to share their reactions to the activities, to offer ideas for other activity, and to consider the team as a resource. She recalled how UUAA embraced Anna Lindemer, a UUAA member with a disability who died recently, and how much Anna offered to the Congregation.

Annual Budget Campaign

Jim Lee spoke of UUAA’s spirit of generosity that he and his family have experienced over the years. He noted two upcoming events:

1. November 1, UUAA will host a concert by Catie Curtis, a longtime strong supporter for Marriage Equality, and
2. November 2, Barry Lynn, Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, will speak during our Commitment Sunday Services.

Barry is a minister and lawyer who has worked extensively on separation of church and state issues and has worked with Catie Curtis on marriage equality issues. Jim encouraged Congregants to consider how they can express their own generosity to UUAA over the next year with time, talent, and treasure.

Senior Minister’s Update

Reverend Geisenhainer noted that the list of delegates representing the Congregation to UUA General Assembly should include Associate Minister Reverend Mark Evens and Senior Minister Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer as ministerial delegates.

She shared that this is her sixth Annual Meeting with the Congregation. She reflected aloud on why we are all here in this Congregation, then on how she and our staff work with us to bring alive our Core Values, to empower the goals set by the Board, and to support lay leadership throughout the Congregation.

She spoke of the Board’s work to deepen its own financial literacy. Board members have learned to take more risk to better understand the financial realities of being good stewards of the mission of the Congregation. There has been ongoing collaboration between staff and the Board in the following areas:

1. Researching options for an outside audit of our financial system and deepening reflection on efforts over the last seven years to strengthen the financial system.
2. Moving toward having a more ordered and coherent charter of accounts and a completely new accounting system to keep up with our growth, increased complexity, and need for more informative financial reporting.
3. Receiving a study to document our needs for a capital replacement reserve fund. We have commissioned a group of lay leaders coordinating with staff to develop a capital replacement plan.

After acknowledging the many ongoing initiatives, projects, and ministries of the Congregation, Reverend Geisenhainer spoke about this year’s celebration of the Congregation’s 150th anniversary. She expressed heartfelt, enthusiastic appreciation to the anniversary’s planning committee. The events associated with the anniversary are top priority for execution for the coming year. She encouraged all to become involved, thanked those who are helping with events, and reminded us that the year will be both tumultuous and very rewarding.

She offered her gratitude for other key support and activities:

* For the hard work of those who led the Comprehensive Campaign, co-chairs Margaret Pekarek and Tim Richards
* For those whose giving and pledging is reducing the principal balance of the Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) building mortgage, which is expected to move below $1,000,000 sometime over the summer.
* For our 37 forbearers, and for those who a little over a decade ago voted to build the SGD wing. Reverend Geisenhainer noted that it was a visionary and brave decision to create that beautiful and safe space for children, and we are now living into that trust by offering the best possible SGD programs. She asked those who participated in that vote to raise their hands, then those who were not there for the vote but are here today to raise their hands.
* For those who served on the Board this last year bringing the gifts of who they are, with special gratitude for those finishing their terms of service: Becky Hoort, Tom Darnton, Dixie Hibner (who served as Past President), and Elizabeth LaPorte, who transitions to her role as Past President. Elizabeth will continue to assist with several projects and will join the august group of past Congregational presidents who offer wisdom and guidance. Reverend Geisenhainer thanked the past presidents for their support.

Reverend Geisenhainer expressed thanks to all for their support of her ministry for another year. She looks forward to celebrating our 150th anniversary in the months ahead.

President’s Report

President LaPorte expressed appreciation for how well Reverend Geisenhainer is able to serve on the Board as both our spiritual leader and CEO. She also thanked the entire UUAA staff for its support of Board efforts and for inviting the Board to engage with the Congregation’s members and gave many examples of their support.

She offered highlights of Board activities and accomplishments this year:

1. Board linkage with the Congregation

Board members facilitated more than six small-group meetings with lay leaders. Also, Board Liaison appointments provided a direct Board link with small group ministries. Julie Voelck was appointed as the first liaison to the Social Justice Council. Other liaisons: Paul Morris - the Leadership Development Team; Roberta Allen - Denominational Connections Team; Tom Darnton - Stewardship Team; Becky Hoort - Reflective Conversations Team.

1. Leadership development

The Board has developed a charge, action plan, and goals for the new Communications and Collaborations Team. Reverend Geisenhainer will be following up on this. The Board worked with the Leadership Development Team (LDT) to roll out new leadership tools and improve information about the LDT. It will continue with LDT to assist in communications about leadership. The Board has also been developing new information about governance, focusing on shared leadership. The Web Team helped get that information online. Appreciation was expressed to those who contributed to the activities described.

1. Assessment of ministries

The Board appointed a task force to gather feedback about areas of ministry from small group conversations. Feedback comments have been recorded. A report with recommendations from the team will be submitted soon to the Board, and the Board will report to the Congregation about the program in January 2015. Appreciation was expressed to those who participated and to the team.

1. Financial literacy

The Board initiated a budget planning process to allow sufficient time to discuss key issues with our Sr. Minister/CEO. It heard presentations about capital reserve needs and proposed a plan to set aside funding to address priority needs. She thanked Jim Gallas and Thom Bales for their reports and presentation. The Board has been discussing the type of audit needed to review financial procedures and improve efficiencies. It is important to note that the Board has the utmost respect for and confidence in our CEO, Executive Director, and all staff. The audit-related discussions are to assist the Board with its fiduciary oversight and accountability to the Congregation. The Board has also supported the work towards new accounting procedures and reports to the Board, with thanks to Roberta Allen for taking the lead.

Additionally, the Board has received proposed changes to the By-laws and governing policies. Board work on such changes will continue through 2014.

Questions for the Board

Cindy Krueger asked the amount of the outstanding mortgage balance on the Religious Education building. President LaPorte responded that it will very soon be $1,000,000.

Sandy Eyl commented that when joining the Congregation she expected to participate in the Congregation in a democratic way, making meaningful decisions. She referred to the “right of democracy” and “right of conscience” noted in the UUA list of affirmations. She said that it seems that decisions are made in the Congregation in an arbitrary manner, without inclusion of members in the decision-making process - giving as an example the decision to change the timing of Services. She feels it is unclear who to talk with about potential changes and the type of process involved in making changes. She would like to know who to talk with and what the decision-making process is.

President LaPorte responded that staff members are very willing to help answer questions about the facilities. Also, it is part of the Board process to make sure all are informed about activities in advance. She suggested that those wanting more information read the Annual Report and feel free to speak with Board members individually (names are on the UUAA website). Anyone can feel free to approach them in the Social Hall or contact them by phone or email.

To address the connection between how this meeting operates and the fourth principle of the UUA, Reverend Geisenhainer explained that in 2008 the Congregation voted to move day-to-day decisions out of the annual meetings to other areas of Congregational life. This reserves annual meeting time for decisions that the Congregational body alone can make. She noted that while she can understand related frustrations, she does not share the idea that no one knows about how and where decisions are made. She welcomed Sandy to talk with her to find the right person to speak with, and encourages her engagement. She explained that the Congregation is still building the infrastructure for the policy-based governance model in which many types of decisions are made outside annual meetings.

Cindy Krueger mentioned that it would be helpful to have an organizational chart to identify who one can go to for certain things. Reverend Geisenhainer referred people to the large organizational map in the hallway of the staff office and said she would be delighted to give a tour of the map.

Pat Herbst thanked Sandy Eyl for her point made and noted her comment focused on the role of decision-making in the Congregation and the conversion to the current form of governance. He suggested more transparent reporting on the assessment of the Church operations and gave two examples of incidents in which operational support he expected was not available. He suggested, too, that the CEO make decisions informed by the Congregation’s opinion on an issue (e.g. to consider which day of the week it is better to have the Church closed.) The opinions could be gathered, for example, through a non-binding referendum. Also, he shared that the Men’s Council just voted to sponsor signage in the back-40.

Elizabeth Hansen, a visitor, asked who audits UUAA’s financial books. President LaPorte responded that the books are audited internally, that Reverend Geisenhainer has said that we are going through a process to identify what kind of external audit we want to have, and that the Board, in its fiduciary role, reviews the monthly financial statements.

Thank You

President LaPorte thanked the Congregation for the opportunity to serve as its President.

Outgoing Board Trustee Tom Darnton spoke of the gratitude he felt for the opportunity to serve the last four years as a Trustee at Large and for what the experience offered him. He invited others to serve, saying that serving is a blessing available to all.

Passing the Torch

President LaPorte invited President-Elect Ken Clein up to receive the President’s Chalice, noting she has found it to be a real pleasure working with Ken, that he is a thoughtful man, and that she is honored and proud to welcome him as UUAA’s new President.

Adjournment

Motion 14.06.01.06 Spencer Thomas moved to adjourn the meeting. Bob Hospadaruk seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned: 1:10pm Closing Hymn

# **Board of Trustees**

Submitted by Ken Clein, President

Description of the Board

The Board serves as the governing body for the Congregation. In the course of bi-monthly meetings, the Board considers new policies, reviews existing policies, approves the annual budget, and monitors compliance with the by-laws and other guiding documents, such as the strategic plan.

The Congregation elects lay leaders at the annual meeting to serve on the Board of Trustees, including four officers and five members at large. Terms of services are rotated to ensure stability. Each year, the Congregation votes on a slate of 3-4 people, presented by the Leadership Development Team (LDT). In addition, the Past President and the Senior Minister/CEO advise the Board and serve as non-voting members.

Members of the Board of Trustees: (June 1, 2014 - May 31, 2015)

* Officers: Ken Clein (president), Beth Hospadaruk (vice president), Roberta Allen (treasurer), Priscilla Spencer (secretary)
* Trustees at Large: Julie Voelck, Ginny Creasman, Paul Morris, Allen Duncan, Tricia Mooney.
* Past President: Elizabeth LaPorte
* Senior Minister/CEO: Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer

UUAA Values Addressed by the Board:

* Spiritual life: Supporting lifelong learning and leadership.
* Social Justice and Environmental Action: Appointing a Board member as new Social Justice Council liaison.
* Community: Supporting the 150th Anniversary Celebration; appointing an LDT liaison.
* Stewardship: Initiating the 2nd Ask Campaign and promoting financial literacy.
* Culture: “To work together to lead the Congregation according to our established Core Values. We commit to achieve this by: working together collaboratively; working from our minds and our hearts; and embracing the Congregation we serve.”

2014-2015 Board Activities and Accomplishments

Board Linkage and Communications

Strategic Plan

* Meet with the various ministry and small groups to better understand their successes and challenges. We will learn about their accomplishments and plans for the future and encourage them to implement and evaluate those plans.
* Initiate conversations with the Board that will be open to all Congregants. The purpose of these conversations will be to share appropriate and important information with the Congregation and to listen to their ideas, questions, and concerns.

Activities and Accomplishments

* Reauthorized the Ministries Reflection Task Force (MRTF) to continue the series of reflective conversations with various ministry groups. This year the MRTF was asked to focus on stewardship and Worship.
* Supported the 150th UUAA anniversary celebration by engaging with the 150th planning team on a number of occasions and participating in the year-long reflection and celebration.
* Discussed the importance of leveraging communications methods with Congregants including study use of Social Media and Web and promoting *Conversations with the Board.*
* Appointed Board and ministry liaisons to provide direct, effective links between small group ministries and the Board of Trustees. Liaisons participate in additional meetings and events. The following Trustees were appointed:
* Julie Voelck: Social Justice Council
* Allen Duncan: Leadership Development Team
* Roberta Allen: Denominational Connections Team
* Open: Stewardship Team
* Tricia Mooney: Reflective Conversations Team

Leadership Development

Strategic Plan

* Revisit the charge to the Leadership Development Team to strengthen the connection of leadership development programs for the specific needs of UUAA.

Activities and Accomplishments

Leadership Development Team (LDT)

* Continued developing the working relationship with the LDT through meetings and discussions to emphasize the cultivating of leaders.
* Per the By-laws, the Board appointed a former Board member Tom Reischl to the LDT.
* The past president and members of the LDT continued work on revising the UUAA website to better reflect both the Board recruitment and leadership efforts of the LDT. Updates are expected to be completed in Summer 2015.

Communication and Collaboration Team (CCT)

* Launching of the CCT was placed on hold to allow the Senior Minister and potential members of the group to focus instead on the 150th anniversary celebration. The Board anticipates launching the CCT in Fall 2015.

Assessment

Strategic Plan

* Clarify the goals and identify a process for assessment of the Church ministries, the Board, and the CEO that is consistent with our policies and covenants.

Activities and Accomplishments

* The following Governing Policies used by the Board to guide our discernment were reviewed. Revisions and/or new policies are being proposed and approved where needed:
* Senior minister sabbatical policy per Section 2.2.5 & 2.11 and Letter of Agreement.
* Financial management policies as identified in Sections 2.3 – 2.6.
* Staff monitoring and fair treatment per Sections 2.2 and 2.3.
* Assess the need for a Ministerial Succession Plan/Policy per Sections 3.3.2 and 2.10.
* Incorporate previously proposed Governing Policies updates.
* Received monitoring reports from the CEO and staff per Section 4.4.
* Assessed Board accomplishments per Sections 3.1.5 and 3.3.
* Reflective conversations were held on Stewardship and Worship. The results are forthcoming and will be used by the Board and RC Team to assess ministry effectiveness and provide feedback to lay leaders.
* The President reported on last year’s Reflective Conversations at the January 2015 Congregational Meeting. Contributors: Dixie Hibner (chair), Becky Hoort, Fran Dew, Carolyn Madden, John Seeley, Jim Lee, and Theresa Rohlck.
* Reviewed and commented on proposed changes to the By-laws, ongoing through 2015.

Financial Literacy

Strategic Plan

* Incorporate conversations and training about finances, aspirations, and how they are intertwined and how they support each other into leadership training, conversations with the Congregation, and conversations with various ministry groups.

Activities and Accomplishments

* Authorized the CEO to refinance the mortgage, when our balance was reduced to under $1million. The interest rate was reduced and is allowing us to pay principal and interest. At the current rate and payment level, the mortgage will be retired in approximately six (6) years.
* Supported Comprehensive Stewardship and Annual Budget Campaign (ABC) Initiatives.
* Began discernment on moving the ABC to the Spring and changing the fiscal year to run from July through June to allow for better financial planning.
* Promoted financial literacy by initiating, organizing, and running the 2015 2nd Ask Campaign to raise additional funds in support of the stewardship of our buildings, land, and staff.
* Approved a capital reserve replacement plan.
* Received a list of approved capital projects for 2015, per Governing Policy Section 2.8.4.
* Approved an annual budget that reflects the Congregation’s values and priorities and includes a third party financial review, establishment of a Capital (building) Maintenance Fund, parking lot, and boiler repairs.
* The Treasurer refined the monthly budget reports by introducing a “dashboard” overview tool that the Board has found very helpful. This tool will be fine-tuned and used to communicate regularly with the Congregation beginning in Fall 2015.
* The Board initiated a budget planning process to allow time to discuss priorities, review draft budget, and approve a final budget before the end of the fiscal year.

Future Plans and Goals

* Revise the Annual Board Strategic Work Plan.
* Implement the new Communications and Collaborations Team.
* Continue Reflective Conversations with different ministry programs and based on information collected, assist ministries in discerning approaches for improving.
* Continue to refine financial literacy education for the Board and improve communications of the financial health of UUAA to the Congregation through an online “dashboard” and quarterly reporting.
* Establish a plan for periodic financial reviews, focusing on improving procedures and increasing efficiencies.
* Move the ABC to the spring and change the fiscal year to run from July through June.
* Implement the plan for the Senior Minister’s sabbatical.
* Support the CEO in replacing staff positions and reorganizing as necessary to match the available staffing budget.
* Support the 150th Anniversary planning and implementation.
* Propose changes to By-laws for approval at the next Congregational meeting.
* Implement updates to the Board of Trustees Governing Policies.
* Implement improvements to the LDT website.

**GOVERNING POLICIES**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION**

**OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN**

**Board of Trustees**

**Core Values: The First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan (UUAA) has been deeply committed to liberal religious thought and action for 150 years. We join together in community to encourage and inspire each other’s spiritual journeys, to honor and care for the natural world around us, and to join forces to further social justice in order to make a difference in the world.**

**We work together to achieve the following ends:**

# 1.1 Spiritual Life

We find inspiration, renewal, and challenge in worship services. Children, youth, and adults are enriched by classes and programs that expand religious understanding and nurture spiritual growth rooted in Unitarian Universalist traditions and values.

* + 1. We actively support members of this Congregation in their journeys toward spiritual growth and self-knowledge.
    2. We gather in worship to share the power of collective spiritual experience**.**

# Spiritual Growth and Development

Submitted by Sandy Garges, Director

This year we continued efforts to strengthen the structure, and thereby sustainability, of the Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) program. To build on the advancements of last year, discussion of the creation of an SGD council has taken hold. My thanks to all of the lay leaders who are engaging in this discussion.

This report uses as its foundation sections 1.1 through 1.5 of the UUAA Governing Policies.

Children and Youth Program

As of April 28, 2015, 318 children and youth are registered in the SGD Children and Youth program. Over 100 volunteers have participated this year. The SGD program is served by the following staff members: Erin Dixon, Lead Pre-School Teacher; Julie Dybdahl, YRUU Coordinator; Debra Golden, SGD Program Assistant for the Children and Youth Program; and Sanne Krummel, Lead Nursery Teacher.

The Children’s Ministry Team, the Youth Ministry Team, and the YRUU Coordinator have each submitted a report detailing their efforts over the past twelve months.

Summer Program

The new summer format introduced last year will continue. It worked well. The inclusion of the three-week “Service, Song, and Story” intersession was successful. Debra Golden will again facilitate the 12-week summer program which will focus on UU Super Heroes.

Adult Education

The Adult Education Advisory Team (AEAT) has proffered a wonderfully broad and deep selection of Adult SGD offerings during this, its second year of active engagement. See the AEAT report submitted by Charley Burleigh for more information about this important work.

Congregational Activities

As part of the 150th Anniversary celebration, the SGD program hosted an open house in the SGD wing to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the SGD Wing and the 150th anniversary of UUAA. Tours of the classrooms were provided, as was cake and hot cocoa.

In connection with the recent accessibility work undertaken by the UUAA, Michelle Ferguson continues to serve as the Children’s Welcoming Council chair, as well as the Children and Youth Program liaison with the Accessibility Team. The mission of the Children’s Welcoming Council is, in short, to foster communication between and among SGD participants to create a welcoming environment for all children, youth, volunteers, and parents and caregivers.

Transitions

Maria Thomas, programs coordinator, resigned her position in March. Maria provided administrative support for the programs of UUAA with specific emphasis on SGD. Her smile and warmth will be missed by all. Thank you, Maria, for your three years of compassionate and dedicated service.

I, too, have tendered my resignation effective May 10, 2015. My thanks to all of the lay leaders who are supporting SGD ministries during this time of transition.

# **Children’s Welcoming Council**

Submitted by Michelle Avery Ferguson, Chair

The mission of the Children’s Welcoming Council (CWC) is to support teachers as they work to create classrooms inviting for all children, youth, and teachers.

During this past program year, Michelle Avery Ferguson (chair), Sandy Garges, and Debra Golden served as members of the CWC.

The CWC focuses on bringing our first and third Unitarian Universalist principles into being by providing teachers the information, support, and tools they need to create a warm and welcoming place for our youngest Congregants. Through teacher training, special events, and other communications, the CWC seeks to foster the acceptance of each child and youth and their unique way of being in the world. Where needed, the CWC provides teachers the information, support, and tools to create a warm and welcoming place, honoring the inherent worth and dignity of each child and youth who walks through our doors.

The CWC achieved the following during the May 1, 2014 to April 30, 2015 program year:

* Offered classroom consultation and support to SGD teachers,
* Arranged for the performance group Diversability to present to SGD students and families, raising awareness of issues facing people with disabilities,
* Developed a 9:30am 6th grade SGD classroom to accommodate students benefitting from a smaller class size,
* Provided sensitivity training during the annual teacher training and orientation,
* Coordinated with the Dis/Ability Action pilot program, now Accessibility and Inclusion Ministries (AIM),
* Established an accessibility liaison to serve as the voice of accessibility and inclusion within the Children’s Ministry Team (CMT) for the coming program year.

Although the next program year will undoubtedly bring changes due to staff departures, we are hopeful that the CWC will continue to exist within Spiritual Growth and Development. We have identified the following goals for the coming year:

* Continue to increase teachers’ awareness of the support provided by the CWC,
* Include a description of the CWC in the SGD Family Guide to inform families of the availability of services and to make a statement about UUAA’s commitment to accessibility and inclusion in SGD,
* Continue to review allergy and medication policies in SGD and revise as needed,
* Recruit new members to the CWC,
* Coordinate with AIM, CMT, and YMT,
* Participate in discussions regarding possible organizational changes in SGD to assure the diversity of needs among children and youth are considered.

