

2015-2016 Annual Report



Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 22nd, 2016

1:45 PM Sanctuary Church

Unitarian Universalist Society of Iowa City

MISSION STATEMENT:

We are a diverse spiritual community that touches hearts, changes lives, and transforms the world.

VISION STATEMENT:

Our vision is to be a loving, inclusive, and growing spiritual community. We celebrate life and a liberal tradition that leads social justice work, heals the earth, and nurtures the lifelong journey of mind and spirit.

Unitarian Universalist Society

of Iowa City

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Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda

Sunday, May 22nd, 2016

1:45 pm Sanctuary Church

Please pick up your yellow voting card at the table in the back of the sanctuary prior to the meeting.

Opening

Opening Words Rev. Steven Protzman

Chalice Lighting

Recognition of Religious Education Teachers

Offering

Call to Order & Establishment of Quorum Jim Olson

Action/Discussion Items

Presentation of Slates for Board of Trustees, Committee on Congregational Life and Ministry,
Leadership Development Committee and Endowment Committee Paul Pomrehn

Election, and Recognition of Retiring Committee Members Jim Olson

Report of UUSIC's Staff Revisioning Process Kelly O'Berry

 How we have defined our mission/vision and goals

 Description of the positions of Director of Lifespan Religious Education

 And Director of Congregational Life Steve Vincent

 Funding this initiative Adam Ingersoll

Motion for Adjournment Jim Olson

Closing

Closing Hymn

Closing Words Rev. Steven Protzman

Nominees for 2016/17 Elected Positions

The Leadership Development Committee is proud to present the 2016 slate of nominees to UUSIC elected positions. Each of the individuals below is familiar with the mission and goals of UUSIC; all have demonstrated their dedication to UU principles. We hope that you will join us in thanking them for volunteering to donate their time, talent, and enthusiasm in service to our community, should they be elected at the congregational meeting this month.

Jim Laughlin—Board Vice President/President/Past President

Jim Laughlin is a retired Postmaster who lives on an acreage outside of West Branch raising horses with his wife Barbara. His son, Jeremy, is a former US Marine living in Iowa City.

Jim has been a UUSIC member since 1978. He has served on the Board, Membership Committee, Buildings & Grounds, the Space Committee, Stewardship Committee, Facilities Task Force, Capital Campaign Committee, and as a Worship Associate (twice). He has also been a part of the UUSIC Conflict Task Group, Treats & Talents Auction, and the Fireside Choir. He has served on the MidAmerica Region nominating committee and has been a staff member for the Midwest Leadership School.

He enjoys growing vegetables and flowers, golf and cross-country skiing. He is an artist, painting mainly landscapes, as well as a gourmet cook and wine enthusiast.

Peg Voelker—Board Secretary

Peg Voelker has lived in Iowa City ever since moving into the University of Iowa's Hillcrest Dormitory from Washington, Iowa, in 1980. She has a B.S. in Journalism (survey research) and a Ph.D. in Epidemiology (focus areas: chronic disease, aging, and mental health) and worked for many years as a research scientist at the UI. Peg and her spouse, Mary Fisher, have been together 29 years and live near Hickory Hill Park.

After experiencing several losses and life changes, Peg began attending UUSIC in 2008 and soon became an active member. She realized that this welcoming community, striving to affirm and promote the principles of Unitarian Universalism, was "just what she needed!"

Over the past eight years, Peg has enjoyed working with other members and staff as a Membership Associate, a Worship Associate, and through her involvement with the Green Sanctuary Committee, Partner Church/Festival of First Bread, Interweave, UNI-Care, the Day of Services, and the Treats & Talents Auction. She also shared her love of UU history by co-facilitating a course on Ralph Waldo Emerson for Welcome Home Wednesdays.

Peg is enthusiastic about serving as Board Secretary. In doing so, she hopes to help UUSIC and Unitarian Universalism, in general, expand within and beyond our community.

Sara Feldmann—Board Trustee

Sara Feldmann grew up on a farm near Dyersville, Iowa. She attended conservative Catholic elementary and secondary schools where she admits to developing a potent cynicism about religion. Unitarian Universalism was not even on Sara's radar until 2009 when her friend Meredith described to her a church that sounded so completely different that it might actually be worth revisiting assumptions about what it means to "go to church." The first service Sara attended at UUSIC was eye-opening—she was excited and surprised to find a community that genuinely welcomes diversity, is inspired by questions instead of answers, and is invested in real issues of justice, both locally and beyond. UUSIC has become a spiritual home to Sara, her husband, Scott Wittenkeller, and their two children, Mabel and Nora. She looks forward to increasing her investment in Unitarian Universalism and giving back to this wonderful community that has welcomed her and her family so warmly.

Sharon Booker—CCLAM

Sharon Booker is an Iowa native who has spent much of her adult life living out of state; for example, she attended undergraduate school at West Texas A&M and graduate school at Texas Tech University. She has lived in Kansas, Nebraska, New Jersey, and in California, where she began a 30-year career in health care administration. In 1995, she returned to Iowa for a position with the University of Iowa as the administrator for the Department of Family Medicine and the UI Family Care Center. She retired from that position in February 2014.

She has one adult son, Matt, who lives in Oklahoma. Her interests include politics, healthcare policy, memoir writing, exploring national parks, reading, and spending time with her sisters and friends.

Sharon has been a member of UUSIC for 15 years. She served on the first Welcome Home Wednesdays Planning Committee, the Staff Relations Committee, and the Stewardship Committee. She has been a Worship Associate, a Free Lunch Program volunteer, a member of the First Thursday Covenant Group and is a member of a Hospitality Team. For the last four years, she has co-chaired the Treats & Talents Auction Committee.

Nominees for 2016/17 Elected Positions, cont'd

Marsha Cheyney—CCLAM

Marsha's first experience with UUSIC was in the early '90s, when she worked in the nursery as an undergrad at the University of Iowa. Shortly thereafter, she headed off to the mountains and eventually joined the Army. After leaving the Army, she returned to Iowa City to complete her studies in Psychology and went on to earn a Masters in Public Health. Since then, she has worked in clinical and research positions at UIHC, the Iowa City VA, and at the College of Public Health. In 2007 she married Kirk Cheyney, and they now have two children (Jacelyn and Reed). Her hobbies include gardening, community singing, and crafting (especially jewelry making). She also leads a Girl Scout Brownie Troop at Lucas Elementary.

