

**2013-2014
ANNUAL REPORT**

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF ALBANY

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF ALBANY

A Welcoming Congregation

We welcome all men, women and children who seek a religion based on the inherent sanctity of every person's free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

In keeping with our distinctive, non-creedal religion, we strive to excite the human spirit and inspire its development; to respond to moral and ethical issues in our local, national and world communities; and to sustain a vital and nurturing congregational life.--Adopted November 7, 1993

On April 22, 1998 the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany voted to become a Welcoming Congregation. As we welcome into our society people of all ages, races, colors, national origins, genders, gender identities, affectional or sexual orientations, disabilities, political and religious beliefs we will grow in vision and inclusiveness.

Table of Contents

Annual Meeting

Agenda.....	1
Policy on Congregational Meetings.....	2
Proposed Budget for 2014-2015	3
Minutes of the May 19, 2013, Annual Meeting	6
Minutes of the Feb. 23, 2014, Special Congregational Meeting	9

Year in Review

Minister 's Report.....	12
Board of Trustees, President's Report.....	17
Treasurer's Report	21
Endowment Trust	23
Stewardship Donor Report.....	24
Director of Religious Education (see RE Council report).....	
Church Administrator	26
Wheel of Life	28

Councils

Program Coordinating Council (PCC).....	29
Religious Education Council (REC).....	31
Social Responsibilities Council (SRC)	35

Standing Committees

Committee on Professional Ministry.....	42
Finance	42
Membership	43
Nominating	45
Personnel	46
Stewardship (see report in Year in Review).....	

Special Committees

Bylaws Committee	47
Mission Statement Task Force.....	47

Volunteer Positions

Childcare Coordinator.....48
Denominational Affairs.....48
Interfaith Impact Liaison.....50
Reception Coordinator51
UUSC Liaison51

Committees

Annual Fellowship Dinner53
Building and Grounds.....53
Building Use.....53
Caring Network.....54
Flower Committee.....55
Fun(d)raising55
Gardening.....56
History and Archives57
Joy Library.....57
Lifespan Learning59
Partner Church60
Public Relations60
Religious Services62
Safe Congregation Response Team63

Programs and Activities

Channing Circle.....64
Choir.....64
Circle Dinners65
CommUUnity Group.....65
Evensong65
Pastoral Care Associates.....66
Philosophy Group66
Projects & Quilts (Ps & Qs)67
Small Group Ministry67
UU Christians67
Walker Book Club68

Annual Meeting

Agenda

Sunday, May 18, 2014

Appointments

Parliamentarian

Timekeeper

Quorum/Vote Counters

Adoption/Rules of Procedure

Governed by FUUSA's Policy on Congregational Meetings (see next page)

Words for Gathering

Approval of Agenda, Additions

Nominating Committee Report and Election

Update on Stewardship Campaign

Presentation/Adoption of 2014-2015 Budget

Presentation, Discussion, and Vote on Mission Statement Resolution

We welcome everyone. Our Unitarian Universalist community seeks truth and deeper meaning, pursues justice through inspired action, and cultivates compassion and love for all connected by the web of life.

Comments of the President

Recognition of Outgoing Officers, Board Trustees and other Board appointments

Announcement of Election Results

Potential Additions to Agenda

Adjournment

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF ALBANY

POLICY ON CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

I. Rules of Procedures on Debate

After the meeting has been called to order, the president shall appoint the following: a quorum counter, a parliamentarian, a timekeeper, and pro and con floor managers.

Next, the Agenda shall be submitted for approval.

Next, the following Rules of Procedures shall be submitted for approval, after allowing amendments from the floor or suspension by a majority vote:

A. Rules of Procedures for Presentation

1. The person or committee that prepared a resolution or motion on the agenda for congregational vote shall make a supporting presentation limited to 10 minutes.
2. If there is a minority or dissenting opinion, the spokesperson for the opposition shall make a presentation, also limited to 10 minutes.

B. Rules of Procedures for Discussion

1. Those wishing to speak shall form a line behind either the pro or con microphone station, consistent with the views he or she wishes to express.
2. The chair will alternately recognize a speaker at one station and then at the other.
3. No person may speak for more than 3 minutes on any one item.
4. No person may speak more than once on an item as long as anyone else stands before him at a microphone station.
5. When there are no speakers waiting at one of the stations, the debate may be closed.
6. After initial presentation, debate time for each item requiring a vote shall be 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, a motion shall automatically be put, "Shall debate be extended for fifteen minutes?"

Any time that a majority shall fail to extend the time, debate shall be closed and the question on the floor put to a vote.

II. Pre-Meeting Educational Efforts

Resolutions, bylaws or budget changes, or other non-routine matters being brought to a congregational meeting, shall be presented in writing in advance of the meeting and be accompanied by brief explanations. If there is an opposing view, a brief summary of opposing arguments shall also be presented in writing.

Furthermore, there shall be ample opportunity to conduct pre-meeting discussions to educate the congregation, and for congregation members to ask questions and seek clarification from the resolution authors. Such pre-vote meetings shall consist of a church-wide town meeting, a series of neighborhood gatherings, and/or brief sessions incorporated in regularly scheduled committee meetings.

BoT Approved 2014-2015 Budget -- as of 4/18/14						NOTES
Ordinary Income and Expense	(Acct. Num.)	Prior Year '13-14 Budget	2014-2015 Board Approved Budget	% diff. current year		
Income						
<u>Contribution Income</u>	<u>4100</u>					
Back Pledges	4110	15,000 \$	13,000 \$	-13.3%		reflects actual experience
Collection Plate	4120	9,500 \$	8,000 \$	-15.8%		reflects actual experience
Net Current Year Pledges	4130	399,310 \$	417,000 \$	4.4%		\$429,500 (+7.5%) -5% shrinkage (\$20,500) + \$8,000 new pledges = \$417,000
Other Contributions	4150	2,000 \$	7,623 \$	281.2%		reflects actual experience, reappropriation of DF \$1623
Total Contribution Income	4100	425,810 \$	445,623 \$	4.7%		
<u>Other Income</u>						
Net Building Rentals	4215	39,500 \$	38,000 \$	-3.8%		includes classrooms & halls, rental costs
Interest Income	4220	500 \$	250 \$	-50.0%		reflects actual experience
Coffee/bagel income	4240	1,700 \$	1,500 \$	-11.8%		projects fewer bagel Sundays
Total Other Income	4200	41,700 \$	39,750 \$	-4.7%		
<u>Program Income</u>						
Net FUN/D Raisers	4320	26,000 \$	30,000 \$	15.4%		reflects actual experience
RE (Child)	4340	3,600 \$	3,200 \$	-11.1%		reflects actual experience
Total Program Income	4300	29,600 \$	33,200 \$	12.2%		
Total Income		\$ 497,110	\$ 518,573	4.3%		
Expense						
<u>Non-Ministerial Sal. & Ben.</u>						
Music Director Salary	5000					NOTE: COLA = 1.06%
Music Administrator Salary	5010	17,702 \$	18,244 \$	3.1%		COLA +2%
Church Administrator Salary	5015	44,000 \$	44,466 \$	1.1%		COLA
Office Administrator	5016	21,300 \$	31,491 \$	47.8%		Salary increase to \$15.14/hr after probationary period. Added Rental Agent duties.
Custodian 1 Salary	5025	14,544 \$	16,315 \$	12.2%		Salary increase to 12.55 /hr
Custodian 2 Salary	5026	X	6,526 \$	NA		Salary increase to 12.55 /hr
RE Director Salary	5030	51,800 \$	54,421 \$	5.1%		COLA +4%
Sunday Nursery Care	5035	2,400 \$	2,400 \$	0.0%		
Staff Benefits	5042	19,332 \$	21,584 \$	11.6%		8% retirement + \$9,227 health, no dental
Music Director Prof. Dev.	5050	0 \$	1,400 \$	NA		Matt has been using Professional Development approximately every other year
Church Administrator Prof. Dev.	5051	1,786 \$	1,786 \$	0.0%		
Administrative Local Travel	5052	150 \$	150 \$	0.0%		
RE Director Prof. Dev.	5053	2,880 \$	3,880 \$	34.7%		
Office Admin. Prof. Dev.	5054	150 \$	150 \$	0.0%		
Staff Holiday Gifts	5060	350 \$	-	-100.0%		merged into individual compensation packages
Employer Payroll Taxes	5080	12,068 \$	13,117 \$	8.7%		
Workers Comp. & Disability	5090	3,500 \$	2,600 \$	-25.7%		reflects reduced state charges
Hourly Custodian	5260	6,000 \$	300 \$	-95.0%		staffing change see account #s 5025 and 5026
Rental Agent	5285	9,075 \$	-	-100.0%		staffing change -- see account # 5016, Office Administrator above
Total Non-Ministerial Sal. & Ben.	5000	207,037	218,830	5.7%		goal of equitable compensation & benefits

Ordinary Income and Expense	(Acct. Num.)	Prior Year '13-14 Budget	2014-2015 Board Approved Budget	% diff. current year	NOTES
Administration	5100				
Audit, Banking & Payroll	5140	5,500 \$	6,200 \$	12.7%	increases in costs for credit card, audit & payroll services
Office Equipment	5150	4,000 \$	3,320 \$	-17.0%	
Office Supplies	5160	4,000 \$	3,120 \$	-22.0%	reduced costs due to electronic communications
Postage	5170	2,121 \$	1,227 \$	-42.1%	reduced costs due to electronic communications
Telecommunications	5280	3,978 \$	3,374 \$	-15.2%	reflects actual experience
Total Administration	5100	19,599 \$	17,241 \$	-12.0%	reflects reductions due to communication changes
Building Maintenance	5200				
Buildings & Grounds	5210	19,000 \$	20,000 \$	5.3%	
Janitorial Supplies	5230	3,000 \$	3,000 \$	0.0%	
Utilities	5270	17,000 \$	15,000 \$	-11.8%	solar energy savings and other green efficiencies
Insurance	5470	7,700 \$	8,650 \$	12.3%	reflects current increases in insurance charges
Total Building Maintenance	5200	46,700 \$	46,650 \$	-0.1%	
Church & Community	5300				
Small Group Ministry	5304	100 \$	-	-100.0%	
Art and Aesthetics	5306	0 \$	200 \$	NA	
Board of Trustees	5310	400 \$	200 \$	-50.0%	
Annual Dinner Subsidy	5315	X	690 \$	NA	new item
Stewardship Committee	5320	400 \$	300 \$	-25.0%	
Board Training & Development	5325	700 \$	350 \$	-50.0%	
Receptions/Appreciations	5335	350 \$	-	-100.0%	will use own designated fund
Child Care (General)	5340	500 \$	750 \$	50.0%	increase due to new coverage of former Membership Committee costs
Membership Committee	5350	1,585 \$	1,300 \$	-18.0%	childcare is included in line above
Kitchen Fund	5355	1,750 \$	1,500 \$	-14.3%	
Caring Network	5357	150 \$	150 \$	0.0%	
Joy Library	5361	450 \$	400 \$	-11.1%	
Religious Services Committee	5365	5,000 \$	5,000 \$	0.0%	
Publicity Committee	5370	1,000 \$	1,200 \$	20.0%	new initiatives
Music Committee	5375	4,100 \$	4,100 \$	0.0%	
Archives Committee	5385	50 \$	75 \$	50.0%	
PCC	5386	90 \$	90 \$	0.0%	
Total Church & Community	5300	16,625 \$	16,305 \$	-1.9%	
Denominational Affairs	5400				
Partner Church Council	5410	1,500 \$	1,500 \$	0.0%	
CRUJNY	5415	X	500 \$	NA	new item
SLD Dues	5420	10,210 \$	10,625 \$	4.1%	reflects actual assessment
UUA Program Fund Dues	5430	23,160 \$	23,220 \$	0.3%	
Denominational Affairs Subsidy	5440	2,500 \$	2,500 \$	0.0%	SLD Conf, GA, NYSCU & UUL TI
Unirondack Dues	5450	150 \$	150 \$	0.0%	
Total Denominational Affairs	5400	37,520 \$	38,495 \$	2.6%	

Ordinary Income and Expense	(Acct. Num.)	Prior Year '13-14 Budget	2014-2015 Board Approved Budget	% diff. current year	NOTES
Ministerial Expenses	5500				
Salary/Housing	5550	87,742 \$	88,672 \$	1.1%	COLA
Insurance	5560	10,065 \$	13,329 \$	32.4%	increased cost health ins., no dental, life & disability
Retirement	5565	7,019 \$	7,094 \$	1.1%	8% of salary
Professional Expenses	5510	8,956 \$	7,000 \$	-21.8%	reduction balanced by increased health insurance above
Total Ministerial Expenses	5500	113,783 \$	116,095 \$	2.0%	
Religious Education	5800				
Children & Youth	5800	4,800 \$	7,250 \$	51.0%	increase due to both adult OWL training and Rite of Passage occurring this year
Lifespan Learning	5810	X	310 \$	NA	new item
Total Religious Education	5800	4,800 \$	7,560 \$	57.5%	
Social Responsibilities	5900				
Interfaith Impact	5910	850 \$	850 \$	0.0%	
Social Responsibilities Council	5920	2,400 \$	2,400 \$	0.0%	
Total Social Responsibilities	5900	3,250 \$	3,250 \$	0.0%	
Total Expense		\$ 449,314	\$ 464,426	3.4%	
Transfers					
Capital Reserve Fund		14,907 \$	15,000 \$	0.6%	
Building Reserve Fund		31,289 \$	37,547 \$	20.0%	
Ministerial Intern Reserve Fund		1,000 \$	1,000 \$	0.0%	
Sabbatical Fund		600 \$	600 \$	0.0%	
Total Transfers		47,796 \$	54,147 \$	13.3%	
Total Expense and Transfers		\$ 497,110	\$ 518,573	4.3%	
DIFFERENCE			\$ (0)		
					Personnel Committee Notes
					The committee proposes that we pay a fixed dollar amount for health benefits (no dental) based on a mid-range plan (CDPHP Gold 304) and that contribution be 80% for individual and 65% for family coverage.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting
First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany
Emerson Community Hall
May 19, 2013

Meeting Start-up

After a quorum was established, President Chuck Manning called the meeting to order at 11:47 a.m. Chuck drew participants' attention to the *Policies on Congregational Meetings* printed on page 2 of the 2013 Annual Report. Terry Way made a motion to accept the Rules of Procedure. Dave Metz seconded the motion.

Karen Kaufmann made the following motion for a rule on amendments and comments from the floor:

"Today we are considering a resolution proposing a number of amendments to certain sections of the bylaws. These proposed amendments have been presented to and considered by the congregation at three conversations, at the Program Coordinating Council Meeting, and at Board Meetings. I would like to propose a rule for today's meeting: that any additional proposed amendments or comments from the floor relate only to those sections of the bylaws that are already proposed to be amended by the resolution. In other words, any proposed amendments or comments from the floor that relate to sections of the bylaws not already proposed to be amended by the resolution will be ruled out of order at today's meeting. Such proposals will be communicated to the Board of Trustees for consideration by the bylaws revision committee as it continues its work."

Kevin Purcell seconded the motion. After a brief discussion the amendment to the rules was passed. Chuck then called for a vote on the motion to accept the Rules of Procedure as amended. The motion carried.

Chuck made the following appointments for the meeting: Mike Myers as Parliamentarian; Dick Dana as Timekeeper; and Paula Brewer as the Quorum/Vote Counter. This was followed by words for gathering presented by the Rev. Sam Trumbore.

Chuck presented the agenda and asked for any additions. No changes were suggested and Kate Bohn moved that we accept the agenda as presented. Philomena Moriarity seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Nominating Committee Report and Election

Dawn Dana, Chair of the Nominating Committee, introduced the members of the Nominating Committee: Meredith Andrews, Debby Brown, Dave Metz, Paula Moskowitz and Linda Way. Dawn said the Nominating Committee strives to present a slate of candidates that are diverse in age, opinions and length of membership. She encouraged those interested in running for future office to contact members of the Nominating Committee early in the year to let them know of their interest and expertise. She then read the names of the uncontested candidates and asked them to stand as their names were read. She asked for nominations from the floor; there were none. Dawn asked the secretary to cast one ballot for the following uncontested positions.

Officers to be elected for 1-year terms

President: Peggy Sherman
Vice-President: Dick Dana
Secretary: RoseAnne Fogarty
Treasurer: Sue Berzinis
Assistant Treasurer: Reese Satin
Religious Education Chair: Tracy Tilgner
Social Responsibilities Chair: Karen Kaufmann

Religious Education Council to be elected for 3-year terms

Cari Abatamarco, Brian Frank, John Scaringe, Dee Van Riper

Religious Education Council to be elected for a 1-year terms

Sandy Stone

Social Responsibilities Council to be elected for 3-year terms

Ed Hancock
Jaye Holly

Following the adoption of the slate of uncontested candidates, Dawn introduced the candidates for the contested positions. She asked for nominations from the floor; there were none. Dawn reviewed the rules and procedure for voting. The vote was taken by paper ballot and tallied. The results for the contested positions were as follows:

Board of Trustees for 3-year terms

Michele Desrosiers, Erik Eddy

Nominating Committee for 3-year terms

Laura Churchill, Donna Meixner

Endowment Trust for 5-year term

Sharon Babala

Update on Stewardship Campaign

Chuck introduced and thanked the members of the Stewardship Campaign Committee: Dick Dana (Chair), Donna Meixner, Chuck Manning, Kathy Harris, Tim Burch, Erik Eddy and the Rev. Sam Trumbore. Chuck reported that we were within 5% of reaching our pledge goal of \$414,000.

Presentation / Adoption of the 2013-2014 Budget

Treasurer Sue Brezinis thanked the congregation for continuing to make their pledges on time. She presented the budget for the 2013-14 fiscal year, which was prepared in conjunction with the Finance Committee and the Personnel Committee. She reported that we had a perfect storm in rising personnel costs for the coming year with an increase in Matt's hours, Leah's becoming credentialed with a commensurate increase in salary, and an increase in health insurance costs, which largely accounted for budget increase. Ed Hancock suggested that the budget should show the amount we pay to the solar company as a liability, since it is a contractual obligation. Sue agreed to make that change. Lois Thompson requested that in the future the budget be printed in a larger font. Sue agreed to make that change.

After a brief discussion, Al DeSalvo moved that we accept the 2013-2014 budget. Larry Gambino seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention.

Presentation/ Discussion and vote on By-laws Changes

Chuck called for a motion to accept the proposed bylaw changes. The motion was moved and seconded. Chuck then opened the floor to debate on the motion. Kevin Purcell, Chair of the Bylaws Committee, began the discussion by reviewing the process and approach used to revise the bylaws. He also presented a brief summary of the proposed changes.

- Karen Kaufmann introduced three friendly amendments to the proposed revised bylaws. These amendments were proposed after the bylaws were released to the congregation in response to the comments and strong opinion calling for these changes shared at the Congregational Conversations.

First Proposed Amendment. Amend Article I, Section 4 by changing the title from "Non-Discrimination" to "Inclusion." After brief discussion, the motion to accept the amendment passed with three abstentions.

Second Proposed Amendment. Amend the first sentence of Article III Section 4(c) to read as follows: "Said notice must be read from the pulpit on Sundays of posting, must be posted on the website and other social media in use by the Society, and must be included in a mailing to members by regular electronic mail at least ten days before the date of the meeting." After brief discussion, the motion for the second proposed amendment passed with one abstention.