# **Youth Ministries Team**

Submitted by Stephanie Surfus, Chair

The Youth Ministry Team (YMT) was launched in the summer of 2014 as an acknowledgement that the needs of youth and adults participating in Grades 6 through 12 are significantly different than those of youth in lower grades. The 2014-2015 YMT was served by Stephanie Surfus (Chair), Christine Pellar-Kosbar, Craig Van Kempen, Justin Poliner (YRUU representative), and Sandy Garges (staff liaison). Two more team members will be added to the 2015-2016 team so all grades will include an adult representative. We are also planning to have a recent YRUU member serve as the young adult representative on the YMT.

Mission Statement

The mission of the YMT is to strengthen connections within and across the 6 through 12 grade groups, the Congregation, and the larger community. We will work to provide a spiritual foundation based on the UU principles and identity. We will work to create a welcoming environment to help children transition to youth, and to help young adults transition to adult participation in the UU community.

The YMT met monthly, developing goals and action items around the mission statement. We sponsored a 6th through 12th grade social event in March 2015. More than 40 youth gathered at the first Spring Fling to get to know each other and to learn contra dancing. The Spring Fling will become an annual event with leadership from Grades 6 through 12 defining the experience and activities. We are exploring ways to integrate the OWL curriculum and our 7 principles into each grade. Plans are also well underway to network with young adults who have aged out of our program but may still be looking for a UU connection.

Review our goals below. There is much good work to do here.

Goals of the YMT

* Maintaining and strengthening the bonds that develop in 6th grade through subsequent years.
* Create connections and team-building through grades 6-12.
* Develop connections to other youth groups in neighboring Congregations.
* Develop connections within the Congregation.
* Foster a welcoming environment.
* Expose youth in each grade to our principles and our UU identity.
* Foster understanding and connection to our principles and our UU identity for teachers and volunteers.
* Support, train, and recruit with an awareness that the class management needs are different with older youth.
* Provide a transition for young adults so they continue to feel welcome in the UU community after 12th grade.

# **Children’s Ministry Team**

Submitted by Lisa Kohn, Member

The Children’s Ministry Team (CMT) envisions, develops, supports, represents, and evaluates the Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) program for children from nursery through 5th grade at UUAA under the guidance of, and in collaboration with, the Director of Spiritual Growth and Development. The group ideally consists of four members each serving a two- year and three-month commitment. Members rotate off the committee in staggered years to provide continuity for new members. Currently, there are two members serving on the committee: Lisa Kohn and Gregg Peterson, both of whom are nearing the end of their service in August 2015. Recruitment has been ongoing to seek new membership. The group changed its regular meeting time from the second Tuesday evening of the month to the second Sunday of the month between first and second Services, to accommodate members’ schedules. Historically, the group also conducts a half day retreat in the summer; however, the group chose not to have a retreat in 2014.

The members of the CMT serve as classroom liaisons for the different school age grades, to help monitor and facilitate growth and development of the teachers, students, and participating families. An important function of the group is the recruitment of SGD teachers and volunteers. The committee uses a Recruitment Process Tool to establish monthly benchmarks for recruitment. Beginning in April and through September, group members staff the SGD table during Social Hour each Sunday, submit announcements in the *Weekly Bulletin* and *Monthly Newsletter,* and actively reach out to Congregants on a personal level to discuss the SGD programs. The group also serves to establish policies and goals and evaluates curriculum. Our SGD program had a robust enrollment this fall with over 250 registered youth.

This was the first year in which the Children’s and Youth SGD program functioned with two separate committees of Children’s Ministry (nursery-5th grade) and Youth Ministry (6th-12th grade). The groups collaborate to work through issues such as teacher recruitment, promote of the SGD program as a whole, and are responsible for various administrative duties such as completion of the annual report. With the establishment of two groups, focused attention can be directed to the age specific needs of our children.

Highlighted activities that took place over the last year include the teacher orientation in late August and early September 2015, rotating classroom chalice lights at the start of Service, participation in the first annual “Make a Difference Sunday: Involvement Fair” in February, and a Teacher Appreciation Brunch on Sunday, April 26.

With the departure of Sandy Garges as SGD director, the group is working to identify immediate and intermediate needs for our Children’s Ministry.

# Young Religious Unitarian Universalists

Submitted by Julie Dybdahl, YRUU Coordinator

We have continued to have a large and active YRUU group this year. With over 30 registered 10th through 12th graders, there are over 25 active members who attend events regularly, if not weekly. Sunday morning attendance is typically 20-23 youth, and attendance has also been very good for extra (other than Sunday morning) activities. In July 2014, we took a week-long service trip in Kentucky; 24 youth and 11 adults participated.

The mission of YRUU is to provide a spiritual home for our youth, where we can:

* Learn about and put into practice our UU principles,
* Learn about other topics such as ethics, values, and healthy personal relationship,
* Build a safe and welcoming social community for all,
* Encourage leadership development,
* Worship together.

The core values of our Congregation help to define our group’s activities:

Spiritual Life

Many of the youth hunger for worship that is comfortable and personally relevant. In general, the worship they desire is shorter but more intense than what they usually experience in adult worship. After listening to lectures at school five days per week, the youth are resistant to listening to sermons or other didactic presentations. Instead, they prefer worship that is more participatory.

We begin each class with an opening reading, selected by our youth Worship Coordinator (an elected position) from the Church hymnal or the internet. We begin each class with a ritual chalice-lighting, followed by check-in. We end each class with linked arms and a song. At each of our evening social events (Gnomapaloozas) we have a time for group worship, led by our Worship Coordinator and other youth volunteers.

During the summer of 2014, we experimented with offering a Chalice Circle for the youth on four Sunday mornings. These circles were led by experienced Chalice Circle leaders and utilized topics from previous adult Chalice Circles. Each Sunday, approximately 10 youth participated, with nearly 20 youth attending one or more sessions. The circles were quite successful, and we hope to offer them again this next summer.

In March, the group created and provided Worship Services for the whole Congregation in a YRUU-led Service on the topic of “U Being U.” In preparing for this Service, the youth learned about typical UUAA worship format. They developed music and words they felt would be appreciated by the Congregation and they had the opportunity to work with our Senior Minister to develop their leadership skills and to prepare a smooth-running Worship Service.

Social Justice and Environmental Action

Our youth have a strong interest in social justice, the environment, and being of service. One major focus of Sunday morning meetings chosen by the youth was discussion and learning about controversial topics. On several Sundays we listen to a TED Talk and then discussed or debated the issue presented.

This past summer, 24 youth, nine parents, one advisor, and the YRUU Coordinator planned and participated in a week-long service trip to Frakes, KY. We participated in the summer work camp program at Henderson Settlement, an established Methodist mission in Appalachia. In the months prior to taking the trip, we learned about the people and the land we would be visiting. We learned about the economic injustice the Appalachian people have experienced, and the environmental devastation of the region due to coal mining practices.

For five days in July, we worked on home remodeling projects in one of the poorest counties in the country. We removed rotting structures and built new replacements, painted interiors and exteriors, installed gutters, floors, and a ceiling, and secured a toilet fixture. While we worked, we interacted with the homeowners and their families, learning about their lives and developing friendships. Most of the participants - youth and chaperones - found this service trip to be eye-opening and life changing. It was a sobering experience for the youth to witness such poverty. It was also a rich, empowering experience, as the participants learned new skills and were able to make positive changes in the lives of the residents.

Community

Maintaining a welcoming community continues to be a priority for YRUU, and this has been a successful year. Strong bonds and new connections were forged during last summer’s service trip, which included rising 10th graders who were new to the group. The classes and Ingathering Gnomapalooza in September focused on community-building activities. In most Sunday classes we continue this through playing a cooperative or community building game. Our Gnomapaloozas and overnights are opportunities for youth to relax and be social together. The youth show a commitment to supporting one another, and when a conflict arises in the group, they make it a priority to work it out as individuals or as a group process.

Stewardship

The YRUU youth recognize that they are a part of the greater Congregation. They are respectful of our Church’s resources. This year, for the second year, the YRUU has avoided using disposable items such as paper plates and plastic cutlery, as much as possible. Instead, they use the Congregation’s china and silverware and take responsibility for cleaning these and restoring them to their correct locations. The YRUU again participated in the all-Church Halloween party by creating a haunted house for the younger children. Again this year, we sent care packages to last year’s seniors in early December, to remind them that they are still a part of UUAA and are remembered by their YRUU friends.

Culture

In YRUU, we seek to develop a culture that is welcoming and respectful of all. Because this is such an important value, we have an elected position of Right Relations Coordinator, who is responsible for ongoing assessment of social relations and balance within the group, and who addresses problems in relations or emotional climate within the group. If an individual is uncomfortable with some aspect of the group, he or she can bring this to the attention of the Right Relations Coordinator, who will then help address the problem in the group.

Other elected positions are the Social Action Coordinator, the Worship Coordinator, and the Leader of Leaders.

In this past year, we have been successful in doing all of the YRUU’s traditional annual events in addition to Sunday classes. These include: raising money for holiday gifts for needy children through sale of apple dumplings, a ski/winter sports trip to northern Michigan in January 2015, Bridging Ceremonies for incoming 10th graders and for graduating seniors, and the summer service trip. Several YRUU youth have attended regional conferences (CONS).

Adults involved in leading YRUU this year included: Julie Dybdahl, Lead YRUU Coordinator, and YRUU advisors Kate Hutchens, Mark VanKempen, Phil Hodge, and Emma Kennedy. Several parent volunteers were instrumental in our activities, especially the summer service trip. Unfortunately, we have had a harder time finding parent volunteers during this school year, and have had to cancel some events due to a lack of adult support. We are very sad that we will be unable to do a summer service trip in 2015 because there are not enough parents available to help in planning or chaperoning such a trip. We hope we will be able to resume the tradition of an annual summer service trip next year.

# **Adult Education Advisory Team**

Submitted by Charlie Burleigh, AEAT Member

Our mission is to renew the tradition of Adult Education at UUAA. Our inspiration is drawn from the Provocative Proposals section of the UUAA Community Self-Evaluation (Sankofa) Report (September 3, 2006), which found a need to engage in community building among adult UUs through discussion and study in small groups about timely issues related to personal and spiritual growth. Small groups meeting in quiet spaces are essential. For us, dialogue itself is a spiritual practice. Our mission statement provides as follows:

Guided by Section 1.1 of our Governing Policies, the Adult Education Advisory Team (AEAT) plans to engage the minds, hearts, and whole selves of adult learners in our community. With the understanding that the Unitarian Universalist (UU) journey is one of an ongoing quest for truth and meaning, we will provide adult participants with opportunities to:

* Develop an integrated sense of their own UU and UUAA identity,
* Find resources for negotiating the various stages of their life journey,
* Be empowered to live their beliefs through their actions,
* Cultivate spiritual deepening and develop spiritual practices,
* Enrich their understanding of the world around us,
* Build connections with others.

In the pursuit of this mission, we expressly undertake that relevance to the Seven Unitarian Universalist Principles and/or the UUAA Five Core Values will guide the approval of each individual program proposed to be offered by AEAT, and that the Adult SGD program as a whole will operate with minimal cost to UUAA and minimal demands on the time and energies of UUAA staff. It is our hope that the benefits of the Adult SGD Program will be especially evident in relation to the Core Values of Community and Culture.

Each school-year term, beginning in the fall of 2013, AEAT has offered a catalog of Adult SGD courses and workshops which

1. Publicize the offerings of other UUAA recognized groups such as Welcome Ministries and
2. Adds a diverse array of courses and workshops taught and facilitated by qualified individual members of our community.

Both the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, Catalogs were published online at uuaa.org and in hard-copy. 300 color copies of the Spring Catalog were distributed in hand. We have personally invited many fellow Congregation members to attend courses and workshops. We view our support of each of these offerings as a highlight of our activity.

Highlights

1. Arranging the room space and providing the Congregation-wide publicity for the organization of the Community of Writers,
2. Participation in the request to open the Church building on Friday nights and providing the room scheduling and publicity for eight Friday evening meetings of the course, “Cakes for the Queen of Heaven.” This is the course which has traditionally been the platform for formation of women’s circles in the Congregation.
3. More broadly, in the Fall 2014 Catalog, there were nine offerings of ‘individual’ courses or workshops (courses or workshops not originated by UUAA groups), and in the Spring 2015 Catalog there were 15 such offerings.

AEAT member Bev Black, on the basis of her work experience, advises that it takes three years to get a new program up and running smoothly in an organization. On that basis, we are two-thirds of the way to our first major goal, which is to provide a go-to source of publicity and information which will encourage UUAA groups and qualified individuals, on one hand, and Congregation members, on the other, to increasingly seek out one another to engage in “Conversations That Matter.”

Our larger goal is the vision of small-group engagement and energy described in the Sankofa Report. In this, we realize we still have much to do.

Members of the AEAT are: Carol Acitelli, Bev Black, Charley Burleigh, Sandy Eyl, Bruce Gibb, and Bett Weston. Our catalog design is provided by Angelina Zaytsev. Liaison with the UUAA Ministerial team is provided by our staff advisor Sandy Garges, Director of Spiritual Growth and Development.

**GOVERNING POLICIES**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION**

**OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN**

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**We work together to achieve the following ends:**

# 1.2 Social Justice and Environmental Action

We live our beliefs by creating, sustaining, and enhancing programs that actively engage Congregants of all ages in projects that promote peace, justice, and positive environmental action locally and beyond.

* + 1. This Congregation acts in concrete and substantial ways to promote social and economic justice in the larger community.
    2. This Congregation acts in concrete and substantial ways toprotect the natural environment.
    3. This Congregation participates in programs that promote peace and understanding in the world.

# Social Justice Council

Submitted by Kate Warner, Carolyn Madden, and Julie Voelck, SJC members

The Mission and Objectives of the Social Justice Council (SJC):

The Mission of the SJC is to coordinate and inspire the Congregation’s efforts to advocate, educate, organize, serve, and witness for social action and to establish UUAA as a leader for social justice. The work of the SJC is inspired by the Ends Statements from the Governing Policies.

The Objectives of the Social Justice Council

1. To strengthen the involvement of members of the Congregation in social justice ministries,
2. To nurture and support the social justice work of our Congregation, and
3. To develop and maintain policies and procedures for review, approval, and oversight of initiatives and actions of social justice programs that are conducted in the name of our Congregation.

Organizational Structure of Social Justice:

Breaking Down Silos: The Social Justice Council co-sponsoring and working collaboratively with other social justice groups at UUAA to inform, educate, and advocate.

The SJC, in conjunction with the Leadership Development Team (LDT), planned and held a workshop on Saturday, February 21, 2014. It was attended by leaders of 11 Congregational social justice groups. The workshop featured activities including a “toolkit” of what social justice groups need to know to effectively “make a difference” within their groups; a panel presentation provided by Congregants represented four different groups and an interactive activity to help participants become knowledgeable about UUAA policies and procedures.

This Saturday workshop was followed by an involvement and information fair held on Sunday, February 22 during Social Hour. This Make a Difference Fair yielded new awareness and volunteers for many of the participants who set up tables to highlight their groups. The fair was again organized by the SJC and the LDT, with the much appreciated assistance of Welcoming Ministries Coordinator Hannah Hotchkiss.

In addition to the above, during the year the SJC also:

* Coordinated two UUSC Justice Sunday Services with Social Hour follow-up.
* Formally recognized new social justice groups, including the Climate Action Group, the Restorative Justice group, and the Immigration Action Coalition. Members of the SJC participated on the Steering Committee of the Friends of Restorative Justice of Washtenaw County which meets at UUAA.
* Publicized and co-sponsored film showings, book reviews, and discussions in conjunction with various social justice groups, such as Challenging Racism, AAUUJME, Mindful Eating, and Veterans for Peace.
* Participated as the UUAA’s representative in the Michigan UU Social Justice Network’s campaigns to defeat discriminatory legislation on religious restoration and legislation permitting acquisition of gun permits by those with domestic violence histories.
* Jointly operated a social justice table during Social Hour in conjunction with the Denominational Connections Team and Challenging Racism.

Social Justice Council Goals for Next Year

* Co-sponsor a second “Make a Difference Weekend,” with a focus on new and emerging leaders.
* Begin to address the question of what our Congregation’s social justice programs and activities could become—and what forms they might take—in the “dawning future.”
* Enhance and expand social justice communications through updates to UUAA’s social justice website, social media pages (Facebook), and publications.
* Review and update social justice policies, procedures, and forms.
* Expand and promote social justice volunteer service and advocacy opportunities within our Congregation.
* Strengthen UUAA’s ties to and participation in community justice issue campaigns and the work of other organizations promoting peace and justice in Washtenaw County and throughout the State of Michigan, such as Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice (ICPJ) and the Michigan UU Social Justice Network (MUUSJN).
* Continue to plan and co-sponsor education and advocacy events on behalf of current UUA CSAI social justice Issues, i.e. Immigration Reform, Reproductive Justice, and Escalating Inequality. This work will be coordinated with the continuing CSAI work of MUUSJN and the over 20 Michigan UU congregations it represents.

Members of the Social Justice Council:

Co-Chairs: Carolyn Madden and Kate Warner. Members: Roberta Allen, Hayley Boyse, Christy Cardinal, Don Pelz, Sally Preston, Phil Tuchinsky, Julie Voelck as Board of Trustees Liaison, and Hannah Hotchkiss. Member Emerita: Ellen Teller.

Habitat for Humanity   
Submitted by Barb Pickett, Chair

The Habitat for Humanity Committee (H4H) started meeting in March 2014. Members are: Michael Muha, Michelle Lovasz, Fran Lyman, Sandy Simon, and Barb Pickett. We met to organize the annual information pamphlet to mail to the Congregation, set fundraising goals, and sign up to be at the table during Social Hour throughout the summer to answer questions and hopefully meet our volunteer and financial goals.

The two homes that Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley assigned to our group (The Good News House Group; 17 area churches that work together to renovate two homes each summer) are on Rambling Way in Ypsilanti. After H4H did some preliminary work, the volunteers began working in early May and worked each Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in May, June, and July. We did not work the weekend of July 4, 2014.

Volunteers represented UUAA on Thursday, May 22; Saturday, June 7; Thursday, June 19; Friday, June 20, Thursday, June 26, and Saturday, July 26. The work day was from 8:00am to 4:00pm. Approximately 50 people worked on the houses with an additional 15 people supplying lunch those same days.

Our fundraising goal was $7,000. We sent in $7,270 to H4H of Huron Valley. Most of that money came in from people giving checks during Social Hour; $1300 was donated during offertory on Habitat’s “Sharing the Collection” Sunday.

The two houses were completed on time and have families who have purchased them. One home was just recently purchased by a new member of UUAA, Angela Peters. She hopes to move in by June of 2015.

We are now getting ready for renovations on another two Ypsilanti homes. Our work for Summer 2015 will be Fridays and Saturdays, June through August.

Ann Arbor UUs for Justice in the Middle East Team (UUJME)   
Submitted by Larry and Diane Cooper, 2014 Co-Chairs and Anne Garcia, 2015 Chair

Description

As with our national Unitarian Universalist Justice in the Middle East organization, founded in the 1970’s, our committee in Ann Arbor continues to focus on the Israel-Palestinian conflict as a human rights issue. AAUUJME is one of the larger and most active of a growing number of chapters across the US. We have been working since 2002 to inform interested members of our Congregation, community, and political representatives about the situation in the contested region and to advocate for a just peace in historic Palestine. In this report year, the committee modified its mode of operation from monthly meetings to a project-based meeting schedule.

How UUAA Core Values Were Met

All forums sponsored by AAUUJME directly or indirectly address issues surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict. This conflict touches on many of our Core Values and UU Principles. For example, working towards peace in the Middle East clearly addresses Core Value 2 regarding Social Justice and Environmental Action and Principles 2 and 6 (Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all), as does working for equal rights for Palestinians and humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza. The latter item also addresses Principle 1 (inherent worth and dignity of every person). Our forums are educational and some address religious faith traditions; therefore these also address Principle 4 (a free and responsible search for truth and meaning) and Core Values 1 and 5.