Marsha came back to UUSIC in 2013, looking for a spiritual home that held space for her beliefs and a place for her children to participate in a comprehensive religious education program. She has been a leader in the Owl Moon CUUPS group and a part of the senior high teaching team for the past 3 years, and she is a member of the Green Sanctuary Committee.

Kirk Witzberger—Leadership Development Committee

Kirk and his wife Gloria first came to UUSIC in the late 1990s, and their two children, Shea and Kai, participated in our RE program for several years. They stepped away for a while, and Kirk reconnected in early 2012. He facilitated the weekend process in the fall of 2012 where over 50 of our members collaborated to create our current mission and vision statements. Then, in late 2012 and early 2013, Kirk was a member of the team that created UUSIC's three-year strategic plan. In May of 2013 Kirk was elected to the UUSIC Board of Trustees and is about to finish his three-year term. In the summer of 2013 Kirk began working with the Facilities Steering Committee, and he helped facilitate the process and votes that assisted us in realizing that we would be better able to accomplish our mission and vision if we built an accessible, green, light-filled, inspiring place for our services, RE, and social justice work. He is a member of the Capital Campaign Committee and is a regular participant in our Racial Justice study/ACTION Circle. He co-chairs the New Facilities Committee that is working to help us build the greenest church in Iowa.

Kendall Atkinson—Endowment Committee

Kendall and his wife Alice have lived in Iowa City since 1972, and they have been members of UUSIC since the late 1970s. He was a member of the UUSIC Board of Trustees around 1990. Ken was a faculty member in the departments of mathematics and computer science at the UI and is now retired. He volunteers with CIVIC, is a docent for Iowa Hall in the Museum of Natural History, and volunteers at Kent Park.

Pictures of the Departure from 10 S. Gilbert



UUSIC Thanks Its Many 2015/16 Volunteers

Thank You to Our 2015/2016 UUSIC Volunteers! We appreciate our many UUSIC volunteers (listed below) for sharing their time, talent, and resources with our congregation and the greater community.

Carol Adamson	Sherry Dolash	Al Hood	Russ Lenth
Tim Adamson	Andy Douglas	Jean Hood	Lisa Lepic
Bobbe Akre	Stephen Dunbar	Peggy Houston	Brenda Linley
Bruce Alexander	Carolyn Dyer	Kathy Huedepohl	Marta Little
Kurt Anstreicher	Lee Eberly	Jan Hubel	Jan Locher
Alice Atkinson	Susan Eberly	Kenn Hubel	Stephen Locher
Ken Atkinson	John Elson	Lois Hughes	Mary Losch
Julia Audlehelm	Lori Enloe	Merle Ihne	Nancy Lynch
Larry Audlehelm	Jim Ephgrave	Adam Ingersoll	Caryl Lyons
Dayna Ballantyne	Pat Ephgrave	Bridgette Ingersoll	Cari Malone
Brenda Barbour	Sandra Eskin	Issac Ingersoll	Cory Manning
Kris Barrash	Gail Falk	Katrina Ingersoll	James Margadant
Barbara Beaumont	Ed Fallon	Nik Jakob	Heather Marshall
Philip Beck	Sara Feldman	John Jennewein	Katherine Marshall
Connie Becker	Betsy Fischer	Marilyn Jennewein	Lynette Marshall
Sharon Beckman	Linda Fisher	David Jepsen	David Martin
Sharon Booker	Mary Fisher	Mary Jepsen	Diane Martin
Peg Bouska	Jeffery Ford	Sarah Jewell	Karen Mason
Joe Brisben	Amy Fretz	Carolyn Johnson	Marianne Mason
Pete Brokaw	Kurt Friese	Donna Johnson	Cory May
Wendy Brown	Kim Friese	Jessica Fiedler Johnson	Barbara McAfee
Bob Burdinie	Dan Gall	Noah Johnson	Ron McCall
Jen Burdinie	Meredith Gall	Sharon Johnson	Brad McDowell
Amy Butler	Winnie Ganshaw	Allan Jordison	Alison McGoff
Earle Canfield	Gail Garwood	Haley Kamps	Janet McKee
Lynne Cannon	Joel Gilbertson-White	Sue Kann	Mary McMurray
Mike Carberry	Stephanie Gilbertson-White	Miriam Kashia	Tom McMurray
Jeanette Carter	Brian Glidewell	Cara Keller	Virginia Melroy
Alesa Case	Amy Grahs	Sandy Keller	Kathryn Messer
Dixie Cassady	Jerry Grahs	Bailey Kelley	Pamela Michaud
Maryellen Cazanans	Carmen Griggs	Larry Kent	Gay Mikelson
Michael Cervantes	Trudy Gullette	Shelly Kerr	Diana Miller
Brett Chaney	Kurt Hamann	Kathleen Kingman	Paula Miller
Kirk Cheyney	Julie Hammer	Margaret Kinsman	Tony Miller
Marsha Cheyney	Barbara Haring	Betsy Klein	Paula Miller
Lucy Choisser	Claudine Harris	Garry Klein	Virginia Miller
Rachel Clark	Sally Hartman	Margaret Koenig	Kathy Moon
Sam Cochran	Lisa Haverkamp	Nita Kosier	Joyce Moore
Mary Cohen	Mike Haverkamp	Susan Krohmer	Larry Mossman
Molly Coon	Patricia Hayek	Zach Kyte	Fred Meyer
Gloria Corbin	Joe Hennager	Clare Lanaghan	Elyse Myers
Chris Coretsopoulos	Diana Henry	John Lanaghan	George Myers-Verhage
Ron Crawford	Colleen Higgins	Pat Larson	Shelby Myers-Verhage
Dan Cummins	Sarah Holmes	Kasia Laskowska	Gwendolyn Neumeister
Laurie Cummins	Michael Honey-Arcement	Barbara Laughlin	Leigh Nida
Jane DeWitt	Rochelle Honey-Arcement	Jim Laughlin	Peter Nothnagle
Monique DiCarlo		Gary Lawrenson	Carol Nordquist
Peggy Dietrich		Melissa Lehan Mackin	Jerry Nordquist
Rob Dietrich		Kirk Leiffert	Carrie Norton