Third Proposed Amendment. Amend Article X Section 2 to read as follows: "All staff members shall report to the minister or the minister's designee(s), subject to the Board's authority under article V, Section 2 of these bylaws." After discussion, the motion passed with two abstentions.

Chuck then opened the discussion to questions and comments from the floor.

- Article I, Section 4. Some people questioned why this section was needed in light of our Purpose as stated under Article I, Section 2. Karen Kaufmann explained that UUA Bylaws models all have this, and the Committee felt it was lacking in our bylaws. **Robb Smith made a motion to change the term "gender identity" to "gender expression" in Article I, Section 4. Paula Brewer seconded the motion. It passed with six opposing votes and seven abstentions.**
- Article III section 5b. Several people raised questions about the meaning of the lead off phrase "Provided that" in Article III Section 5b. **After brief discussion Karen Kaufmann made a motion to replace "Provided that" in Article III, Section 5b with "Notwithstanding paragraph (a)." Martha Schroeder seconded the motion. The motion passed with one opposing vote and five abstentions.**
- Article III, Section 3. Emergency Meetings. **Ed Hancock moved to strike the provision for emergency meetings from the bylaws. Al Berzinis seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion to remove Article III, Section 3 was defeated.**
- Article III, Section 3e. Emergency Meetings. **Chris Jensen moved to change "shall" to "must" in Article III, Section 3e. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed.**
- Article XIII, Section 3: Conflict of Interest. Lee Newberg suggested that this section should be in the Personnel Manual. Kevin responded that next year the Bylaws Committee would be looking at how these policies all fit together and connect.

The motion was made and seconded to accept the changes to the bylaws as amended at this meeting. The motion passed.

Closing

Chuck said a few words of thanks to outgoing Board and Council members. He then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Meixner, Secretary

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany
Congregational Meeting to consider:**

**“A Resolution of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany to
Oppose the Current Practice of Hydraulic Fracturing and Support the
Widespread Adoption of Renewable Energy”**

February 23, 2014

Presiding: Peggy Sherman, President
Parliamentarian: Kevin Purcell
Timekeeper: Mike Myers
Quorum Counter: Sue Berzinis
Floor Managers: Karen Kaufmann and Dick Dana
Secretary: RoseAnne Fogarty

The meeting was called to order at 11:55 A.M.

Peggy Sherman asked for approval of the single- item agenda. No objection being heard, the agenda was approved.

Kevin Purcell explained the rules for the meeting, including:

Ten minute each for pro and con presentations;

Pro and Con microphones;

The option to close debate when no one remained at one of the two microphones.

The rules of procedure were approved without objection

Michelle Desrosiers made a motion to approve the resolution as presents; Chris Bystroff seconded the motions

Presentations on the resolution of ten minutes duration were by:

Chris Bystroff in favor of the resolution:

Explained the process for developing the resolution and recognized those who have worked on the resolution;

Noted that this had been a three-year process;

Reviewed the presentations held at FUUSA to present both sides of the argument;

Summarized the assertions marshalled against hydraulic fracturing;

Urged the congregation to take a stand against fracking and in favor of renewable sources of energy.

Brian Carr in opposition to the resolution:

Explained that his objections to the resolution had to do with what he asserted are exaggerations on the part of both sides of the argument, but especially on the part of the anti-fracking movement;

Asserted:

- that our society is not ready to switch to renewable energy sources;
- that the sources of information used by the anti-fracking movements were not scientifically credible;
- that EPA has done an excellent job protecting our water and environment in general that more stringent enforcement of work related laws should not be restricted to one industry.

- that litigation is the appropriate response to these problems.
- that global warming is part of a natural, and ongoing process, which will probably be more beneficial than otherwise.

One speaker appeared at each (Pro and Con) microphone:

Pro: Sandy Steubing thanked those involved in the work of preparing the resolution, and asserted that the preponderance of research supports the resolution.

Con: Brian Carr appealed for an end to the ban on fracking, asserting that it penalized land owners.

The question was called at 12:20 P.M. Voting was as follows:

In favor of the resolution: 82

Opposed: 2

Abstentions: 4

The resolution was adopted, and the meeting adjourned at 12:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

RoseAnne Fogarty
Secretary

Attached below is the text of the resolution approved.

A Resolution of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany to Oppose the Current Practice of Hydraulic Fracturing and Support the Widespread Adoption of Renewable Energy

I. Whereas horizontal high-volume hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) is a **recently developed technology for extracting methane gas from shale** by injecting large quantities of water, toxic chemicals, and sand under high pressure;

II. Whereas the members of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, New York have **studied and discussed** health, environmental, economic, and policy aspects of fracking in light of Unitarian Universalist principles;

III. Whereas, based on our belief in the **inherent worth and dignity of every person**, we are concerned that fracking endangers human health because it uses, without proper safeguards, toxic chemicals that are known to cause cancer, birth defects, and other illnesses;

IV. Whereas, respecting the **interdependent web of all existence** of which we are a part, we are concerned that fracking endangers the environment, posing risks of methane and toxic chemicals seeping into ground water supplies; of methane and radon emissions into the air; of induced seismic activity; and of inadequately stored waste fracking fluid contaminating the soil, streams, and rivers;

V. Whereas, believing in **justice, equity and compassion in human relations**, we are concerned that communities and rural residents subjected to fracking disproportionately suffer

environmental and health consequences without equitably sharing in the financial benefits enjoyed by the industry;

VI. Whereas, believing in the **right of conscience and the use of the democratic process**, we are concerned that State law is inherently unfair and unjust because (under Compulsory Integration) it can compel landowners who oppose fracking to submit to horizontal drilling beneath their property;

VII. Whereas, notwithstanding industry claims that best available technology can effectively eliminate any health and environmental adverse impacts of fracking, there is **neither sufficient incentive to industry nor sufficient governmental enforcement resources** to ensure that such technology is actually used and maintained;

VIII. Whereas, from a long-term perspective, the **methane that has existed within shale formations since early geologic time will reside there** until alternative technologies are developed for its safe extraction and may not need to be exploited at all if renewable energy sources are pursued with urgency;

THEREFORE, be it RESOLVED that the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, New York is opposed to hydraulic fracturing in our community, state, nation, and around the world **until the following conditions are met** that would make the practice consistent with Unitarian Universalist Principles:

1. **The rights of all affected parties**—including, but not limited to, land owners, proximate land owners, well-owners, drillers, and their employees, community residents and those at risk of being adversely affected by drilling operations' impact on the air, land and water—**are fully protected** by enforced legislation and regulation and are truly indemnified by well owners against any harm resulting from these operations now and in the future.

2. **Sufficient fees and taxes are imposed** on hydraulic fracturing operations to support close oversight and regulation of such operations and to pay for local expenses, such as road repair, environmental clean up, and evacuations.

3. All **exemptions** of hydraulic fracturing operations from environmental laws and regulations **are eliminated**, including, in the U.S., exemptions from the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Safe Drinking Water Acts and from employee-safety regulations. One consequence of removing exemptions would be the requirement to identify all chemicals used in the process and to eliminate those that are hazardous.

Be it further RESOLVED that the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, New York calls for **legislation requiring substantial energy conservation** and accelerating the **development of renewable energy resources**, to reduce dependence on fossil fuels (and the need for fracking) and **avoid** the disastrous effects of **global warming**.

FUUSA Anti-Fracking Resolution adopted on 2/23/14

Year in Review

Minister's Report Rev. Sam Trumbore

Overview

Each year, reflecting back over the events documented each month in my minister's report to our Board of Trustees, I marvel at the many activities in which I've participated, the pastoral care crises and losses, the celebrations and services. Not only is it a joy for me to have this great calling to serve as a minister – what a joy to be doing that ministry here with this congregation, at such an exciting time in the history of civilization, and with such exciting opportunities before us. Serving the personal, spiritual and religious needs for growth and development in our congregation never gets stale boring or old for me. Even after 15 years, I still see many new and stimulating directions for this congregation to serve our needs and the needs of the world around us. There is meaning and satisfaction in abundance serving the purposes for which this congregation exists.

Sunday Services

Following the inspiration that arose from meeting in June with five other UU ministers to discuss how to follow up on the training we all received from the Rev. Scott Tayler at the January, 2013 Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Convocation in Florida, we coordinated work together on **themes for the month**. The themes I chose for the month were: September – **Hospitality**, October – **Purpose**, November – **Courage**, December – **Connection**, January – **Compassion**, February – **Character**, March – **Journey**, April – **Freedom**. Each month, I used the theme as a focus for my newsletter column. I then did two or three

services that connected in some way to that theme. Then the theme was used for deeper reflection and discussion as part of the Meaning Matters program. This focused approach allowed me to go into greater depth than what might be possible considering a topic for only one Sunday. Response by members of the congregation has been good to this approach so I plan to continue it next year.

One experiment the Rev. Priscilla Richter, UU minister in Schenectady, the Rev. Lynn Ashley, UU minister in Glens Falls, and I did this year was to take the theme “journey” for the month of March and have each of us do a sermon on it, then offer it in the other two congregations, sort of a Capital Region Unitarian Universalists of New York (CRUUNY) **pulpit rotation**. It allowed each of us to have two weeks to work on other pressing projects rather than write a sermon. This was especially helpful the last week of the month when we were all in Erie, Pennsylvania for the St. Lawrence and Ohio Meadville combined District Annual Meeting.

Another experiment was to do a **pulpit exchange with the Rev. Douglas Taylor** and combine it with a workshop. January 10-12, I traveled to Binghamton and led one of my meditation workshops followed by doing the Sunday service. February 7-9, Rev. Taylor led a worship titled, **Building our Shared Theologies**. His Sunday service turned out to be very helpful to the Mission Task Force. This model of exchange worked very well and might be a model for similar exchanges in the future.

In addition to our regular services we do on Sunday morning, on occasion we have special services on other days. It was our turn to host the **Union Thanksgiving Service** that brings together members from Temple Beth Emeth, Trinity Methodist, Westminster Presbyterian and our congregation to celebrate our shared history of mutual support. Mayor elect **Kathy Sheehan** spoke to us this year and did a great job. Her presence also stimulated a great turnout compared to previous years. We also did a great **solstice service** this year that attracted a good turnout in Channing Hall. A new service that I helped lead was part of the January **Albany Peace Project** led by Bethany Gonyea. She was having meditation services all month to stimulate interest in meditation as a path to reducing violence on the streets of Albany. I led a guided meditation at the service held in our congregation that she video-recorded and posted on her web site.

I continue to offer **meditation on Sunday morning** with a core group of about 12-18 people who come. I also offered several Friday night and Saturday retreats for people to learn more about the basics of mindfulness meditation practice. I have steady interest in mindfulness meditation and it continues to bring people to our congregation.

Lifespan Education

My small group educational initiative this year was **Meaning Matters**. Meaning Matters, a revised program drawing materials from the Rochester Unitarian Church program called Soul Matters, coordinates with the theme for the month bringing together the benefits of small group ministry techniques with a greater emphasis on content and learning. At the beginning of the month, the participants get a 8-12 page packet of materials related to the theme.

The components are: 1) introductory essay, 2) deepening exercises, 3) exploration stimulating questions, 4) reading and viewing resources including quotes, books, articles, web links, movies and video clips. The text for the sermons (when available) is posted on my web site blog. At the end of the month, the small groups gather to check in, and discuss the deepening exercise and the questions. Rather than discuss the questions individually, each participant has the opportunity to discuss the question that grabs them and stimulates their reflection. Thus there is the content of the question to consider as well as why did that question engage them, adding a heart dimension to the conversation. The participants have been enthusiastic about both the content and the small group process. I plan to organize three groups next year and encourage greater participation, especially for those new to our congregation.

The second class I led for my Lenten Christian theme used Reza Aslan's controversial book **Zealot**. I started the class after offering a sermon using a theme from the book. About fifteen people participated in the class. I felt good that we didn't have people drop out of the class and they stayed till the end.

Finally, we hosted a class by the Capital Region Theological Center on evolution and religious groups led by **Dr. David Sloan Wilson**. I was pleased to have Leah Purcell and John Walko participating from our congregation, but would have desired a much larger participation. The content and discussion was very interesting and relevant to Unitarian Universalism, so I plan to use his class as the basis for a class for our congregation in the fall.

Mission Task Force

The Board decided to review our mission statement this year and their product will be up for approval at our annual meeting. I attended their meetings and did a **service March 9th** that supported their work. As part of the service, we encouraged people to fill out a questionnaire that was inserted in the order of service. This helped stimulate interest and get people thinking about it. A sermon I did in April also stimulated interest by using the proposed mission statement as the chalice lighting and touching on it in the sermon. This task force was a good example of the benefits possible when there is collaboration between minister and congregation for the good of the whole.

Personnel Transitions

Stephanie Hayes resigned in the fall creating the need to fill her position. The Board and Personnel Committee wisely decided to take some time to review that position before replacing her. **Patti Jo Newell** offered to serve as a temporary employee while we decided what we wanted the position to look like in the future. We decided to **merge the rental agent position with the office assistant position** so we could **create a full time position**. We were able to then hire **Alyssa Yeager** who has done a magnificent job filling it. Thanks go to **Lynne Lekakis** who saw the value of merging the rental agent position into the full time position and we thank her for her great service to our congregation in that role.

Fulfilling the Call

Fulfilling the Call: A Model for Unitarian Universalist Ministry in the 21st Century is the product of a year-long partnership between the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), the Unitarian Universalist Ministers

Association (UUMA), and Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC).

It was distributed to ministers and congregations as a tool to help ministers grow throughout their career in nine different areas identified as **critical areas of competence**. Those areas include:

1. Leads worship;
2. Officiates rites of passage;
3. Provides pastoral care and presence;
4. Encourages spiritual development;
5. Witnesses to social justice in the public square;
6. Leads administration;
7. Pursues personal renewal and professional development;
8. Serves the larger Unitarian Universalist faith;
9. Leads the faith into the future.

I worked with the **Committee on Professional Ministry** to survey the congregation and determine at what level I was competent in each area. Thankfully there is general agreement that I'm competent in these nine areas, but of course there is room for growth. I've begun incorporating the feedback I've gotten into my planning for future personal growth and development. I thank the COPM for their sensitive and productive handling of this evaluative process.

Mini-Sabbatical

As I completed 14 years of service to this congregation last year, I decided it was time to take a little time for renewal. Originally I had thought that the best renewal I could have would be to take time for a month of meditation. Cleaning out the mind and resting the body is a wonderful renewal ... but I discovered other areas of interest that I thought would have great value for our congregation and Unitarian Universalism. Listening to a podcast by **Dr. Joanna Macy** about her experiences in 1979-80 spending a year in **Sri Lanka** moved me deeply to want to learn more about the organization she studied called **Sarvodaya Shramadana**

Movement. Started by A. T. Ariyaratne in 1958, he used socially engaged Buddhist and Gandhian principles to work in poor villages on shared development projects that had socially transforming results for the villagers and the volunteers from the city. In the last 55 years the organization has worked in 15,000 villages. I wanted to see this amazing organization, the preeminent socially engaged Buddhism project in the world, for myself and find out what I could learn to bring back. I traveled there for three weeks in the middle of winter, getting to know the organization and beginning to unpack their organizational discoveries about how they do their work. Here are a few lessons I brought back from that trip:

The genius of “shramadana” is something we could bring into our congregational culture. Shared work parties around shared goals that include time for ceremonial beginning, great food, time for open dialogue and discussion during the work party and time at the end to celebrate our accomplishments would be of great benefit. We already know that shared work builds community. I just don't think we are intentional in building it into our organizational culture.

The Buddhist practices of loving kindness (metta), compassion (karuna), sympathetic joy (Mudita), and equanimity (upekka) are powerful, interfaith Sarvodaya community building tools we could develop as the foundation of a UU spirituality. We do not have regular practices to cultivate these qualities. What is so beautiful about them is they give access to the experience people refer to as spiritual with or without the theistic baggage that many in our congregation reject. Thankfully, others

are working on this translation of these Buddhist principles into the UU forms and I'll be investigating this more.

Sarvodaya's interfaith approach and focus on shared work for building community might be a tool for us to use here as we seek to bring congregations, churches and mosques together with our neighbors. I'd love to see the Central Avenue mosque, Mt. Pleasant Baptist and our congregation come together to work on a project that the local community sees as a priority.

The second leg of my sabbatical this year is **traveling to Europe** to spend time with my sister who lives in Germany to do a bit of a tour of the continent, visit our partner church in Romania, and preach in Basel, Switzerland to a small UU group there. Looking forward to this adventure starting May 1 and concluding with my return on June 11. So rather than take an extended period of time for sabbatical, I've taken trips that cover about two months of time. And I'm thinking the renewal will be comparable.

Concluding Thoughts

As I write this report the day before leaving for Europe, I'm partly not ready to go because there are very interesting developments just beginning that you'll be reading and talking about in the near future. I'm consulting with leaders at the Unitarian Universalist Association about the multi-site proposal I wrote about in the May Windows. If you haven't read it, I encourage you to return to it.

The vision of thinking of our congregation as an entity that doesn't just exist in one building but can exist in multiple sites is a radical change of how we think about ourselves with many implications. As I've started reflecting on this approach, I see

many, many opportunities for our congregation to grow its ministry to reach many more people who would be interested in becoming Unitarian Universalists as well as support greater diversity of programs and services. Once you stop thinking about “church” as what happens on Sunday morning in just one building, many new possibilities come into play.

The biggest challenge is to open our imaginations about how to help people grow and develop in their lives and the lives of their children. Sunday morning is just one of many different approaches to support that process. Small groups are one process. Services in different locations and different times are another process. Electronic minis-

try as is being done by the Church of the Larger Fellowship (<http://clfu.org>) is yet another one. What I'm realizing is how small my vision of supporting people's religious lives has been and the amazing possibilities that might be out there I haven't even considered.

As generations change, people change how they want to be involved in a religious organization. What will not change is the deep need people have for community, for meaning and for ongoing inner development. We have one contemporary way people will want to do that in the future and we need to offer it in innovative ways that will meet their needs and ours.

Rev. Sam

Board of Trustees

Officers:	Peggy Sherman, President Sue Berzinis, Treasurer	Dick Dana, Vice President RoseAnne Fogarty, Secretary
Trustees:	Al DeSalvo Michele Desrosiers Erik Eddy	Bob Franklin Katharine Harris Mark Yolles
Ex-officio:	Sam Trumbore, Minister Tracie Tilgner, Religious Education Council Chair Karen Kaufmann, Social Responsibilities Council Chair	
Youth Representative:	Anna Brewer	
Elected Officer:	Reese Satin, Assistant Treasurer <i>(not on Board of Trustees)</i>	

President's Report Peggy Sherman

Through monthly meetings, e-mail exchanges and conversations, your FUUSA board members worked this year to accomplish the business of our congregation while keeping our long term goals front and center. This year, four new members joined the board. After an organizational meeting in August, we spent the first weekend in September together, talking about purpose, both that of the congregation and of the Board of Trustees. As a result of that Board retreat, we established some priorities for the year: to review our congregational mission; to review progress against our 5 year old FUUSA strategic plan; to look at resources to increase staffing, especially for membership and social responsibility; and to better balance the internal and external use of our building.

Our Mission

Writing two or three sentences about the purpose of our congregation doesn't seem like a difficult task at first. But when you add on the requirement that these sentences

must be accepted by a majority of our diverse membership as a mission statement that can serve FUUSA for the next ten or twenty years, you've got a challenge! Fortunately, Al Berzinis, Kathy Harris, Jaye Holly, Mike Myers, Jon Newell, and Reese Satin accepted this challenge and were appointed by the Board to serve on the Mission Task Force, along with Rev. Sam and me. The Board directed the Task Force "to involve members of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany in a discussion of our congregation mission and purpose, to consider the possibility of presenting a revision of the twenty year old mission statement for approval at a congregational meeting."