Highlights of Activities

* Committee members staffed a table during Social Hour on a number of Sundays providing informative materials to anyone interested.
* Several committee members attended General Assembly (GA) 2014 in Providence, Rhode Island. They took part in staffing UUJME’s booth, distributing packets of study guide materials, and attending UUJME’s well attended program, with speakers Rabbi Brian Walt and Palestinian scholar Sa’ed Atshan, attracting unprecedented interest and positive constructive discussion.
* Committee activities and personal outreach to Congregational leadership resulted in an increased awareness of the relevance of this issue to the UU community.
* We organized and conducted two series of study group sessions, based on the study guide prepared by the Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church USA, titled *Zionism Unsettled*. Approximately 40 people participated overall with most of the feedback being very positive, suggesting that there may be enough interest in the Congregation to conduct a third series. Interestingly, six members of the Unitarian Universalist congregation in Brighton attended the second educational session; and we have discussed helping them give a similar presentation in their congregation.
* On Sunday, February 8, 2015, our committee showed the film, “Peace Propaganda and the Promised Land”. Approximately 30 members of the Congregation attended, with active discussion following the film.
* A member of our committee participated in one of the events marking the 150th anniversary of our Congregation: “What Sustains Us.”
* In March 2015, the policy advisor of the US Campaign to Stop the Occupation [of Palestine] gave a series of lectures in southeastern Michigan. Our committee co-sponsored two of these presentations. One was conducted at the Friend’s Meeting House, downtown Ann Arbor on Saturday, May 28 and the other was conducted, in concert with two University of Michigan student clubs, at the Michigan League on Monday, March 30.

Goals Reached

* We achieved a significant level of participation and appreciation for the two study group programs conducted: one in the fall of 2014, the other in the spring of 2015.

Names of Active Participants in the Ministry:

Marina Brown

Diane Cooper (2014 Co-Chair)

Larry Cooper (2014 Co-Chair)

Anne Garcia (2015 Chair)

Mark Jagner

Akin Oni-Orisan

Ruth Vail

Future Ideas, Plans, and Goals

* The committee has shifted its modus operandi to a project-based focus.
* We will also reach out to several people who have shown a keen interest in the issue to give them an opportunity to become more actively involved.
* Members of AAUUJME will be attending GA 2015 in Portland, Oregon. They will assist with raising awareness and participating in constructive actions via UUJME’s booth, and the Reflection & Learning Program with speakers Mark Braverman and Dana Ashrawi, who have been involved in the development of the *Steadfast Hope and Zionism Unsettled*, and *UU Seven Principles* based study guides, respectively.
* We are planning a book discussion of *Shattered Hopes: Obama’s Failure to Broker Israeli-Palestinian Peace* by Josh Ruebner for the summer of 2015.
* A third series of study sessions is being considered for the fall because of interest expressed by several Congregants. Alternatively, or in addition, we are looking into assisting the Brighton congregation with a similar project.

**Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Coffee Project**  
Submitted by Jenny Kropf, Co-Chair

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Coffee Project is an ongoing fundraiser for UUSC's social justice programs as well as for our Church, by selling Fair Trade organic coffee, tea, chocolate, dried fruit, nuts, and olive oil. This project embraces the vision of human rights by allowing UUAA joining hands with small farming communities globally in securing economic, social, and environmental justice.

On Sundays during Social Hour, we sell products from Equal Exchange (EE), a democratic worker-owned co-operative, which is in partnership with UUSC. For every pound of product we purchase from EE, they donate 20 cents to UUSC. In the past year, UUSC profited over $15,000 from UU churches nationally who are part of the Coffee Project, and we were able to fundraise $4000 for our Church, from our sales during Social Hour. We hope to continue to serve the Congregation and are always looking for volunteers to help keep the program going.

Our main highlight last year was when the Coffee Project was presented with a much-needed cabinet by Church member Hal Breidenbach that he designed and built. It has been a valuable asset for our team to help us store and display our products.

The Coffee Project's dedicated team members are: Cathie and Hal Breidenbach, Lynn Dwyer, Connie Frederick, Nancy Harter, Shireen Jones, Denise Kearns, Jenny Kropf, Sharon St Mary, and Cathy Whitaker, who all wish to thank the Congregation for supporting “A Taste of Justice!”

# Challenging Racism

Submitted by Kathy Friedrichs, and Lucia Heinold, Co-Chairs

Challenging Racism supports members of this Congregation in their journey toward spiritual growth and self-knowledge about their own racial, ethnic, and class privilege. We present programs that affirm the worth and dignity of all and build meaningful connections with others. Our evolving mission is to assist UUAA by engaging in conversations about race, ethnicity, and class; and to provide opportunities for reflection.

This group grew out of an earlier anti-racism group: Dialogue and Action on Race and Ethnicity, and took on its current name five years ago. There are 80 members on our email list. Kathy Friedrichs and Lucia Heinold are current co-chairs. Many others design and facilitate our programs. This year event organizers and workers include: Louise Kazarinoff, Sandy Eyl, Quincy Northrup, Alma King, Charlie Pekarek, Edie Croak, Constance Bridge, and Tom Schade. Cheryl Valentine is the leader of our new subgroup, the Immigration Action Network.

Three major goals for 2015-16

1. Devote UUAA programming to racial and class issues,
2. Continue developing partnerships within UUAA and in Washtenaw County,
3. Take more actions to demonstrate our commitment to #Blacklivesmatter,
4. Improve our social media presence at UUAA.org and elsewhere.

Most of our late 2014 and early 2015 efforts focused on our part of the UUAA’s 150th Anniversary celebration. We had major responsibility for the logistics supporting Bill Schultz’s visit in October 2014. We supported the May 2-3, 2015 weekend Saturday workshop and Sunday book signing of *The Selma Awakening: How the Civil Rights Movement Tested and Changed Unitarian Universalism* by UU Reverend Mark Morrison-Reed.

Beginning January 2015, we held drop-in conversations about race on the first Sunday of each month to help our Congregation deal with the highly publicized murders of black men and women by police across the country and here in Ann Arbor.

In February 2015, we worked with Reverend Gail to intensify UUAA work on #BlackLives Matter. In March 2015, we collaborated with the Social Justice Council on the program Islam 101. Also, we took a fledgling new group, the Immigration Action Coalition, under our wing. In April 2015 we followed last year’s showing of *Inequality for All* with another film about money in politics, *Pay 2 Play*; and facilitated a discussion of *The Selma Awakening: How the Civil Rights Movement Tested and Changed Unitarian Universalism* on Sunday, April 19.

Summer 2015 will implement a demonstration project against police killings and we resume promotion of the AACHM Freedom Journeys and cultural events. The Immigration Action Coalition group will help to implement the new Washtenaw ID program designed to help many immigrants, African Americans, and seniors in the county.

Our program planning meeting for 2015 - 2016 will be held in September. New ideas and people are always welcome.

# Mindful Eating Coalition

Submitted by Colleen Crawley, Guala Luazzana, Cathy Muha, Co-Chairs

Mission Statement

The mission of the Mindful Eating Coalition (MEC) is to encourage the Congregation and the wider community to become informed about, and advocate for, food justice and human health, and for the benefit of animals, plants, food workers, and the environment. We provide information, resources, and fun educational opportunities to help us all put into practice the principles of the Ethical Eating Statement of Conscience adopted by the Unitarian Universalist Association and our Congregation in 2011.

Through our many activities (see below) we address all five core values of UUAA: Spiritual Life, Social Justice and the Environment, Community, Stewardship, and Culture. We participate in Worship Services and put on programs that challenge us to expand our understanding of how our food choices affect the planet and other beings. We promote social justice and environmental issues locally and beyond. We search for truth in love, never dictating but always encouraging further exploration of how our values might inform our food choices. Our presentations do not require money from the Church; we are quite self-sufficient. The inherent worth and dignity of every individual underlies all aspects of our work. We would expand that further to say: the inherent worth and dignity of every being.

We meet the fourth Tuesday of every month. Our core group members are: Connie McGuire, Merrill Crockett, Ruth Vail, Eileen Wright, Donna and Hal Estry, Sheila Sanders, Colleen Crawley, Cathy Muha, and Guala Lauzzana.

Activities

Every Sunday, we staff a table during Social Hour at which we provide information and opportunities to sign up for activities. On the first Sundays of each month, we feature delicious samples of local, healthy treats based on themes such as “Healthy Super Bowl Snacks,” or “What’s New at Your Farmer’s Market?” and “Plant-Based Milks”.

Our website <http://uuaa.org/social-justice/324-me-home-page> is managed by Cathy Muha. The site includes recipes, current information about MEC events, and a link to the UUA Statement of Conscience on Ethical Eating.

Colleen Crawley writes the MEC electronic bi-weekly newsletter which features announcements of upcoming Church and community events and links to news articles on topics related to our mission. More than 400 members and friends of the Congregation currently receive this newsletter.

During summer months, we offer a very popular produce sharing section at our table. Congregants are invited to drop off excess homegrown produce and anybody is free to pick some up to take home.

This year, our fifth, we asked people to make a donation; the money collected was sent to the UUSC Haitian Garden Project. Two members went so far as to dress as carrots during Social Hour to increase donations for this cause.

Every other month, Veg UUAA, headed by Hal and Donna Estry, hosts a plant friendly family potluck at Church. These events often follow a theme, such as Earth Day or holidays, and provide an opportunity for vegans and those curious about vegan diets to sample delicious food and share their experiences and knowledge.

Last summer was our third season of working with our Maple Road neighbor farmer Bill Schmid. He donates a large portion of his harvest to the Food Gatherers as one of their faith-based farm projects.

As we prepare to head into our fourth season, we reflect back on a very successful 2014. Sixty volunteers contributed 452 hours at the farm from May through October 2014, for a grand total of 3,270 pounds of fresh produce and $1,895 in cash from the road-side stand donated to Food Gatherers. In addition, our volunteers included a beautiful cross-section of the Congregation – Chalice and Women’s Circles, YRUU, and SGD classes – as well as members of other faiths and foreign exchange students.

Colleen Crawley, who spearheads the project, spoke at this year’s Local Food Summit. Her story, “Digging Potatoes and Building Bridges,” was selected for the Local Food Story Love Slam.

Our Fall Harvest potluck tied into the Church’s 150th anniversary with the theme “Recipes Then and Now.”

We continued to host the “Meet Your Farmer” series with Sunday presentations by Cathy King of Frog Holler in January 2015 and Anne Elder and Paul Bantle of Community Farm of Ann Arbor in February 2015.

Our core members organized both the opening and closing receptions for the Church’s 150th anniversary. Also as part of the 150th celebration, our co-chairs presented a Mini-History at both Services in January. Colleen contributed a written reflection of Mindful Eating for the book being compiled.

We are actively participating in the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice (ICPJ) year-long investigation of how people of faith link what they eat to their values and beliefs. To date, Cathy Muha represented UUs on the January 2015 panel discussion “Connecting Food and Faith” at the downtown Ann Arbor library, Colleen Crawley spoke on a panel at the Local Food Summit; and we held a discussion group on the ICPJ’s suggested book *Faith and Food: Changing the World One Meal at a Time.* We plan to encourage Congregants to take up ICPJ challenges such as pledging to eat one meatless meal a week.

We attend events together such as the films “Food Chains” about the Coalition of Immokalee Farmworkers in Florida and “Cowspiracy,” as well as the ICPJ Food Justice bus tour into Detroit.

Future Ideas, Plans, and Goals

Our goal remains to find creative ways to carry out our mission. Some activities that are already planned include:

* Spring-Summer-Fall: Volunteer at farmer Bill Schmid’s farm.
* June: Tour of fellow UU’s vegetable gardens.
* September 11: potluck and food games.
* September 27: Swaroop Bhojani “Fuel and Additives for Human Machines.”
* October 16: Fall Harvest potluck.
* During the winter months we’ll also hear more from local small farmers in our “Meet Your Farmer” series.

# Prison Books

Submitted by Jim Gallas, Chair

Prison Books continues in a successful mission to deliver reading materials to confined readers. We were able to deliver approximately 20,000 books to our readers during 2014; our ninth year of operation.

Some Highlights

1. Continued providing books and reading materials to prison readers (selected facilities are looking for new mediums for their residents). The highlight for 2014 is that we have now delivered a cumulative total of over 100,000 books to federal, state, and local facilities.
2. Continued emphasizing children and youth books for our targeted facilities. These materials are useful in reception areas for visitors and the youth books provide easier reading materials for some readers.
3. Continued prison facilities: 15 total facilities. Although we are experiencing a withdrawal of interest from some facilities as we move forward. The UUAA program scale may have to adjust during 2015 to reduced demand.
4. We continued with 12 donation sources, including our own Congregation. Prison Books continues to collect books from Congregants and outside organizations while distributing these valuable commodities to different prison facilities. Through the work of the Prison Books Ministry our program continues to prosper and sustain with as many as 20 members participating during the year.

Prison Books is grateful for your continuing contributions to this worthy cause and for the wonderful efforts provided by UUAA members. The donation site is in Spiritual Growth and Development Wing upper corridor. Thank UU.

# Alpha House

Submitted by Angela Barber, Chair

The work that the members of UUAA do for Alpha House supports our Congregation’s Core Values of social justice, environmental action, and community.

Alpha House is a shelter for homeless families in Washtenaw County that is run by the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN). IHN was formed in 1994 when six local congregations (UUAA was one of these founding members) came together to address their common concern about the plight of homeless families – there was no shelter for them in Washtenaw County.

In the beginning, IHN provided housing for homeless families by having one of IHN’s-member congregation house the homeless families in that congregation’s church building for one week. This meant finding sleeping space for the families, bathrooms, laundry facilities, a place to have meals, a place for the kids to play and do their homework, and provide bath towels and bed linens, soap, shampoo, and toothpaste. The families also received assistance on finding permanent housing by working with an IHN person with expertise in this area. At the end of the week, the families and their belongings were packed up and moved to the next of the congregation. The mattresses, and such, had to be moved to the next church, too. Thus, the families were housed but the weekly moves were disruptive for the families and were a lot of work for the IHN congregations.

Things changed significantly in 2001 when St. Joseph Mercy Hospital System offered IHN the use of a building on Jackson Road for a rent of $1 per year. This is now Alpha House, and it has space to house up to six homeless families, plus a dining room, kitchen, play area for the kids, etc. The IHN staff also has offices in the building. Previously they were in the Carriage house building at UUAA when we were on Washtenaw Ave. As a result, the IHN member congregations no longer needed to house and move the families. There is still a need for food supplies such as: milk, cereal, bread, meat, cheese, peanut butter, jelly for sandwiches, juice boxes, etc. There is also a need for a warm dinner each night, people to serve that dinner, a hot breakfast on weekends, people to play with the children, a person to stay overnight as a backup to the Alpha House staff person, plus people to buy the paper towels, diapers, laundry detergent, plastic gloves, and more that Alpha House needs. This is where the support of UUAA comes in.

Four times each year, UUAA is responsible for a Host week. For each Host Week, volunteers are recruited to fill 145 positions. Twenty four of these volunteer positions are for staffing the recruitment table during Social Hour for six weeks before our Host Week. For the 21 “bring food” positions, volunteers make or purchase food that is then delivered to Alpha House. These volunteers are not reimbursed. Two volunteers purchase items on a shopping list from Alpha House and they are reimbursed. Around $300 each Host Week is taken from the Alpha House account which is funded with donations taken at the recruitment table. It is not unusual for one volunteer to sign-up for multiple positions during a Host Week. They are a wonderful group of people.

Pat Herbst was the Alpha House coordinator through the April 2014 Host Week. He began transitioning his responsibilities to me in June 2014. I have fully taken over as the Alpha House Coordinator starting with the November 2014 Host Week. The UUAA Alpha Coordinator creates the on-line sign-up for the recruitment table 8 weeks before a Host Week and emails a link to the members of the Alpha House Committee. These members of the Alpha House Committee staff the recruiting table in the Social Hall: Jo Anne Diehl, Dee Dishon, Sandy Eyl, Pat Herbst, Judi Lintott, Angela Menegay, Sally Preston, Tricia Smith, Priscilla Spencer, Cheryl Valentine, and Vey Valentine. The coordinator also creates a separate online sign-up 6.5 weeks ahead of the Host Week. The coordinator updates the on-line signup each Sunday with the names of the people who signed up in the Social Hall that morning. Each Saturday night of during recruitment, the coordinator downloads the latest information from the online sign-up and puts it into the format needed for the physical sign-up in the Social Hall.

Since the last annual report on Alpha House, our Host Weeks have been Thanksgiving week 2014, February 9 to 15, 2015, and April 20 to 26, 2015. The Thanksgiving 2014 Host Week was an especially challenging since Pat Herbst had committed us to signing up 150 volunteers and donors in honor of the UUAA 150th Anniversary. To meet this goal, we also collected donations of blankets, sheets, pillows, comforters, alarm clocks, and medicines to replenish Alpha House’s stocks. We exceeded the goal for 150 volunteers and donations. Our future Host Weeks are in August 2015 and during Thanksgiving week 2015.

The following lists \*237 of the people from UUAA who have volunteered to support Alpha House since April 2014: Nicol Albanese, Paul Albanese, Carey Allen, Lisa Anderson, Heather Banet, Shelly Banet, David Bates, Delphine Benard, Suzanne Benlovcif, Jon Boyd, Sandy Breck, Ann Brennan, Constance Bridge, Lara Brown, Kate Burkhardt, Terry Butcher, Hayley Cason, Ruth Cassidy, Jay Cavanaugh, Luke Cavanaugh, Cathy Cherico, Tom Chettleburgh, Kim Clugston, Carol Cramer, Brenna Crawford, Scott Crawford, Matthew Cunningham, John Danks, Patty Danks, Sandy David, Suzanne Davidson, Jeff Della Rovere, Melanie Dever, Fran Dew, Jo Anne Diehl, Michelle Diepenhorst, Bob Dinan, Dee Dishon, Vicki Echegoyen, Kathy Edgren, Eric Ericksen, Sandy Eyl, Diane Fead, Margaret Flannery, Kathy Friedrichs, Barb Gales, Anne Garcia, Lorna Gibson, Madeline Goodson, April Grace, Emma Grace, Jackie Grace, Amy Grant, Venus Gregory, Gwen Gutherie, Lorraine Gutierrez, Dorothy Haigler, Heidi Harris, Pat Herbst, Dixie Hibner, Carli Hildebrandt, Beth Hospadaruk, Kate Hutchens, Amyleigh Johnson, Amyleigh Johnson, Derek Johnson, Eva Johnson, Rick Johnson, Gloria K. Jones, Jonena Jones, Sivan Josef, Larry Junck, Louise Kazarinoff, Alma King, Jackie Koch, Jeremy Koch, Dave Kohn, Lisa Kohn, Sam Kohn, Terry Kress, Robert Kropf, Cindy H Krueger, Paul Lalinsky, Dan Lane, Bridget Laundra, Lisa Lemble, Christine LePottier, Judi Lintott, Mary Locey, Pauline Loewenhardt, Thomas Longworth, Brian Love, Nancy Love, Fran Lyman, Carol Maccini, Becca Manery, Sara Mathews, Sherry McCargar, Kathleen McGaw, Connie McGuire, Angela Menegay (with Gavin Taylor, Brenna Taylor, and Lucy Taylor), Aleza Merkel, Ki-Wing & Louis Merlin, Vilma Mesa, Teri Minton, Kirsten Mogbo, Roen Montalva, Erin Moore, Cathy Muha, Mike Muha, Steve Nason, Margaret Pekarek, Christine Pellar Kosbar, Mary Penet, Joyce Phillips, Barbara Pickett, Sally Preston, Betsy Price, B. Quist, Bethany Ramirez, Lori Reece, Cathy Reischl, Betsy Reitbauer, Ebonie Remsey, Carrie Rheingaus, Gretchen Ridenour, Carolyn Roberts, John Russell, Rosemarie Russell, Jim Schaefer, Sara Schaefer, Bruce Shields, Sandy Simon, Brandy Sinco, Brandy Sinco, Darien Skifstad, Tricia Smith, Tricia Smith, Laura Sparrow, Priscilla Spencer, Linda Sprankle, Sharon St. Mary, Bennett Stark, Mary Lynn Stevens, Brian Sullivan, Robert Tamblyn, Margie Teall, Carol Thomas, Esty Thomas, Lorie Otis thomas, Lisa Travis, Robert Treadway, Carol Tucker, David Tumbarello, Cheryl Valentine, Cheryl Valentine, Vey Valentine, Melissa Villanueva, John Wakeman, Kate Wells, Sara Wesser, Terri Wilkerson and Spenser, Carra Wilson, and members of the 7th grade class.

\*This number does not include the names of all the children who came with their parents for the “Play with Kids” activity or the “Serve and Clean” activity, or the people who made cash donations for purchasing supplies for Alpha House. I apologize if any names are missing or misspelled.