Nancy Noyer
Liz Noyes
Kelly O'Berry
Terri O'Berry
Terry O'Brien
Alison Oliver
James Olson
Sue Otto
Cecile Owings
Ron Owings
Kim Palmer
Lula Palmer
Maureen Patterson
Wayne Patton
Dorothy Paul
Pete Paul-Petersen
Dorothy Paul-Petersen
Gerry Pearson
Emily Peck
Damian Pieper
Bonnie Penno
Mark Penno
Debra Persons
Connie Peterson
Ron Pile
Paul Pomrehn
Steven Protzman
Nancy Purington
Judith Quinn
John Raley
Bruce Randall
Christina Randall
Tony Razavi
Jean Reese
Linda Rice
Tom Rocklin
Shona Roeder
Jaia Rosenfels
Mary Roth
Rhonda Rowden
Charity Rowley
Susan Salterberg
Garrette Saltzman
Matt Schaefer
Kay Schneider
Deb Schoelerman
Hazel Seaba
Jamie Sharp
Michael Shaw
Nicole Sheldon
Dick Siefers
Vicki Siefers

Sabri Sky
Jane Slaymaker
Cindy Spading
Renee Speh
Virginia Stamler
Juli Statton
Jill Stephenson
Lisa Stover
Stefan Strack
Faye Strayer
Hilary Strayer
Sheila Streeby
Margaret Street
Adam Tatro
Christopher Taylor
Jonathan Tauscheck
Al Thomas
Betty Thomas
Sharon Thomas
Peter Thorne
Carol Throckmorton
David Tokuhisa
Judy Tokuhisa
Jim Trepka
Theresa Ullerich
Aiko Van Cura
Stephanie Van Housen
Steve Vincent
Tova Vitiello
Peg Voelker
Zach Wahls
Doug Wallace
Mary Kathryn Wallace
Margalea Warner
Julia Wasson
Connie Webb
Susan Wells
Mary Lou Welter
Jerry Wetlaufer
Frank Wildensee
Kristin Wildensee
Lauralee Wilkins
Kaye Winder
Ruth Wirtz
Jessie Witherell
Haven Witherspoon
Scott Wittenkeller
Kirk Witzberger
Carol Wolfe
Ron Wright
Kari Yorek
Matt Yorek

Susan Kasal Young
Rich Young
Mark Yuskis
Lenda Zelinkas
Jessica Zimmer-
Saltzman

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

Audrey Adamson
Jocelyn Ankenmann
Lydia Ankenmann
Robert Ankenmann
Amara Ballantine
Aubrey Ballantine
Ian Ballantine
Ike Barrash
Nolan Case
Atreyu Chaney
Jacelyn Cheyney
Reed Cheyney
Aster Cox
Nathan Gall
Charlie Ingersoll
Fiona Ingersoll
Grace Ingersoll
Henry Ingersoll
Naomi Ingersoll
Teddy Ingersoll
Cassie Kaminsky
Megan Kann
Noah Lehan Mackin
Emerson Linley
Noah Linley
Rory Marshall
Abby Patterson
Cora Patterson
Teagan Roeder
Amelia Saltzman
Joscilynn Saltzman
Maddilyne Saltzman
Anneka Thorne
Rebekah Tokuhisa
Ethan Trepka
Kai Trepka
Mira Wilmont-DiCarlo
Mabel Wittenkeller
Nora Wittenkeller
Adam Wolfe
Isaac Wolfe

LEADERSHIP: President's Report

2015-2016 has been a year of transition for UUSIC. The Board of Trustees, working with the staff and several committees and individuals, has approved plans for our new facility, completed the purchase of property at 2355 Oakdale Road in Coralville and the sale of our historic building in Iowa City, and guided our relocation to our temporary home at Sanctuary Church. In addition, the Board is taking steps to accelerate UUSIC's evolution into a program church that fulfills our mission by touching hearts, changing lives, and transforming the world.

Perhaps the most visible and dramatic work has been the planning and financing of our new facility, completing two complex real estate transactions, moving from 10 South Gilbert in Iowa City to the Sanctuary Church in Coralville, and planning for the eventual move to our new facility. The Board authorized three key committees: the New Facilities Committee (chaired by Trustee Kirk Witzberger), the Transition Task Force (chaired by Treasurer Adam Ingersoll, Brigitte Ingersoll, Dan Gall, and Meredith Gall), and the Capital Campaign Committee (chaired by Jamie Sharp and Jeffery Ford, with Immediate Past President Vicki Siefers as Board liaison). Members of the congregation donated thousands of hours of volunteer work to these three groups. The results were outstanding: We completed the purchase of the former Miller property in September; moved from 10 South Gilbert in October; raised \$2 million from current members and friends in October and November; and closed on the sale of 10 South Gilbert in April. These committees, the Board, staff, and scores of volunteers have made an extraordinary gift of resourcefulness, commitment and productivity to UUSIC.

In addition to facilities work, the Board took steps to continue UUSIC's evolution from a pastoral church (with 50 to 150 in attendance on Sunday, a minister who is central to all programs, and a board whose members function as volunteer staff) to a program church (150 to 350 Sunday attendance, expanding programs, additional full- and part-time professional positions, and a board that focuses on policy rather than program implementation). The Board enthusiastically supports the goal of becoming a mission-oriented congregation.

At its annual retreat in August, the Board set congregational goals for the year based on our 2013-16 Strategic Plan. In implementation of these goals, the Board:

- Formed a task force to work with Congregational Life Coordinator Carol Throckmorton to develop a job description for that position emphasizing the integration of members and congregational health. In the same vein, Board members and relevant committees are planning for a comprehensive campaign for the fall, in which members will pledge not only funds for the 2017 budget, but also volunteer time, congregational engagement, and leadership.
- Identified the need for a Publicity Committee to work with the staff to enhance internal and external publicity, building on staff-initiated improvements in the weekly email, the monthly newsletter, and the UUSIC website.
- Partnered with Rev. Steven on new ways to use our time together at Sanctuary Church to strengthen community, such as the 1:30 pm ingathering.
- Created a mandate for a Land Ministry Committee to guide the use of the Oakdale property in line with our mission; and
- Provided encouragement and budgetary support for the new Racial Justice study/ACTION Circle.

The Board developed and updated congregational policies, building on the work of earlier UUSIC boards. These policies deal with communication, part-time childcare personnel, fundraising, the acceptance of gifts to the congregation, the responsible serving of alcohol at UUSIC functions, the use of the Oakdale house and property, and the administration of the Endowment Fund. We are grateful to the committees and individuals who prepared drafts of these policies for consideration by the Board.