As convener of the task Force, Jon Newell set a brisk pace for its work. The group solicited input from FUUSAns through a survey, two congregational conversations, e-mail and Facebook. They met with the Board once to understand its opinions and a second time to present the recommended statement. This statement has now been endorsed by the

Board and placed on the agenda for the annual meeting. Thanks to the Mission Task Force and all who participated in this process.

Strategic Plan Review

The Board also decided to review the FUUSA strategic plan over a four month period. Each month from October through January, we discussed one focus area from the strategic plan, to assess our congregation's progress against the goals, as well as the remaining gaps. Generally, we have made progress in many areas, and the goals of the strategic plan remain relevant. These discussions highlighted the importance of the Board working with volunteer leaders to align FUUSA activities and programs with our strategic priorities. As a next step, the Board asked committee chairs to reflect on how their committee work is advancing FUUSA's strategic plan and to share their plans for the coming year as they prepared their 2013-14 annual reports. This is the beginning of a process to make the FUUSA Annual Report a strategic document that shows how we are all working together to realize our congregation's dreams.

Staffing

In the summer, recognizing a greater need for experienced coordination in the church office, Rev. Sam and the Personnel Committee asked Amy Lent to resume most of her former Church Administrator duties. This led to some of the concerns raised by Board members at our planning retreat: how do we provide staff support for the membership, communications and social justice activities that are so important to our congregation's identity and future?

Before we could tackle that question, Stephanie Hayes left her position as office administrator. We were very fortunate to

have Patti Jo Newell step in as interim office administrator until Alyssa Yeager joined us as full time office administrator in December. Alyssa's position combined two part-time roles: the office administrator position and the part-time rental agent role ably handled by Lynne Lekakis. We thank Lynne for helping to build our reputation as a desirable space for meetings and events through her service as rental agent for the last four years.

Staffing costs represent almost 2/3 of the FUUSA budget. This year's proposed budget takes additional steps towards fair compensation for our staff. In the near term, expanding the number of permanent FUUSA staff is not financially feasible, so the Board and volunteer leaders will need to continue to look at alternatives.

Building Use

Completed seven years ago, our expanded facility, with Emerson Community Hall as its centerpiece, continues to serve us well as a gathering place for our congregation and the community. Rentals to outside groups raise a significant amount of revenue for our congregation, more than \$30,000 so far this fiscal year. The high level of demand for our space raised some issues for Board consideration this year.

In the summer of 2013, during a rental, the Albany police were called in response to an incident outside our building. To prevent future incidents and assure that our facilities are used in a manner consistent with our values, the Building Use Committee led by Reese Satin developed risk-based criteria to assess proposed renters and adjust the conditions of the rental accordingly. The Board approved this risk based approach, which in some cases means

that we will turn away rentals that pose an unacceptable level of risk.

The Religious Education Council raised another concern, that the popularity of our space may mean that proposed RE and youth events, particularly overnights, are “closed out” of the building use calendar. After several discussions, we agreed to try an approach in which the Religious Education Director will reserve 8 overnight dates for the next church year for youth events, and then either confirm or release them 3 months in advance. We hope this will give our youth more flexibility in scheduling events through the year.

Taking a Stand Against Fracking

On February 23, the congregation adopted a resolution to oppose the current practice of hydraulic fracturing and support the widespread adoption of renewable energy. This was the result of months of hard work by the Fracking Resolution Working Group sponsored by the Green Sanctuary Committee. Beginning in the fall, they encouraged congregational participation in developing this resolution through newsletter postings, forums, congregational conversations and a pot-luck discussion. By taking a position on this important issue, we are seeking to influence elected officials, citizens, and environmental and religious organizations in New York State and beyond.

Board Operations

The Board took several actions to try to be more efficient and effective in its own operations. The institution of a “Consent Calendar” allows us to quickly approve non-controversial items at our meetings. We invited “process observers” to observe and then make suggestions about board meetings; thanks to Phil Rich, Mark Butt, Al Berzini, and Reese Satin for their comments.

We moved the meeting start time from 7 PM to 6:30 PM.

Beyond FUUSA

Rev. Sam, Leah Purcell and I participated in monthly meetings with representatives of the other UU congregations in our area – Schenectady, Glens Falls and Saratoga Springs. Together as the Capital Region Unitarian Universalists of New York (CRUUNY), we continue to sponsor programming on public radio station WAMC and celebrate together at our annual joint worship service. This year, the service is June 1 at Shenendehowa High School in Clifton Park and will feature Rev. Tom Chulak, our former St. Lawrence District Executive.

In 2011, FUUSA was selected as one of the first class of Threshold Congregations named by the Central East Regional Group (CERG) of the UUA. Mid-way through the three year program, we parted ways with the program by mutual agreement. However, CERG consultants continued to be available to us; for example, Rev. Renee Ruchotzke came to Albany to meet with the Mission Task Force in February. To close out the Threshold Congregation program, the Board completed a self-evaluation questionnaire in March. We clearly see progress in our congregation over the last three years. It was interesting to see that we ranked our performance highest in the area of Governance, reflecting last year’s work to revise the bylaws. The Board saw the most room for improvement in the area of Recruiting and Developing Leaders. We identified and acted on new ways to encourage members to consider leadership, such as inviting them to attend FUUSA Board meetings or participate in General Assembly and District events.

Thanks to all who support our congregation

I continue to be amazed by the time and talent that volunteers and staff devote to our religious community. I want to especially note the contributions of Kathy Harris,

Mark Yolles and our youth representative, Anna Brewer, whose terms as Board members will end this June. It has been a pleasure to work with the dedicated members of the Board of Trustees this year.

**Treasurer’s Report
Sue Berzinis**

2012-2013 Year-End

For FY2012-2013 we finished slightly negative using just under \$1,000 in contingency funds (designated savings) to balance the year. Net rental income of \$27,000 and \$32,000 from Fun(d)raisers supplied 12.3% of our income. The Income & Expense summary follows.

2013-2014 Summary

With income contributions from pledges, gifts, rentals and fundraisers, we should exceed our budgeted 3.3% increase in income over the previous year. We expect to close the year with a modest surplus which will be transferred to the Building Fund. To make contributing to FUUSA easier, we implemented a program for on-line contributions through our website.

Proposed 2014-2015 Budget

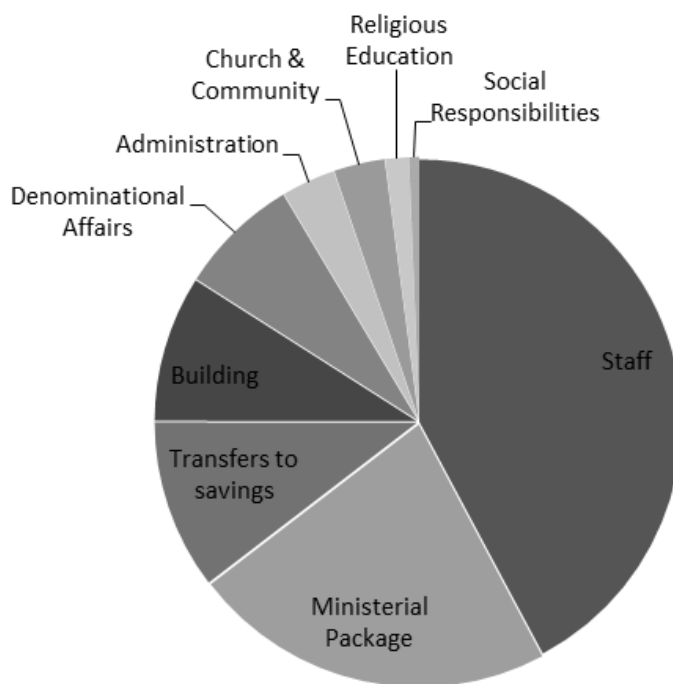
In my second year as Treasurer, I continue to find everyone to be very conscious and respectful of their budget and expenses. I have participated in very thoughtful, responsible and detailed planning of our finances by the Finance and Personnel Committees controlling spending while maintaining a goal of equitable compensation and benefits for our staff. For FY 2014-2015, Personnel felt strongly that we needed to increase the portion that we paid for employee health care. To achieve this increase from 55% to 80%, they recommended elimination of dental coverage. (The employees may still purchase through our plan.)

Personnel also proposed a substantial increase in the hourly rate paid to our custodial staff. As a result total salary and benefits for our non-ministerial staff

increased 5.7%, accounting for 42% of our 2014-15 budget. We also increased support for RE, for Rite of Passage & OWL training and added a budget line for Lifespan Learning (Adult Education). We added support for CRUUNY, to continue the region-wide advertising campaign.

Building Mortgage for Emerson Hall

As of March 2014, we have paid off \$245,169 of the principal, leaving a balance of \$954,831. Each year we budget an increase in the amount transferred from our Operating Budget to the Building Reserve Fund in lieu of the assuming the entire mortgage payment of \$82,000. This coming FY2014-2015 we are increasing the transferred amount to \$37,500. Our mortgage must be renegotiated in 2017; we are hoping that interest rates remain low.



2014-2015 Budgeted Expenses

**Income & Expense Summary FY 2012-2013
ending 06/30/2013**

Ordinary Income and Expense

Income

Total Contribution Income	\$ 396,602	83.1%
Total Other Income (rentals, interest)	\$ 41,808	8.8%
Total Program Income(FUN/D raisers, RE)	<u>\$ 38,805</u>	<u>8.1%</u>
Total Income	\$ 477,215	100.0%

Expense

Total Non-Ministerial Salary & Benefits	\$ 183,139	41.7%
Total Administration	\$ 31,183	7.1%
Total Building Maintenance	\$ 50,037	11.4%
Total Church & Community	\$ 21,114	4.8%
Total Denominational Affairs	\$ 36,355	8.3%
Total Ministerial Expenses	\$ 107,272	24.4%
Total Religious Education	\$ 6,950	1.6%
Total Social Responsibilities	<u>\$ 3,017</u>	<u>0.7%</u>
Total Expense	\$ 439,067	100.0%

Transfers

Capital Reserve Fund	\$ 11,083
Building Reserve Fund	\$ 25,465
Ministerial Intern Reserve Fund	\$ 1,000
Sabbatical Fund	<u>\$ 600</u>
Total Transfers	\$ 38,148

Total Expense and Transfers

\$ 477,215

Net Surplus transferred to Building Reserve account \$ -

**Designated Fund Balances
06/30/2013**

<u>Designated Funds</u>	<u>Balance</u>		<u>Balance</u>
Adult Ed	\$ 839	Minister's Discretionary	\$ 2,568
Annual Dinner	\$ (470)	Ministerial Intern Fund	\$ 3,286
Art	\$ 365	New Congregation Two River:	\$ 9,833
Choir Fund	\$ 1,247	Ordination Fund	\$ 150
Contingency	\$ 3,956	Oriel Magazine	\$ 178
CRUUNY	\$ 4,692	Partner Church	\$ 2,717
Digital Projector Fund	\$ 750	Quilt	\$ 1,066
Earth Spirits	\$ 151	RE General	\$ 2,549
Economic Distress Fund	\$ 1,027	RE Rite of Passage	\$ 4
Electronics	\$ 500	RE Senior High	\$ 1,851
Endowment Trust	\$ 485	Receptions	\$ 1,401
Flower	\$ 1,809	Rummage Sale	\$ 932
Future Year Pledges	\$ 19,670	Sabbatical Fund	\$ 5,111
Garden Fund	\$ 1,942	Seder	\$ 14
Hymnals	\$ 54	SRC	<u>\$ 1,994</u>
		Designated Funds Total	\$ 37,017

Endowment Trust 2013 Year End Financial Report

Chairperson: Lee Newberg

Treasurer: Todd Thomas

Secretary: Chris Jensen

Members: Betsey Miller, Sharon Babala, Sue Berzinis (ex-officio)

Purpose

As stated in The Declaration of Trust, the purpose of the Endowment Trust is to invest and manage gifts and testamentary bequests made to the Society by its members and other individuals or entities. The primary objective of the Trust is to assure potential donors that their bequests will be honored and administered, to protect in perpetuity a principal fund that will generate income which may be used from year to year to assist the Society in furthering its purposes through special projects.

Financial Balances

At the end of 2013, the Trust had a value of \$864,725 up from the \$809,312 value at the end of 2012. Excluding the value of the \$575,000 interest-free loan from the Endowment Trust to the congregation for the Emerson Community Hall, the end of year value for 2013 was \$289,725, up from \$234,312 at the end of 2012. During 2013 contributions totaling \$1,040 were made to the trust, grants totaling \$1,950 were made from the trust and the trust increased \$56,323 due to interest, dividends, and net appreciation.

At the end of 2013, the Endowment was composed of a congregational building loan of \$575,000 (66%), a mutual fund portfolio of \$251,199 (29%), interest-bearing loans to the Community Loan Fund of \$30,000 (3%), and to the Honest Weight Food Coop of \$7,900 (1%), and a designated fund balance of \$626 (<1%).

Grants

According to our policy, the Trust had up to \$2,973 newly available for grants in 2013, plus \$1,955 that had not been used in 2012. From the unused 2012 funds, in 2013 the Trust made grants of:

- ◆ \$250 towards the costs of setting up a program of online giving
- ◆ \$750 towards the cost of a brighter projector
- ◆ \$950 towards materials for Little Free Libraries, so that FUUSA volunteers may build them

In 2014, we will have approximately \$4,325 in newly available grant funds plus \$2,973 from unused 2013 grant funds. (By policy, the remaining grant funds from 2012 and prior years are no longer available for grants.) We welcome proposals for using this money to benefit the mission of FUUSA.

Gifts Received

During 2013, a total of \$1,040 in gifts were received in honor of or in memory of:

Marge Collins , Marilyn Dockter, Roland Hummel, Hughes Gemmill, Mathew E. Odell, Hallie Schroeder, Katherine Satin, Mary & Bob Stierer

The Trust Board takes this opportunity to publicly thank this year's contributors:

Priscilla Crago, Eva Gemmill, Edna Goldsmith, Steven & Paula Moskowitz, Kay Moss, Don Odell, Barbara Sekellick, Margaret & John Sherman, Lois Webb, Alexander Yatsevich

Remember: Gifts can be made by bequest, in memory or in honor of another, or for special occasions, such as a birthday gift for that special person who already has everything. Thank you for your continued support.

Stewardship Committee

Chairperson: Chuck Manning

Members: Tim Burch, Bruce Rodgers, Melissa Ramirez, Dick Dana, John Sherman, Erik Eddy, Linda Hunt, and Michele Desrosiers (consultant)

Purpose

Conduct the annual Stewardship Campaign and provide members with other stewardship opportunities such as legacy giving.

Accomplishments in 2013-14

- ◆ Educated members and friends in the financial realities of an annual budget of over \$500,000 that is necessary to support our congregation and gathered financial commitments to fund over 80 % of this budget.
- ◆ Held Stewardship Gatherings that enhanced our sense of community and connection.
- ◆ Used technology to provide information on Facebook and provide the opportunity for on-line pledging.
- ◆ Provided the opportunity for recognition of individuals and families supporting FUUSA with their generosity.

Plans for next year

- ◆ Conduct a successful fund raising campaign to meet the needs of the congregation
- ◆ Prepare a legacy giving brochure and distribute it to the congregation

Donors, Stewardship Campaign for 2014-15

Visionary

20 Anonymous

Mary Applegate and Charles Fisher

Patricia Bailey

Dave Brandon and Ann Brandon

Albert DeSalvo and Susan Thompson

Arden Dockter and Marilyn Dockter

Bill Batt and Karen Donaldson

Kathy Harris

Frederick Eames

Don Eberle and Ann Eberle

Millie Eidson and Tom Henderson

Rodger Fink

RoseAnne Fogarty and Perry Smith

Lois Griffin

Kathy Hodges

Eileen Hoffman and David Munro

Judith Karis

Karen Kaufmann

Sally Knapp and Arnold Patashnick

Mary Ann Lettau

Chuck Manning and Barbara Manning

Jan McCracken

Peter Meixner and Donna Meixner

David Metz and Barbara Metz

Patti Jo Newell and Bruce Rodgers

Don Odell

Jean Poppei

Kevin Purcell and Leah Purcell

Visionary (continued)

Andrea Ricard
Phil Rich
Martha Schroeder

David Stone and Sandy Stone
Sue Stierer
Sam Trumbore and Philomena Moriarty

Sustainer

21 Anonymous
Dick Dana and Dawn Dana
Erik Eddy and Margie Eddy
Bob Franklin and Carolyn Stetson
Amy Jesaitis
Steven Moskowitz and Paula Moskowitz

Jon Newell and Sigrin Newell
Cathy Perkins
Annika Pfluger
Eric Randall
Jim and Kay Schlembach
John Sherman and Margaret Sherman

Supporter

15 Anonymous
Lea Ali-Napo
Eric Beeche and Randee Hartz
Cate Bohn and Erick Bohn
Mark Daniels and Molly Daniels
Virginia Hammer

Rudy Johnson
Elissa Kane and Lynne Lekakis
Ela Kessel and Tyler Kessel
Marshall Miller and Dorian Solot
Jennifer Quail
Joe and Tina Raggio

Other

(This category includes anyone who did not indicate a giving level on their pledge form.)

90 Anonymous
George Allen and Jane Allen
Muriel Asbornsen
Lorraine Blanchfield and Jeffrey English
Jean Bolgatz
Pam Clements
Findlay Cockrell and Marcia Cockrell
Karen DeWillers
Peter Fallone Jr.
Eva Gemmill
Jane Carol Glendinning
Jaye Holly and Judy Yeckley
Renee Howard
Kathy Magee
Mary Alice Maynes

Hanns Meissner and Linda Munro
David Musser and Martha Musser
Lee Newberg and Heidi Newberg
Mary Phillips
William Pittman and Meme Pittman
Mary Ann Randall
Darnell Rohrbaugh
Ruth Salter
Barbara Sekellick
Susan Standfast and Ted Wright
Kabel Stanwicks and Sarah Stanwicks
Robert Thomson and Lois Thomson
Jodi Wey and Aaron Wey
Jody Zimmerman and Earl Zimmerman

Church Administrator's Report

Amy Lent

Staff

Minister: Rev. Sam Trumbore

Director of Religious Education: Leah Purcell

Church Administrator: Amy Lent

Music Director: Matt Edwards

Office Administrator: Alyssa Yeager

Custodians: Hadiya Wilborn, Cameron Holloway

Nursery Caregiver: Mary Ellen Millett

After 12 years here, I find myself back where I began, sort of. My job title is Church Administrator, and my desk is back in the same space I began in! What is different—I now manage a facility that is 50% bigger and has a beautiful new hall to keep in best form for rentals and Sunday services, I supervise three employees and do all the human resources ground work for a staff of eight, and while we don't print as many paper newsletters or pledge statements as we used to, we get a lot more communicating done by means of email, social media and the internet.

Of the three staff I supervise, two are new this year. Cameron Holloway joined us as Custodian in September 2013, and if you've seen the way he works, or received one of his offers of help, you know why we are thrilled to have him here! Hadiya Wilborn is in her third year as Custodian, now working two days per week. She keeps our Sunday mornings sane, and the coffee in coffee hour—and you know how important coffee is to UUs! We now have custodial coverage seven days a week—and this is a boon for this busy building.