# Climate Action Group

Submitted by Larry Junck, Chair

Brief description

* 134 members.
* Group created in July 2014.
* Activities coordinated primarily by electronic communication.

Goals

* To take actions to mitigate global climate change.
* To education Congregants and others about actions to mitigate climate change.

Relation to UU core values

* Primary relation

7th principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Activities of our group have the primary goal of mitigating damage to the interdependent web.

* Other relations

[2nd Principle](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/principles/282069.shtml): Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

[6th Principle](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/principles/282071.shtml): The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

* We embrace environmental justice. We advocate solutions to climate change that do not disproportionately affect persons of low income or low political power.

Activities

* Three after-church forums.
* Lobbied Ann Arbor Transportation Authority to purchase hybrid buses, (possibly a partial success insofar as they agreed to purchase 3 hybrid buses)
* In support of Interfaith Power and Light, submitted over 100 postcards to EPA supporting Clean Power Plant Rule
* Sent over 100 letters to Congress in February-March 2015 supporting action on climate change in general and carbon-fee, carbon-dividend in particular.
* Ongoing relationship with Citizens Climate Lobby, Ann Arbor Chapter, including hosting most of their monthly meetings at UUAA.
* Support of the activities of the Green Building Committee.
* Participation in Church Service emphasizing climate change on April 26, 2015.

Names of active participants

* 134 total members
* In addition to Larry Junck, the more active members have included: Hal Breidenbach, Roberta Duda, Dave Friedrichs, Edie Hough, Louis Merlin, Paul Morris, John Seeley, and John Wakeman.

Future ideas, goals, plans

* Expand participation of more group members in activities of the group.
* Support action to limit fracking in Michigan.
* Additional educational programs, possibly as after-church forums.
* Continued support of Citizens Climate Lobby, Ann Arbor Chapter.
* Continued support of the Green Building Committee.
* Participation in one or more additional Sunday Services over the next year.
* Expanded presence on social media.
* Possible participation in local environmental film series.
* An opportunistic attitude toward involvement in local initiatives or actions.

**GOVERNING POLICIES**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION**

**OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN**

**Board of Trustees**

**Core Values: The First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan (UUAA) has been deeply committed to liberal religious thought and action for 150 years. We join together in community to encourage and inspire each other’s spiritual journeys, to honor and care for the natural world around us, and to join forces to further social justice in order to make a difference in the world.**

**We work together to achieve the following ends:**

# 1.3 Community

We create and foster community by providing an intentionally welcoming and safe environment where all feel valued and cared for, and where all are given opportunity to form meaningful connections with one another. We foster a climate of purposeful inclusion of all. We cherish the diversity of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, range of abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, financial means, education, and political perspective. We live together in peace, search for truth in love, and help one another.

1.3.1 We welcome all who enter into this religious community in which members and friends both value and respect their differences and support and care for one another.

1.3.2 We actively reach out to our surrounding communities to offer our salvific message of the power of love and to offer a place in our religious community to all who share UU values and beliefs.

# Associate Minister

Submitted by the Reverend Mark Evens

As with organisms in nature, church programs sprout and grow, bear fruit or not, live for a time, short or long, and then inevitable change or die to make room for new growth. Change is healthy and necessary, but not always welcome or easy. As our Congregation celebrates its 150th anniversary there is much health and much to be grateful for in our shared life as a community of seekers.

As with church programs so too with ministerial relationships. Since I began serving here in September of 2008, we have accomplished a lot together. We have expanded the Chalice Circles small group ministry program. Together we have developed the Pastoral Care program, a strong Men’s Council, and deepened the work of Interweave, our LGBTQIA and allies group.

We now have a Congregational Map, and a Recognized Groups List to help Congregational groups align with the Congregation’s mission and help communicate to all the workings of the Congregation as a large system.

At this point the Congregation needs a different balance of talents from the Associate Minister. The skills and capacities you need now and into the future do not fit the ministry I can provide.

The date of my transition out of the associate minister role here is not yet set. There will be opportunities closer to that date for me to discuss what the transition from minister to Congregant will mean, and for us to celebrate our time together sharing this relationship minister and Congregation.

As has been true since I started here in September of 2008, a significant portion of my work this year was in providing pastoral care and leading the Pastoral Care program which is discussed in a separate report.

During the past year I continued to support Small Group Ministries, includingproviding leadership support to the Chalice Circles small group ministry program. I was available on an as-needed basis to our Women’s and Men’s circles.

I continued to provide senior staff support for Identity Based Ministries including our Interweave group that anchors our welcome of transgendered, bisexual, lesbian, gay, and intersex people, our Men’s Fellowship, Women’s programming, and our Humanist group. I have been available to our 20’s - 30’s group and our Seniors Dining Out groups, and responded to some new interest in campus ministry.

In the area of multi-generational fellowship, I have continued to connect contractual and administrative dots for the Family Camp Team and provided ministerial presence at the 2014 Family Camp weekend. Together with the assistance of Hannah Hotchkiss, welcome ministries coordinator, I also support the monthly intergenerational first Sunday of the month Game Day, the Halloween celebration, and the winter holidays party.

This is the second year I have provided senior staff support to the Accessibility Team and project with monthly meetings with program leadership.

Life Passages and Pastoral Care

This past year I, officiated at three weddings including the wedding of member Dara Ganoczy and David Johnson on August 2, 2014.

I performed or assisted with twelve memorial services. I conducted memorial services for these UUAA members: Irma Sklenar August 5, 2014, David Shapirio August 31, 2014; Fred Shimp in a home service October 11, 2014; Len Quenon December 12, 2014; Mary Stadel February 14, 2015. I assisted with memorials for these members: Anna Lindemer June 7, 2014; Tawnya Phifer October 11, 2014; John McLean October 25, 2014; Marshall Shearer December 20, 2014; and James Johnson March 7, 2015. I performed memorial services for Carole Lombardini, mother of member Drake Meadow, June 18, 2014 at the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church; for Christy Posselius Lawrence, sister of member Trisha Mooney, on March 8, 2015; and for Rob Tischler, friend of the Congregation, on April 11, 2015.

In addition to interments connected with the above memorial services, I interred the cremains of Violet and Walter Waller, parents of member John Waller, in our memorial garden August 11, 2014.

Worship

I lead Worship and preached at these six Services this past year:

May 18, 2014: “The Individual in Community”; June 15, 2014: “Redemption”; June 22, 2014: “Providence”; October 5, 2014: “Vocation and Calling”; December 7, 2014: “Silence and Advent.” January 24, 2015: “Courage to Love: History of UU Engagement with Non-Violent Direct Action”.

I lead Worship with others preaching, speaking, or providing the key text at these Services:

September 21, 2014: Michael Dowd preaching on “Religion 3.0: Ecology as the New Theology.” October 26, 2014: Jabez Sunderland and the Khasi Hills with a special guest appearance by Jabez; April 19, 2015: “The Lorax Speaks”, a multi-generational Service for Earth Day, I narrated words by Dr. Seuss, while actors acted out the story (co-developed with SGD Program Assistant Debra Golden); November 23, 2014: “A Cornucopia of Gratitude”; I recruited, coached, and hosted lay voices across the ages speaking on gratitude; November 30, 2014: I hosted Cindy Landrum preaching on Grace; December 14, 2014: provided ministerial support for “A Winter Light Pageant” produced and directed by Debra Golden; December 28, 2014: I recruited, coached, and hosted lay college students reflecting on their life experiences as young adults raised in our Congregation.

In addition to Sunday morning worship in our Sanctuary, I also led worship at Family Camp at Camp Pinewood near Muskegon August 24, 2014, at the Men’s Retreat on September 28, 2014, helped plan and lead our annual interfaith Service of Affirmation with our Interweave group which we hosted on December 16, 2014, and led the opening Worship Circle and Closing Blessing at our All Congregation Gathering sponsored by Interweave at UUAA on April 25, 2014.

Denominational Connections and Professional Development

In June 2014, I attended several days of the annual UU General Assembly in Providence, Rhode Island. In October 2014, our Heartland UU minister’s chapter met in Angola, Indiana and shared a program on developing one’s own theological framework led by Reverend Dr. Gretchen Wood. In February 2014, I attended in-service training with 400 other UU ministers at the Asilomar Conference Center in California. There I learned and experienced a technique for individual discernment in a small group framework developed by Parker Palmer.

Throughout the year I continued meeting monthly by phone with Reverend Kevin Tarsa as his mentor for the UU ministerial fellowship credentialing process.

Special Thanks

It was a delight to work with Rich Donner during his two year term as co-chair of the Chalice Circles program. Rich will continue to support the program and the new co-chairs, Steve Kuzma and Anne Ramsay, through continued service as a member of the program’s steering committee.

A hearty “Thank you” to Pat Herbst for his reliable, thoughtful leadership of the Men’s Council during the 2014 calendar year. He and other men of the Men’s Fellowship have done well in recruiting Kurt Skifstad as the 2015 council chair.

Thank you to Leigh Robertson and Margaret Pekarek for their able leadership of the Interweave group. They are both stepping down this year. Learning and leading with them has been a pleasure.

# In Memoriam

Helga Hover

March 15, 1926 - April 14, 2014

Fred Shimp

March 18, 1928 - May 15, 2014

Anna Lindemer

April 1, 1975 - May 17, 2014

Donald Lamphiear

September 7, 1924 - June 17, 2014

Deborah Alper

1949 - July 13, 2014

David Shappirio

June 18, 1930 - July 27, 2014

Tawnya Phifer \*

April 4, 1947 - September 21, 2014

Jon McLean

October 8, 1946 - October 4, 2014

Marshall Shearer

March 1, 1933 - November 26, 2014

Mary Stadel \*

July 25, 1927 - December 3, 2014

Len Quenon

May 7, 1925 - December 8, 2014

Clare Spitler

February 2, 1923 - December 26, 2014

Donald Axon

October 16, 1921 - January 15, 2015

James S. Johnson

November 7, 1943 - February 22, 2015

Meredith Spencer Foster \*

March 27, 1943 - March 18, 2015

\* Members of the Sunderland Society who included a bequest

to the Congregation in their estate plan.

# Memorial Reception Hosts

Submitted by Sara Matthews, Chair

As part of practicing compassion and encouraging spiritual growth and development, and as part of affirming to help one another and to serve, the Memorial Reception Host Volunteers have a specific mission.

Our Mission

The Memorial Reception Host volunteers serve celebrants and the UUAA by helping to organize, operate, and clean up memorial receptions in a healthy, safe, and unobtrusive way and by having the kitchen and its supplies ready for the next scheduled activity.

2014-2015

Ten memorial receptions were served. This service has different stages, outlined in the reception checklists. The first stage is working with the staff on dates, times, number of celebrants, and floor plans. The second stage involves one of the co-leaders assigning volunteers, contacting the celebrant arranging the memorial, contacting the caterer if there is one, and inspecting the kitchen to assure supplies and readiness. The third stage is setting up on the day of the memorial, assisting the family and caterer, and serving the reception. The final stage is cleaning (including sharing the task of washing and returning tablecloths and dishtowels), securing parts of the building (if necessary), and updating inventory.

Current Host Volunteers

Coordinator: Sara Mathews

Pat Appleberry, Carolyn Barber, Joan Burleigh, Dick Duke, Marie Duke, Janet Duncan, Beverly Fish, Lucia Heinold, Judith Lintott, Richard Lintott, Fran Lyman, Margaret Pekarek, Betsy Price, Bruce Shields, Deana Shields, Elvera Shappirio, Tom Longworth, and Sara Rudy.

# Welcome Ministries

Submitted by Hannah Hotchkiss, Welcome Ministries Coordinator

The mission of Welcome Ministries and Sunday Welcome Teams is to warmly welcome all who enter UUAA, provide information about Unitarian Universalism and our Congregation, and integrate visitors and new members into our spiritual community.

Welcome Ministries and Welcome Teams strive to uphold our third Core Value, Community, which states the following:

“We create and foster community by providing an intentionally welcoming and safe environment where all feel valued and cared for, and where all are given opportunity to form meaningful connections with one another. We foster a climate of purposeful inclusion of all. We cherish the diversity of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, range of abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, financial means, education, and political perspective. We live together in peace, search for truth in love, and help one another.”

Welcome Ministries oversees the coordination and training of the Sunday Welcome Teams, which include greeters, ushers, Involvement Table staff, newcomer welcomers, and the Sunday Social Hour Team. In 2014, eighty-six committed Welcome Team volunteers contributed their warmth and hospitality to provide a positive, welcoming experience for our Congregants.

Vital Signs 2014 (January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014)

* Total active membership reported for UUA Certification: 638
* New members in 2014: 36
* Visitor cards in 2014: 191
* Visitor returns tracked in 2014: 70
* Introduction to Our Faith registrations: 82

Accomplishments in 2014

* Created a new Talents and Interests Survey to better connect members to groups of interest.
* In conjunction with the Social Justice Committee and Leadership Development, staged an Involvement Fair.
* Conducted Sunday Welcome Team Safety workshop to help develop a better emergency plan.

Future Opportunities

* Update and expand Sunday Welcome Team Training to reflect the expansion of roles.
* Collaborate with the Accessibility Team to provide a more barrier-free environment.
* Explore paths to expand awareness of UUAA in the wider community.
* Develop new Sunday Welcome Team volunteer position for parking lot greeters.

# Men’s Fellowship

Submitted by Kurt Skifstad, Chair of the Men’s Council

The mission of the Men’s Council is to provide leadership and support for the development and stability of programs for men and boys that enhance friendship, spiritual growth, and positive community engagement.

Men’s Council Membership  
The elected Men’s Council members for 2014 were Pat Herbst (chair), Mark van Kempen (secretary), Rajeev Batra (treasurer), Jeff Poliner, Brian Bruns, Steve Schewe, Neal Foster, Craig van Kempen, and Kurt Skifstad. The elected Men’s Council members for 2015 are Kurt Skifstad (chair), Rajeev Batra (treasurer), Craig van Kempen (secretary), Mark van Kempen (communications), Jeff Surfus (men’s circles coordinator), Steve Schewe, Neal Foster, Mike Muha, and Tom Reischl.

Coming of Age Boys Weekend

Jim Schaefer, Kurt Skifstad, Jeff Poliner, and Mark van Kempen, organized the 2014 Coming of Age Boy’s weekend (May 3-4) on the Church’s property. Kurt Skifstad led the organization of a “Boys to Men” dinner, open to the men of the Congregation, honoring the boys. Approximately 40 participants participated in a dinner honoring the Coming of Age boys, and participated in the Boy’s Weekend Coming of Age welcoming initiation. A similar activity, led by Russ Blaesing, Jeff Surfus, and Kurt Skifstad, was the 2015 Coming of Age Boy's weekend on May 2-3.

Men’s Retreat

The 2014 Men’s Retreat took place at Judson-Collins Center on Wamplers Lake (near Tecumseh) on September 26-28, 2014. The retreat was attended by over 70 men. The Men’s Retreat for 2015 will be September 25-27, at Judson-Collins. Mark van Kempen is the chair.

Men’s Circles

There are currently five active circles in operation, involving approximately 70 men involved in circles. A list of men interested in joining a men’s circle is being kept.

Men’s Dinner

The 2014 Men’s Dinner was held on April 5, organized by Pat Herbst and attended by 70 men. The program, organized by Bruce Gibb, versed on the topic of “Communicating With the Women in Our Lives” and included a beginning discussion by a panel including members Bob Hospadaruk, Craig van Kempen, John Preston, and Neal Foster; participants continued the discussions at their tables, moderated by members Bob Dinan, Phil Tuchinsky, Russ Blaesing, Jim Schaefer, Jim Lee, Charley Burleigh, Terry Madden, and Jeff Poliner. The 2015 Men’s Dinner on Friday, May 8, 2015 featured a presentation “Man Up, Man Down: What “Real Men” (should) do in Times of Trouble,” by Woody Neighbors, a professor of Health Behavior and Health Education at the University of Michigan.

Monthly Breakfasts

On the third Saturday morning each month from 8:30 to 9:30am, September through May, a mix of a dozen men of the Congregation drop by to share stories and to catch up on the news of the day. The Men’s Monthly Breakfasts are organized by Fred Lynch. Currently the breakfasts are held at the Holidays restaurant on 2080 West Stadium in Ann Arbor.

Church Property Activities

The Men’s council is in conversation with the Accessibility Committee regarding some potential improvement projects on the property.

# Chalice Circles

Submitted by Rich Donner and Steve Kuzma, Co-Chairs, and Reverend Mark Evens

The 2014-15 Chalice Circle Program continued to provide meaningful facilitated sessions that offered opportunities to grow spiritually as individuals and build community within the circles and the larger program. This year, the program continued to develop and mature, building off the robust structure previously put in place.

The 2014-2015 program year realized the following results:

1. Seven Chalice Circles were offered through the Church. Six of the Circles were held at UUAA, and one at a satellite location in Tecumseh. Participation included 66 participants and 13 facilitators. This year’s facilitators were: Merrill Crocket, Rich Donner, Barb Gales, Pat King, Steve Kuzma, Mary Lund, Ginny Morgan, Margaret Pekarak, Barb Pickett, Emily Pingel, Emily Simon, Shelley Stoll, and Kathi Waters.
2. A new Snowbird Circle was established with a shortened schedule which began in September. The purpose of offering the Circle was to allow the Chalice Circle program for individuals who were not able to commit to attend the Circles during the winter months.
3. We continued to offer One-Time Chalice Circles as a way to introduce people to the program without a 14 week commitment. This also provides an opportunity to experience a Chalice Circle to those who are not able to participate in the regular program. Seven One-Time Circles were held in July, August, November, December, January, February, March, and April. Facilitators for the One-Time Circles included Ginny Preuss, Scott Morgan, Alma King, Anne Ramsey, and Kathi Waters.
4. The registration process was very effective, managing the number of Circles offered and working to match members with the number of available sessions.
5. An investiture of the facilitators was held in November in recognition of their lay leadership role and responsibilities to the Congregation.
6. Two facilitator training opportunities were provided. New facilitator training was held in June and training for all facilitators was held in September.
7. Each Chalice Circle that met at the Church completed a Service Project to benefit the Congregation. These projects included clean-up and plantings around the Church building, assisting with dinners and luncheons, and assisting at the auction. The Tecumseh satellite Chalice Circle completed a project at its host location.

The program was led by the Leadership Council: Reverend Mark Evens, Rich Donner, and Steve Kuzma. The council is responsible for oversight and program development. The Steering Committee was responsible for the operations and program implementation. This key committee was led by the co-chairs and comprised of Anne Ramsey (Writing Team), Ginny Preuss (Registration and One-Time Chalice Circles) and Cathy Olson, Tom Longworth, and Carol Cramer (Service Projects).

Each year a writing team develops the program curriculum, including writing new sessions and selecting sessions from previous years to include in the full year curriculum. The writing team who developed content for the 2014-15 year included Denise Frick, Anne Ramsey (chairperson), Phil Tuchinsky, Kathy McLean, Emily Pingel, Shelly Stoll, and Kathi Waters. Writing team members creating sessions for the 2015-16 year include Anne Ramsey (Chairperson), Christy Cardinal, Emily Pingel, Kathi Waters, and Scott Morgan.

The program’s continuing success is due to the passion and integrity of its participants and lay leaders. It would be difficult to continue the program without their dedication and commitment to Chalice Circles. Without them, we would not be able to achieve the program’s goals and meet the needs of the larger faith community at UUAA.

Chalice Circle Vision Statement

This document expresses the difference we hope to make through the Chalice Circle program using the UUAA Board Ends Statements as an organizing framework. Section numbers refer to that document.

1.1 Spiritual life

1.1.1 Chalice Circles actively support members, friends, and visitors of this Congregation in their journeys toward spiritual growth and self-knowledge. They provide small groups in which individuals can share and reflect on their own experiences, and benefit from hearing the experiences of others.

1.1.2. The participants find Chalice Circles to be important spiritual experiences in which they share the power of collective spiritual experience and have opportunities for personal transformation.

1.2 Social Justice and Environmental Action

The Chalice Circle curriculum developed for each program year includes at least one topic that encourages the development of participants’ social justice consciousness.

1.2.3 Chalice Circles develop people’s skills at listening, understanding, and speaking their truth in a group united by a mutually created covenant. All of these skills contribute to the development of peace and justice in the wider community.

1.3 Community

Chalice Circles create and foster community by providing an intentionally welcoming and safe environment where all feel valued and cared for. Participants are given the opportunity to form meaningful connections with one another. Chalice Circles foster a climate of purposeful inclusion regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, financial means, education, or political perspective. We live together in peace, search for truth in love, and help one another.