In addition to the preliminary work on the Publicity and Land Ministry Committees, noted above, the Board approved the mandates of a reconstituted Finance Council and a committee to coordinate UUSIC's 175th anniversary observance. The Board approved a process, developed by the Staff Relations Committee, for the annual evaluation of the Minister, and established a committee to conduct the evaluation for submission to the Board in June.

The Board addressed several staff and personnel issues during the year. We approved a new part-time administrative assistant position and welcomed Bailey Kelley to that position. To improve communication between our personnel and the Board, we now convene quarterly meetings attended by staff members and the Executive Committee. We are grateful to the Staff Relations Committee for its work on personnel issues throughout the year and we thank the staff for taking on numerous new tasks and responding to unprecedented challenges during this transition year.

President's Report, cont'd

The Board accepted, with regret, the resignations of two valued staff members. Congregational Life Coordinator Carol Throckmorton has announced her intention to retire within the next year, and Lifespan Religious Education Director Jessica Zimmer-Saltzman resigned for personal reasons effective June 30th. The Board thanks both Carol and Jessica for their strong commitment and many contributions to our congregation, and we offer warm best wishes as they begin new chapters of their lives.

In light of these staff changes and in recognition of the imperative need to expand our ministries and fulfill our mission, the Board and the Leadership Development Committee are considering possibilities for restructuring staff responsibilities. As this report is written in mid-April, several ideas are under consideration, and the Board looks forward to working with committees and all members to refine these ideas in the weeks ahead.

In conclusion, I want to thank Immediate Past President Vicki Siefers, Secretary Jeanette Carter, and Trustee Kirk Witzberger, whose terms are ending on June 30th. Their devotion to UUSIC and their willingness to do what needs to be done are extraordinary. I also wish to thank continuing Board members Vice President Kelly O'Berry, Treasurer Adam Ingersoll, and Trustees Steve Locher, Marianne Mason, and Steve Vincent. It has been a pleasure to work with this smart, creative, and hard-working team.

Every month the Board reviews committee recommendations and reports representing hundreds of hours of volunteer work. Congregation members are generous not only in giving of their material resources, but in donations of time and talent. Similarly, our staff—Rev. Steven, Jessica Zimmer-Saltzman, Carol Throckmorton, Emma Barnum, Bailey Kelley, Gloria Corbin, Trudy Gullette, and Jonathan Tauscheck—go way above and beyond. Thank you to all.

With gratitude for the opportunity to help advance our mission during this year of transition,

—Jim Olson

Leadership Development Committee

The Leadership Development Committee (LDC) is a committee of five members elected by the congregation. This year's members are Jim Laughlin, in his third and last year; Sue Eberly and Paul Pomrehn, serving their second year; and Sherry Dolash and Heather Marshall, in the first of their three-year terms. We did not start meeting in this liturgical year until January. Since then we have met nearly weekly into April to carry out the nominating function of the Committee.

The Leadership Development Committee nominates qualified candidates to the congregation for the May Annual Meeting during which the annual elections for leadership positions are held. In 2016, nominations were made for: Board Vice President (succeeding to President); Board Secretary; one Board Trustee; two three-year positions on the Committee on Congregational Life and Ministry; and one three-year term on the Leadership Development Committee. In addition, in a special situation, the LDC nominated a candidate to replace a member of the Endowment Committee who resigned during his appointed term. The Board of Trustees then made the appointment of the member to complete the remaining 30 months of the term on the Endowment Committee. Such an appointment is one of the Board's responsibilities as defined in the UUSIC Bylaws.

Another of LDC's roles in the UUSIC mission is generally to cultivate leadership within our congregation. One part of that is to encourage a few of our members to attend the Annual Midwest Leadership School. This year we also began preliminary discussion and planning with the Board to host a local leadership workshop in the fall of 2016. The date and theme of the workshop had not been determined at the time this report was submitted.

—Paul Pomrehn

Committee on Congregational Life & Ministry

Mandate and Committee Membership

The Committee on Congregational Life & Ministry (CCLAM) furthers the mission and vision of UUSIC by monitoring the ministries of UUSIC and recommending ways to strengthen the effectiveness of these ministries. The 2015-2016 members of CCLAM and their terms are:

- Kären Mason, 2013-2016, co-chair 2014-2016
- Brian Glidewell, 2014-2017, co-chair 2015-2017
- Meredith Gall, 2014-2016
- Judy Tokuhisa, 2014-2017
- Winnie Ganshaw, 2015-2018
- Terri O'Berry, 2015-2018
- Ex-officio: Rev. Steven Protzman and DLRE Jessica Zimmer-Saltzman

Evaluation of the Ministries of UUSIC

Most of CCLAM's energy this year was devoted to the transition to our temporary facility. During this time of transition, we monitored the activities of committees and groups primarily through our two CCLAM members who served on the Transition Task Force, Meredith Gall and Judy Tokuhisa. They reported regularly on efforts to locate temporary facilities and assess the needs of each ministry or committee, and they brought their concerns to CCLAM.

CCLAM continues to monitor how the committees are functioning now that they are settled in their temporary quarters. On the whole, our ministries are healthy and have weathered the move to temporary quarters well. Most groups have remained active, and some new ministries have begun, such as the Racial Justice study/ACTION Circle. A Land Ministry is in the process of forming.

The afternoon service has been a challenge for many, particularly for families with children, as is evident from the low participation in Religious Education. But the success of the Capital Campaign and the Stewardship Campaign reflect the members' strong commitment to the church. In the coming year we will continue to touch base with our ministries to gauge their health during this transitional period.

As we celebrate our 175th anniversary as a congregation and the construction of our new building, we will have an opportunity to reimagine and strengthen our ministries within our congregation and in the larger community.

—Kären Mason and Brian Glidewell, co-chairs

STAFF: Minister's Report, Rev. Steven Protzman

*One day you finally knew what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice—
though the whole house began to tremble
and you felt the old tug at your ankles.
“Mend my life!” each voice cried.
But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do ... —Mary Oliver, *The Journey**

As I reflect on this past year, Mary Oliver's words speak eloquently to the challenges of an unusual year of enormous change for this congregation. Our biggest changes came as we continued in our work to create facilities that will meet our needs and serve our mission for many years to come. Knowing what we had to do, we worked together and can celebrate some amazing achievements this past year. We found and purchased 2355 Oakdale Rd., and now we have a beautiful place where we can work and play, be good stewards of the earth, appreciate the natural beauty around us, and expand our ministries.