Our newest hire is Alyssa Yeager as Office Administrator. This position now includes responsibility for our building rental program, and my first direction to Alyssa was to focus on rentals (while learning everything else that has to be done!) and here is how she describes her accomplishment: "One of my largest investments of time... has been creating a consistent rental process that provides for the needs of the renters and our facility. I have worked closely with the Building Use Committee to address concerns regarding liability insurance, risk assessment, fees, tentative bookings, and overall communication. The outcomes so far are rental documents that give more information to prospective renters and staff, and a process that focuses on details from initial application through post-event checklist." Additionally, she has brought her technology skills to bear on many areas of her work including "the availability of Excel/email-ready rental forms, the addition of a Lifespan Learning section to the homepage of the FUUSA website, and increasing use of Facebook to communicate Church happenings."

One thing that has not changed is the vivacity of this congregation. Members, friends and guests of the congregation are active participants and the lifeblood of FUUSA. The volunteers that shape policy, manage finances, make decisions, create programs, teach others, host events, wash dishes--and even fix toilets--are a pleasure to work with. In fact—they do most of the work and we just support them!

The Building and Grounds crew, led by Dave Metz, is a committee I interact with frequently, and I give them huge credit for the thoughtful care that they put into our facility.

Our Treasurer Sue Berzinis has brought her tremendous professional expertise to our financial operations, and has become a treasured part of our office crew!

Reese Satin and the Building Use Committee have had their share of work this year as we have soldiered through various issues, mostly about rentals, and worked with Alyssa as she improved rental documentation and process.

It's been exciting this year being part of the revitalized Public Relations Committee as Patti Jo Newell gathered the group and our resources and got our outreach effort moving forward.

The work of the Membership Ministry and its teams, chaired by Peter Brown, is still near and dear to my heart, and I hope next year to have more time to support their efforts to help more people discover they are UU!

A suggestion from the Green Sanctuary Committee is evolving into a project that will happen over the summer: expect a new, improved recycling program when we 'return' on Homecoming Sunday! I am working on this with Renee Panetta, George Shear of the Art and Aesthetics Committee, and Reese Satin—our go-to guy for all sorts of carpentry projects.

Our online database, ChurchDB, is serving us well, and we are aiming to make even better use of it. Alyssa has just moved all our maillists from our webhost to ChurchDB, where they are called eGroups. If you were on any of our previous maillists,

you recently got a message from Alyssa giving you the new address to use. These eGroups are significantly easier to maintain, and have the advantage that you, the member or friend of FUUSA, can put yourself into or out of any open eGroup. These eGroups are a useful tool whether it's for committee work or an affinity group organizing a get together.

I proposed another ChurchDB venture to the Program Coordinating Council recently—and received their whole-hearted endorsement to go ahead. I've been hearing folks say it's time for another picture directory—we know it is a valuable tool for making connections within the FUUSA community—so here's our motivation to take advantage of another ChurchDB feature. We can print a photo directory right from the program—we only need to get your photos uploaded. So, you can expect to receive shortly a request to upload a photo of yourself or your family to ChurchDB!

Yet another summer project for me will be drafting my new job description and working on it with the Personnel Committee and Rev. Sam. We added membership work to my job description several years ago, and various other changes, and then staffing fluctuated again, and now it's time to take another look.

We got a lot done in a year at FUUSA—and we got it done because we all work together. As always, it is a pleasure working with you all.

As this church year draws to a close, I am feeling upbeat about the state of our congregation. Our facility, our staff, and our hardy corps of volunteers are functioning smoothly and I anticipate we'll go "rocking" into 2014-15.

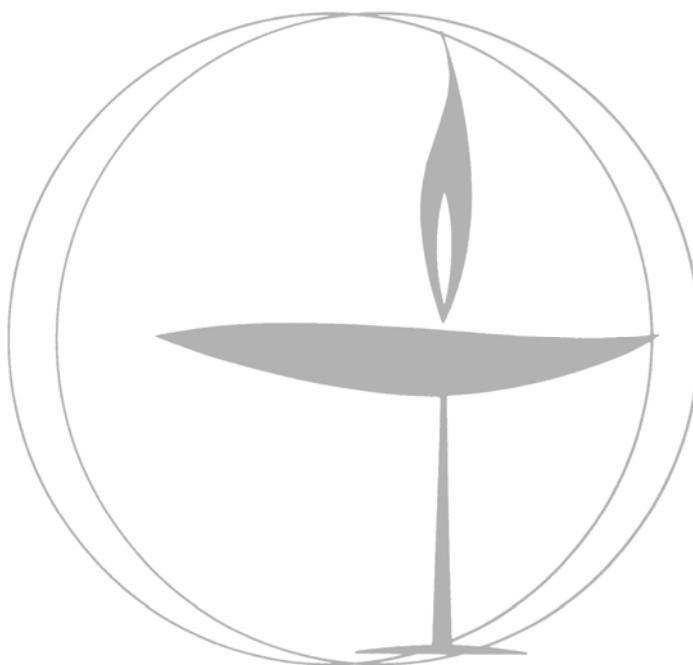
Wheel of Life

Born

Willa Kathleen Metzger

Joined

Jocelyn Adams
Elizabeth Baldes
Rich Baldes
Cindy Dean
Mary Fellows
Thayer Heath
Janet Hunter
Zahara Moore
Jill Peckenpaugh
Michaela Pochily
Marilyn Salinger
Christine Vanderlan



Died

Kevin Barron
Tom Collins
Marge Collins
Roland Hummel
Glenna McClamrock

Councils

Program Coordinating Council

Chairperson: Dick Dana (Vice President)

Members: Council and Committee Chairs or their designees; Amy Lent; Leah Purcell

The Program Coordinating Council is made up of FUUSA's lay leaders and consists of all committee chairs, council chairs, leaders of affiliated groups, the Church Administrator Amy Lent, and the Director of Religious Education Leah Purcell. Our task is to oversee and coordinate the lay ministry of FUUSA.

What does this entail? PCC's main role is to coordinate activities that involve more than one committee or group, such as the Get Connected Fair, the Friday evening multigenerational potlucks once a month, and the Committee of the Week at every Sunday service. PCC coordinates the dates of all major church events to make sure they are spread out evenly over the course of the church year. PCC supports the Board of Trustees by making sure that the policies they set are carried out, including the necessary coordination and recruitment.

Building Community

PCC organized a successful Homecoming Sunday lunch after the first service in September, the second year of this event. A great variety of sandwiches and finger food provided the needed excuse for FUUSAns to linger and catch up with each other on their summer activities.

Each February the PCC maps out FUUSA's major events for the following church year. Highlights of this year's planning process included (1) increasing the number of multigenerational potlucks from 6 to 8; (2) holding two dates for each of the

five religious education overnights: one each for the Our Whole Lives and the Rite of Passage classes, and three for the senior and junior high youth groups.

This second expansion of dates, it was decided by the Board of Trustees, was necessary to assure that by the time the classes met and had a chance to decide on a date, there would still be a choice of dates available. This has become necessary because of recent heightened interest by outside renters in reserving FUUSA's facilities many months in advance for weekend weddings and other celebrations.

Supporting Committees

At the fifth annual Get Connected Activity Fair in March, representatives of FUUSA's committees and activities staffed tables in Emerson Hall, and adults and children toured about, learning of opportunities for participation and service. Barb Manning and Paula Moskowitz organized the event again this year.

PCC coordinates the designation of committees for special focus for each Sunday service. This Committee of the Week takes responsibility for reading announcements and also has an opportunity to describe the committee's purpose, goals, and to highlight any upcoming committee special events.

This year, the PCC established a method and procedures for making electronic copies of minutes available to the Nominating Committee for them to use in identifying members involved in committee work (i.e., attending meetings) who might be tapped for leadership positions. Copies are emailed to a specially designated mailbox. This al-

lows the office staff, when time permits, to post these minutes on a secure location on our website, available only to members. This newly available resource will also help new committee chairs coming in seeking information on their committee.

Supporting Volunteers

PCC's Unsung Hero Award, begun in 2005, is awarded to persons who have made significant contributions to the life of the congregation, contributions that have up to that point be unheralded and unappreciated

by the congregation. Recipients are recognized at a Sunday service with a citation and token of the congregation's appreciation. This year, Mike Babala and Jack Heinsohn were both recognized for the many hours each week that they volunteered over the past year, devoted to upkeep on the four buildings that comprise FUUSA's physical plant, doggedly reducing a seven page list of much needed repairs to three pages.

Religious Education Council

Director of Religious Education: Leah Purcell

Religious Education Volunteers (not elected): Teaching team members: MaryAnn Letteau Todd Gray, Sheila Gray, Leah Akins, Jill Peckenpaugh, Tulin Ture, Ann Von Linden, Cari Abatemarco, Cindy Ferrari, Mary Myers, Deirdre Harwick, Jen Quail, Anne Savage, Laurie Beberwyck, Carol Butt, Darnell Rohrbaugh, Marietta Angelotti, Millie Eidson, Lee Newberg, Terry Way, Morgan Costello, Tracie Tilgner, Elena Reynolds, Christine Carrera, Amy Jesaitis, Brian Carr, Jon Bick, Pam Clements, Jim Hutchins, Kate Nuding, Sarah Martin, Don Odell, Laura Churchill, Tom Mercer, Molly Daniels, Tyler Kessel, Joanna Heinsohn, Zahara Moore, John Scaringe, Sarah Stanwicks, Elizabeth Baldes, Leah Purcell, Jeremy Magliaro, Britany Orlebeke, Winston Hagborg, Lynne Lekakis, Ed Hancock; Workshop Rotation Leaders and volunteers: Terry Way, Scott Knox, Megan McConchie, Jessica Semon, Anne Marie Haber, Tracie Tilgner, Carol Young, Chris Bystroff, Cora Stackelberg, Chris Bateman

RE Council Members (Elected): Tracie Tilgner (chair), Sarah Martin, Brian Frank, Mary Myers, Dee Van Riper, Cari Abatemarco, Owen Devine, Annika Pfluger, Jennifer Quail, Sandy Stone, Jan Satin, Dave Quist, John Scaringe

Purpose

The Religious Education Council partners with and supports the Director of Religious Education to foster and maintain a religious education program for the children and youth. The Council defined their mission and vision in 2009 to be a Unitarian Universalist Lifespan Community of

Learners, dedicated to creating a safe, nurturing and welcoming environment for individuals and families to learn and grow. The four objectives identified are:

- ◆ To instill Unitarian Universalist values by internalizing and practicing our seven principles
- ◆ To promote stewardship through participation in and caring for our congregation, our denomination, our world community and institutions that promote Unitarian Universalist values
- ◆ To offer opportunities to formulate and celebrate one's Unitarian Universalist identity and beliefs
- ◆ To provide opportunities for spiritual, philosophical, ethical and faith development across the ages of life and stages of personal growth

The DRE and one member of the Council serve on the Safe Congregation Response Team. The DRE and one member of the Council serve on the Lifespan Learning Committee.

Accomplishments

To promote community and connections at FUUSA, Leah created the Parent Support Group to learn about non-violent communication skills. She and REC members offered orientations to Youth Group to parents and their children. The REC continues to sponsor 5 multigenerational, low cost events which focus on crafts, games, food, fellowship and celebrating holidays and other events in a Unitarian Universalist context. Leah created her blog and made posts on Face Book to keep families informed about the program and offer resources. With Alyssa Yeager's help, she created an email group for members of the

Family Support Group to share their experiences practicing nonviolent communication. Leah's weekly emails to the families in each Sunday school group, RE Calendar, contributions to Face Book, the weekly preview, and newsletter gave reminders about events each Sunday and upcoming weeks.

To promote theological and philosophical diversity, Leah and the RE Council provided many opportunities for individuals to share their journeys and beliefs: Sunday school; OWL Support Group; Parent Support Group; the second graders planned and presented one Family Chapel; Leah worked with Melissa MacKinnon, the DRE of Schenectady to presented a workshop for RE volunteers in both congregations on "Teaching as a Spiritual Practice"; Leah planned and presented a Solstice Service with Rev. Sam and Betsey Miller; and worked with Rev. Sam and Matt to tell a pagan story for the Easter multigenerational service and Leah created a flyer for parents and others on suggestions on how to tell and talk about the Easter story in a UU perspective. Encouraging study, reflections, and deepening of spiritual, philosophical, and theological beliefs and practices embodies the fourth objective of the REC. This year Leah offered a series of multigenerational workshops on world religions, but cancelled it due to low sign ups. Leah promoted the idea that parents are their children's primary religious educators and offered them resources (books, blogs, ideas, spiritual practices) to strengthen the home/church connection and give families ways to create an explicitly UU home. Leah also taught spiritual practices in Family Chapel. The senior high group presented their worship service in April. They also hosted a St. Lawrence District youth conference that included worship services for the whole

group and small groups for sharing. To celebrate diversity of beliefs and practices and honor varieties in language and expression Leah invited the children to bring readings for Family Chapel each month. Also the 5th and 6th grade group learned about some of the religions in practiced in our area through the Neighboring Faiths curriculum. To enhance artistic expression and experiential opportunities in our Sunday services and worship experiences, Leah provided materials for and invited everyone to create a "Second Line" umbrella and bring it to the Mardi Gras service. She also invited congregants to make Green Man masks at a table in Channing Hall in response to the service on Easter.

In the area of social justice, the RE Council gave some assessment of selecting projects by identifying the over-abundance of opportunities to donate goods and money in November and January and Leah wrote about it in a report to the Board. Leah discussed having Soup Bag making material available to Sunday school classes throughout the year with the Social Responsibilities Council. In an effort to make a difference in the lives of children and families in the city of Albany, children trick-or-treated for Sheridan Prep at a Coffee Hour in October. The rain barrel making project for Workshop Rotation was one effort learning sustainable environmental practices and resulted in a donation to Community Harvest Garden. The partnership between the Religious Education program and the Green Sanctuary Committee to create a workshop for Workshop Rotation is proven method for increasing congregational support and involvement in social justice initiatives (since children are part of the congregation too). This partnership developed because Leah reached out to the SRC and GSC as an

effort to increase communication and coordination among, staff, lay leaders, and members/volunteers. Some other examples of integrating social justice into the religious education are cooking meals for overflow shelter, trick or treat for food pantry donations, the mitten tree, and Guest at Your Table. Teaching our sixth and seventh Principles is integral to Family Chapel and Sunday school.

Religious Education has a role to play in helping FUUSA to be a beacon of liberal religion. Leah posted events to the public FUUSA Face Book page to reach UUs in the region served by our congregation. To help FUUSAs develop deep knowledge of the history and values of Unitarian Universalism, we used curriculum from the Tapestry of Faith program which draws on all 6 UU sources for the stories of the sessions. The 8th/9th grade curriculum had sessions explicitly on UU history and heritage. Each Sunday school group creates a covenant of behavior that addresses the needs of every individual in an effort to create environments that are accessible and attractive to diverse members and visitors. The Our Whole Lives Program is an anti-oppression program; it promotes self-respect and fostering relationships within and among families that promote tolerance. We offered OWL for Kindergarten and first grade for the first time this year and it was well received among parents and children. In part to increase our success in attracting visitors, welcoming new members, and retaining current members, Leah called, emailed and went on Face Book to contact both new and current parents to check in on them and get a sense of what commitments they are able to make to the Religious Education program and what their hopes and dreams are for

the religious development of their children and for themselves.

Plans

During the course of the year, Leah and the REC identified some things to “tweak” for next year:

- ◆ So that families may participate in all the rites of passage in the congregation, REC would like Leah to talk to the Religious Services Committee about having New Member Sundays and child dedications on days when they can attend, instead of on Family Chapel days.
- ◆ The REC is helping Leah consider how to offer the series of multigenerational workshops on World Religions at a time of year that parents are likely to participate or offer it in a different format.
- ◆ The REC is considering moving the time of the Mitten Tree donations and whether or not to continue promoting Guest at Your Table to the children so that not so many social justice “asks” are made of families around the winter holidays.
- ◆ Rite of Passage will be offered to 9th and 10th graders next year to promote religious and philosophical development and learn UU history and heritage
- ◆ The REC plans to offer OWL for 4th grade and for 7th and 8th grade next year.
- ◆ Foster connections in the congregation by creating a “buddy system” between older and younger children; look for events to connect youth with adults or involve them in service

The REC and Leah have started many worthwhile, but ambitious initiatives in the past several years: Workshop Rotation, OWL for elementary ages, helping to integrate the youth in congregational events and worship; partnering with other groups to integrate social justice projects in the pro-

gram. And Leah created her blog this year. We expect that most of our goals next will be to continue and develop those initiatives. However, at our upcoming retreat, we will be continuing discussions we started this year on three things that are more overarching.

1. The gap between how adults practice Unitarian Universalism in the service and their congregational work and how children and youth practice Unitarian Universalism as they grow up in our Sunday school program - The problems that this gap causes youth when they leave RE relates to how our congregation practices community and connection, and welcomes theological and philosophical diversity.

2. The concept of Full Week Faith, developed by the Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School - We know that families are busier than ever and that Sunday school focuses less on teaching content - it's more about stirring the souls of children and youth, to deepen their questions, and help them appreciate UU values. So how can we help families engage with their children to practice Unitarian Universalism every day? This topic has implications not only for the theological and philosophical development of FUUSA families, but for working with CRUUNY to support a satellite congregation.

3. FUUSA as a fully multigenerational congregation - The REC, many individuals and congregational leaders consider how to welcome families in events they offer. However, a fully multigenerational congregation considers people of all ages. It could address each of the broad topics of the Strategic Plan – Community and Connections, Theological and Philosophical Diversity, Social Justice and the Beacon of Liberal Religion. The REC will consider being a multigenerational congregation as Judith Frediani, retired from the UUA described it - a community "... in which every age and stage of life is equally valued and equally supported by whatever tangible and intangible resources the community has to offer; in which every age and stage of life is allowed to *contribute* whatever tangible and intangible resources it has to offer; a community in which no decision is made about the community – whether in the areas of worship, physical plant fundraising, budgeting, social action, the arts, education, or any other - without consideration of its impact on and opportunities for every member of the community."

Social Responsibilities Council

Chairperson: Karen Kaufmann

Elected Members: Patty Burch, Fred Eames, Ed Hancock, Jaye Holly, Martha Musser, Renee Panetta

Appointed Members: Anna Brewer, Don Odell, Robb Smith, Jacqui Williams, Betsy Wright.

Purpose

FUUSA Bylaws dictate the charge to SRC as follows: "The Council shall guide and coordinate education and action in the realms of social matters of moral and ethical significance. It may issue statements of public support and endorsement consistent with the policies and positions of the Society, the St. Lawrence District, or the Unitarian Universalist Association. The Council may initiate and promote activities consistent with these statements."

Accomplishments

SRC concluded last year's activities with a strong showing at the annual Pride Day on June 9th. CRUUNY purchased a colorful new banner and all four congregations marched together in the parade, and later greeted festival attendees at our vendor table.

At our final meeting last year, SRC voted to undertake a partnership with Ira McKinley to promote screenings of his courageous and enlightening documentary film *The Throwaways*. The film provides a compelling personal context to the issue of mass incarceration of young men of color, which we have explored through the UUA Common Read, *The New Jim Crow* by Dr. Michele Alexander, who appears in the film and has enthusiastically praised it.