1.3.2 While we have not yet publicized the Chalice Circle program outside the Congregation, we do actively welcome and include visitors. Chalice Circles are one of the strongest mechanisms for incorporating new entrants into the community of the Congregation. They thereby promote and make Unitarian Universalism available to those who request it.

1.4 Stewardship

1.4.1 The Chalice Circle program supports wise stewardship through its recruiting, training, and support of leaders during their period of service.

Recruiting: We require that Chalice Circle facilitators be members of the Congregation (though exceptions may be granted). This requirement promotes the importance of membership and the increased emotional and moral commitment members have made to the values and practices of the UUAA community.

Training: We make good use of our facilitators’ time by providing a well thought out, well presented training that prepares them to succeed in their work. Training and experience in the Chalice Circle program also equips lay leaders for effective service in other areas of Congregational life.

Support: We provide ongoing practical support and community for our facilitators through monthly meetings patterned after the Chalice Circle meetings. The Chalice Circle program deepens the facilitators’ sense of connection and commitment to the Congregation and Unitarian Universalism through service projects and volunteer appreciation.

Service Projects: Each Chalice Circle performs a service project that enhances the well-being of the wider Congregational community. With gratitude, we appreciate the Chalice Circle for their service project work and model mutual appreciation of all contributions to the good of the Congregation.

Volunteer Appreciation: We regularly and formally appreciate our facilitators and other leaders. We support their spiritual development, the development of their skills for use elsewhere, and their ability to express appreciation of others. This recognition also extends to the overall program.

Active Continual Program Evaluation: We consistently and frequently seek feedback from program leaders and participants. This insures that the Chalice Circle program is responsive to the needs of the Congregation.

1.5 Culture

In their design and functioning, Chalice Circles embody the core principles and values of this Congregation and Unitarian Universalism. The core truth of Chalice Circles is that we learn and grow from our differences. The curriculum intentionally includes at least one session overtly focused on one of the UU Principles or Sources. Through this we express the value we place on our connections—past, present, and future, to the Unitarian Universalist world network.

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# Accessibility Team

Submitted by Els Nieuwenhuijsen, Priscilla Spencer, and Phil Tuchinsky

The Accessibility Team helps the Congregation participate in the UUA Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM) Certificate Pilot Program*.* As a pilot site in this program, the Congregation is intentionally aiming to (a) enhance accessibility and inclusion for and by people with visible and invisible disabilities in the Congregational worship, programs, and activities, (b) strengthen participation by and for all persons with a disability, and (c) engage in social justice change on disability issues. Our goal is to welcome, embrace, integrate, and support people with disabilities and their families fully and sustainably. This work builds on the UUAA core values to strengthen our connections to one another and on the UUAA covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

The team followed the steps outlined in the *Certification* *Program Handbook*, initially a two-year process. However, due to the 150th Anniversary and the time it takes to pilot test the various tasks for the UUA, an extension was requested of one more year before submitting the official application. The UUA EqUUal Access team approved this request in the fall of 2014. During the second year of this program (May 2014 to April 2015), we identified and completed key action steps (workshops, worship, accessibility/inclusion projects, and a social justice project) grounded on a 2014 needs assessment check-list. Of the 13 minimum actions required by UUA for AIM certification, this Congregation has completed seven, several are underway and a few more are planned.

The following members are active on the team, contributing in various ways:

Leadership Team: Els Nieuwenhuijsen (also a member of the Pastoral Care Education Team), Priscilla Spencer (also secretary of the Board of Trustees), andPhil Tuchinsky (also a member of Social Justice Council and co-chair of the Jackson Social Welfare Fund Committee).

Active members: Eric Appleberry, Shelly Banet, Mary Burton, Edith Croake, Katlyn Cameron, Michelle Ferguson, Gene Gaunt, John Hagen, Glen Kime, Pauline Loewenhardt, Charlie Pekarek, Caron Pelton, Don Pelz, Bethany Ramirez, Carolyn Roberts, Steve Schewe, Brandy Sinco, and Kate Warner.

In 2015 to 2016, the Accessibility Team will (a) complete the final certification action steps presented in an interim progress report to UUA and apply for the AIM Program certificate and (b) maintain and grow our strong Accessibility Team that sustainably provides guidance, education, and training in disability-related access and inclusion issues, and promotes social change.

This program receives guidance and support from Accessibility Team members at regular meetings and from senior leaders through monthly meetings with Reverend Mark Evens.

Key Accomplishments and Overview

* May 3, 2014: Panel session: “The Dream of Inclusion for All: Taking Steps to Strengthen Accessibility” raised awareness about disability-related strengths and challenges.
* May to July 2014: Accessibility Team identified needs and proposed actions, based on our Accessibility and Inclusion Needs Assessment Checklists (completed winter 2014)
* June 25 to 29, 2014: Els attended the UUA General Assembly as a UUAA Delegate and met with members of the EqUUal Access team.
* Summer 2014 to present: Provide “Your Words Our Image”, a handout covering welcoming disability-related terminology, at the Social Justice Council table during Social Hour.
* September 26, 2014: Proposed Accessibility Initiative-related action projects that outline high priority action needs and their respective a) ties to UUAA values, b) intended outcomes, c) action steps, d) proposed costs, and (e) involvement of staff and lay volunteers. This report was disseminated and discussed with UUA (lay) leaders during fall 2014.
* October 2014: Phil Tuchinsky joined the Accessibility leadership.
* November 6, 2014: Els attended the Creative Inclusion Webinar, presented by Linette Lowe from UU Congregation Louisville, Kentucky and provided constructive feedback.
* November 9, 2014: At the Depression Forum event, two members and Dr. Belmonte (UM Medical School) discussed the complex issues of mental disorders and presented tools for living with depression.
* November 26, 2014: The UUA EqUUal Access team, inspired by proposals submitted by several pilot sites including UUAA, renamed its program Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM) Certificate.
* December 2014: Phil Tuchinsky researched and purchased a portable audio system with wireless mics, using funds allocated by the Social Justice Council. The team completed the Accessibility Team Mission Statement.
* January 25, 2015: Els presented a 5-minute update about Accessibility Team activities at the annual Congregational Meeting.
* January 2015: Member Michelle Avery Ferguson was hired as the EqUUal Access AIM Ministry Program administrator.
* February 1, 2015: Members discussed accessibility in the Sanctuary and alternative proposals for adding handrail(s) to the pulpit area steps. A committee will follow up.
* February 22, 2015: Accessibility Team participated in the Involvement Fair and generated signatures in support of the Michigan Flyer petition, a social justice action.
* March 16, 2015: Els provided suggestions to the EqUUal Access team regarding AIM Certificate Handbook content, neutral terminology and a uniform conceptual framework.
* March 19, 2015: Els delivered the completed Michigan Flyer petition with 179 signatures to Michigan Flyer, lending significant community support for a March 30, 2015 court hearing.
* March 22, 2015: Priscilla provided poster content for the 150th Anniversary event.
* March 31, 2015: Accessibility Team submitted a substantial Progress and Plans, Accessibility Team Interim Action Report to the UUA EqUUal Access Team.
* April 18, 2015: Accessibility Team was a co-sponsor for the “Improving Your Memory” workshop initiated by Pastoral Care Education.
* April 25, 2015: Accessibility Team member Alex Mitrovich received an Oberlin College Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award for outstanding work with a speakers’ bureau of people with mental disabilities. Accessibility Team reception followed.

# Bridge Group

Submitted by Karen Bourdon, Chair

The Bridge Group has been popular in this Congregation for many years. The early organizers were Marjorie Reade and Elsie Sinclair. The Bridge Group gives us an opportunity to get to know other UU members and friends while playing a popular Ann Arbor table game. We play in a convivial social atmosphere in the Emerson Room, where no one is embarrassed by mistakes. Our players have a broad range of skill and, with regular mini-lessons most months. We strive to improve our bridge skills. We meet the second Sunday of the month from 2:00 to 5:00pm except for May and June when we meet the first Sunday afternoon. New players are always welcomed regardless of skill level. If a person does not have a bridge partner, they may join as a substitute player and several partnerships have developed in that way. Each month a different bridge team contributes snacks for the group. We have 26 people playing regularly plus three people who are available as substitutes. Regular players contribute $25.00 each to the General Fund for the year.

Members for the 2014-1015 year are: Dick Bauman, Lucy Bauman, Bob Reed, Karen Bourdon, Cathie and Hal Breidenbach, Jo Anne Diehl, Grace Dreyer, Jayna Eckler, Tom First, Julie Grygotis, Fred Lynch, Sonia Manchek, Wanda Mumford, Dennis O’Brien, Jeanne Van Ochten, Wayne Adams, Tom Overmire, Bethany Ramirez, Donna Roe, Tim Romlein, Emily Sharp, Jamie Todd, Phil Tuchinsky, Joyce Van Ochten, Jack Volk, and substitutes Bob Treadway, Steve Kuzma, and Martin Gaerttner. Karen Bourdon: Bridge Coordinator. Tim Romlein: Bridge Manager.

# Wednesday Morning Readers

Submitted by Liz Hartley, Chair

Wednesday Morning Readers meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 10:00 to 11:30am in the Jackson Chapel. Our group varies in size from small (4) to large (14) depending on schedules, availability, and interest. We read a variety of genres but non-fiction seems to be the group favorite. Each member who suggests a book is also responsible for facilitating the book discussion. We do request that all book selections be available in paperback. The QUUest bookstore has most of our books available for purchase on Sundays during Social Hour. Information and reminders are sent out via email to the Wednesday Morning Readers group and the *Weekly Bulletin*.

# Humanist Group

Submitted by the Humanist Group, Bruce Gibb, Charley Pecarek, Co-Facilitators

Description

The Humanist Group (HG) is comprised of members and friends of the Congregation. The group meets twice a month, on the first and third Thursday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00pm. Everyone is welcome.

The HG is a group in the Congregation that explicitly considers the beliefs and values of the members not with the purpose of changing the beliefs of other members but to understand them. It is a safe group for individuals to share their thoughts and feelings openly without challenge or criticism. The Humanist label of the group means that anything which pertains to human processes of thinking, feeling, or behaving is open for discussion. It is not specifically focused on more general humanist doctrine or advocacy but these topics do come up for examination.

During this year, the remaining founder of the group, Ellen Teller, due to health needs moved away to be with her family in Wisconsin. We will miss her commitment, support, and ideas.

The group starts each meeting with members sharing articles and personal events of interest for about a half-hour. The group then discusses a topic (see the list below entitled “Lists of Spiritual Disciplines, Humanistic Virtues, Habits of the Heart and Dimensions of Spiritual Transformation” facilitated by a group member who has volunteered to guide the discussion. This segment takes about an hour followed by more general discussion and planning for the next meeting.

Core Values

The Humanist group enhances the mission of UUAA by living the following principles:

[1st Principle](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/principles/282067.shtml): The inherent worth and dignity of every person is lived by the respect given to each member and their contributions.

[2nd Principle](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/principles/282069.shtml): Justice, equity and compassion in human relations among the members of the group and in all relationships. When there is a need by a group member, the rest of the group provides empathy and support in a compassionate way.

[3rd Principle](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/principles/282074.shtml): Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. Some of the members have a problem with the word “spiritual” and so the terms “Humanist Virtues and Habits of the Heart” are used by them. See the list below.

[4th Principle](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/principles/282073.shtml): A free and responsible search for truth and meaning is the core commitment of the group.

[5th Principle](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/principles/282072.shtml): The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations, in the society at large, and in the group’s meetings.

Articles and Books considered:

“Wilson-Alone and Free in the Universe.”

“How the Pentagon Papers Came to Be Published,” by the Beacon Press.

“Five toxic religion stories of 2014”.

“Rick Santorum on Separation of Church and State.”

“In Seven States, Atheists Push to End Largely Forgotten Ban.”

“Is Religion a Rorschach Test?”

“Catholic Church Argues It Doesn't Have to Show Up in Court Because Religious Freedom.”

“Ingersoll Contest” with Terry Madden

“Free Enquiry-What is religion good for?”

“Bill Maher Isn’t the Only One Who Misunderstands Religion.”

“Mixing Religion and Politics.”

Sam Harris's book *Waking Up.*

“God, Darwin, and My College Biology Class.”

“ISIS Bans Teaching Evolution In Schools.”

“Aural Journey Into the Spiritual.”

“The Machinery of Moral Progress”

Google Data Reveal Poor have an Interest above "Dark" Religion

“Forgiveness and Moneyholics.”

“Adizes-Bad Diagnosis”

“Are Christians More Like Jesus or Pharisees?”

Chapter 2. from *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes* by Ammerman

Chapter 9. from *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes* by Ammerman

“Adizes on Gaza War.”

“When Gods Decay and the Rise of New Religions-Nietzsche”

*When Religion becomes a Trap rather than a* Safety *Net* a Book Review

“Where Reason Ends and Faith Begins.”

“Children Exposed to Religion.”

“Fight the New ‘Hobby Lobby’ Ruling.”

“Love People, Not Pleasure.”

“How Conservative Christian Women came to Claim ‘True’ Feminism.”

“Founding Fathers' Statements about Religion.”

“The Hegemony of Christianity in America is in Trouble”

“In Search of the Christian Buddha.”

“Two Cultures: Scientific and Humanist.”

“How Politics Makes Us Stupid.”

“Supreme Court Rules In Hobby Lobby Case.”

“Atheism Has a Big Race Problem that No One’s Talking About.”

“My Kind of Atheist.”

Russell Brand, *Selling God.*

“Americans Exaggerate How Much They Go To Religious Services.”

Ehrenreich's *Wild God*.

“Supreme Court Upholds Prayer at Government Meetings.”

“Why Right-Wingers Think the Way They Do.”

“Among the Disrupted.”

“Building Better Secularists.”

“Courage.”

“How Business Made Us Christian.”

Oliver Sacks *My Own Life*.

“Transformation.”

“The Right’s Home-School Conspiracy.”

“How I Helped GOP Launch a Religious War.”

“Cuba: Visit and Observations.”

Goals and Objectives Achieved

We are not directed by specific measurable goals and objectives. Implicitly, we are a group which builds and strengthens the relationships among the members of the group. By exploring concepts and issues of importance to the members, each thinks more broadly than before the discussions. Another implicit goal is to engage and apply the understandings, insights, and values we gain in our lives outside of the group, to become better people. See the previous list of articles and topics considered this year.

Members

Jim Breck, Sandra Breck, Cathie Breidenbach, Hal Breidenbach, Terry Butcher, Lori Fithian, John Frank, Bruce Gibb, Sara Gibb, Linda Groucho, Terry Madden, Ken Muha, Rob Northrup, Joan Overmire, Sujit Pandit, Charles Pekarek, Bob Peyser, Gary Porter, Ethel Potts, Bert Ramsay, Mary Stapleton, Bev Todd, and Carl Williams.

Lists of Spiritual Disciplines, Humanistic Virtues, Habits of the Heart, and Dimensions of Spiritual Transformation[[1]](#footnote-1) which were or will continue to be considered in the coming year:

Active, energized, take initiative, assertive

Appreciative (a)

Accepting of mystery, experience a feeling of awe, reverent, ambiguity (f)

Authentic, lack of pretention, comfortable with self (s)

Aware of the world, knowledgeable, aware of own paradigms

Compassionate, caring (g)

Connected with people, support community, common struggle (j)

Connected to nature “everything is holy now”

Courteous, kind, polite

Courageous

Curious, seek knowledge,

Creative

Determined, dedicated (e)

Empathetic

Faith in self and others

Forgiving (l)

Friendly

Generous, sharing, charitable (p)

Grateful, have and express gratitude

Harmony, peaceful

Have character: duty, honor, courage, toughness, graciousness, selflessness

Hopeful

Hospitable (hospitality)

Humble, teachable, learn, grow (d), (x)

Humor, playful

Imaginative

Intuitive, prescient

Truthful, honest, sincere, integrity (c)

Joyful, happy (b)

Just, fair

Loving (including “tough love”, eros, agape, philia) (n)

Moral, act for the good of the whole (n)

Meaning, purpose, contribution, mission

Mindful (r)

Perseverance, stick-to-it-iveness

Power with/over self and with others

Reflective, awareness of self, self-knowledge (h)

Repentant, acknowledges effect of actions on others, redeems self (t)

Respectful, grant dignity to self and others (i)

Responsible

Strong, resilient, can defend oneself

Self-control

Service

Simple, “treads lightly”

Stewardship (of the earth and material things) (w)

Sympathetic

Tolerance, valuing differences (q)

Trustworthy, trusting

Values and actions aligned

Wise, understands and applies knowledge

Dimensions of Spiritual Transformation:

I see beauty around me (Charlie Pecarek).

I delight in experiences both great and small.

I act with integrity.

I seek opportunity to learn and grow.

I am dedicated to things I care about.

I accept ambiguity as inherent in life.

I care deeply about the welfare of others.

I am reflective.

I believe it matters what I do.

I see something universal in all human struggle.

I do not jump to conclusions.

I can ask for and accept forgiveness.

I can tell the difference between what I am responsible for, and what I do not control.

I believe to love is worth the pain of grief.

Leading a moral life makes me happy.

I give to others fully and generously.

I encourage and support varying beliefs, practices, and world-views.

I am mindful of my emotions.

I act in an authentic manner.

I have ability to repent, forgive myself, and change.

I am aware of the limitations or paradoxes of my own preferred religious vocabulary.

Awareness of my mortality informs how I live my life.

I act with awareness of my place in the interconnected web of existence.

My spiritual growth is important to me.

# Social Hour

Submitted by Roger Marshall, Chair

Picture Sunday morning at UUAA sans Social Hour. Yes, it’s that important. Social Hour provides opportunity to investigate and join the many activities that frame who we are as a Congregation: from Mindful Eating, to Chalice Circles, to Climate Action, to Script, to Interweave, QUUest Bookstore, and beyond. Social Hour also provides time and place to connect as individuals and community; long time members, new members, steady attendees, and visitors. In many ways Social Hour presents the active face of who we are as a Congregation.

And what would this nourishment of mind be without nourishment of body; fine cake donuts (Ann Arbor’s best), bagels and cream cheese, veggies, fruit, juice, and yes, fair trade coffee in tall handsome pots.? For this we thank the team, Hannah Hotchkiss (staff support) and Lisa Lemble for insuring that the kitchen is supplied with all the Sunday morning necessaries. Their work makes the Sunday morning host teams commitment defined and workable; setting and restocking refreshment tables, coffee, and tea supplies, and various cleanup activities. We recycle.

Volunteer Hosts include: Ginny Creasman, Dick and Marie Duke, Ingrid Gunderson, Karen Kerr, Roger Marshall, Mike Muha, Caron Pelton, and Kenji Yano.

Goals for the 2015-2016 year include expanding the number of host volunteers to ease the effort needed by a few stalwarts. We will enhance instructional and sign-up functions to support this end as well as review various processes to insure we are best meeting the needs of the Congregations. Your suggestions are sought.

# Pastoral Care

Submitted by Reverend Mark Evens

The vast majority of the timely, effective pastoral caring in our Congregation happens at the “grass roots” level between you and your friends and acquaintances here. Reverend Gail and I are available for times of particularly acute need, or for the occasional check in to help you ground your life-journey spiritually. We also provide support to Congregants, especially Congregational leaders, to help you wisely provide a caring presence for others while also taking care of yourselves.

Over the last six years we have developed additional structures and programs to enhance the pastoral care environment here and to address specific pastoral care needs. Currently the strongest of these are the *Pastoral News*, the Pastoral Care Telephone number, the Pastoral Care Assistants, and the Pastoral Care Education program.

We publish news, approved by Congregants, relating to illness and recovery, deaths and births, graduations, awards, and other momentous life events that help us connect with, celebrate with, and care for each other. We publish *Pastoral News* electronically with the *Weekly Bulletin* on Thursdays and in hard-copy in sign holders on Sunday mornings. You can send your news to [pastoralnews@uuaa.org](mailto:pastoralnews@uuaa.org).

The Pastoral Care Telephone number, 734-506-8822, is not published on the web site because its use is reserved for those who attend and are involved at UUAA. Put it in your cell phone and on your refrigerator so you have it when you need to reach a minister. You can call it for any pastoral care purpose. Our current goal is to respond to all calls appropriately within three hours. For non-emergency issues late at night or in the pre-dawn hours you can email us at [pastoralcare@uuaa.org](mailto:pastoralcare@uuaa.org).

We currently have seven trained Pastoral Care Assistants supervised and supported by the pastoral care minister (currently Reverend Mark). Pastoral Care Assistants are members of the Congregation who are trained to offer a listening ear and support to fellow Congregants in times of need.