When 10 S. Gilbert was sold and it became clear that we would have to move out of our beloved old building, you stepped up to lead and to do the work of planning, packing and transporting our belongings and equipment. Thank you to everyone who helped with the move (there were many of you)! Special thanks to our Transition Task Force who spent many hours planning, coordinating, working with the Board and the staff, negotiating potential rental spaces, and organizing the process that ensured a smooth transition into our current spaces. As we worked, we also took time to celebrate 107 years at 10 S. and to grieve the end of this chapter of our history with a series of events that culminated in farewell services on September 27th, 2015.

My priorities this fifth year together were to continue helping each of you discover and share your gifts; holding before us our mission and vision as we made decisions about our ministries, our facilities and our future; walking with you through life's joys and struggles; growing in my skills as a staff supervisor and administrator; and working carefully with the Board to create the policies and procedures we need to govern ourselves well and walk together in our covenant of mutual love and care. As I preached and led worship, as I taught and served you, as I worked with the staff and the Board and the many committees and ministries, I invited us again and again to be open to change, to be willing to discover new ideas and new ways of being alive, and to be ready to experience the wonder, the beauty and the awe that still awaits us, no matter where we are in our journey. I held up and continue to hold up our shared vision of a world where justice and peace are enjoyed by all people. I spoke words of indictment to racism, systemic injustice, and oppression, and words of hope to inspire us to continue working for the Beloved Community. I continued to pay careful attention to and nurture the spiritual state of the congregation, and I am pleased to report that in watching us work, worship, and play together, this congregation is emotionally, systemically, and spiritually healthy. We are able to joyfully acknowledge our abundance and share our many blessings through the practice of generosity. We had an unusual opportunity to practice greater generosity with the Capital Campaign, and I am grateful to each of you for the sacrificial giving you did in order to help exceed our goal. I see this congregation understanding more and more fully the concept of shared ministry, that each of us has gifts, wisdom, talents, skills and resources and that this community is a place where we can grow spiritually through both giving and receiving these gifts.

Worship

As your minister, one of my primary tasks is to create and lead worship experiences that challenge you, inform you, nurture you, connect you with the depths, and help you understand what it means to be human and Unitarian Universalist. Our worship theme this year was "Building a New Way," which was chosen by the Capital Campaign Committee and the New Facilities Committee to emphasize our work of discerning and shaping this next chapter of our congregation's history. There were seven services for all ages: Water Communion (September), Apple Communion (October), Thanksgiving, Christmas, a celebration of the completion of our annual Thirty Days of Love (February), Easter, and Flower Communion (Mother's Day). This year our Water Communion was part of a Gala Celebration held on our Oakdale property, and there was a multi-generational Blessing of the Animals service the first Sunday in October (also held outdoors on our property). Other services were chosen in response to current events and topics that were timely for the congregation. I continued my practice of a March three-part sermon series on an ethical issue, choosing Racial Justice as the theme. I once again designated February UU History Month, and there were two sermons on various aspects of Unitarian Universalist history. Since we couldn't have a Christmas

Minister's Report, cont'd

Eve service in our rented worship space, we held a joint candle light Christmas Eve service with the Cedar Rapids congregation, Peoples Church. Other special services this year included the Day of the Dead, Winter Solstice (which was a partnership with CUUPS and the WomenSpirit Group), the Wassail Service (a 32-year tradition now!), Thirty Days of Love/Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday, Festival of the First Bread, Earth Day, and the annual Youth Service.

As we prepared to move to our transitional spaces, the Board invited me to use the worship services to experiment and to discover new ways to be in community together. In response to this invitation, when we began our Sunday afternoon services at the Sanctuary Community Church, I added a 15-minute ingathering time before the service for singing and announcements. I also began to use available technology, projecting words for hymns and other parts of the service and using short video clips and pictures. The Worship Associates helped shape and create worship in many ways this year, including the planning and coordination of summer services, leading worship on my Sundays off, assisting with Welcome Home Wednesday vespers, researching and discovering new worship materials and ideas, and offering each other support, care, and encouragement. The Worship Associates also chose the theme for last summer, "Giving Life the Shape of Justice," in response to a suggestion from the Social Justice Committee. I wish to thank the Worship Associates for your hard work, commitment to this community, and your passion for crafting good worship. The worship theme for this coming liturgical year is "Stories of Our Past, Dreams of Our Future," which was inspired by the 175th Anniversary Task Force. This coming year as we begin celebrating the 175th anniversary of our founding as a congregation, a celebration that will conclude in our new building next year, we will tell stories of our history and dream about our future together. During the summer services, as part of this theme, members of the congregation will be sharing their personal spiritual odysseys.

Staff

It has been a pleasure this past year to work with our talented, creative, dedicated, and hardworking staff. They work with me and the congregation's leadership to serve you and to see that our mission, vision, and strategic plan are carried out, and to lead and nurture the congregation's many volunteers. The staff and I hold weekly staff meetings to coordinate the week's events, discuss any concerns or issues of importance, keep each another informed, and hold each other accountable for achieving our year's goals and serving the congregation and its mission. As supervisor of the staff and manager of day-to-day operations, I also met with each staff member individually to check in, discuss any concerns or problems, praise achievements, and share information. This year we added a part-time administrative assistant position to help with administrative tasks and increase our use of technology to communicate and be a presence in the greater community. The staff participated in workshops and meetings with the Executive Committee to improve communication and clarity about priorities during our transition. Thank you Emma, Jessica, Jonathan, Gloria, Carol, Trudy, and Bailey for your hard work this past year, for your commitment to UUSIC and its mission, for stepping up and putting in many extra hours during the move to lead and assist our volunteers, and for working together as we adjusted to our new location and put routines into place.

Our Ministry

African American poet Gwendolyn Brooks says that:

we are each other's harvest:

we are each other's business:

we are each other's magnitude and bond.

Ministry, which is the main reason this spiritual community exists, is about serving the needs of others. It is the outward expression of our mission and vision. Ministry is the heart of our spiritual lives, and it helps us become more fully human and alive as our compassion, love, and care for one another and the world deepens. Our ministries continue to grow and thrive in response to our ever-deepening understanding of what it means to serve each other, the Iowa City community, and the world. Among the new ministries that started this year, two are particularly noteworthy: the Land Ministry, which recognizes that our property is one of our most important assets and that there needs to be a plan for its care and use that respects and incorporates our values. In response to the Black Lives Matter movement, the UUA Racial Justice theme for the Thirty Days of Love, and the energy around racial justice that came out of last summer's services, Alison Oliver began a Racial Justice study/ACTION Circle. All of our ministries, committees, and activities (there are approximately fifty!) are supported and nurtured by the Committee on Congregational Life and Ministry (CCLAM). This committee continues to ask the important questions of how we work and be together as a spiritual community, and what shared ministry means as they monitor the

Minister's Report, cont'd

life and work of the congregation. The CCLAM visited with our many committees and ministries to offer support and encourage the work of creating committee mission statements and policies. In collaboration with the CCLAM, I continue to make it a point to visit with as many committees and activities as possible and seek to be more of a presence when I see a committee struggling or in need of resources and support.