As a cooperative effort to promote Ira's film and also promote FUUSA's involvement

in the issue of mass incarceration that devastates inner-city communities including Albany, SRC sponsored FUUSA's first-ever table display at African American Family Day on August 3 at the Empire State Plaza, a joyous annual event that draws thousands of Albany residents. We put up an eye-catching laminated poster headed "DEAR GOVERNOR CUOMO," inviting people to our table to sign a petition to the Governor demanding the appointment of a commission to study the issue of mass incarceration in New York State. We co-tabled with Ira and were able to engage many people in discussion about mass incarceration, and also distributed information on UUA resources around the issue as well as information about FUUSA.

Given the substantial re-editing of Ira's film, the attention it garnered from prominent film and TV producers and the continued need to promote it and raise funds for its distribution, SRC voted to again donate the use of Emerson for a screening on August 22. This event was well attended, the film was enthusiastically received, and much-needed funds were raised through voluntary donations. Since that event, legendary filmmaker Sam Pollard has signed on as producer, and Ira's film has been formally launched at Sundance and other film festivals. FUUSA's steadfast support of this project earned us an acknowledgment in the film's credits!

SRC also voted last year to formally co-sponsor the Two Row Wampum project, a commemoration of the 400-year-old treaty between New York's Dutch settlers and its Native peoples. This ambitious project culminated in an historic 13-day journey of Na-

tive and allied paddlers down the Hudson River from Albany to Manhattan, to the United Nations for a formal commemoration ceremony to coincide with International Indigenous People's Day. For photos and videos of this remarkable event, go to <http://honorthetworow.org/>

Donna Doran, Karen Kaufmann and Melissa McKinnon, the newly-credentialed Director of Religious Education at our sister Schenectady congregation, took active part in planning and attending numerous publicity and fundraising events, including the successful SRC-sponsored event in Emerson on July 17, which featured a screening and discussion of Professor Lori Quigley's documentary *Unseen Tears* about the notorious "Indian schools" in New York, and raised several hundred dollars through donations, a silent auction and t-shirt and book sales. At the daylong kickoff event at the Russell Sage campus in Troy on July 27, many hundreds of visitors, including a number of FUUSAns, came to enjoy a variety of Native and Dutch entertainment and exhibits and moving speakers. SRC and FUUSA were recognized on the banner honoring sponsors of the event.

FUUSA also co-sponsored the National Neighborhood Night Out on August 6 for the Washington Square and Central Avenue neighborhoods, donating the beverages for the event. Robin Street between Central and Bradford was closed to traffic and a slew of neighborhood kids filled the street, playing games, jumping rope, doing chalk art and enjoying pizza and popcorn. Leah led the street-tic-tac-toe, and Sam and Deborah Vogel facilitated high-stakes jumprope, while Deborah's daughter Delaney providing awesome face-painting. We tabled with some FUUSA literature and were able to interest a few participants in the institution

behind the steeple that was visible from the street.

On July 20, FUUSA was honored as "Organization of the Year" by In Our Own Voices – a wonderful organization that provides support to LGBTQ people of color – at their annual fundraiser, a posh event at the ballroom at 11 North Pearl Street. About ten FUUSAns attended and shared the pride as Sam accepted the award with remarks about FUUSA's history as a beacon of nondiscrimination.

In August, FUUSA once again hosted the backpack project, joining with other churches and FOCUS Food Pantry to fill backpacks with donated school supplies for neighborhood children. Patty Burch spearheaded the project and reported that 255 backpacks were filled and excess donated supplies were given to the Albany City School District.

On September 14, FUUSA participated in the annual Sheridan Block Party, which seeks "to promote a sense of community (in the Sheridan Hollow-Arbor Hill area) and to provide adults, children, and families with actionable, self-betterment resources." We contributed to this goal by distributing children's books to our neighbors at no cost.

As school resumed in September, FUUSAns resumed volunteering in the classrooms of nearby Sheridan Preparatory Academy to assist our neighboring children who face challenges succeeding in school. Lois Griffin and Martha Musser continued to coordinate the program, meeting with the school's principal and volunteer coordinator to maximize our effectiveness in meeting the school's needs. Seven FUUSA volunteers are working in assigned classrooms throughout this school year.

Another ongoing project supported by SRC was the advocacy effort in support of state legislative enactment of the Safe and Fair Evaluations (Safe) Parole Act, which would increase fairness in parole hearings in accordance with existing law. Spearheaded by Judith Brink, support letters were prepared each week to a different member of the Legislature for signature by FUUSA congregants at coffee hour. The legislation is gaining momentum in the Legislature and with statewide advocacy groups.

In October, SRC voted to sponsor an exhibition at FUUSA of political cartoons of one of the so-called “Cuban 5” political prisoners being held in U.S. prisons. Their story raised awareness of the actions of right-wing Cuban exile groups operating in the U.S. against Cuba, reportedly with the covert support of the U.S. government.

On November 17, about 30 FUUSAns, both adults and children, volunteered at the Grassroot Givers Day of Simple Giving, moving among “donation stations” to assemble gifts of basic necessities to those in need.

Another ongoing program within SRC is the preparation of meals for the Interfaith Partnership homeless shelter during the winter months. Led by Patty Burch and Barb Cooley, volunteers cooked meals once a month at FUUSA for delivery to the shelter.

On February 7, SRC hosted the Chili Cookoff potluck to coordinate with the UUA Thirty Days of Love that runs from Martin Luther King Day to Valentine’s Day. We screened the film “Thirty Days on the Minimum Wage” and a discussion was led by Joy Perkett of the Labor-Religion Coalition on the inadequacy of the current mini-

imum wage and other low-income worker issues. About 55 FUUSAns attended.

Throughout the months the state legislature is in session, SRC members support and participate in lobby days for issues we are concerned with. In 2014, these included:

- ◆ February 10 on the problem of wage theft and inadequate enforcement of wage requirements by the state Department of Labor;
- ◆ Moral Mondays, a series of demonstrations at the Capitol for a moral state budget
- ◆ March 12, the Economic Security Campaign, a coalition of over 200 groups working to improve economic security for low-income New Yorkers
- ◆ April 28, the NY4Democracy coalition advocating for the state legislature to support a federal constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*
- ◆ May 5, Prisoner Justice Network, lobbying and rally for parole reform and end to solitary confinement
- ◆ May 12, Interfaith Impact of NYS, lobbying for the Women’s Equality Agenda, transgender rights, and an increase in the minimum wage.

Plans for next year

- ◆ SRC will again host the February potluck around a theme consistent with the Thirty Days of Love. We are thinking of screening Robert Reich’s film “Inequality for All,” and having a speaker and discussion of the problem of and possible solutions for economic inequality.
- ◆ Next year, if the new chair and members approve, SRC will implement a reorganization that will make members responsible for certain administrative

and leadership functions so that these are not all borne by the chair.

- ◆ SRC proposes to conduct a Social Justice Sunday service to engage the congregation in selection of SRC projects and stimulate wider participation.

Give Away the Plate

The Social Responsibilities Council is authorized to designate groups to receive a total of five plate giveaways in each fiscal year. Groups seeking a plate giveaway complete an application available on the FUUSA website that provides information about the organization's mission, its proposed use of the funding, and its other sources of funding. The application is voted on by the voting SRC members. A representative of the donee group is invited to speak briefly at the service at which the plate is donated. In 2013-14, the following groups received plate giveaways:

- ◆ October – The giveaway to Grassroot Givers yielded a donation of \$1,012.
- ◆ April – The traditional Earth Day giveaway to Capital District Community Gardens yielded a donation of \$1,024.56.

SRC also planned giveaways to the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants in May and one to People of Albany United for Safe Energy (PAUSE) in June.

Room Use Donations

SRC has been authorized by the Building Use Committee to provide 13 building use donations or rental rate reductions each fiscal year, in addition to the longstanding donations of space to NA and AA. SRC-approved donations provide support for worthwhile events while also attracting diverse members of the community to FUUSA. In 2013-14, SRC approved the following donations:

- ◆ Aug. 22 – Screening and promotion of Ira McKinley's documentary "The Throwaways"
- ◆ Aug. 28 – League of Women Voters for a candidate forum for City of Albany candidates
- ◆ Sept. 18 – Pride Center forum on "Life after DOMA"
- ◆ Oct. 9 – Presentation by Malalai Joya, Afghan politician and activist (prominent coverage by Albany Times-Union)
- ◆ Dec. 14 – Jajja's Kids, local organization supporting street children in Uganda
- ◆ Feb. 1 – Community Gardens' annual signup event
- ◆ May 25 – Hudson Link, screening of film "University of Sing Sing," to support college programs in state prisons
- ◆ May 29 – Neighborhood Resource Center, award ceremony for Outstanding Neighborhood and Community Service
- ◆ June 5 and 6 – In Our Own Voices, Sober Dance and awards-themed ball for LBGTQ people of color as part of Pride celebration

SRC is the umbrella organization for several committees and activities whose reports follow.

Green Sanctuary Committee

GSC initiatives are reflected in numerous ongoing sustainability practices at FUUSA. Ink cartridges, cell phones and office paper are recycled. Paper products are usually substituted with cloth napkins and washable dinnerware during potlucks and other events. This has been common practice for many years. SRC continues to sell Fair Trade coffee, cocoa and chocolate, and items handmade by women from Guatemala, Ecuador and Mexico. CFL bulbs are also available. Proceeds from the sales have

gone to assist in making the FUUSA building more energy efficient. FUUSA switched all of its paper to recycled products, and bought a new copier to handle the recycled paper. Last year we negotiated with solar vendors to put a 28kW array on the roof and get ~40% of our electricity from the sun, producing a substantial savings in FUUSA's utility costs.

This year in February, the passing of A Resolution of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany to Oppose the Current Practice of Hydraulic Fracturing and Support the Widespread Adoption of Renewable Energy was a tour-de-force. Channel 13 reported on this at the scene of the Special Congregation meeting. A Times Union article about the resolution appeared in March, and posts were made to the UUA blog. In the spirit of the resolution, FUUSA lent its support, in the form of a petition, to a nationwide effort to divest the UUA in fossil fuels, spearheaded by UU's in Madison WI. A vote on the issue will happen at this year's General Assembly.

Please stop by the SRC & GSC tables at coffee hour after service. You will find a variety of information about Earth stewardship here. Used beauty product containers (including men's deodorant and after shave products), old toothbrushes which cannot be otherwise recycled in single stream recycling, and used Brita filters are collected at the table. Magazines are swapped here as well. Recently a compendium of green tips was compiled by Betsy Wright, available at the SRC table. Included are some great recipes for green household cleaners! Suggestions for green initiatives you'd like to see are welcome.

GSC is committed to promoting green issues at FUUSA, including sustainability,

environmental stewardship, renewable energy, local food, and generally being good citizens of the planet. We welcome those interested in working with our committee. If you are concerned about the environment, would like to share your ideas for a greener workplace, home, and community, and/or can envision the world different than it is now, we would love for you to join us. We are full of dynamic energy, vision, and dedication to making change. We would like to get to know you. Come visit us the 3rd Sunday of every month at 11:45am in room B8.

The Green Sanctuary Committee officers are:

Chris Bystroff, Chair; Sandy Steubing, Vice-chair; Betsy Wright, Social Responsibilities Liaison; Jessica Semon, Recording Secretary; and Carol Butt, Recycling Czarina.

FOCUS Food Pantry

The graciousness of FUUSA started in Sept. 2013 and continued monthly as this FUUSA year comes to a close. We maintained our 4th Sunday of the month Focus Food Pantry collection; from Sept.'13 to March'14 we collected \$4,639.00. On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, FUUSA hosted the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service and along with 2 boxes of non-perishable food we collected an additional \$335.00.

During the colder months of Oct.-March, FUUSAns assembled a total of 255 soup bags at "Souper Sundays", using a recipe that was given to us by the Food Pantry manager. We bought and 'bagged' 9 non-perishable ingredients and along with the recipe, the clients of the Food Pantry were able to make a healthy meal for their families.

In December, SRC introduced 'Undie Sunday', an idea borrowed for the UU congregation from Palo Alto, CA. FUUSA members bought and donated 299 underwear items. We covered the age and size span, from toddlers to adults, small to 3XL. We hope to continue the underwear collection in the 2014-2015 FUUSA year.

As volunteers, FUUSA member and friends gave numerous hours in the First annual Empty Bowls project, introducing the idea of hunger insecurity to the Albany area.

FUUSAns also continued volunteering at the FOCUS hot breakfast program, cooking and serving the underserved in Albany, as well as working in the actual Food pantry.

Peace Team

This is an informal arm of SRC led by Ed Hancock that meets sporadically. Meetings have been attended by Ed, Barb Cooley, Karen Kaufmann, Carolyn Bradley and others.

On July 13, Ed attended dinner with Native American representatives at conclusion of the Two Row Wampum sail event at the historic Mabee Farm.

Peace Team supported the Kateri Peace Conference at the National Kateri Shrine in Fonda, NY. on August 15, at which Rev. Chris Antal presented a workshop, "Being Peace: Spiritual Disciplines for Sustaining Social Action." Robb Smith attended.

On September 15, Peace Team supported the North Star Peace walk, a multi-generational, diverse, inclusive family of interfaith folks gathered for a 2.2 mile walk for peace, stopping at various houses of worship along the way

October 9, SRC co-sponsored a presentation by Malalai Joya, an Afghan activist and

former elected member of the Parliament from Farah province. She is the author of "A Woman Among Warlords: The Extraordinary Story of an Afghan Who Dared to Raise Her Voice" (2011).

On November 17, Ed attended along with Anna and Paula Brewer a friendship dinner at Ahmadiyya Islamic Center near Amsterdam. Learned that there are different sects and that this represents a large portion of American Muslims.

On March 6, SRC cosponsored a presentation by Kathy Kelly on drone warfare and the follies and tragedies of American intervention in Afghanistan.

Women for a Better World

Retiring Chairperson is Nichola Dutre.

Members are volunteer and fluid so some may have been accidentally missed: Elizabeth Berberian, Patty Birch, Alifair Skebe, Ann Kearney, Audre Bennett, Barb Cooley, Barb Manning, B Campisi, Betsy Wright, Carol Butt, Carolyn Bradley, Chris Strebel, Dawn Dana, Donna Meixner, Elaine Doremus, E Grimm, Jacqui C. Williams, Jaye Holly, Jenn Dorsey, Jessica Semon, Judith Karis, Karen Greene, Karen Dewillers, Karen Kaufman, Karyn Loscocco, Kathy Hodges, Kelly Golden, Laurie McDonald, Lea Ali-Napo, Linda Hunt, Linda Way, Lois Griffin, W Webb, Lynne Lekakis, Maryanne Southgate, Melissa Ramirez, Meredith Andrews, Millicent Eidson, Paula Brewer, Paula Moskowitz, Peggy Sherman, P Slocum, Renee Panetta, Sally, Sigrin Newell, Toni Daniel, Trish Zima, Pat Bailey, B Miller, Elissa Kane,

Our purpose is to build a social giving community, which empowers impoverished people through supporting existing health, educational or economic programs. We learn about development programs and

contribute what is personally affordable to local, national or global causes.

This year we supported the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants with

about \$600 and Youth-Ed Venture and Nature Network with about \$1000

Next year we plan to increase the gathering from twice a year to three times a year.

Standing Committees

Committee on Professional Ministry

The Committee on Professional Ministry meets regularly with the minister to provide him with feedback about the congregation's reactions to Sunday services and other aspects of congregational life. They also serve as his sounding board, giving him an opportunity to reflect on areas he wants to explore with the congregation and helping him think through challenges in the day-to-day management of FUUSA. The current members of the committee are Mary Applegate (chair), Jon Bick, Cate Bohn, David Musser, Jon Newell, and Britany Orlebeke.

The Committee's major focus this year has been a 360-degree evaluation of the minister's performance, based on **Fulfilling the Call**, a collection of national competencies developed by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association (UUMA). The competencies cover the full range of ministerial responsibilities from the mundane to the transcendent, clustered under the following duties:

1. Leads worship
2. Officiates rites of passage
3. Provides pastoral care and presence
4. Encourages spiritual development
5. Witnesses to social justice in the public square
6. Leads administration
7. Pursues personal renewal and professional development
8. Serves the larger Unitarian Universalist faith
9. Leads the faith into the future

The evaluation included three components:

- ◆ Sam completed a detailed self-evaluation, using a performance survey developed by the UUMA
- ◆ All committee members filled out the same survey, with a particular focus on issues they have worked with Sam on
- ◆ Additional members of the congregation and staff completed the survey or provided verbal input to flesh out areas where the committee members had had limited experience working with Sam.

After the data were collected, de-identified, and tabulated (special thanks to David Musser!), Sam and the committee reviewed the findings and discussed potential areas for improvement. Overall, the results of the evaluation were very favorable.

The committee always welcomes input from members of the FUUSA community, both positive feedback and suggestions for improvement regarding sermons, services, pastoral care, and other aspects of the ministry. All input will be passed on confidentially without revealing its source. Please provide your verbal or written comments to any of the committee members.

Finance Committee

Chairperson: Steven Moskowitz

Members: Sue Berzinis, Mike Babala, Kathy Harris, Chuck Manning, Dick Brewer, Becky Myer, Reese Satin and Dave Metz

Purpose

To sustain a vital and nurturing religious community by ensuring a rock solid financial foundation for the daily, inspirational and aspirational activities of the Society.

Accomplishments

Produced and supervised a balanced budget that reflected real income versus actual expenses; maintained adequate and appropriate insurance coverage; and fully funded payments of the mortgage on Emerson Hall. Successfully monitored ongoing financial activities so that fiscal year 2013-14 achieved at least a zero balance, if not a modest amount of unspent funds.

Plans for next year

As preached and practiced over many past years, continue the accomplishments of 2013-14. Continue to make sure that the mortgage on Emerson Hall is planned for and fully paid until the debt is retired. Future items for consideration may include publishing the operating budget on FUUSA's website as well as evaluating the potential financial impacts of new social justice projects, and increasing staff support and resources.

Membership Committee

Chairperson: Peter Brown

Members: Barb Manning, Don Odell, Mary Applegate, John Sherman, Kathy Hodges, Barb Metz, Mark Yolles, Elizabeth Berberian, Amy Lent, and Sam Trumbore

The committee has been very active this year. Our objective is to grow our congregation by welcoming visitors more effectively, creating better connections for new members and working to try to prevent members from drifting away. The structure of the committee has helped improve the results, and reports by four key subcommittees are below. We have tried through the year to help current members understand the importance of being welcoming and learn techniques for reaching out to visitors and

new members. A limited effort which we conducted to evaluate the effort to be welcoming seems to be having good results. It is very important for visitors to feel welcome in our society.

We have been working to improve our Getting to Know Unitarian Universalism sessions to give potential members a better understanding of Unitarian Universalism and FUUSA based upon feedback from participants this year. We applied to Endowment Trust for monies and purchased a new projector for FUUSA with the goal of developing a slide show for visitors to see on Sunday mornings after the service. We hope to have something to show next year.

We are also grateful for the addition of a couple of new members to the committee. We would love to have more FUUSA members work with us on these objectives.

Sunday Hospitality Team

Chairperson: Amy Lent

The Sunday morning welcoming of guests, friends and members is a joyful experience and one each of you probably benefits from!

At least 12 FUUSAns served as Greeter on Sunday mornings this year, doing what is probably the easiest and most fun volunteer job we have here! The Greeters' role is to smile, say hello, and get first time guests over to the Welcome Table. Another nine folks staffed the Welcome Table. At the Welcome Table we have a minute or two to connect with people, get some information from them, and give them some information about FUUSA. The chief goal really is to get them into the service (and RE classrooms if they have kids), let them know we'll be here to answer questions after the service, and that their nametag will be on the board when they come back. This is

working extremely well: Second-time guests walk right up to get their nametag, and we get another chance to speak with them.