The following Congregants are currently serving as Care Assistants. You can approach them on Sunday mornings in the Social Hall or hallways to discuss concerns, ask questions about the Pastoral Care Program or to thank them for their service:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| John Danks cropped.jpg  John Danks | Kathy Friedrichs croopped 2.jpg  Kathy Friedrichs | Sara Gibb cropped.jpg  Sara Gibb | Marion Holt cropped.jpg  Marion Holt |
| Tom Longworth cropped.jpg  Tom Longworth | Vey Valentine cropped.jpg  Vey Valentine | Eileen Wright cropped 2.jpg  Eileen Wright | For pastoral care call 734 506-8822  Email: [pastoralcare@uuaa.org](mailto:pastoralcare@uuaa.org) |

Pastoral Care Education is series of classes and workshops ably organized by program leader Terry Madden and his team. See Terry’s report for details.

Changes This Year

It has been a year of change for the Pastoral Care program. In January 2015 we ended the Pastoral Care Coordinator position due to budget constraints. Meredith Ley, who served in that position starting in April of 2010, did a lot to help us build up the present program. We expressed our appreciation to Meredith for her service at the Senior Luncheon on March 9, 2015.

Carolyn Roberts has ended her several years of service writing cards of caring on behalf of the Congregation to those in the *Pastoral News*. We are grateful for her service.

During the recession following the 2008 financial meltdown, we formed a twice-a-month Job Seeker’s Support Group to help Congregants and community members dealing with job changes. Thankfully the demand for that group has abated considerably. Several members have converted that group to a closed on-going peer networking and support group. We owe special thanks to Paul Alman, a community member with a strong background in executive placement services, who provided many months of invaluable coaching on resumes, interviewing, and networking, and to Meredith Ley who provided sensitive, insightful encouragement.

The much loved Senior Luncheons continued this year. We had four luncheons: June 9, 2014; September 8, 2014; December 8, 2014; and March 9, 2015. Senior Luncheons is now a ministry in search of sustaining leadership. It may be that in Ann Arbor with its wealth of senior resources and opportunities that this ministry is ready to go on hiatus for a while. Contact Reverend Mark Evens if you would like to lead or be part of a team supporting the continuation of this program.

Our Pastoral Care Leadership Council has contributed wise council to help guide and develop our programs and assisted with some pastoral care ministries over the years. Thanks to Joan Burleigh, Terry Madden, Kathy Friedrichs, and Els Nieuwenhuijsen for their recent service. Els is leaving the group to focus more closely on the Accessibility Team as she prepares to hand that project on to new leadership.

As of April, 2015 we have a new peer support group for adults with Attention Deficit (hyper-active) Disorder (ADD). Contact Doug Harris for more information at [douglasharris@comcast.net](mailto:douglasharris@comcast.net).

# Pastoral Care Education

Submitted by Terry Madden, Chair

To help make our UUAA members more informed concerning quality of life health issues as well as identifying resources available in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County, Pastoral Care added a new component, namely “Pastoral Care-Education.” The objective is to develop an annual slate of regularly scheduled presentations on a variety of health-related topics for caregivers and care receivers during the 2014-2015 program year. This series of offerings combine presentations by “outside experts” as well as “inside experts” sharing both their expertise and experiences dealing with various life issues of concern as we age.

Pastoral Care Education Task Force Members: Sandra Breck, Robert Kropf, Pat Kuessner, Meredith Ley, Terry Madden, Els Nieuwenhuijsen, Emily Simon, Marilyn Tripp, and Kate Warner.

Pastoral Care Education offered the following presentations:

* September 21, 2014: “Exiting Life with Grace”, Presenters: Janice Summers, Wye Hale-Rowe and Grace Dreyer**.** Facilitator**:** Pat Kuessner
* Nov. 9, 2014: “Taking Control of Your Mental Health: Coping With Depression.” Presenters: Madeline Bacolor, Marilyn Tripp, and David C. Belmonte, MD, MS. Facilitator: Marilyn Tripp.
* Dec. 7, 2014: “The Retirement Years: To What Do YOU Aspire?” Facilitators: Meredith Ley and Terry Madden
* April 18, 2015: “Improving Your Memory.” Presenter: Lynn Stern, U of M Medical Center’s Geriatrics Center. Facilitator: Emily Simon.
* April 21 and April 28: “Writing Our Obituaries.” Instructor and facilitator: Pat Kuessner.
* June 21, 2015: (Tentative) “Coping with Hearing Loss.”Presenter: Allen Feldt. Facilitators: Kate Warner and Terry Madden

# Pastoral Care Core Values

**Revised 2015**

Spiritual Life

The Pastoral Care program supports opportunities for congregants to grow spiritually through giving and receiving caring attention. We cultivate a culture of mutual caring in all groups within the Congregation. We provide training and support for people engaging in caring and support of others in the formal Pastoral Care Assistants program, in organized classes and workshops, through newsletter articles, through individual support of program leaders, through individual counseling and through intentional address in Sunday worship services. By formally investing our Pastoral Care Assistants and acknowledging other Pastoral Care leaders in a worship service we symbolically connect our ministry of caring to the center of our life as a Congregation.

1.2 Social Justice and Environmental Action

Our caring for each other centers and strengthens us so that we can look outward and address the changes needed to move the world toward justice and sustainability.

1.3 Community  
In our formal and informal pastoral care training we teach the skills of welcoming, of providing sanctuary within which each individual can come to know and be themselves more fully with deepening integrity. In partnership with the Accessibility Team we work to expand our capacity to welcome, include, and provide pastoral care to and with all who seek to walk a liberal religious path without impediment due to physical or mental disability, as well as “gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, financial means, education, or political perspective.”

As resources are available and mobilized we extend our support to those of the wider community beyond our walls. We currently sponsor a peer support group for adults with Attention Deficit (hyper-active) Disorder (ADD). In the past we have, and in the future we will again, offer support groups to address other various life circumstances to both Congregant and the wider community.

1.4 Stewardship  
Pastoral Care volunteers are all active stewards, serving our Congregation and pursuing our ministries through prudent and creative use of our resources, whether physical, environmental, financial, or human. We show respect and care for our beautiful building and grounds, for our staff, and for one another. We cultivate right relationships among members of this Congregation and with the wider world.

1.5 Culture  
In all the services we provide we support and demonstrate the covenant of this community. We support the inherent dignity and worth of each person participating in pastoral caring, both those receiving and those giving care. We share our pastoral care program’s resources of experience, methods, and training materials with other Congregations. We make use of the resources of other Congregations and regional and national organizations to help us remain in dialog with best practices to help us grow and sustain our program.

**GOVERNING POLICIES**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION**

**OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN**

**Board of Trustees**

**Core Values: The First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan (UUAA) has been deeply committed to liberal religious thought and action for 150 years. We join together in community to encourage and inspire each other’s spiritual journeys, to honor and care for the natural world around us, and to join forces to further social justice in order to make a difference in the world.**

**We work together to achieve the following ends:**

# 1.4 Stewardship

We are all active stewards, serving our Congregation and pursuing our ministries through the prudent and creative use of our resources, whether physical, environmental, financial, or human. We show respect and care for our beautiful buildings and grounds, for our staff, and for one another. We cultivate right relationships among members of this Congregation and with the wider world.

1.4.1 Members and staff of this Congregation share and make prudent and creative use of the resources that are available to them in service to the work of the Congregation.

# Executive Director

Submitted by Thom Bales, Executive Director

A Brief History of Capital Replacement or “What’s Up with the Parking Lot?”

In the strategic plan document, “Strengthening Our Connections,” adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2012, deferred maintenance was specifically named as an important objective to address by the end of 2016. Deferred maintenance is the practice of postponing maintenance activities such as repairs in order to meet budget funding levels or realign available budget monies.

To better understand the scope of our own deferred maintenance, in 2013 UUAA hired a consultant firm, Miller-Dodson Associates, to analyze our facilities and develop a capital replacement plan (CRP) to address UUAA’s deferred maintenance. A CRP is a systematic method for allocating and expending money to maintain an organization’s capital assets in a reasonably similar degree of aesthetic and functional quality. Capital items include the physical (non-cash) assets of our facility, including components such as the parking lot, roof, carpet, furnishings, HVAC system, and more. Creating and maintaining a CRP is a best practice recommended by the UUA. The curious can learn more about CRPs here: <http://congregationalstewardship.blogs.uua.org/annual-budget-drive/replacement-reserve-fund/>.

In April 2014, Jim Gallas, who has extensive experience with CRPs, partnered with me to make a presentation to the Board of Trustees on current and anticipated capital replacement items and the estimated financial resources needed to address these items over the next 30 years. At that time, we recommended that a team of lay volunteers be assembled to further refine UUAA’s capital replacements and their costs, with a particular focus on the next ten years.

The Miller-Dodson Study projected that five-year actionable items would cost approximately $1M and the ten-year items would cost $1.5M. UUAA members (recruited and assembled by Jim) refined that list and developed new cost estimates with guidance from local contractors and service providers. This group also refined replacement economic life estimates with local contractors and reviewed failure implications to better define the urgency of any replacements.

Attached to the end of this report is a list of recommended ten-year capital replacement items and their current estimated cost. The original Miller-Dodson analysis was simplified into a continually updated, three-class prioritization of projects:

1. Class I replacements should be addressed in 2015-2016 and include maintenance of the parking lot1, purchase/installation of a new boiler, roof repairs, replacement of our water system components, and refurbishment of the Social Hall floor;
2. Class II replacements should be addressed in 2017-2019 and include purchase/installation of a chiller (main building air conditioner);
3. Class III replacements should be addressed in 2020-2024 and include renovation of kitchenettes and restrooms, as well as replacement of building carpet.

All three project class lists include resources to implement a painting schedule for the main building areas to be conducted over ten years and an allowance to replace smoke detectors, as well as a small amount of contingency funds to pay for smaller, unexpected maintenance expenses, which are currently unfunded.

Based on all of this preparatory work, in September 2014 we made three recommendations to the CEO and Board of Trustees to help UUAA move forward with capital replacement work:

1. Class I items require immediate funding. We recommended a portion of the current General Fund surplus along with bank financing be utilized to pay for Class I replacements. The 2015 General Fund budget approved by the Board of Trustees included $30,000 for 2015 loan payments. 2
2. As Class II/III actions have longer lead times to allow for regular budget allocations to address replacement needs, we recommended the establishment of a Capital Replacement Reserve Fund and the adoption of a governing policy directing 5% of each year’s General Fund budget to be set aside to fund future replacements. The 2015 General Fund budget approved by the Board of Trustees included $52,043 for this future-oriented fund.
3. Finally, we recommended the establishment of an ongoing lay-led committee to carry out the planning, implementation, and reporting of each year’s capital replacement projects and that all planned replacements be reviewed annually by the Board. Jim Gallas has agreed to continue to lead any such recognized group.

The projects enclosed within the CRP would ultimately require Congregational approval as stipulated in UUAA’s By-laws:

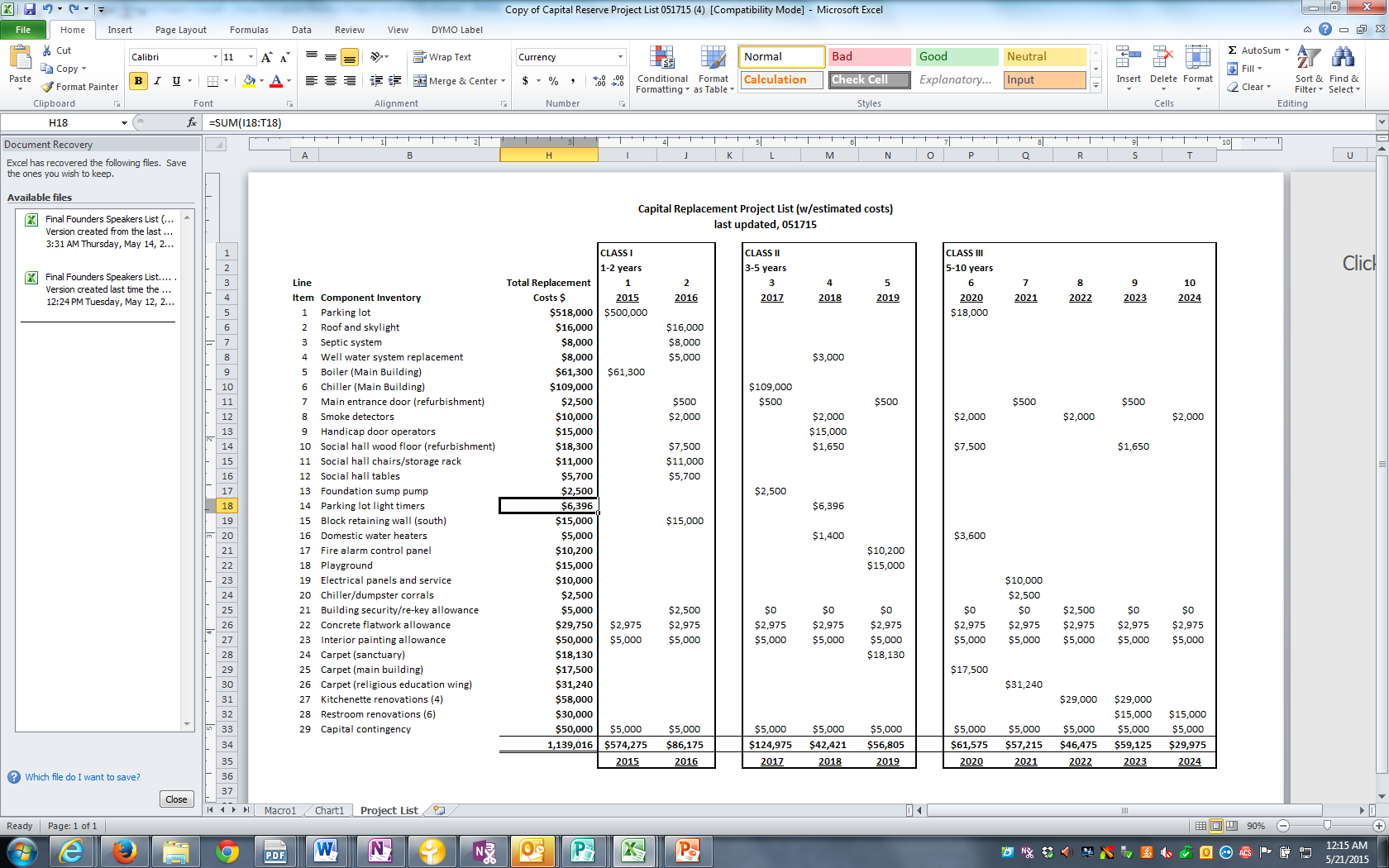
“2.1.4 The Board of Trustees may authorize capital expenditures to a maximum aggregate during any one fiscal year of $50,000. Any capital expenditure which causes the aggregate of all capital expenditures in that year to exceed $50,000 shall require Congregational authorization by a majority vote at a duly called Congregational meeting.”

In the coming weeks, the Capital Replacement Projects Team will recommend to UUAA’s Board of Trustees that all Class 1 replacement projects (attached list with estimate costs) be approved by the Congregation and that funding equivalent to the current estimated cost be financed through the previously recommended financing plan.

Capital Replacement Project Team: Jim Gallas (chair), Larry Cooper, Jim Schaefer, Thom Bales (staff).

Notes:

1. Maintenance of the parking lot would be the most expensive capital replacement project. Our intention had originally been to hire an engineering consultant in November 2014 to lay the groundwork and develop maintenance plans for the parking lot. However, the delay in the approval of the 2015 General Fund Budget pushed actual engagement with a consultant until March 2015. Stantec Consulting was hired at the end of March 2015 to work with us on a project plan that would allow us to hire a contractor and complete the work in 2015.
2. Earlier this year, a request for proposal (RFP) to finance Class 1 replacements was sent to three banks, including our current mortgage holder, Old National Bank. We received positive proposals back from all three banks with each bank expressing willingness to finance our capital replacement projects. After close review – and in consultation with Kim Clugston, a UUAA member and mortgage banker herself- we recently made a recommendation for a financing partner to UUAA’s CEO and President, Board of Trustees.



# Annual Budget Campaign

Submitted by Jim Lee, Chair

This report summarizes the results of the 2015 Annual Budget Campaign (ABC) that ran from September 2014 through November 2014.

Gratitude for Volunteers and Staff who Serve with Grace

The 2015 ABC was led by Jim Lee with support from over 50 volunteers who served in several roles, including stewardship visitors and thank you note writers. The 2015 ABC also required many hours of staff support. In particular, I offer my thanks to: Charley Burleigh, Joan Burleigh, Dave Hall, and Barb Hall, who led our team of stewardship visitors along with Fran Dew, who developed and delivered facilitated training for the visitors; Nancy Schewe who organized the team that wrote several hundred thank you notes; and Interweave and the Sanctuary Audio Techs for helping host our Evening with Catie Curtis on Saturday, November 1, 2014. The latter was a community event with over 100 attendees and considered quite a success by the Americans United for the Separation of Church and State for which it was a friend, fund, and consciousness-raising event. My thanks goes out in particular to Bethany Ramirez, who led and delivered social media, web, and publicity support plus offered excellent ideas regarding communications generally. Finally, I want to express my appreciation for the staff, particularly Maria Thomas, Debby Casamatta, Thom Bales, and Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer, who took on a much larger role than in past ABCs and made the experience of serving as a leader of the ABC more pleasant and less effort. Thank you, all.

Summary

The 2015 ABC Campaign centered on a November 2, 2014 Commitment Sunday Event with information and pledge materials mailed in September 2014, informational table during Social Hour from October 2014 through the end of November 2014, and follow-up through mid-December 2014 with calls and e-mail. The results were not too different from the past few years with $871,233 in pledges through February 2015 from 414 pledge units. The average pledge was $2,138. These numbers are all within 2-3% of the results for the 2014 campaign. This year, we asked people to pledge at or above the Fair Share Guidelines provided on the pledge form, and 28% reported they did, 15% reported they did not, and 57% chose not to respond. Accurately measuring the participation rate is challenging – to maintain membership one must make a pledge or have a ministerial waiver, and many non-members do make pledges. It appears the participation rate increased slightly as the ratio of people who pledged to average Sunday attendance increased slightly. Thank you to all of you who made a pledge, no matter how small or large: making a financial commitment to support your religious home is, above all, most important.

Some Details and History

Below are some details regarding the pledges received. The information is presented within the context of a report prepared at the request of Board President Ken Clein for presentation to the Trustees on Saturday, October 11, 2014. The request was for both a little bit of history and a summary of how the Board of Trustees can assist with the ABC. The data presented are based on the numbers submitted annually in February to UUA as part of our certification process. In case you do not recall or are relatively new to UUAA, the interim period was from 2005-2008, with the first two years led by Reverend Barbara Child and the third year led by Reverend David Keyes. Reverend Gail joined us in August 2008, so 2009 would have been the first year of pledging with settled ministry since 2004.

UUAA Pledge History shows that the number of pledge units has changed very little (dotted blue line, left hand vertical axis) while the average pledge (solid red line, right hand vertical axis) has generally had a steady increase. This is particularly good given a recession and an ongoing comprehensive campaign. So, you may ask, “If average pledges have increased, why is our budget so tight?”

**UUAA Pledge History**

Membership, Attendance, and Pledge Participation

Measuring the participation rate in an annual campaign is challenging. We know how many pledges are made, and generally how many adults and children each pledge represents but we do not record that statistic, and record the number of people in the building on a given Sunday. We require a pledge, or waiver, for every member so 100% of members pledge. A ratio of Pledge Units to Sunday Attendance is likely the best measure of participation. Sunday Attendance and Membership have generally increased since 2008 (purple and green lines, respectively and left vertical axis), when the membership books were cleaned up and a pledge was required to maintain membership. As previously noted, however, pledge units have not increased much. *Thus, one measure of the participation rate, the ratio of pledge units to Sunday Attendance, has remained at very low levels the past three years relative to the ten years presented*(orange line with diamonds, right vertical axis)***.*** We mailed out nearly 900 pledge requests (units, not people) including anyone who has pledged, made a gift, or participated 24 hours in major activities in the past three years. Just below 50% of them responded.

**UUAA Attendance, Pledge Units, and Participation Rate**

Non-Pledge Income

So, we are now serving many more people with fewer pledges. Are we receiving more gift income then? While pledge income has steadily increased (blue dotted line, left hand vertical axis) as the average pledge increases, the budget has not increased much since 2007 (solid yellow line, left hand vertical axis) and non-pledge income has declined (red line with squares, left hand vertical axis). Therefore, we are increasingly relying on pledged income as a share of the budget (green dashed line with diamonds, right hand vertical axis). Of note, non-pledge funding sources were consistently above $200,000 from 2005 to 2010 and peaked at over $300,000 in 2007, but have been well below that since 2011.