As we move through our transition time and prepare to enter our new building, it is important to have a plan in place for our ministry as a congregation. I attended General Assembly in late June in Portland, Oregon, and came back with a vision of UUSIC being a mission-based rather than program-based congregation. This understanding came about from workshops, discussions, and materials that show that the congregations that are thriving are outward looking, seeking to make a difference in the world, instead of being program-based, where there's a focus that's predominantly inward. "Program" typically indicates that a church is large enough to offer a variety of programs, events, activities to engage its members. In many ways we are operating as a program-sized congregation and as we do, I have continued to encourage us to think about mission as the reason we offer the many programs and activities. The goal of our programs and activities is to nurture your spirit, help you discover where your passions meet the world's needs, and equip you to go out into the world to serve those needs.

It is also important to honor and thank people for their commitment to serving others. During our Thirty Days of Love, which ran from January 17th to February 14th, we recognized people from our congregation and the community who have been long-time leaders of social justice by giving them Courageous Love Awards. This year's recipients were Misty Reebik (Executive Director of the Center for Worker Justice), Diane Martin, Chris Taylor, Alison Oliver, and Dorothy Paul. In April (which is National Volunteer Month) we honored all our volunteers at a service. Thank you to each of you (there are over 300 of you!) for the ways in which you serve this congregation and the world.

Governance

Our practice is congregational polity, in which the congregation governs itself and we use the democratic process to make decisions about our finances, our leadership, our ministry, and our assets. Once again, the congregation and leadership have really stepped up to the needs of governance, and we have done a lot of excellent work together this last year. We have many amazing, talented leaders in this congregation who are deeply committed to the mission and vision of UUSIC. We are blessed with hardworking and committed Board members who were willing once again to have more than one meeting several months when action was needed on items ranging from facilities to the budget and staff concerns. Through some long meetings and packed agendas, the Board demonstrated again and again their commitment and ability to listen to one another and to the congregation, to be open to diverse ideas, to think outside the box, to communicate well with one another and the congregation, and to work as a team. As policy needs were identified, the Board continued to create policies that were thoughtful and thorough in their scope. The Executive Committee (consisting of the Board's officers) and I met regularly each month to plan the Board meeting agenda, to share and discuss concerns, and to keep the big picture of our vision and long-range plans in mind. The President and Vice President of the Board and I also meet monthly to discuss my ministry and growth.

In August the Board and I held a retreat to do some visioning work, and from that retreat and a review of our strategic plan, we created a series of goals for the congregation for the year. Please refer to the President's report for these goals. Thank you to the Board and the Executive Committee for all your hard work this year and your willingness to do this difficult and often complex work, which sometimes meant extra meetings and lots of communication between meetings in order to ask the questions and make the decisions that arise as we seek to live out our vision and mission.

Minister's Report, cont'd

Life Passages

Member Weddings

- Andrew Primmer and Emily Jones
- Kathleen Kingman and Sarah Holmes
- Faith Wilmot and Monique DiCarlo

Member Deaths

- Charles Read
- Gordon Strayer
- Kathy Henderson
- Pat Edberg
- Liz Weinberg

Child Dedications

- Atreyu Chaney
- Liam Johnson

Life Members

- Jeanette Carter
- Carol and Jerry Nordquist

A Special Note of Thanks

I wish to thank the Rev. Charity Rowley and Winnie Ganshaw, who graciously made themselves available this last year to provide emergency pastoral care during my absences.

With Gratitude

At moments it's hard to believe that on July 31st I will finish my fifth year as your settled Minister. I continue to feel so very blessed and fortunate to serve this faith community! Week after week, I am amazed and humbled by the generosity, kindness, enthusiasm, love, and commitment of each of you, as you serve as Board members, lay leaders, greeters, ushers, coffee servers, religious education teachers, pastoral care providers, volunteers, covenant group facilitators, choir members, newsletter assemblers, worship associates, committee members, kitchen workers, social justice leaders, and all the dozens of other ways you serve as you bless this community and the wider world with your time, passion, and energy. May our dreams and hopes for this diverse spiritual community and Unitarian Universalism continue to guide and inspire us as we touch hearts, change lives, and transform the world!

With deep joy and gratitude,

Rev. Steven

Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Jessica Zimmer-Saltzman

If I had to pick a theme for this year, it would have to be transitions. Much of what and how we do Lifespan Religious Education has been affected by our move from 10 S. Gilbert to the Oakdale property and transitional home at the Sanctuary Community Church. As a result, we've continued many of the great programs offered in years past, but we have also had to make some changes to fit into and take advantage of our new land and temporary, rental spaces.

Children and Youth Religious Education

Under the guidance and leadership of 24 volunteer teachers, we offered our traditional Children and Youth Religious Education (CYRE). Some of the highlights included:

- The move to the Sanctuary Church gave us space to break our grades up into seven groups—Nursery, Pre-K, K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8 and 9-12 grades. Since the groups spanned a narrower age range, we found they were more manageable for volunteers and the material could be better tailored for each class.
- We soon found out that Sunday afternoon class conflicts with many family commitments—birthday parties, nap time, sporting events, work—and our average attendance has dropped to 20 participants per week. The class structure described above was not sustainable, so we moved to the pilot as described in the February 2016 newsletter.
- With the increased and centralized space at the Sanctuary, we have been able to include more active and hands-on activities in our lessons. Over the past year, the kids have been able to build bat houses, make stone soup, have an RE-wide game day, craft their own Rube Goldberg machines, and compete in recycling relay races.
- We have also been able to incorporate more technology into our lessons. Having reliable access to the internet has meant that we have been able to use clips to break down large topics into more easily digestible and entertaining pieces, to learn songs and social justice work (check out freerice.com).
- This was also our first year using the revised 7-9th grade Our Whole Lives (OWL) curriculum. The curriculum updates cover body image, social media, bullying and bystanders, consent, communicating with a partner, and self care. This year's OWL program had 8 youth, and they appreciated being able to participate openly without being judged, and the knowledge they gained from the program.