Both of these roles are an important part of making guests feel welcome here, and I thank all those who have helped this year, even if your names are not below! Many folks step up to help, but their names don't get added retroactively to Volunteer Spot so I don't have their names on record.

Thank you to all who served as Greeters: Barb Manning, Debbie Brown, Jean Bolgatz, Sandy Stone, Elizabeth Berberian, Jo Keers, Cora Stackelberg, Dave Metz, Michael Hornsby, Lois Webb, Jody Hall Zimmerman, Thayer Heath, and;

Thank you to all who served at the Welcome Table: Andy Hendin, Monica Miller, Michael Hornsby, Dick Dana, Jaye Holly, Sandy Stone, Cora Stackelberg, Barb Manning

Newcomer Welcoming Team

Chairperson: Kathy Hodges

FUUSA's visitors want to know who we are and how to participate in our congregational life. The Newcomers Welcome Team organizes regular orientation sessions (Getting to Know UU) which are held on Saturday mornings bi-monthly during the fall and spring. These sessions are designed to assist new folks to meet others in the congregation, learn about us and our Unitarian Universalists principles. We also share information with them about the process of becoming members. FUUSAns who participate in these sessions are: Barb Manning, Don Odell, Mary Applegate, John Sherman, Kathy Hodges, and Sam Trumbore. Most recently, the committee received some good feedback which can assist the committee in tailoring the content to better meet participants' needs. We like to keep updating!

When newer folks are ready to join, they meet with Sam Trumbore, minister, get acquainted, and share something about their interests in the congregation. They are then invited to participate in the next New Member Service. It is always interesting in the service to learn about the life journeys of new members as they share in their bios something of themselves and how they came to be joining FUUSA. Kathy Hodges has been chairing these activities and Barb Metz has recently joined the team and will be taking on some of these tasks and recruiting additional team members.

New Member Integration Team

Chairperson: Barbara Manning

Over the last year we have continued to make our process for integrating new members more organized and effective. On each Sunday where we recognized new members, a reception was held for new members, their families, Membership committee members, board members and new member guides. This is a relatively small setting where new members are honored for their commitment to join FUUSA and have the opportunity to meet some more people in the congregation. We held these services and receptions three times this year and 12 new members joined. In addition, we are continuing to pair up new members who need help in getting integrated into FUUSA's community with a longer-term member for a few months. More focus on this activity is planned for 2014-2015 church year.

Continuing Connections Team

Chairperson: Don Odell

Continuing connections is our effort to follow up with new members (one year plus) with whom there has been minimal ongoing connections with FUUSA, and

keeping in touch with other members and friends as needed where connections with FUUSA have been lacking and/or infrequent. In this effort we work to identify people who seem to have lost some of their previous attachment to the congregation, and find out whether we can do anything to help them stay or resume as active participants. As necessary we will conduct exit interviews. In the efforts this year, using the lists established by the office and the minister with concurrence with the overall membership ministry, we found that no one seemed to require more than a friendly telephone call to establish or reestablish a connection with FUUSA. This work is ongoing, and Don will request assistance from other Membership Ministry members as necessary.

This year's numbers:

- ◆ We offered **four** newcomer orientations "Getting to Know UU" on Saturday mornings
- ◆ We introduced **12** new members to the congregation on **two** New Member Sundays this church year
- ◆ We certified (with the UUA) **386** members on January 1, 2013, and **387** members on January 1, 2014, a net gain of one.

Nominating Committee

Chairperson: Linda Way

Members: Martha Deborah Brown; Laura Churchill; Dave Metz; Donna Meixner; Paula Moskowitz

In accordance with Articles VIII and IX of FUUSA's Bylaws, the Nominating Committee is responsible for the recruitment and selection of candidates for elective offices as follows:

- ◆ Officers: President; Vice President; Secretary; Treasurer; Assistant Treasurer
- ◆ Chairperson: Religious Education Council
- ◆ Chairperson: Social Responsibilities Council
- ◆ Board of Trustees members (6)
- ◆ Religious Education Council members (8-12)
- ◆ Social Responsibilities Council members (6)
- ◆ Nominating Committee members (6)
- ◆ Endowment Trust trustees (5)

The elections are held as part of the Annual Meeting in May. According to our Bylaws, elections for positions on the Board of Trustees, Nominating Committee and Endowment Trust must be contested, and balloting conducted by the ranking of choice method. All candidates for elective offices, contested and non-contested, must be active members of the Society for at least 30 days, and their pledge should not be in arrears. Endowment Trust candidates must be active members for at least three years. Also in accord with our Bylaws, no individual may hold more than one elected position at a time with the exception of membership on a Ministerial Search Committee.

In recruiting candidates for elective offices, the committee reaches out to the congregation in a variety of ways. It is a regular contributor to Windows both to inform the congregation of the "mechanics" of the election process, such as nominating petitions and absentee ballots, and to promote the visibility of the leadership selection process and FUUSA governance. The committee strives to achieve a slate of candidates that represents the broad spectrum of our congregation.

Prior to the Annual Meeting, the committee compiles biographical statements and photos to inform the congregation about candidate qualifications and to encourage participation in the election process. We also post the names and pictures of the candidates in the church lobby, and hold two Candidate Sundays prior to the Annual Meeting. On these Sundays candidates are introduced to the congregation and wear colorful, identifying buttons during coffee hour.

This year the Nominating Committee completed the development of accurate descriptions for all elective positions at FUUSA. These were compiled and are now maintained in a consistent format which includes: *Authority for the Position; Major Duties; Key Relationships; and Time Commitments*. These descriptions are useful not only for an informed and effective candidate recruitment process, but for planning and evaluation purposes as well.

The Nominating Committee wishes to thank all of those members who are continuing in office for next year, and all those who have stepped up to run for leadership roles. The time and talent of these folks benefit us all and help keep our congregation a vital and thriving community. Thank you.

Personnel Committee

Chairperson: Bob Guerrin

Members: Tim Burch, Molly Daniels, Michele Desrosiers, Peggy Sherman

Purpose

The Personnel Committee oversees the administration of personnel policy and employee benefits for the paid staff of the Congregation. The Committee also facilitates

communications between members of the society and the staff, works with the minister to set staff goals, provides feedback on performance, and encourages and supports the staff toward professional growth.

Accomplishments

The committee continues to promote equitable compensation for FUUSA staff. UUA guidelines, based on regional, demographic and other characteristics, provide goals for our salary structures. This year we were successful in accomplishing these goals for most staff but continuing work toward these standards still remains. In addition to salary adjustments, we made significant changes in FUUSA's contribution to health care coverage, bringing us up to UUA recommendations.

This year staff changes have enabled re-defining duties. The committee continues to review duties assigned to staff. An issue regarding building rentals was resolved in conjunction with the hiring of our new Office Administrator.

The committee this year had also benefited from a liaison with the Finance Committee to better delineate the origin of some staff related budget requests.

Plans for next year

The committee will continue to monitor personnel policy issues and employee benefits with the goal of bringing all staff well within the UUA salary guidelines. We will also continue to review duties assigned to staff to assure efficient functioning.

As always, our work is aided by a professional and competent staff. The new committee chair is particularly grateful for the support of committee members.

Special Committees

By Laws Committee

Members: Kevin Purcell, Karen Kaufmann, Peggy Sherman, Bob Franklin

Having reviewed previously approved policies of this Society and having concluded there was no need to amend the by laws to change the approval process for future policies, and having no suggestions from members to make further changes to the by laws, the By Laws Committee respectfully requests that the charter for this committee be concluded.

Mission Statement Task Force

Members: Al Berzinis, Kathy Harris, Jaye Holly, Mike Myers, Jon Newell, Reese Satin, Peggy Sherman, and Sam Trumbore.

Highlights of our process:

- ◆ Dec. 18 Conference call with UUA rep. Renee Ruchotzke, Sam, Peggy and Jon
- ◆ Jan. 2 First weekly meeting. Meetings held weekly ever since.
- ◆ Jan. 7 discussion of broad objectives and rough timeline
- ◆ Sam published a column, "Identity Matters", introducing our project to the congregation.
- ◆ Sunday, Jan. 26 We were "Committee of the Week", trying to drum up more interest. Jaye gave our elevator speech.
- ◆ Some of us met with SRC, REC, Channing Circle seeking input and ideas.
- ◆ Renee Ruchotzke met with some of us on Feb. 6 to share ideas and plans.
- ◆ On Feb. 9, Rev. Douglas Taylor preached a sermon laying groundwork for our work.
- ◆ We spent a lot of time planning for, scheduling and publicizing a World Café to get input from the congregation,

but sign-ups were few, and we cancelled it.

- ◆ We met for guidance with the Board on Feb 20.
- ◆ We finally began to get traction with Sam's sermon and follow-up on Mar. 9. We handed out questionnaires, asked for written input, and met with congregants after the service. We had identified a dozen or so Mission Statements of other UU congregations, and these helped stimulate discussion.
- ◆ Reese wrote an 8-page analysis of the 27 returned questionnaires, abstracting the raw data into actionable conclusions.
- ◆ Sam set up a specific email for feedback to the Task Force. Also the questionnaire was on the web site, and links to it were included in the weekly updates. At least 14 members commented via that route.
- ◆ With that background, on Mar. 17 we started writing draft Mission Statements, discussing them at meetings, and leaving each meeting with a new, consensus draft.
- ◆ On Apr. 13 Sam preached another relevant sermon; we put our latest draft statement into the Order of Service as a Chalice Lighting, and held a conversation with ~20 members.
- ◆ With input from that meeting, we made our last refinements, and prepared our final draft for the Apr.17 Board meeting.
- ◆ The Board endorsed the following Mission Statement for approval at the Annual Meeting:

We welcome everyone. Our Unitarian Universalist community seeks truth and deeper meaning, pursues justice through inspired action, and cultivates compassion and love for all connected by the web of life.

Volunteer Positions

Childcare Coordinator

Paula Brewer

Childcare Providers: FUUSA Youth aged 13+

Purpose

Provide childcare for FUUSA congregational events

Accomplishments

Childcare provided for social and community building events such as the CommUnity Dinner, Annual Dinner, Stewardship Gatherings, Sri Lankan Dinner, Auction, and Wine and Cheese Tasting.

Childcare provided for SRC sponsored congregational potluck and the congregational meeting on the anti-fracking resolution.

Childcare provided for Getting to Know UU sessions.

Plans

Continue to provide for FUUSA congregational events

Denominational Affairs Liaison

Don Odell

Purpose

The Denominational Affairs Liaison addresses, and seeks to strengthen, the relationship of our congregation with the larger Unitarian Universalist world, including the Capital Region Unitarian Universalists of New York (CRUUNY), the St. Lawrence District (SLD), Central East Regional Group (CERG) and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Both the district and the UUA are associations of UU congregations. FUUSA pays dues, and has met its fair share, to both organizations, and is an ac-

tive participant in each. FUUSA is also a member of the New York State Convention of Universalists.

Accomplishments

Capital Region Unitarian Universalists of New York (CRUUNY). The congregations of the Capital Region (FUUSA, Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady (UUSS), Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Glens Falls, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Saratoga Springs) meet periodically, usually represented by the ministers and congregational presidents, to plan activities that can better provide a regional face of Unitarian Universalism. One should note the underwriting announcements on WAMC, and the annual joint service in June, most recently, most recently the "Love Beyond Belief" service at the Round Lake Auditorium on June 2, 2013. Continuing in this tradition, a combined service will be held on June 1, 2014 in Clifton Park.

St. Lawrence District (SLD). FUUSA sent delegates to the CERG/SLD 2014 Annual Assembly in Erie, PA. These included Glen Reynolds, Julie Reynolds, Peggy Sherman and Jacqui Williams. Dave Munro participated as an outgoing SLD board member.

The St. Lawrence District is now has thirty-four chartered congregations in upstate of New York, and includes all congregations outside of the Metropolitan New York District and one from Athens, PA. There are also new & growing UU fellowships in Brockport & Olean.

The St. Lawrence District Annual Assembly was held jointly with the Ohio Meadville District in Erie, PA on March 29-30, 2014. The Gould Discourse was delivered

by Rev. Priscilla Richter, speaking on *Ours Is No Caravan of Despair: Unitarian Universalism Responds to the Challenges of Our Times* and the Keynote Address was delivered by the Rev. Meg Barnhouse. Her keynote address was titled *Seeds of the Spirited Life*. There was a YRUU Senior Bridging Ceremony at the end of the assembly.

FUUSAns are involved in district activities. Dave Munro serves on the District board. Robb Smith is on the district Nominating Committee. Leah Purcell was elected to the Nominating/Leadership Development Committee. The district also provides a number of other services including Congregational Growth and Development, Lifespan Religious Education, Youth Programs, Campus and Young Adult Programs, and Social Justice to name a few. The UUA has also established regional entities, and the district is a member of the Central East Regional Group (CERG).

Central East Regional Group (CERG).

The UUA has established regional entities, and the district is a member of the Central East Regional Group (CERG), which will serve the St. Lawrence, Ohio-Meadville, Joseph Priestley and Metro New York districts. Rev. Chris Neilson will continue as the first staff contact for SLD congregations. Requests for additional programming will be triaged by Chris, who will seek assistance from other staff to assist and to facilitate appropriate actions in different program areas.

New York State Convention of Universalists (NYSCU). FUUSA sent delegates to the NYSCU Fall 2013 annual meeting in Little Falls. These included Mary Ann Lettau, Don Odell, John Sherman, Peggy Sherman and Robb Smith.

Every year, by tradition in October, NYSCU holds an annual meeting with a keynote address; workshops; worship; and a business session for reports, elections, etc. The 2013 Annual Meeting was held at St. Paul's Universalist Church, Little Falls, NY on October 26. Christine Hart, Policy Associate, Policy & Government Affairs, Women Thrive Worldwide, delivered the keynote address. The 2014 meeting will be held at All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church in Watertown, NY at a date to be determined. FUUSAn Fred Boreali is a member of the NYSCU board.

Unitarian Universalist Association.

FUUSA sent several delegates to participate in the UUA 2013 (and 52nd) General Assembly in Louisville, KY on June 19-23, 2013. They included Lois Griffin, Kathy Harris, Karen Kaufmann, Don Odell, Robb Smith, John Sherman, Peggy Sherman and Jacqui Williams. In addition, FUUSA's minister, Rev. Sam Trumbore, FUUSA's DRE, Leah Purcell, and FUUSA's Administrator, Amy Lent, attended.

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA), for 2011-2012 (the latest data available from the UUA), is composed of 1,046 congregations in North America (Canada, U.S. & Mexico) with a total of 162,796 members. The Association acts as a national and international voice for Unitarian Universalism, with the final power residing at the congregational level. Organizationally, it provides support for Unitarian Universalism at the regional, district and congregational level, for which the member congregations pays annual dues.

This year's General Assembly is being held in Providence, RI in June 25-29, 2014. The UUA notes that religious life in America is changing rapidly with fewer people identifying with specific denominations.

Current studies of faith in America show that there is a movement towards a liberal fluid kind of faith that doesn't fit with traditional denominational identity and structure. We already know that for every adult member of Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations, there are at least three non-members who also consider themselves to be Unitarian Universalist. Thus, the General Assembly Planning Committee, the UUA Board of Trustees and the Administration want the General Assembly in 2014 help our association live into a future where our "Love Reaches Out" to share our faith both within and beyond our congregations' walls.

FUUSA participated in the Congregational Poll for selecting Congregational Study/Action Issues (CSAI) to be considered at the 2014 GA. The FUUSA vote was cast on Sundays during coffee hour and polling of the Board of Trustees and the Social Responsibilities Council in January 2014 by the chair of Denominational Affairs. Based on a tabulation of all votes cast, the submitted congregational votes were yes on "Ending the War on Terror", "Escalating Inequality", "Gun Violence: A Public Health Issue", "Renewing and Securing Our American Democracy" and "UU Values and the Pursuit of a Just Peace for Israelis & Palestinians, and to abstain on "Empowerment: Age and Ability Reconsidered".

Plans

The plan is to continue to inform the congregation of the activities, and programs of the respective district, regional, state, and national organizations of the UUA, and to encourage congregational participation in the respective organizations.

Interfaith Impact Liaison

Don Odell

FUUSA is a member of Interfaith Impact of New York State (IINYS.)

FUUSA members involved are: Robb Smith (executive director of IINYS,) Don Odell (secretary,) and Rev. Sam Trumbore, Larry Gambino, and Rev. Bobbi Place (retired community minister) are Board members of IINYS .

Purpose

Interfaith Impact is recognized as the progressive religious voice for justice and human rights in the NYS Legislature and the Executive Chamber. IINYS is comprised of Unitarian Universalist, Protestant, and Reform Jewish congregations and individuals throughout the state.

Accomplishments

We were involved with others in the effort to raise the minimum wage, and the overall effort was partially successful.

Interfaith Impact is planning its annual advocacy day on May 12, 2014, with the three major thrusts on the Women's Equality Act (WEA), Gender Equality Non Discrimination Act (GENDA), and continuing improvement of the state's minimum wage legislation. We will partner with others in areas of interest, e.g. medical marijuana. We hope to have significant participation by FUUSAns.

We recently conducted a Conscience in Public Life forum in Rochester on the state of public education, and continue to develop e-action campaign capability. In addition to the three issues above, we continue to monitor activity and partner with others in such areas as campaign finance reform, as our resources permit. We do have a success with an imperfect increase in the mini-

mum wage. But, with the opposition of powerful interest groups in areas of progressive concern, our voice is even more important so that the gains of recent years are not lost, and so that we can continue to provide a liberal religious voice in the halls of State government. Information on these and other issues are available on the Social Responsibilities bulletin board in Channing Hall, and our web site at www.interfaithimpactnys.org.

Plans

As a coalition of liberal religious groups, we will participate with interest groups as best serves our advocacy.

The IINYS Board has an annual retreat in August. It is there that we will prepare our overall plans for the next year.

The strength of IINYS in its membership, institutional and individual. We appreciate the continued support of FUUSA as religious organization, and hope that it can continue. We also urge individual members to join. Visit our web site www.interfaithimpactnys.org and/or pick up a brochure at FUUSA.

Reception Coordinator

Jan Satin

Regular volunteers: Barb Manning, Sandy Stone & Linda Way. Many others, from time to time.

Purpose

Provide receptions for FUUSA congregational events and member rite of passage celebrations.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Memorial service for Kevin Barron
- ◆ Union Thanksgiving Service
- ◆ Christmas Eve Service

- ◆ Replaced worn out table cloths with new ones

Plans

Nothing planned, hope for the best.

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Liaison

Don Odell

Purpose

Promote the Unitarian Universalist non-sectarian organization that advances human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world and partners with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies. The mission of the UUSC is guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), as well as Unitarian Universalist principles, which affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

It is an associate member of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), but receives no general financial support from the UUA. Neither does it receive funding from federal or state governments or institutions, ensuring its independent voice. It's work is built on the conviction that all people are entitled to basic human rights, which transcend divisions of class, race, nationality, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, and gender. Through a combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations, UUSC promotes (1) Rights in Humanitarian Crises, (2) Economic Justice, (3) Civil Liberties, and (4) Environmental Justice.

The UUSC relies on our members and supporters to fund its programs. Anyone wishing to support human rights and social justice is welcome and encouraged to join the UUSC. Over 60% of the UUSC budget

comes from individual donations, which includes individual memberships by a number of FUUSAns, and from the sale of UUSC holiday cards and Guest at Your Table.