**UUAA Pledge Income, Non-Pledge Income and Budget**

Distribution of Pledges and Fair Share Guidelines

There is at least one additional piece of information that is of value: the distribution of the dollar value of pledges. The median pledge is $1200 (so roughly 50% pledge above that and 50% pledge less while $1200, conveniently $100 per month, is also our most common pledge). This information was provided in a May 2015 mailing, in the 2015 Annual Budget Campaign Commitment Form, and discussed in Services on Sunday, October 19. Our greatest likelihood for increased pledge income is to have people who pledge $50 to $100 per month to increase to $100 to $200 per month. Thus, the emphasis on a Fair Share pledge as presented in the table. The Fair Share table is greatly simplified from past years’ tables, which ranged in both income and level of commitment including tithing, providing a way to meet the guideline while committing 1% or 10% of the same income. As previously noted, less than 30% reported they pledge at or above the suggested fair share of income.

The Fair Share guideline is, of course, not without some difference of opinion (my experience is we all generally agree that the sun rises in the East, but after that….). It is worthy of continued discussion and either refinement or adopting an alternative means of providing members and friends guidance regarding their financial commitment.

As of this writing the Board was in the midst of a second ask to raise approximately $200,000 that was initiated in March 2015. The outcome of that campaign is presented in a separate report.

As chair of the 2015 ABC, and co-chair for five previous ABCs since 2002, I offer these suggestions for future ABCs:

1. Ministerial, Staff, and Consultant Support

Running an ABC, especially a “high-touch” campaign to less engaged members and friends, requires substantial work and skill. The majority of the “high-touch” campaign cannot be asking for money, and it must be done delicately. People making connections and requests must be well trained and able to discern between unable (thus already being generous) and unwilling, and yet not be shy. This, in my opinion requires continuity of ministerial, staff, and consultant leadership over an extended period of time with skilled volunteer leaders and participants. Dedicating at least 4 hours per week of a professional staff person, with 2-4 ministerial hours *throughout* the year, is the minimum for a Congregation our size. This is not a job to hand to a willing, but inexperienced and unskilled volunteer while we hope for very different outcomes. At $30 per hour, I expect we will get the $12,000 paid to a staff person, assuming 8 hours per week, in increased income every year. A consultant at $12,000 to $15,000 for the first year, who would focus on rebuilding our Stewardship programs and training the paid and volunteer staff, could likely be reduced in subsequent years.

1. A Shared Financial Vision and Commitment

The Board must establish and clearly communicate with the Senior Minister a shared financial vision and commitment. In March of 2015 the Board and staff communicated what would be done with an additional $200,000 – this is essential for discussion prior to an ABC. Secondly, we need an approach, unlikely to be achieved with consensus, to communicate expected contributions from members and friends. Whether it is equal share, fair share, or some other means, we must facilitate people being generous and communicate our gratitude when people contribute as they are able.

1. Discernment and Engagement

We need to understand why a substantial part of the UUAA community participates in Sunday services and activities while providing relatively limited financial support. We likely have a more financially diverse Congregation than five or ten years ago, which is good, but one would expect a decrease in the average and median pledge if this were the primary explanation rather than a decrease in participation. I suggest carefully crafted focus groups and communications, then acting upon what is learned for a sustained period of several years. Based on data from UUA we are doing very well, well above average for UU communities and many denominations, especially in the midst of a capital campaign. How do we move 200-400 families from $50 or $100 per month to $100 or $200 per month as they are able as the capital campaign ends?

In short, we can comfortably (or maybe uncomfortably) tinker around the edges by changing our approach to the ABC, or we can boldly change how we approach financial stewardship generally. Our 150-year history included many years of financial difficulty – our next 150 years does not need to – but we must be both bold and be honest with ourselves regarding our means and commitment to UUAA.

# Sharing the Collection Program

Submitted by Terry Madden, Chair

Mission:

The Sharing the Collection program is one of the ways we live out the Second Principle of Unitarian Universalism: “Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.” This program provides financial assistance to non-profit community service organizations in the furtherance of their important work.

What we do:

The first Sunday collections of every month are donated to one of the many local non-profit community service organizations in Washtenaw County that serve predominantly disadvantaged and vulnerable populations, such as low income families and individuals, people who have been targets of discrimination, or disabled or abused populations; and organizations which depend on community support in terms of funding and/or volunteers. Sharing the Collection also supports Unitarian Universalist (UU) service organizations like the UU Service Committee and the Michigan UU Social Justice Network (MUUSJN) and long term UUAA commitments to Habitat for Humanity and IHN/Alpha House.

Sharing the Collection Task Force:

The 2014 members of the task force were: David Allen, Lynn Ayres, James Johnson, Terry Madden (Chair), and Theresa Rohlck. The 2015 members are: Lynn Ayres, John Frank, Terry Madden, and Theresa Rohlck.

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| **2014 Recipients** | |  | **2015 Recipients** | |
| January | (Snowstorm- No Collection) | January | Jim Toy Comm. Center = $1474 |
| February | Corner Health Center =$1,864 | February | Religious Action Affordable Housing= $1165 |
| March | Friends In Deed = $1,444 | March | Washtenaw Alano Club= $3192 |
| April | UU Service Committee=$2566 | April | Summer Camp Scholarship = $2445 |
| May | Habitat for Humanity Huron Valley = $1470 | May | Habitat for Humanity- Huron Valley |
| June | House By the Side of the Road= $1960 | June | Mich. UU Social Justice Network |
| July | Catholic Social Services: Seniors= $1032 | July | Growing Hope |
| August | Student Advocacy Center = $1190 | August | Washtenaw Literacy |
| September | Packard Health = $1897 | September | Children’s Literacy Network |
| October | Washtenaw Prisoner Re-Entry= $1956 | October | UU Service Committee |
| November | IHN Alpha House = $2803 | November | IHN/Alpha House |
| December | Mich. UU Social Justice Network= $1779 | December | Mich. UU Social Justice Network |

# Scrip Sales and Grocery Certificates

Submitted by Carolyn Barber, Chair

Under the aegis of Thom Bales and the Stewardship Umbrella Group, the Scrip Program empowers Congregants to take advantage of the over 600 retailers who participate in the Great Lakes Scrip (GLS) program and are willing to give us money for shopping at their stores. Our program goal is to promote scrip sales to raise funds for the Congregation by educating our members on the benefits of using scrip and the ease of obtaining and using scrip. This is free money earned on purchases you would make anyway. Please continue to read to learn about important changes in the grocery scrip program.

For 2014-2015, we were responsible for contributing a total of $11,547 to the General Fund, not quite meeting our $12,500 budgeted income.

We continue to be challenged by meeting the Kroger program annual re-enrollment requirements each April, to the point that our income from them has dropped from $800 per quarter to under $200 per quarter. On the other hand, Arbor Farms and Busch’s are giving us about $200 per month. Busch’s contributions, which come from initial card purchases and linking My Way cards to the Church for reloads, could be maximized if all reloads were done by cash, check, or debit card, because using a credit card to reload drops the contribution from 5% to 3%. In similar fashion, Hiller’s has moved to a Hiller’s Club Rewards Program that requires obtaining a “club card,” and then actively going online to direct the rewards to the Congregation when your total reaches 500 points. Meijer and Whole Foods (3% on all purchases) have been very popular items, as well as People’s Food Co-op (5%). When shopping at Arbor Farms, just tell the cashier you are supporting UUAA. The contribution from them is 3%.

Participation in the Great Lakes Scrip (GLS) program is developing nicely and is slowly growing to fill the gaps left by the grocery scrip programs. We currently have about 60 people who make regular purchases at the Scrip Table or are ordering Great Lakes Scrip online. Many more participate in grocery purchases and scrip reloads, but the stores no longer release that information. In addition to grocery scrip, we keep an inventory of the more popular GLS cards on hand.

With regular participation by Congregants, this program can have a major impact on the operating budget. With Congregation-wide participation, this program could add tens of thousands of dollars to our income (multiply $11,547 by 10.).

Having coupons on sale after each Service requires two teams of two sellers every Sunday, except for the single-Service months. I am so grateful for the ten reliable regulars: Lise Anderson and Miles Peterle, Jo Dodge, Sara Gibb, Ruth Lamphiear, Sara Mathews, Cindy Krueger, Peggy Shearer, Becky Swank, and Susie Thompson- who make sure the table is staffed each week. We really miss James Johnson, who passed away this year. Barb and Bob Dinan are taking a sabbatical while they are involved with their daughter’s SGD class.

I am especially grateful for the loyal efforts of Becky Swank, who fills in for me when I’m out of town and makes sure that Scrip Table news gets into the *Weekly Bulletin* and *Monthly Newsletter*, and Elsie Dyke, who picks up the local grocery scrip orders and brings the scrip to Church on Sunday.

As coordinator, I maintain the spreadsheet for inventory, purchases, and sales; determine and place weekly orders with GLS; determine quantity, request checks, and place orders every other week for whatever grocery scrip needs restocking; keep physical custody of the inventory; fill in at the table when needed; and coordinate staffing when necessary. I make every effort to notify scrip users by newsletter, bulletin, or email of special offers from Great Lakes Scrip and of changes in the local grocers’ scrip programs.

I have a dream that more people would investigate ways that they can use scrip—free money for buying the things they need to buy anyway—and especially when they are not able to just chip more into the General Fund or the Comprehensive Campaign.

# QUUest Bookstore

Submitted by Lucia Heinold and Marion Holt, Co-Chairs

The QUUest Bookstore's ministry is to support members’ and visitors' spiritual journeys by providing a welcoming center with a stimulating selection of UUA theological publications from Skinner House and general books addressing personal spiritual growth, social and environmental justice, and other common interests. We offer books supporting UU classes, group reading selections, and events. QUUest places individual special orders.

The UU Principle most directly applicable to our work is #4: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Profits are contributed to the General Fund. Book sales in 2014 were $9,510.00. Transfers to the General Fund for the year were $2,779.79

Three people staff the book selling table, two for both Social Hours and one to help close the store after the second Service. QUUest Bookstore is open every Sunday, year round. There are thirteen booksellers now. We always welcome more. The work is fun. Schedules are flexible.

Our monthly meeting at 1:30pm the first Monday of each month is optional. We encourage attendance because that is where the group shares information about the latest books and jointly decides on which books to buy in the next few weeks.

In 2015, QUUest continues to support UUAA reading initiatives such as the Wednesday Morning Readers, Social Justice, and Mindful Eating initiatives. We continue to recruit new booksellers and ideas. Interested? Give your contact information at the QUUest bookstore table or contact Lucia Heinold at [heinoldcia@aol.com](mailto:heinoldcia@aol.com). We will follow-up quickly.

# Treasurer’s Assistants

Submitted by Roberta Allen, Member

Each Monday morning, our group counts and processes all monies (currency and checks) received by UUAA during the previous week. These monies include the weekly offerings, pledges, memorial gifts, Comprehensive Campaign, Social Hour activities (Equal Exchange Coffee Project, QUUest Bookstore, Scrip, Alpha House, Khasi Hills, 150th Celebration, etc.), rental income, and other sources. Counting and processing involves filling out standard forms and double-counting to insure accuracy. Then we fill out bank deposit slips; deposits are made by Thom Bales or Deborah Casamatta.

We instituted several measures this year to increase efficiency and accounting accuracy. Each Church group that processes money now fills out a standardized sheet, devised by Treasurer Roberta Allen. These sheets separate cash and checks and provide us and the individual groups with an accurate record of their financial activity. This allows for our work to proceed faster, with fewer questions.

Our process works ideally with four people. Two new members joined the team allowing vacation schedules to be honored. The current group members are: Carolyn Barber, Dee Dishon, Jo Dodge, Marie Duke, Royla Furniss, and Phyllis Valentine. We were guided this year by Board Treasurer Roberta Allen. Our staff liaison is Deborah Casamatta.

# Arts and Aesthetics Committee

Submitted by Vivian Wilson, Chair

Members

Bob Peyser, Neal Foster, Ethel Potts, Barb Hall, and Vivian Wilson

Activities

* Established a regular meeting time of the first Monday of the month at 2:00pm.
* Developed a mission plan for enhancing the main public spaces in the Church building exclusive of the SGD Wing .
* Sorted through the items belonging to the Church and properly stored art works in a separate closet.
* Retrieved and refurbished portraits of influential thinkers in the history of our religious movement which hung originally in the library of our first Church on State and Huron Streets.
* We mounted a show of these in the narthex as part of our celebration of 150 years; Neal Foster researched and developed signage for the show.
* Bob Peyser photographed and developed a framed print of UUAA’s first church building which the church did not have and which is included in the show.
* Mounted two shows of works of art by Congregation members.

# Office Volunteers

Submitted by Carolyn Barber and Scott Ferguson, Members

One of Deborah Casamatta’s duties as office administrator has been to build, direct, and assist a team of eight Congregant office volunteers who are in the Church Office half a day a week. During this past year, the volunteers have included Carol Acitelli, Carolyn Barber, Joan Burleigh, Edie Croake, Jane Ferguson, Scott Ferguson, Jim McCargar, Terry Morris, Sally Preston, and Peggy Shearer.

The volunteers are the first smiling faces that greet visitors to the Church Office and offer an escort around the building as needed. Some of the valuable tasks they perform are: answer the phones; shred papers; help to replenish Office supplies; proofread the Orders of Service, *Monthly Newsletter*, *Weekly Bulletin*, Annual Report, and other office publications; create databases for weddings and memorials; process audio recordings of sermons and post on the website; update the white board daily for scheduled events; update files as needed; enter pledge and giving data into the Automated Church System (ACS) database; alphabetize and file pledge forms; burn CDs as needed; help with mailings; water the Office plants; maintain the *Monthly Newsletter* and Order of Service archives; re-hang pictures in the Office; fold the *Weekly Bulletins* and Orders of Service, cut inserts; make large-print Orders of Service for the Accessibility Team; and write annual reports for the group.

Joan Burleigh, Edie Croake, and Scott Ferguson have completed categorizing and organizing the collection of books in Reverend Gail’s personal ministry library**.** This was a project that began in January 2014.

**GOVERNING POLICIES**

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION**

**OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN**

**Board of Trustees**

**Core Values: The First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Michigan (UUAA) has been deeply committed to liberal religious thought and action for 150 years. We join together in community to encourage and inspire each other’s spiritual journeys, to honor and care for the natural world around us, and to join forces to further social justice in order to make a difference in the world.**

**We work together to achieve the following ends:**

# 1.5 Culture

We are nourished by the culture that has evolved in this Congregation throughout our rich liberal religious heritage in Ann Arbor; a culture rooted in our core belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every individual. We learn and grow from our differences. We value our connections, past, present, and future, to the Unitarian Universalist world network.

1.5.1 Members of this Congregation are supported in substantial ways to live our values and principles, to learn and grow from our differences, to value our history, to participate in regional, national, and international Unitarian Universalist programs and to promote awareness of Unitarian Universalism in the wider community.



# 150th Task Force

Submitted by Terry Madden and Sandy Simon

The Charge from the Board of Trustees of the UUAA to the 150th Anniversary Celebration Task Force reads:

“The 150th Anniversary Celebration Task Force is charged with the task of coordinating and facilitating the implementation of activities and events to take place during the 2014-2015 Church year that will identify, promote, and celebrate our UUAA history. One focus will be on learning how our history informs the present and guides our steps into the future.” Voted and adopted by the Board of Trustees, May 7, 2013.

Our year of celebrations is not quite over as of this writing. A comprehensive report on the 150th celebrations will be submitted to the Board of Trustees in the summer of 2015. We are extremely happy to summarize here a very successful year of activities fulfilling the charge of promoting and celebrating our UUAA history and using that history to guide our steps into the future, as requested in our charge.

Terry Madden and Sandy Simon co-chair the 150th Task Force that includes Senior Minister Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer, past Board President (2012-13) Dixie Hibner, May 17, 2015 Events Coordinator Nancy Schewe, and Publicity Coordinator Cathy Muha. "Revere the past but trust the dawning future more" from the hymn “As Tranquil Streams” served as our inspiration throughout the planning process. Our goals in addition to those set forth in our charge were to involve as many people in the Congregation as possible and provide a range of activities that would appeal to different segments of the Congregation. We wanted to celebrate our current thriving Congregation, inspire gratitude and appreciation for the events and people who created our 150 year history, bring more members into the recognition that this is “our” Congregation and “our” history and help people see a hopeful future that continues that history.

To that end, Reverend Geisenhainer, Terry Madden, and Sandy Simon planned weekly Mini-Histories presented by many different voices in the Congregation, and monthly Our Story Sundays when the Service themes highlighted an aspect of our history. At each of these Services

* Members who signed our membership book during a specific decade were honored as part of the Chalice Lighting. We began with members from the 1950s and progressed thru the year to the most recent member at the last Our Story Service in April 2015,
* Congregants were encourage to wear 150th t-shirts,
* Usually a forum or related activity followed the Our Story Service,
* Steve Kuzma and Mike Halerz took photos of parts of the Service. The photos were posted on the UUAA web site.

Timeline

Ahead of the 150th celebration year

* The logo and slogan at the top of this report was developed by member Nic Sims ahead of the year and was used to brand all of the 150th activities.
* Lori Fithian and Jean Chorazyczewski created a poster of the year’s events.
* 150th t-shirts with the logo and slogan began selling in August 2014 through, with Lisa Lemble overseeing this complicated logistics for setup and sales. The Men's Retreat used the t-shirt design with their slogan added to the back for their fall retreat.
* New nametags designed by Lisa Lemble were created and Hannah Hotchkiss organized swapping out old nametags for new.
* Ed Lynn arranged for a banner to be hung on the Church building announcing we are “Celebrating 150 Years.”
* Motawi Tileworks designed a tile using the 150ths logo to sell as a commemoration for members and to provide as gifts for guest speakers during the year. Colleen Crawley, who works at Motawi, made all of the arrangements working with Margaret Pekarek and Margie Teall.
* History information was added to [www.uuaa.org](http://www.uuaa.org), including a timeline of our ministers over the 150 years and information and a slide show of our historic buildings.
* A lighted display case was donated by Doug Kelly, who then provided two historical displays, one on the slavery era and one on women’s suffrage.

September 28, 2014: Kick-off for the year of celebrations. Dixie Hibner coordinated a spectacular celebratory birthday party to start the year. The opening Our Story Service included an unveiling of a beautiful fabric hanging off the UUAA chalice crafted by Betsy Price and Barb Hall, the telling of the beginning of Our Story, a proclamation from the mayor of Ann Arbor, then birthday cake, music, and all-Congregation photos (in our t-shirts) taken by Steve Kuzma.

Sunday, October 12 Klein Lecture with Reverend William Schulz, President Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC).

Saturday, October 25 Mindful Eating Harvest Festival.

Sunday, October 19 Our Story Sunday: “Spreading the Word Westward”.

Sunday, October 26 Our Story Sunday on Jabez Sunderland and the Khasi Hills

Forum on our current Khasi Hills program.

Sunday, November 2 Commitment Sunday, Jim Lee brought Barry Linn to speak with a concert by Catie Curtis the Saturday evening before.

Sunday, November 16 10th Anniversary Celebration of the Classroom Wing

Open House for Spiritual Growth and Development program.

Thanksgiving Week 150 UUAA Volunteers for Alpha House.

Sunday, December 21 Our Story Sunday: “Evolving UU Theology”.

Forum on Christian and Buddhist UUs.

Sunday, January 18 Our Story Sunday: “Sanctuary: Care for the Stranger”.

Forum on Social Justice Outreach.

Sunday, February 18 Our Story Sunday: Reverend Ken Phifer, “Revere the Past”.

Reception for Minister Emeritus, Ken Phifer.

Sunday, March 15 Our Story Sunday: Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout, “Finding Our Voice”.

The Big Sing - 150 voice choir with Glen Thomas Rideout.

Sunday, April 12 Our Story Sunday: Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer, “The Next 150 Years of Reason & Compassion in Action – Got Vision?”

Discussion on the Future for the UUAA.

Saturday, April 18 Tour of our historic buildings: Hobbs & Black building and the Stone Chalet. Organized by Kathy Edgren and Lucy Bauman.

Thursday, May 14 Evening Candlelight Service marking the date of our founding May 14, 1865. Created by Becky Hoort.

Saturday, May 16 Dawning Future Panel: A lively discussion with innovative UUs from across the country moderated by Tom Schade.