Children and Youth Committee

The Children and Youth Committee (CYC), chaired by Matt Yorek and then Brigette Ingersoll, has spent the year concentrating on finding ways for CYRE families to build community and fellowship outside of the classroom and making sure we stay connected during the transition.

- During the fall the CYC hosted the first campout at our new property, and we had 38 members and friends join us. It was commented by many that this was the first time that they had felt like they had really gotten to know other RE families.
- To capitalize on the success of the campout, the CYC decided to continue with more informal, low-key family Fuun Nights. More recently they have been potlucks hosted at a member's home or at the Oakdale House.
- We are seeing 30-40 people at each event, and this includes families that have not been able to attend RE on Sundays.



Director of Lifespan Religious Education, cont'd

Adult Religious Education

Adult Religious Education (ARE) continues to be centered on our Welcome Home Wednesdays (WHW) offerings through the WHW Committee chaired by Linda Rice.

Due to the timing of the move from 10 S. Gilbert, we did not offer our traditional Fall Welcome Home Wednesday programming. However, it was back for the Winter 2016 session.

For Winter 2016 WHW, we had 37 participants and the classes included:

- *The Grand Tour: A Discussion of Travel & Art* with Connie Peterson
- *Joyful Noise* with Rob Dietrich and accompanied by Joe Brisben and Jonathan Tauscheck
- *Climate Action* with Miriam Kashia and Deb Schoelerman
- *Gentle Yoga* with Esther Retish

With the downsize in kitchen space and equipment at the Sanctuary during the transition, it was decided not to offer WHW meals. Instead, the evening schedule started with a drop-in, informal, and meditative worship offered by the vespers service Worship Associates, followed by one-hour classes.

Despite not having Fall WHW, we did take the opportunity to process, connect, and renew during the move, and in its place, we instead offered a series of three classes focused on our transition called "Looking Back, Moving Forward." We had 33 people participate, and the classes included:

- *Remembrance and Leaving: Grieving and Loss* with Winnie Ganshaw
- *Helping Each Other Through Our Change* with Nancy Noyer
- *Stories from Our Past* with Sally Hartman

Finally, in addition, to our WHW programming, we partnered with the Racial Justice study/ACTION Circle to offer discussion groups for the UUA Common Read, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson. We had 21 people attend two daytime and evening sessions led by Caryl Lyons and Joel Gilbertson-White, respectively.

Campus and Young Adult Community

The Campus and Young Adult Community (CAYAC) is a group of mostly post-graduate and young professionals who attend UUSIC, and they are led by Pete Brokaw and Jessica Zimmer-Saltzman. Some are new to Unitarian Universalism while others grew up attending UU services with their families.

After looking at the goals for campus ministry in the strategic plan, the group decided to focus on:

- **Connections:** CAYAC has been a great way to connect UUs in a social setting and to build friendships.
- **Social Justice:** The group has expressed interest in social justice issues, specifically issues related to immigration and refugees, at a local level and beyond.
- **Social Media:** The CAYAC Facebook page is the primary communication channel for scheduling meetings and making announcements of upcoming events related to social justice.

—Jessica Zimmer-Saltzman



Administrator, Emma Barnum

It has been a busy year for the UUSIC office! Here are some of the big things that have happened since last year's Annual Report:

Buildings & Grounds

- Before the move from 10 S. Gilbert, we upgraded our wifi system and made several necessary but small repairs and upgrades to the buildings. As we prepared for the move, utilities, services, and equipment at 10 S. Gilbert were shut down and cancelled, regular rentals were stopped, and our contract with our longtime custodian, Amos Kiche, was ended.
- I assisted the Transition Task Force with finding alternative locations for regular UUSIC events and group meetings, as well as with the move to 2355 Oakdale Rd. A huge thank you to several volunteers, including Katrina Ingersoll, Dan Gall, Emily Peck, Garrett Saltzman, and the Buildings & Grounds Committee for their hard work making the Oakdale House and grounds accessible, habitable, and an adequate office and meeting space.
- Along with the rest of the staff, I provided feedback to the New Facilities Committee as they designed our new building, and support as they planned member events (like the Ground Breaking Ceremony) and sent communications to the UUSIC membership.
- We bought a temporary phone system for the Oakdale House that fixed the issues we had with our old system. A different, permanent system will be built into the new building. The Oakdale House was also fitted with a code lock, allowing secure access to staff, leadership, committee leaders, our cleaning service, and one-time visitors to the building.

Communications

- I assisted in the fall Program Council and began brainstorming with the Board about creating more frequent all-committee meetings with themes, trainings, and opportunities for collaboration.
- Bailey Kelley was hired as a quarter-time Administrative Assistant. She has been instrumental with maintaining our online presence and in providing support to the staff. Before Bailey was hired, Mary Lund Shumaker briefly held the position before taking a full-time job elsewhere. A heartfelt thank you to both Mary and Bailey for their assistance.
- We added a more robust Events Calendar to our website. More updates were made to the weekly email to increase readability and to provide more interaction with our website and events calendar. I created/integrated blogs into the website for our Minister and Director of Religious Education, and I set up an IFTTT (automatic actions) to add new posts to our Twitter and Facebook feeds as they are published.
- A survey on how our membership reads and engages with our monthly newsletter, *The UU News*, was included in the December issue. With Bailey's help we created a *Have UU Heard* section on our website, where staff and committee news, articles from the monthly newsletters, and blog entries are posted.
- I worked with CCLAM, staff, and the Board to create new guidelines for Annual Report submissions, meant to create a shorter, more engaging and readable Report.

Finance

- Bailey created an online voucher system, allowing members to submit reimbursement requests or invoices for payment online. The UUSIC Treasurer, Adam Ingersoll, updated our voucher process to allow the Administrator to write checks for payments under \$200 directly from the office. These two new processes have greatly reduced the time it takes to cut checks and mail payments and have allowed much more detailed online record-keeping.
- I assisted Adam with our switch to Central State Bank and with tying up all the loose ends at US Bank.
- As usual, I assisted the Stewardship Committee with the annual stewardship campaign. This year I also provided support to the Capital Campaign with mailings, administrative support, and with tracking incoming pledges, payments, and follow-up.