Accomplishments

In the 2013-14 year, FUUSAns contributed \$686 in the 2013 Guest at Your Table campaign. All contributed at levels to be members of the UUSC, and six of the contributions will be matched by the Veatch Fund to enable the UUSC to continue its social justice work worldwide and in the US. The Religious Education Council and our Director of Religious Education, Leah Purcell, coordinated and conducted this activity.

Thirty eight packs of UUSC holiday cards were purchased at FUUSA during November and December 2013. Thank you to Thayer Heath and Patty Burch for staffing the tables on Sunday mornings.

In addition, a number of members of the congregation contributed directly to the UUSC. We are recognized as a *Creating Jus-*

tice Banner Society as 25-49% of our membership are UUSC members.

Thank you to all who contributed to the UUSC, through the Guest at Your Table, directly to the UUSC, through the holiday card sales, and special collections.

Plans

The plan for 2014-15 is to continue to cooperate with the UUSC in promoting its mission of advancing human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world.

This will be done through continued handling of the UUSC holiday cards and Guest at Your Table. It will also include periodic and timely reports to the congregation and appropriate Boards, Councils and committees on the efforts of the UUSC and the congregation's participation in those efforts.

Committees

Annual Fellowship Dinner

Chairperson: Bob Franklin

Members: Ann D'Attilio, Bob Franklin, Amy Lent, Meredith Mercer, Linda Way

Purpose

Organize Annual Fellowship Dinner.

Accomplishments

157 people attended the dinner on April 11, 2014 at Franklin Terrace in Troy. Music provided by Matt Edwards and his Big Easy Revue.

Utilized direct mailings, Sunday announcements, Windows articles, and personal contacts to recruit attendees.

Worked with Membership Committee to invite and host new members.

Plans

Will schedule dinner in Spring at a time and place to be determined. Will analyze past attendee patterns to hopefully raise attendance. Will investigate online reservations and/or payment.

Building & Grounds

Chairperson: Dave Metz

Members: Reese Satin, Dave Stone, Mike Babala, Jack Heinsohn, George Shear, Amy Lent, Eric Beeche

Purpose

To improve and maintain the FUUSA's physical facilities, buildings and grounds.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Complete replacement of the drop ceiling and all lighting in the basement hallway of the RE building.

- ◆ Complete replacement of the stalls in the first floor bathrooms in the RE building, including new paint throughout.
- ◆ Replacement of many ballasts in fluorescent light fixtures.
- ◆ Replacement of non-functioning emergency lights.
- ◆ Extensive repair and painting of walls in Emerson.
- ◆ In conjunction with Building Use committee, examining all storage spaces, selling, recycling or throwing away obsolete and/or unwanted items, and re-arranging storage more efficiently.
- ◆ Many minor repairs as needed.

Plans

Basically more of the same that we have been doing on an on-going basis for years. If FUUSA can afford it and the Board approves, we hope to install air conditioning in Channing Hall and the Sanctuary. We are in the process of getting estimated costs now.

Building Use Committee

Chairperson: Reese Satin

Members: Dave Metz, Lynne Lekakis, George Shear, Alyssa Yeager, Amy Lent, Karen Kaufmann

Purpose

We ensure that our building promotes FUUSA's mission by making policy and procedures, and developing plans that create welcoming, functional and affordable facilities that:

Preserve our building for future use;

Provide spaces that meet the needs of our members and renters and that support deserving community organizations;

Provide income that significantly contributes to the stewardship of our community.

Accomplishments

Implemented new policy, restrictions, fee schedule and rental risk assessment. Provided input to reconfiguration of rental staff function. Offered a wide variety of public and private rental events including:

- ◆ 5 Dinners/Luncheons
- ◆ 18 Dances
- ◆ 10 Film Showings
- ◆ 4 Memorial Services
- ◆ 168 Worship Services
- ◆ 3 Concerts
- ◆ 8 Conferences
- ◆ 48 Other Meetings
- ◆ 8 Weddings
- ◆ 7 Parties
- ◆ 7 Other Celebrations
- ◆ 18 Classes/Workshops
- ◆ 111 Recovery Meetings

Met with neighbors and police to resolve adverse impact of rentals on the neighborhood.

Had a table at Get Connected activity fair.

Developed a plan to allow SRC a number of “give-away” rentals to facilitate worthy groups who cannot afford even the reduced rate. Donated over \$12,000 worth of building use to sponsored and reduced rate rentals including the following organizations:

- ◆ Two Row Wampum campaign
- ◆ The Throwaways
- ◆ League of Women Voters

- ◆ Malalai Joya
- ◆ Pride Center
- ◆ Jajja's Kids
- ◆ Community Gardens
- ◆ Bountiful Blessings
- ◆ Narcotics Anonymous
- ◆ Alcoholics Anonymous
- ◆ Solid Ground
- ◆ Voices for Creative Non-Violence
- ◆ Capital Region Theological Center
- ◆ Mission Accomplished Transition Services
- ◆ Neighborhood Resource Center
- ◆ In Our Own Voices

Plans

Monitor efficacy and efficiency of new policies and procedures.

Monitor effectiveness of give-away program.

Increase educational and non-profit rentals to compensate for a small reduction in social rentals based on the risk assessment.

Caring Network

Chairperson: Eileen Hoffman

Members: Rev. Sam Trumbore, Sharon Babala, Barbara Manning, Sandy Stone, Leah Purcell, Mary Ann Randall, Irene Saulsbery, Mark Yolles, Bobbi Place, Martha Schroeder, Linda Way, Trish Zima, Amy Lent, Judy Hanson, Sheila Gray, Jan Satin, Kathy Hodges, and Alyssa Yeager. We have been especially blessed with the volunteerism of a small group of FUUSAns who have stepped up at times when we were especially busy and helped with transportation, visits, meals, home repairs, etc.

Purpose

To provide support and encouragement to FUUSA members who, due to hospitalization, sickness, loss, isolation etc., need

help on a short term basis. Services might include transportation to medical appointments when not available from other sources, meals and shopping during recovery, friendly visiting. Additionally, one member publishes the "Joys and Concerns" column for the newsletter each month (thanks Mary Ann). One other member also has assumed the responsibility of sending cards for various occasions in behalf of the CN (thank you Sheila).

Accomplishments

Approximately 41 people have been helped in some way (see purpose) by this group of very responsive and caring volunteers. Some requests were received that did not fit with the goals of the committee and were dealt with in other ways. An important role of the committee is to refer people to the Pastoral Care Associates when the needs of the individual or family fall into their purview. This has worked quite well for both groups. The annual Valentine flower delivery was coordinated again by Judy Hanson and, despite weather woes, was well received.

Plans

Maintain goals for next year and advertise for more drivers to transport those in need which seems to be an area that requires improvement. We have many in our congregation who do the work of the Caring Network but are currently not members of the Network. I would like to invite those helpers to formally join us.

Flower Committee

Chairperson: Jody Hall Zimmerman

Flower Arrangers: Dorry Campano, Lorraine English, Jane Lax, Barb Metz, Lois Webb, Trish Zima

The Flower Committee members do the flower arrangements for the Sunday services when the donors, who are members of the congregation, do not wish to do it themselves. The Committee members also do the holiday arrangements and those for special events.

Donors pay for the flowers that are done by the committee and the arranger talks to the donor about any preferences they may have and then purchases and arranges the flowers.

Please sign up to donate in Memory or Celebration of, for Joy, Beauty, Peace, or just for Fun!!! And a Huge Thank you to all the Donors and Arrangers this year for adding an additional spot of Beauty to a Beautiful Thing!

We would love to have more members on the Flower Committee!! Please call Jody @ 785-3638.

Fun(d)raising

Chairperson: Chris Jensen

The Fun(d)raising committee acts as an umbrella to several other established committees whose main purpose is to provide additional income to FUUSA. Currently, there are three active events/committees:

Auction/Entertainment Books

Co-chairs: John Walko, Randy Rosette,

Members: Chris Jensen, Bob Zima, Trish Zima, Dave Metz, Barb Metz, Jan Satin, Reese Satin, Kathy Harris, Paula Moskowitz, Linda Hunt

Holiday Bazaar

Co-chairs: Barb Manning, Jan Satin

Members: Barb Metz, Paula Moskowitz, Arlene Gilbert, Linda English, Patty Burch, Jo

Keers, Mary Semon Heinsohn, Meredith Mercer, Eileen Hoffman, Linda Way, Donna Meixner, Sandy Stone, Randy Rosette, Jan Satin and Barb Manning

Wine & Cheese Tasting

Chair: Sue Berzinis

Members: Eric Paul, Ali Skebe, Rick Whitebread, Peter Meixner, Al DeSalvo, John Sherman, Don Odell, Tim & Patty Burch, Al Berzinis

Purpose

To provide additional income to FUUSA, as well as enhancing the lives of members, friends, and guests by providing fun events and an outlet for the creative talents and passions of the committee members

Accomplishments

Wine Tasting: The 9th annual event on Feb. 22, 2014 presented wines & cheeses in a program we called Affordable France! We raised over \$900 with rave reviews by many of the 72 attendees. Using the newly donated stemware (from Chartwell) really enhanced our presentation.

Auction: The annual FUUSA Goods and Services Auction continued to be a popular event, drawing over 90 attendees on March 15. Winning bids were made by 73 bidders and ranged from \$5 to \$500, with a total of over \$23,000 raised. Over the course of a year, the auction committee planned for this event through a series of committee and subcommittee meetings. The auction planning committee helped sponsor the Satin "New Age" Summer Picnic. A variety of committee members and outside helpers solicited donations, posted the fixed price envelopes for pre-auction bidding, decorated the hall, published the catalog, provided food and beverages for the event, called out

and recorded auction bids, hosted post-auction sales, collected money and supported donors with reporting. Anyone interested in helping or joining the committee should contact either of the co-chairs, John Walko or Randy Rosette.

Holiday Bazaar: This is a fun event that brought many FUUSAns together as well as made a significant amount of money. Many members and friends of the congregation helped set up, contributed baked goods and/or hand-crafted items to sell, peeled and cut up apples, made baking mix or soup mix gift bags, worked as sales people on Saturday and Sunday, made soup, worked in the kitchen, served food, cleaned up, contributed books, organized books, came and shopped and ate lunch, bought pies, and donated items for Granny's Attic. Most of these activities were done in groups, creating more connections and interactions amongst FUUSAns – creating stronger community.

We had more people come shop than last year, we had an interesting array of outside vendors and we grossed about 4% more than last year, raising over \$7,424 for the FUUSA General Fund.

In addition to these major events, the Change of Time Breakfast and the sale of Entertainment books also contribute to the funds raised over the year.

Plans

All three major events plan on continuing their successful operations next year. The Wine & Cheese crew is working on a Beer tasting event to be held in the fall.

Gardening

Chairperson: Paula Moskowitz

Members: Numerous volunteers that help out once or multiple times over the growing season.

Purpose

The Gardening Committee, affectionately known as the "dirty fingernails" maintains the five garden areas that surround our building, increasing the attractiveness of our physical "plant" for our neighbors, visitors and members. Enhance the welcoming appearance of FUUSA.

Accomplishments

Maintained the gardens, improved areas that had declined in attractiveness.

Plans

Continue to ensure the space around FUUSA is inviting; encourage participation in this effort by new volunteers, get the message out that gardening is a "family friendly activity".

History & Archives

Chair: Patricia Bailey

Members: Eva Gemmill

Goals

Organizing, systematizing and updating the archives and continuing to keep good order to preserve our history and to make records accessible to all FUUSA members. We plan to create an alpha list of the files along with a diagram of the location of items of interest and value. We continue to explore the cost and value of putting all cassette tapes (over 600) of services and other events on CD's for better preservation.

Responsibilities

Maintaining the History & Archives of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany.

The archives contain many records going back to the beginning of the Universalist Society in 1830's. Some records are irreplaceable. It also contains many items saved by members and later turned over to us to archive. Originals of some of our records are stored in the New York State Library and the Trustees also keep microfilms in Stone Mountain Storage Inc. - as per approval. Copies of most of these documents are kept in the archives. Also, due to space we are only able to archive one of every valuable item, such as copies of Oriel, Windows, etc. It is our hope that we will be able to continue to store important records along with much interesting data in this manner and for long into the future.

Continuing in 2013-2014 we have been increasing the amount of storage for easier access to many documents and files. With the addition of 1 (one) 4-drawer file cabinet in good condition, the general files are now easier to use both for filing and searching for needed materials. Thanks to Dave Metz and Amy for locating and delivering the new cabinet.

We hope to examine additional storage boxes for materials that need to be filed in the enlarged space and/or distributed to other locations.

We gratefully accept archival items for safekeeping and we especially appreciate having **dates, including the year and names** (especially in photographs) and, if appropriate, the name of the person donating the items. Thank you to those who provide these pieces of history.

As always members wishing to borrow a document from the Archives should fill out the log sheet located on the desk in the Archive office.

Charles R. Joy Library

Co-Chairs: Sally Knapp and Arnold Patashnick

Members: Ann D'Attilio, Pamela Crane

Purpose

The Library supports the mission of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, and selectively collects and facilitates access to information resources on: Unitarian Universalism and other spiritual traditions; social and ethical issues, philosophy, theology, Bible study with a liberal religious perspective, and other issues of interest to our congregation. The library also holds non-circulating collections of art books and antiquarian books on Unitarian Universalist history.

Accomplishments

Relating to goals and objectives As of April, 2014 the Library held books related to the following goals:

"... spiritual, philosophical, and theological beliefs and practices": 66 books related to spirituality; 229 related to philosophy; 216 related to theology.

"Celebrate the diversity of beliefs..." Among other things: *Buddhist Voices in Unitarian Universalism*; *Imagine there's no heaven: voices of Secular Humanism*; *Voices From Women's Liberation*.

"Lead in sustainable environmental practices": 16 books re: environmental topics such as: Al Gore's *The Future*; *Six Drivers of Global Change*; *Cooler Smarter: Practical Steps for Low-Carbon Living*; *Fight Global Warming Now: The Handbook for Taking Action in Your Community*, etc. This year purchased five titles re: fracking including: *Under the Surface: Fracking, Fortunes, and the Fate of the Marcellus Shale*; *Snake Oil: How Fracking's False Promise of Plenty Imperils Our*

Future; Fracking Pennsylvania: Flirting with Disaster, etc.

"...develop deep knowledge of the history and values of Unitarian Universalism..." Library holds 164 titles related to Unitarian-Universalism.

"Integrate anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multicultural work..." Library has 2 copies of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*; 1 copy of *Behind the Kitchen Door*; 10 books on immigration; 18 titles on racism, sexism, discrimination, etc.

Books Total holdings = 1372 books as of April 12, 2014 an increase of 35 over 1337 on April 17, 2013. Books Added in 2013 = 45 ; books withdrawn =10.

Circulation: 50 books borrowed in 2013; 37 had been returned as of April 12, 2014.

Budget As of Mar 31, 2014 Joy Library had spent \$ 268 (59.6%) of our budgeted \$450, \$182 remaining. Currently on order : \$146 from UUA bookstore and \$18.36 from Amazon, total encumbered \$164.36. Total spent plus encumbered \$432.36.

Joy Library Notes appeared in columns in Jan, Mar, Apr, May, June, Midsummer, Sept, Oct, Dec. issues of *Windows*.

Plans

April 2014 books on order: *Jewish Voices in Unitarian Universalism*; *Christian Voices in Unitarian Universalism: Contemporary Essays*; *Coming Out in Faith: Voices of LGBTQ Unitarian Universalists*; *Faithist: How an Atheist Found Common Ground with the Religious*; *A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power*.

We requested \$900 to purchase an additional bookcase for the Library to hold our growing collection and many as-yet-uncataloged books in the lower cabinets

and in boxes. We need to address the problem of non-print materials and of pamphlets.

We still want to get a picture of Charles Joy to hang with a brief bio in the room which houses the Library/Stott Lounge. To date, I have unsuccessfully contacted two possible sources.

Lifespan Learning Committee

Chairperson: Jan McCracken

Members: Paula Brewer, Toni Daniel, Don Odell, Karen Greene, Diana Shear, Leah Purcell, Rev. Sam Trumbore

Purpose

The lifespan learning program provides opportunities for members and friends at FUUSA to learn, grow, and develop in faith, spirit, and action. The function of the committee is to create and support learning events for adults in our congregation and also assist the Director of Religious Education and the Religious Education Council in creating multi-generational learning opportunities. UU faith formation can come in many shapes and sizes. Classes on UU history and heritage, UU identity, world religions, spiritual practices, compassionate communication, anti-oppression, end-of-life issues, and leadership are among the topics and areas of the committee's focus.

Friends and members are encouraged to participate as learners, or as teachers and facilitators. The LL committee invites proposals for learning events whose content falls within the intended program areas and they are ready and willing to support and assist in carrying out such activities.

Accomplishments

After some dormancy, this committee was given new energy and started meeting

on a regular basis in December. The following programs fit under this year's "umbrella" of Lifespan Learning.

Meaning Matters: a monthly small group growth and development program led by Rev. Sam

Beloved Conversations: ten week program of facilitated conversations about race and ethnicity as a vehicle for faith formation and spiritual awakening, led by Michael Hornsby and Melissa Ramirez

Building Our Shared Theologies: a one-day workshop presented by Rev. Douglas Taylor from the Binghamton UU church

Chair Yoga: three "fee free" classes offered as an embodied mindful practice to increase range of motion, flexibility, strength, balance, focus and concentration, with time for sharing and deep listening, taught by Sharon Babala

Blazing Pathways to Connection: an introduction to nonviolent communication – one day workshop facilitated by Jan McCracken and Philomena Moriarty

Seeking the Historical Jesus: a Lenten series of three classes facilitated by Rev. Sam

Wellspring I: full year program of spiritual deepening and connection facilitated by Cathy Perkins and Dave Munro (See Wellspring report below.)

Wellspring II "Deep Questions": full year program for participants who took Wellspring I and want to continue their spiritual deepening, facilitated by Betsy Miller

Over the past four years, about 30 members and friends of FUUSA have participated in both introductory and advanced UU Wellspring™ programs. The courses are 10 months long, during which participants

attend small group sessions every other week, commit to a daily spiritual practice, meet at least once a month with a spiritual director for guidance, and complete the readings and other assignments UU Well-spring™ provides a safe space for participants to explore the sacred within; to understand how we UU's got to be who we are; to read, think and talk about life's big questions; and to reflect upon what we are called to do in the world.

During the 2013-2014 year, eight participant took Wellspring I, which was facilitated by Dave Munro and Cathy Perkins. Betsey Miller facilitated an advanced Well-spring program called Deep Questions of the UU Life, which is grounded in our Principles and Purposes. Next year we expect to once again offer the intro course (for the 5th time) as well as another advanced course—either Spiritual Practice or Faith in Action.

Plans

As of this writing, planning for specific programs is just getting underway. Programs will continue to incorporate community building strategies in their design, provide forums for small group learning and ministry, offer diversity, anti-bias, and non-violent communication training opportunities, and support theological and philosophical diversity.

Partner Church Committee

Chairperson: Dave Metz

Members: Sharon Babala, Pat Bailey, Debbie Brown, Peter Brown, Dawn Dana, Dick Dana, Ben English, Judy Hanson, Barb Manning, Chuck Manning, Barb Metz, Dave Metz, Betsey Miller, Russ Myer, Don Odell,

Darnell Rohrbaugh, Diana Shear, George Shear, Sam Trumbore

Purpose

To maintain an active relationship with FUUSA's partner church in Szökefalva, Romania.