Sunday, May 17 Commissioning Sunday: The Reverend Vanessa Southern preached on “What to Pack on the Road to the Dawning Future.**”** Our guest panelists fromSaturday,May 16, 2015 joined us along with other area clergy and members of the community as we launched our next 150 years. A gala reception followed the Service. Included were a video of Congregational life created by Gene Gaunt, posters depicting the current programs of the Congregation, and a commemorative program with a history of the Congregation written by Tim Richards. The program also includes a recap and photos from the year.

Throughout the Year

* Pat Kuessner collected “stories”-- memories from UUAA members that were made into a book made available in May 2015.
* 150th t-shirt and 150th tile sales continued very successfully.
* The UUAA History Detectives collected pieces of our history and helped decide on subjects for Mini-Histories; some members presenting Mini-Histories.
* Letters of congratulations from our partner organizations were posted on our web site.
* Publicity went out to the public with an article in the *Saline Eagle*, an ad in the Ann Arbor *Observer* and more.
* Posters, documents, the story book, Mini-Histories, photos have all been collected in electronic form to create an electronic “time capsule” for the ages.

Many, many volunteers stepped up to help make this year a great success. They provided helping hands and great ideas. The names mentioned in this report are only a few of many more to be listed in the final report.

We are extremely grateful for all of the joyful work everyone put into this special year. And we are very proud to feel that our goals were not just met but exceeded. We are grateful for the opportunity this project gave to learn so much, to work with so many good people, and to gain a deep appreciation for this Congregation’s 150 years of Reason and Compassion in Action.



# Reflective Conversations Task Force

Submitted by Dixie Hibner, Chair

The Reflective Conversations Task Force (RC) is a Board of Trustees appointed group charged with gathering reflective feedback from members about our ministries and programs. The process being used is based on the book *Completing the Circle* by David R. McMahill.

During the 2014-15 program year, six Reflective Conversations were scheduled, three on Sunday Worship and three on our Stewardship ministries. The dynamic and complicated schedule resulting from our year-long 150th anniversary celebration resulted in two of the Sunday Worship conversations being canceled. One RC was held on Sunday Worship and three on Stewardship: two for general membership and one for volunteers who worked on stewardship.

Reflective Conversation participants are selected at random from the current membership list in order to permit each member an equal chance of being selected for participation and to best assure that a diverse range of experiences are reported.

This process is a good example of listening to each other and speaking our own truths. We do this in an honest and respectful way and the person whom we most want to hear our personal truth is in the room because ministers or program leaders are present to hear participants in each Conversation.

Data collected are being summarized and analyzed, and will be presented to the Senior Minister and the Board of Trustees. The Board is then expected to report back to the Congregation at a congregational meeting, as they did with last year’s data.

Members include: Fran Dew, Dixie Hibner (chair), Becky Hoort, Jim Lee, Carolyn Madden, Tricia Mooney (Board Liaison), Cathy Olson, Ginny Preuss, Tom Reischl, and Theresa Rohlck.

# Interweave

Submitted by Margaret Pekarek and Leigh Robertson, Co-Chairs

Mission:

Interweave of UUAA is a spiritual home to transgender, bisexual, lesbian, gay, queer, questioning, intersex (TBLGQI) people, their families, and allies to nurture social connections; educate ourselves and others; and advocate for social justice. Interweave provides a welcoming presence and gathering place for TBLGQI people, their families, and allies.

Interweave continues to be a strong and vital program of UUAA. So strong, that our membership has integrated into every aspect of Congregational life. This is the second year of new programming to further meet the diverse needs and desires of our current TBLGQI members and friends and to reach out to new people. We believe this format has made it easier on leadership as there have been fewer potlucks and programs to coordinate, but it has still allowed us to offer quality programming and events to the Congregation.

Interweave has served as a gateway for TBLGQI people to find support within our Congregation. Then they have moved on into all aspects of Church life, not necessarily remaining active in Interweave. This has continued to challenge us in the area of attracting new leadership.

The programming for this year is similar to last year with our potlucks and programs, sharing circles, the Service of Affirmation, and the Spring Gathering. An addition, with the leadership of Ernie Kalina and Margaret Pekarek, we began a film series from March through June. These have been well received.

Leadership Team:

Leigh Robertson and Margaret Pekarek, co-chairs; Royla Furniss, Joan Burleigh, Roberta Allen, Victor Hola, Scott Ferguson, Charlie Pekarek, Lucia Heinold

Active participants in Interweave: Core leadership of 10 people.

List Serve of approximately 256 people.

Service of Affirmation: 25 Interweave members: total attendance 150.

Spring Gathering: 40 participants with 12 Interweave members.

Participants in Interweave events varied widely according to the type of event. Core values represented include Spirituality, Social Justice, Community, and Culture. Attendance at each of our programs and events is noted below.

Interweave Calendar for 2014-2015:

June 1, 2014: Interweave is proud that with our encouragement and recommendation, UUAA at their Annual Meeting on June 1, 2014, passed by unanimous vote a motion in support of marriage equality.

The motion stated:  
 "As Unitarian Universalists, we affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

As individuals, we speak out to ensure equal justice for all who live and love in Michigan and beyond.

As a Congregation, we support efforts to strengthen families and protect children.  
 As a welcoming Congregation, we support an end to discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

And, because marriage is held in honor among the blessings in life,   
 we, the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor,   
 stand on the side of love in support of Marriage Equality".

Ours is the first UU faith community in Michigan to affirm marriage equality by Congregational vote.

August 5, 2014: Interweave and other UUAA members joined others in Lansing for an interfaith service and rally near the Capital to assert a strong support for marriage equality among religious people. Sixty UUs attended in Standing on the Side of Love (SOSOL) bright yellow t-shirts to show our solidarity and commitment to marriage equality.

September 16, 2014: Interweave potluck and Welcome Back. We gathered with Lori Fithian and Jean Chorayczewski to build community in a special way. Attended by 30 people.

October 7, 2014: Interweave Circle. Co-facilitators: Margaret Pekarek and Leigh Robertson. The circle discussion focused on the coming-out process and the many ways we manage that disclosure about our TBLGQI identities. Attended by 15 people.

November 18, 2014: Thanksgiving potluck. The documentary film, “TRANS,” about males, females, and everything in between, was an “up close and personal” view of the transgender community that changes both mind and heart. Attended by 25 people.

December 16, 2014: Service of Affirmation: “Love & Justice”. Attended by 150 people.

January 4, 2015: Interweave Circle. The circle discussion focused on sharing our spiritual practices, especially as we entered into the winter season. Attended by 20 people.

February 17, 2015: Potluck and program. “Standing on the Side of Love” with Reverend Gail R. Geisenhainer. Attended by 45 people.

March 13, 2015: Interweave Spring Film Series. Potluck dinner and “The Loving Story”.

March 22, 2015: Interweave Circle. Margaret Pekarek and Ernie Kalina, co-facilitators. Attended by 10 people.

April 10, 2015: Interweave Spring Film Series. Potluck dinner and “Lilting”.

April 25, 2015: All Congregation Gathering. Attended by 40 people.

Interweave leaders will host a general meeting in May 2015 to discuss leadership and programming for next year. Margaret and Leigh will be stepping down in their roles as co-chairs. Other leaders may also be stepping down, too. The agenda for the meeting will be to review our work this past year and to invite members to take on leadership roles for next year’s programming. We will encourage people to coordinate one event or program; for instance, Standing on the Side of Love or a potluck with a program theme. They can also consider new program and event ideas, for example, the recent film series. Our hope is that others can step forward to continue programming with Interweave’s mission as their guide.

# Leadership Development

Submitted by Kathy Edgren, Co-Chair, with Connie McGuire, LDT Member

The Leadership Development Team’s (LDT) function is two-fold

1. Identify, cultivate, and develop leaders for the Congregation,

2. Serve as the nominating committee for the Board of Trustees (BOT) and the LDT.

UUAA Core Values Met by LDT

Core Value 2: Social Justice and Environmental Action:

The LDT co-sponsored a workshop on “Making a Difference” with the Social Justice Committee, and worked with Hannah Hotchkiss on the Involvement Fair.

Core Value 4: Community

The LDT sought to provide a diverse slate of nominees for the BOT and LDT.

Core Value 5: Culture

The LDT participated in developing a culture that nourishes and supports leaders.

Highlights of Activities

* Oriented three new LDT members (Two members and board liaison)
* Developed a proposed budget for the LDT,
* Co-planned a workshop with the Social Justice Council (SJC), worked with Welcomes Ministries Coordinator Hannah Hotchkiss on the Involvement Fair, and presented the LDT nomination process at the workshop,
* Met with BOT twice for communication and planning purposes; recommended a regular schedule of meetings three times a year between the BOT and the LDT,
* Shared information on a survey of Board presidents which helped lead to a proposal for changes in By-laws for the President and Vice-President positions,
* Presented the nomination process at Annual Meeting in January 2015,
* Provided a slate of nominees for BOT and LDT.

Names of Active Participants

Dee Dishon, Allen Duncan (Board Liaison) Kathy Edgren, Kathy Friedrichs, and Connie McGuire.

Future Ideas, Plans, and Goals

* Repeat the workshop and involvement fair with SJC in a way that responds to suggestions from evaluations, and addresses most important Congregational needs.
* Conduct a survey of Board, staff, Communication and Coordination Team (CCT), and those on the Congregational leader lists to identify specific leadership needs.
* Assist the BOT with the development and implementation of the CCT.
* Partner with other groups, and identify individuals with expertise to help achieve LDT goals.
* Maintain and update the LDT leader list.
* Provide a slate of nominations for consideration by the Congregation for the BOT and LDT.
* Update the LDT pages on the Congregation’s website.

# Denominational Connections Team

Submitted by Royla Furniss, Chair

The Denominational Connections Team (DCT) during its fifth year saw 15 people from UUAA attend General Assembly (GA) in Providence, Rhode Island from Wednesday to Sunday, June 25 to 29, 2014. Eleven people acted as delegates for the UUAA at this GA. We also had our first “offsite” delegate for GA. A post-GA forum was held on Monday, July 7, 2014 to share what experiences attendees would like to bring back to UUAA.

The DCT coordinated with the Reproductive Justice Team to work on the draft Statement of Conscience (SOC) published by the Commission on Social Witness (CSW) with input from community partners. The results of that work were approved at the Congregational meeting in January, 2015. We will see if the CSW will take some of our suggestions at GA in Portland, Oregon when the delegates vote on the SOC there.

We participated in the “Make a Difference Volunteer” fair sponsored by the Social Justice Council and Leadership Development Team in February, 2015.

Currently, we are gathering names of those interested in attending GA 2015 to be held in Portland, Oregon from Wednesday to Sunday, June 24 thru 28, 2015 during Social Hour at the Social Justice table. A forum on attending GA was held Sunday, April 12, 2015.

Future goals of the DCT include:

* Continue our ongoing mission to educate our Congregation on what to expect at GA by holding a pre-GA meeting in June, 2015.
* Host a post-GA meeting in July, 2015 to share what was learned at GA.
* Help with establishing a team to participate in the new CSAI for 2014 - 2018, “Escalating Inequality.”

The DCT serves as a conduit for the exchange of information between the UUAA and the wider Unitarian Universalist (UU) community, providing our Congregation and the denomination with a vibrant means of co-operating and strengthening our identity as UU's. The DCT is approaching the end of its fifth year.

We continue our mission due to the energy and dedication of team members: Marina Brown, Roberta Allen, Alma King, Carolyn Madden, Ellen Teller, Kate Warner, and chair Royla Furniss.

# Partner Church

Submitted by Phyllis Valentine, Chair

In 1997, UUAA formally voted to establish a formal partnership arrangement with the Unitarian Church in Kézdivásárhely, Romania. Our partner church has approximately 100 members, with about one-third of them active. This program supports all five core values of our Congregation: spiritual life, social justice, community, stewardship, and culture. We share many of the same values as our partners, although there are variations in the way we practice our religions and both partners learn from each other.

We have accomplished most of the goals set out for the past year: increased communication, continued financial support, pilgrimage, and participation in the 150th Anniversary celebration. Our relationship with the minister, Reverend István Buzogány-Csoma has grown in strength and mutual understanding. He continues to provide information about his two congregations’ activities, especially via Facebook. He wrote a warm greeting to our Congregation for its 150th anniversary. We continued the financial support of two University students and the minister.

We planned and carried out a group trip to Kézdivásárhely in June 2014, with John Dale of the UUPCC travel services. Travelers were Phyllis Valentine, Nancy and Steve Schewe, Cathy and Mike Muha, and Janet Bower. We visited important historical sites of Budapest and Transylvania. The trip concluded with a visit to Kézdivásárhely, home stays with members of our Congregation, a weekend of activities and Sunday Service in the village. Cathy and Mike Muha were able to renew and strengthen the relationship they established on the 2008 visit. Travelers wrote five of this year’s *Monthly Newsletter* articles. They also communicate with their hosts via Facebook, sharing photos, and news.

Our goals for the coming year are:

* Continue regular communication with partners via Facebook and other means, especially as they develop plans for a church building of their own.
* Seek ways to establish communication between children's programs.
* Engage this year's and previous travelers in conversation about the partnership.

# Khasi Hills Sponsor a Student

Submitted by Cathy Doherty and Allen Duncan, Co- Chairs

Description of the Work

The Khasi Hills SAS Committee provides financial support for a Unitarian elementary school at Mawkisyiem in northeast India and personal, transformational connections between the students there and their sponsors in Ann Arbor. The financial support helps to improve access to education in the region. While India has stated a commitment to providing “universal access” to publicly funded primary education, such is not available in many areas, including northeast India. Private schools are necessary to ensure access, and tuition waivers must guarantee the possibility of inclusion in these private schools.

As part of its activities, the committee provides a means for written correspondence between Congregation members and the students of the school. Congregation members (sponsors) provide support in the form of unrestricted contributions that connect the sponsor to a particular student. The relationship and communication between a particular Congregation member and a particular student are maintained throughout the student’s tenure in the school (or the Congregation member’s participation in the program). The committee also organizes occasional pilgrimages to the Khasi Hills. Such trips were made in 2006 and 2011. The next trip is tentatively scheduled for October of 2016. UUAA Congregation members will be invited to participate in the pilgrimage.

Demonstration of UUAA Core Values

Without elaboration, the committee directs its work to support the following of the Unitarian Universalist Principles:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are all a part.

Highlights of Activities

Representatives of the Congregation (and committee) participated in the dedication of a new Unitarian church building, adjacent to the school, funded largely by donations from members over the past five years.

Participants in the Committee

Laura Bauman, Mary Ann Camron, Barbara Cherem, Cathy Doherty, Allen Duncan, Janet Duncan, Deborah Golden, Rick Johnson, John Seeley, Robert Treadway.

Plans for 2015-2016

Continue support of the school, plan trip to India for October, 2016.

# Round Robin Dinners

Submitted by Sally Preston, Chair

Round Robin Dinners provide members with an opportunity to break bread together in a member’s home for an evening of conversation and food. To my knowledge Round Robin has been an active group in UUAA since sometime in the 1970’s, but I do not know exactly when it started. I consider this to be a welcoming ministry because it gives perspective members, in particular, an opportunity to meet a few other members in a comfortable environment and have a conversation. From the dinners that I have attended, it is common for people to talk about how they became a UU. To me, the principles it best exemplifies are *Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth*, and *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning*. Overall, it helps to foster a sense of community by providing another avenue where members can connect with one another.

Dinners are held on the second Friday of the month from October through May, and on occasion a picnic may be held during the off months. The dinners are hosted by members in the group and are attended by six to eight others at each location. On average, there are between five and six dinners held each month and a total of 42 to 45 participants on average. There are currently 57 “regular” members (people who plan to attend each dinner) and 64 “will call” members (people who participate occasionally). Since January 2014, 27 new people have joined the Round Robin Dinner group.

This is not a goal oriented ministry, but I believe that the addition of new participants to the group each year is a sign that it is an ongoing ministry that provides a time and place where members can gather and share fellowship.

Future plans are to find a new coordinator by the beginning of the new season in October 2015. I will be available to provide records, processes, and training for the new coordinator.

# Jackson Social Welfare Fund

Submitted by Kyla Boyse and Phil Tuchinsky, Co-Chairs

The Fund

The Jackson Social Welfare Fund (JSWF) Committee annually implements the 1955 bequest of George and Bessie Jackson. The Fund’s full name is: George L. and Bessie Florence Hazelton Jackson Social Welfare Fund. The bequest requires that we distribute annual earnings for either of two purposes, briefly stated as follows:

1. To advance understanding and acceptance of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution or,
2. To promote rational and peaceful means of conflict resolution.

The full language in the bequest states that funds be

* Used for the purpose of advancing the understanding and acceptance of the great principles of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and
* For promoting the use of reason and understanding as the effective method of solving, in a peaceful manner, domestic and international difficulties and conflicts.

The First Amendment reads:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

The Committee and 2015 Activites

The JSWF Committee fulfills this bequest through this annual cycle of activities: We…

* Receive the amount we can give in grants for the current year from the UUAA Investments Committee ($27,200 for 2015);
* Set our schedule and agree on current-year *Request for Proposals* (RFP) and *Criteria for Evaluating Proposals* documents at a first meeting (held February 28, 2015);
* Solicit proposals by distributing the RFP to local, regional, national, and even international organizations, via the UUAA website and Facebook page;
* Receive proposals by our deadline (16 proposals arrived by April 15, 2015);
* Evaluate all proposals individually; then
* Meet again, discuss all the proposals and decide on grants. In 2015, we agreed on 11 grants in varying amounts.
* We accomplished this work on April 21, 2015 this year. Our 2015 work will be complete when we send response letters to all grant applicants, enclosing checks where appropriate.

Membership

The Committee’s membership structure is unique at UUAA: It consists of six UUAA members plus two members appointed by the Ann Arbor Friends Meeting (AAFM). The UUAA members serve renewable three-year terms; for 2015 we were:

Term Expires

Roberta Allen (Treasurer, Board of Trustees) 2015

Kyla Boyse (co-chair) 2017

Joan Burleigh 2016

Phil Tuchinsky (co-chair) 2015

Kate Warner 2016

<one open seat> 2017

At the beginning of our 2015 cycle, Katlyn Cameron was the sixth UUAA member, but she soon resigned for health reasons. We did not succeed in replacing her in the short time available; the co-chairs will resolve this soon.

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting appointed Marilyn Churchill and Art Wolfe to the Committee. Art has served since 1993; Marilyn was new to the Committee this year. Terms of service do not apply for the AAFM members; their congregation controls that.

2015 Award Recipients

We congratulate these JSWF grant recipients for 2015

|  |
| --- |
| * American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan |
| * American Friends Service Committee |
| * Americans United for Separation of Church & State |
| * Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living |
| * Citizens Alliance on Prison and Public Spending (CAPPS) |
| * Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants (Michigan Chapter, MI-CURE) |
| * The Dispute Resolution Center, Livingston & Washtenaw Counties |
| * Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice |
| * Prison Creative Arts Program (PCAP) |
| * UM-Dearborn College Courses, Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility |
| * Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights (WICIR) |

Other Activities

The JSWF co-chairs participated in the 150th Anniversary celebrations by providing a JSWF Mini-History during Worship on Sunday, April 26, 2015.

# Klein Lecture

Submitted by Bob and Beth Hospadaruk, Co-Chairs

The Klein Lecture Series began in 1991 and was originally funded through a bequest of Robert F. Klein (1928-1986) who was an active member and dedicated volunteer of this congregation. Bob Klein was always interested in new ideas and could change his mind about an issue after careful study and discussion. He valued people and worked to help them get along with one another, even in difficult circumstances. The Lecture is dedicated to his memory with the hope that his spirit, the spirit of peace, goodwill and justice, might flourish. It continues to be sponsored through memorial funds donated by friends of Robert and Ruth Klein and proceeds of ongoing lectures.

The 2015 Lecture hosted the Doctor Reverend William (Bill) Schultz, President of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), who spoke on “The Human Rights Challenges of the 21st Century”. This year’s lecture was part of the 150th Anniversary Celebration and was coordinated through the 150th co-chairs Sandy Simon and Terry Madden. A video was made and the lecture is currently posted on the Church’s website for all to view. There were 136 attendees paying $10 per ticket. Expenses were $500 honorarium check given to the UUSC plus printing and advertising costs of $50. Volunteers of UUSC Coffee Project and the Challenging Racism Social Action Group helped to supply food for the reception, set up, and clean up. All travel and lodging expenses were paid by the UUSC. The balance of the income remains in the Klein Lecture account for costs of future lectures.

1. UUAA dimensions are designated with letters in parentheses where they are the same as the first list of spiritual disciplines/humanistic virtues/habits of the heart. Names indicate who facilitated the dialogue on the topic. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)