Accomplishments

Our relationship with our partner church in Szökefalva, Transylvania, was somewhat inactive during late 2012 and early 2013 as there were significant questions about the tenure of Sándor Kiss as minister there. This issue has been resolved and the relationship is back on track, including an invitation from Szökefalva to send a group from FUUSA to visit them in the summer of 2015. Sam will be visiting there during his sabbatical in May, 2014.

Plans

We are planning to send a small group to visit the partner church during the summer of 2015. The trip is in the very earliest planning phase and more specific information will not be forthcoming until after Sam's visit.

Public Relations Committee

Chairperson: Patti Jo Newell

Members: Cate Bohn, Bob Franklin, Amy Lent, Paula Moskowitz, Josh Shea

Purpose

The Public Relations Committee manages event- and issue-specific communications between FUUSA and the community at large. These include:

- ◆ Work with FUUSA committees to promote events and prepare media communications; ensure committees work within established protocols for media and policymaker contact

- ◆ Publicize FUUSA events and issues to community at large
- ◆ Conduct media outreach, including development/distribution of media advisories and releases
- ◆ Act as spokesperson for FUUSA as needed/appropriate
- ◆ Manage and promote social media

Accomplishments

The Public Relations Committee (PRC) reconvened in 2013 after its dissolution to a few dedicated people independently working on PR activities. Initial meetings focused on revisiting the purpose and goals of the committee and the prioritization of next steps. We determined the PRC would focus on publicity, advertising and media, leaving marketing, public relations, branding, etc. for further discussion pending the Board of Trustee’s revisiting of the FUUSA mission statement and strategic plan.

We determined to prioritize various opportunities for traditional advertisement in the context of limited funds and to expand and enhance social media and Internet communications. We also identified the need for review of existing procedures and protocols, and to advertise same within the community, to promote timely and accurate communications with the media and policy-makers.

Specific activities included:

Social media: The PRC engaged in review of social media, including website, and explored ways to enhance and expand both the tools and their use. Facebook and Twitter accounts are monitored and posted-to daily. Funding was allocated for tracking and boosting tools to advertise events at FUUSA, especially Evensong and analyze use and trends on Twitter. Increased effort

on taking photos at FUUSA events was initiated.

Get Connected Sunday: The PRC provided opportunities to explore use of social media and encourage congregation to use it to enhance their awareness of and experiences at FUUSA, and also to strengthen the tools themselves through increased use.

Media: The PRC created and distributed media advisories and media releases concerning multiple SRC events and outcomes, including the resolution on hydraulic fracturing, “Drones and 21st Century Warfare” with Kathy Kelly, and Green Sanctuary forums.

Website: The PRC reviewed the website for updates and integrity of links, and identified need for redesign.

Advertising: The PRC engaged in limited traditional advertising because of costs associated with print advertising. Funds were allocated for advertising within Metroland and Capital Pride Center programs/journals. We made heavy use of free online calendar postings, including the Times Union, The Spotlight, and myriad other community calendars. These focused on holidays and special services, Evensong services, unique events, and forums.

Plans

Website: The PRC is planning for the redesign of the website. We will contract for an outside audit of the website in preparation for its revision.

Policies and Protocols: The PRC will complete its revision of protocols for media releases to smooth the process for other committees and to promote timely and accurate communications.

Media: In addition to continuing with current activities, the PRC will work direct-

ly with committees to review amended policies and procedures for media releases and representing the congregation.

Advertising: The PRC will continue with current activities, seeking innovative and inexpensive ways to broaden our message and advertise unique events.

Social media: The expansion and enhancement of social media, and the promotion of its use within the community, will continue. We plan to table for several Sundays re use of social media, encouraging real-time activity, leading to a service which will be broadcast via the web and feature a Twitter feed that will allow real-time comments during service. It will also include either a live feed for a satellite community or a taped version with its own Twitter feed. We also plan to fund increased use of boosting and analytic tools on Twitter.

Religious Services Committee

Chairperson: Linda Way

Members: Cate Bohn, Dawn Dana, Peter Meixner, Don Odell, Sue Stierer, and Rev. Sam Trumbore

The Religious Services Committee (RSC) helps the minister plan Sunday services on those dates when the minister is not in the pulpit. For those Sundays the RSC recruits Service Leaders, provides a host for guest speakers if needed, and sees that guests are in touch with Matt Edwards to plan music and with Leah Purcell in regard to children's time.

The RSC also attends to service logistics, including ushering, Joys and Sorrows, and the Offertory. Our goal is to provide a high quality and integrated flow to the service. In pursuit of this goal the committee has tried to refine these logistics, and we are

grateful to Dawn Dana who revised both lead usher/usher instructions and service leader scripts to reflect these refinements.

This year given Reverend Sam's sabbatical time and, in addition, an arrangement among three CRUUNY congregations (Albany, Schenectady, and Glens Falls) to exchange pulpits, we had a number of visiting ministers. These included the Reverend Dick Gilbert, the Rev. Chris Antal, the Rev. David Weissbard, the Rev. Douglas Taylor, the Rev. Lynn Ashley, and the Rev. Priscilla Richter.

A perennial and well received service at FUUSA is "This I Believe." The RSC arranged for two such services this year, one in early February and the second slated for May. In February, presenters included Michael Hornsby, Dawn Dana and Frank Woods; scheduled for May are Ann Lapinski, Mike DeVolder, and Diana Shear. The committee greatly appreciates the willingness of members of the congregation to participate in these services.

Other services for which the RSC took responsibility this year included "We Remember" in late December; "Living the Challenge of the First Mother's Day" presented by the Grannies for Peace in May; and, also in May, a service commemorating Memorial Day by Diane Cameron.

A full program of services is again being scheduled for the summer to be coordinated by Sue Stierer; she will be aided this year by Vee Abbitt, who is currently studying for the UU ministry. Many of the speakers and services are already lined up including the Rev. Tom Chulak; ministerial candidate Beth Dana, who grew up in FUUSA; our own Sigrin Newell; and presentations on General Assembly and Wellspring. We are

pleased that we have such an interesting and diverse summer program taking shape.

An innovation of the RSC this year was the creation and introduction of a *Sunday Service Logbook*, in which members of the congregation can record comments they have about the service. The Logbook is available on the credenza in the back of Emerson each Sunday; comments are acknowledged to the writer when a name is given, and all comments are discussed at the committee's meetings. We anticipate that this will be a regular and useful means of feedback from the congregation to the RSC.

Finally, the committee acknowledges and thanks Irene Saulsbery, who chaired the RSC for several years but has had to step down due to serious illness. We are grateful for her service and send to her our caring thoughts.

Safe Congregation Response Team (SCRT)

Convener: Katharine B. Harris

Members: Owen Devine (Religious Education Council - REC), Katharine Harris (Board of Trustees - BOT), Jean Poppei (Member at Large), Leah Purcell (Director of Religious Education, DRE), Sam Trumbore (Minister of FUUSA)

Purpose

Ensure that any violations of the FUUSA Safe Congregation Policy are properly investigated and responded to

Ensure that those who are required to take the New England Adolescent Research Institute (NEARI) *Balancing Acts: Keeping Children Safe in Congregations* have certificates of completion on file with the DRE

Accomplishments

The SCRT reminded the members of the BOT that they are required to take the training from NEARI and to give their certificate of completion to the DRE. It is the responsibility of the DRE to ensure that the training actually takes place and that the certificates are on file with the DRE.

Plans

New members need to be recruited from the BOT and the REC for 2014-15 as those current members will be rotating off both their posts and from the SCRT. A means to ensure that all required training has taken place should be put into place.

The SCRT will continue to be available to respond to any allegations of violation of the Safe Congregation Policy and to remind new BOT members to take the NEARI training.

Programs and Activities

Channing Circle

Co-Chairs: Thayer Heath, Mark Yolles

Members: Tina Raggio, Jo Keers, Anita Patka, Mark Yolles, Ann D'Attilio, Lois & Bob Thomson, Martha Schroder, Glenn Durban, Bob Blank, Katharine Gordon, Malcolm & Nancy Bell, Lois Griffen, Ann & Dave Brandon, Ann & Don Eberle, Barb Cooley, Peg Slocum, Ted Wright & Susan Standfast, Larry Gambino, Kathy Hodges, Ruth Salter, Eva Gemmill, Linda Way, Jane & George Allen Priscilla Crago, Lois Webb, Barbara Warner, Arlene Gilbert, Mary Freeman, Marian Tischler

Purpose

The purpose is to involve members of FUUSA over 70 or those who have retired to meet monthly for lunch at FUUSA. It is a social group as well as one interested in sharing interesting programs created by its members such as poetry reading, places of travel, collections of various kinds, political issues, life stories, etc. In the summer months, we go to the many cultural events available in the area such as Tanglewood, Saratoga Performing Arts, Shakespeare in Lenox, Clark Museum.

Accomplishments

Channing Circle provides an opportunity for older members of FUUSA who have contributed to FUUSA over the years both in time and money to continue to be involved and share with one another their journeys. The programs, 9 of them, are listed above in the purpose of the group.

Plans

Plans are being developed to interview and tape many of the members' interviews

for the archives as there are several in their 90's. Suggestions of additional programs are offered by the group on an ongoing basis.

Choir

Co-Chairs: Matt Edwards, Kathy Harris

Members: Lea Ali-Napo, Kayla Autery, Pat Bailey, Ann Brandon, Peter Brown, Chris Bystroff, Dorry Campano, Barb Cooley, Cindy Dean, Cathy DeMille, Michele Desrosiers, RoseAnne Fogarty, Peter Gerdine, Kathy Harris, Linda Hunt, Chris Jensen, Julie Lomoe, Dave MacLeod, Barb Metz, Dave Metz, Russ Myer, Jon Newell, Sigrin Newell, Lou Rehder, Debbie Rodriguez, Terry Rooney, Randy Rosette, Ruth Russell, Ruth Salter, Jan Smith, Sue Stierer, Nancy Wagner, Terry Way

Purpose

To provide music for services and to enhance congregational life through musical experiences.

Accomplishments

- ◆ Varied musical support for services
- ◆ Sing-a-long concert
- ◆ Evensong
- ◆ Caroling
- ◆ Guest musicians from within and external to the congregation

Plans

Planning for next year is done over the summer. The choir welcomes all suggestions for ways to continue to support the missions of FUUSA

Circle Dinners

Chairperson: Martha Musser

Purpose

Circle Dinners provide FUUSAns and visitors the opportunity to socialize over a potluck dinner in a private home and get better acquainted with fellow FUUSAns. As well as giving members the opportunity to strengthen their connections with FUUSA and contribute to a vital, nurturing religious community, the dinners provide an extraordinary opportunity for newcomers to learn about FUUSA. With these goals in mind, we have committed to encouraging greater participation by newcomers and families with young children.

Accomplishments

We scheduled dinners on six weekends during the 2013-14 church year. On two weekends, we provided the option of attending on either of two weekend nights. With May dinners still to come, 20 dinners have been held and 82 adults and seven children have attended at least one dinner. Over half of attendees have attended more than one dinner. The last dinners of the church year are scheduled for May 16 and 17.

Plans

We have planned seven dinners for the coming year, beginning in October and plan to encourage more newcomers to participate.

CommUUnity Group

Conveners: Paula Brewer, Lou Rehder and Julie Reynolds

Purpose

“CommUUnity Group” is focused around a monthly Friday Potluck dinner

where any FUUSAn (with the focus on families) can join in on an evening of sharing food, fun and fellowship. Those who wish, can use the opportunity of the potluck to have a breakout discussion group in a private room on the topic of choice while others may prefer to stay casual and either join in a board game in the sitting area or just enjoy unstructured small group conversations at the dining tables. After the dinner hour, paid child supervision is available for parents who wish to bring their children upstairs to one of the classrooms for play in a designated classroom. CommUUnity Group’s agenda is one of fellowship with other UUs.

Accomplishments

CommUUnity Group has met 5 times, providing conversation and fellowship for a diverse group of FUUSAns. We are in the beginning stages of establishing ourselves as one of the strategies of community-building at FUUSA.

Plans

Continue the monthly CommUUnity Group.

Evensong

Reporter: Randy Rosette

Core Planning Group: Matt Edwards, Kathy Harris, Ann Lapinski, Sigrin Newell, Bobbi Place, Randy Rosette, John Sherman, Sue Stierer

Featured musicians throughout the year: Scott Bassinson, Chris Bystroff, Matt Edwards, the FUUSA Choir, Kathy Harris, Chris Jensen, Scott Knox, Dave MacLeod, Russ Myer, Britany Orlebeke, Randy Rosette, John Sherman

Readers or Presenters: The Planning Group members took active roles as readers. Addi-

tionally, Linda Hunt, and Ruth Salter participated as readers. Jill Peckenpaugh from the Dances of Universal Peace and Scott Knox were also instrumental in coordinating or adding to special themes of Movement and Drumming, respectively. Kali and Dash Knox also assisted in the drumming Evensong.

Publicity: Cate Bohn and Paula Moskowitz

Purpose

Evensong provides a place for community worship focused on music and readings connected to a distinct theme. Set in an intimate atmosphere, participation is encouraged, whether singing, moving, or speaking about a special topic.

Accomplishments

Five Evensong services were held during this church year and highlighted SundaySong (Introduction to Evensong), the Harvest (Drumming), As the Spirit Moves (Movement), Pete Seeger: A Celebration, and To Life: A Festival of Broadway Songs. From thirty to ninety people attended each Tuesday evening program. Singing, listening, and thoughtful participation were essential to the success of each. Time for sharing light refreshments and conversation followed.

Plans

Next year we plan to continue Evensong about every other month with more music and words that will touch your heart and encourage a time of thought and spirituality.

Pastoral Care Associates

Reporter: Philip G. Rich

Members: Sharon Babala, Jerry Deighan, Jon Newell, Phil Rich, Bruce Rodgers, Randy Rosette, Jan Satin, Sandy Stone

In 2010, it was Rev. Sam's wish that a caring and compassionate group of FUUSAns would be able to help him with the pastoral duties of the congregation.

Interviews were conducted for those who might be interested in undertaking this venture. A group of people was selected and our work began.

Our Pastoral Care program is based on the counseling theories of Carl Rogers and Marshall Rosenberg. Through nonjudgmental and empathic listening, Pastoral Care Associates help congregants over a rough time and enable them to summon the necessary resources to help them with their difficulties.

Associates come from varied backgrounds such as pharmacy, social work, secretarial science, the ministry, and education.

At present, our advisers are Rev. Bobbi Place and Rev. Sam Trumbore.

Our congregants are responsive to our endeavors showing us that our program works well. We will, however, continue to make adjustments and refinements as needed.

Philosophy Group

The Philosophy Group is an informal discussion group which meets every Tuesday from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.. A topic is chosen each week by consensus at the end of each meeting. The topic is sent out by email each week on the Philosophy group email list . Anyone interested can have their email address added at the office. An informal quorum of 5, starts the meeting with the presentation of the topic. Each participant if they chose presents their thoughts on the issue for three minutes fol-

lowed by an open discussion. The following is a sample of the topics which we have discussed during the last few months.

What happens to those who may not adapt to the new skill sets required by new technologies and may find their "usefulness" impaired even if they want to work hard and support themselves, their families?

What is "privacy" and how has its definition evolved with time. This can include personal, informational, organizational, spiritual, and intellectual privacy.

What is the deep reality? There are three classes of models: 1. Materialism - Matter is fundamental; 2. Dualism - Matter and mind are distinct; 3. Idealism - Consciousness is fundamental. What is the relative plausibility of each? Are there any other possibilities? Foreign Aid or War on Poverty at Home: A Question of Priority

As educated and voting adults we are constantly presented with policy issues which are or appear to be controversial. How should we approach them? Can we every have enough information to make a real decision.

Projects and Quilts (Ps & Qs)

Convener: Jan Satin

Members: Fran Berg, Priscilla Crago, Pam Crane, Joan Ekengren, Virginia Hammer, Janet Hunter, Anita Patka, Michaela Pochily, Barb Manning, Sue McClure, Mary Reich, Abby Sugarman

Purpose

Make quilts and other needlework projects for FUUSA and the community in an affinity group.

Accomplishments

New wall hanging in Emerson and a new quilt to be donated.

Plans

Make a new quilt for Art and Aesthetics fundraising

Small Group Ministry

Convener: John Sherman

Facilitators: Ben English, Barbara Manning, Don Odell, Patsy Patrick

Accomplishments

Twenty three of FUUSA's members participated in our three Small Groups this year. Using an open structure that welcomes every person as a valued participant, Small Group participants get to live our Unitarian Universalist values and principles in twice monthly meetings. In groups of six to ten, people engage in a lay-facilitated ministry that focuses on our personal experiences, develops our ability to listen to and support others, deepens our individual appreciation for life, and provides a unique opportunity to become closely connected with other members of the group.

Plans

We are exploring the possibility of coordinating our program with Lifelong Learning.

UU Christians

Convener : Sue Stierer

Members: John Sherman, Phil Rich

Purpose

To offer the opportunity to share and explore/reflect on beliefs, questions, and practices related to Christian roots, and heritage around particular Biblical passages, and other writings about Christian doctrine,

in order to clarify their place in our personal faith journeys, and relevance to Unitarian Universalist theology. We welcome skepticism, interpretation, and personal experience as foundations for belief, and reference several Biblical translations, from King James to The Message (Eugene Peterson, 1993)

Accomplishments

We examined teachings attributed to Jesus as a source of UU heritage; discussed a selection of New Testament parables including the Prodigal Son, the Sower, and the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, and the Sermon on the Mount including the Beatitudes. We participated in Sam Trumbore's study based on the book *Zealot*, focused on the historical Jesus.

Plans

To continue in current mode, bringing in more resources, including some literature from "Emergent" Christianity and denominational UU Christian writings, participate in other studies related to UU roots, such as those relating to the historical Jesus, and possibly reach out through a Communion Service (to follow a regular 10am or Summer Worship Service).

Walker Book Club

Reporter: Linda Hunt

The Walker Book Club meets at FUUSA on the second Sunday of each month at 5:30 PM from September through June, beginning with a potluck supper, followed by a lively discussion of the book of the month chosen by agreement by participants. This informal group, which has existed for many years and is named in memory of a treasured, deceased FUUSAn, offers participants the opportunity to search for UU truth and

meaning by reading and discussing a wide-range of literary works of fiction and nonfiction. Participants greatly expand their reading horizons and develop a deeper sense of community and connections with other FUUSAns. Newcomers are always welcome and the group is open to all FUUSA friends and members.

The group read and discussed four non-fiction books and six novels. Our annual traditions include reading a book considered to be a classic in May, and short stories in June that focus on a particular theme or author. The group also reads a longer book over the summer for discussion in September. Attendance has ranged from 8 to 16, including new participants during the 2013-14 year.

Books scheduled for discussion during 2013 – 2014:

- ◆ *The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris* by David McCullough
- ◆ *The Burgess Boys* by Elizabeth Strout
- ◆ *The Roundhouse* by Louise Erdrich
- ◆ *The Poisoner's Handbook: Murder and the Birth of Forensic Medicine in Jazz Age New York* by Deborah Blum
- ◆ *The Twelve Tribes of Hattie* by Ayana Mathis
- ◆ *American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Regional cultures of North America* by Colin Woodard
- ◆ *The Tiger's Wife* by Tea Obreht
- ◆ *Behind the Kitchen Door: What Every Diner Should Know About the People Who Feed Us* by Saru Jayaraman and Eric Schlosser
- ◆ *Howard's End* by E.M. Forster
- ◆ *Short Stories* by Tobias Wolf