Administrator, cont'd

Administration

- I adjusted my office hours at the Oakdale House. I now have 6 hours per business day as open office hours, with the remaining time set aside each day for errands, working outside of the office, or confidential tasks (such as the weekly deposit). I also have started working from noon to 2 pm on the second Sunday of each month.
- The Office Volunteers continue to do amazing work and have adapted magnificently to the new challenges of the Oakdale House. Sue Eberly retired from the group and Cari Malone joined.
- Linda Fisher and Wendy Brown (and a shortlist of other UU volunteers) have become proofreaders for the office.
- In May of 2016 we made a transition away from Church Windows, our longtime church management software, to a new program called Realm. Realm is entirely online and (along with many significant upgrades for church administration and record-keeping) creates online access for UUSIC members, friends, committees, and leadership to view their own personal contact and giving information; and join, receive communication, and share data within groups and committees.

Next Year

Some goals for next year include:

- Assist with the transition into our new building
- Encourage all members, committees, and leadership to join and actively engage with Realm
- Welcome and assist with the training and onboarding of new staff

—Emma Barnum

Congregational Life Coordinator, Carol Throckmorton

The 2015-16 liturgical year has been a quite a time of change and growth for us all. Let us all take a moment to reflect on how far we've come in the seven months since we closed the doors of our 10 South Gilbert building and congratulate ourselves and one another for our many achievements as we look forward to opening the doors of our new building in 2017.

Volunteers

The move required the mobilization of massive person-power to pack, heft, and then store or unpack our furnishings. Many volunteers rose to the occasion when the call went out for assistance. Thanks to our project coordinators—Adam, Brigitte, and Katrina Ingersoll, Meredith and Dan Gall, and Judy Tokuhisa—for their phenomenal leadership throughout this process. With everyone's help and dedication, the move was accomplished in a very efficient and timely manner.

This was only one of the many occasions when our amazing UUSIC volunteers stepped up to assist. It seems that whenever there is a need, all that is needed is a request, and someone will say, "I'd be happy to do that." Much of who we are as a congregation can be attributed to our over 300 volunteers. It was a pleasure to honor everyone during the April 3rd worship service and at the special reception that followed.

Our very active congregation consists of 320 members, 73 friends, and 21 non-member spouses or partners, totaling 414 people. These members and friends serve on one or more of our 52 committees and interest groups. Their dedication to the mission and vision of UUSIC is truly awe-inspiring, and their energy seems to be without limitations.

On April 3rd, three long-time members were honored with Life Member awards. Jeanette Carter, who has been a UUSIC member for 53 years, and Carol and Jerry Nordquist, 51 years, were acknowledged for their exemplary service and long-term dedication in furthering the UUSIC mission.

New Members

Sixteen of our 320 members joined this year during New-member Covenant Ceremonies. On December 13th, 2015, we welcomed Betsy Fisher, Sharon Johnson, Leigh Nida, and Virginia Miller; on March 8th: Cara Keller, Deb Moore, Jane Slaymaker, and Vanessa Taylor; and on May 15th: Kim and Kurt Friese, Kate Ingersoll, Jessica and Jake McCusker, Kristin Wildensee, and Ruth Wirtz.

During these three ceremonies, the new members signed the Membership and Covenant or Right Relations books. The ceremonies were followed by special receptions during social hour where congregants had the opportunity to meet and greet the new members. All new members are provided with a certificate of membership, a Membership Photo Directory, and a UU Pocket Guide. Their biographical information appeared in the Orders of Service, and their bios and photos were published in *The UU News* and displayed by the Welcome Table.

New-member classes were held three times this year. In January, the classes were redesigned as a three-part "Journey of Discovery" series. The first series occurred in February and the second in April. These education sessions are conducted by our Minister, the Congregational Life Coordinator, guest presenters, and Membership Associates.

Visitors

Visitors to our services are invited to participate in our "Welcome to the Journey" classes, which are held approximately once per month following the worship service. The purpose is to introduce newcomers to the basic tenets of Unitarian Universalism and to answer their questions. Participants are invited to the next new-member class series and provided with a folder of educational information.

Visitors who complete the Connections cards receive a personal letter with additional information about Unitarian Universalism and UUSIC. Their contact information is provided to the chairpersons of the groups and committees in which they have indicated an interest. Seventy visitors completed Connections cards in the past year.

Membership Committee

The Mission Statement of the Membership Associates is to "create a loving and inclusive community through the practice of radical hospitality." The Membership Committee consists of nine Membership Associates (MAs). New members of our team this year are Carol Adamson and Paula Miller. Steve Vincent, who is a UUSIC Board of Trustees member, serves as a liaison between the MAs and the Board. Our enthusiastic and creative team members meet bi-monthly on the third Thursday of odd-numbered months.

Congregational Life Coordinator, cont'd

Each Sunday MAs serve as greeters at our Sunday afternoon services. They also staff the Welcome Table, which serves as a central information point for members, friends, and visitors, and provide information and education regarding Unitarian Universalism to newcomers and congregants. They also connect individuals with interest groups and committees within the Society.

The MAs supervise voting procedures for congregational meetings, which are held in January and May, and for special votes, such as the April 10th vote to approve of the mortgage on our 2355 Oakdale Road property.

A Membership Associates' manual is updated annually to reflect their various responsibilities, including their roles as greeters, Welcome Table hosts, and congregational meeting assistants.

The Connections card system continues to provide communication between members of the congregation and the staff. These cards, which are located in the worship hall chairs and at the Welcome Table, are made available to everyone attending services. The chair folders contain the Connections cards, brochures ("Welcome to UUSIC," "Becoming a Member," and "The Greenest Church in Iowa"), the Opportunities document (a listing of all UUSIC interest groups, committees, and options for volunteer service), and name badges.

I want to thank our very dedicated Membership Associates for their exceptional efforts in providing a welcoming environment to our visitors, members, and friends. It is a joy working with them, and I am continually amazed and appreciative of their enthusiasm, creativity, and commitment to this vital ministry.

Hospitality Teams

The Hospitality Teams continue to provide valued services on Sunday mornings by ushering and managing the social hour. The original goal was to have twelve teams, and this year we achieved that goal. Kim Palmer has taken on a leadership role in serving as Hospitality Team coordinator. He invites new members to serve on the teams and provides training for them. He and Lula Palmer often fill in as team members if a team needs additional assistance.

Hospitality Team members serve an important role in our congregation and their service and dedication are very much appreciated.

Skills, Talents and Interests Survey

It has been three years since we implemented the Skills, Talents and Interests Surveys (STIS). All new members are asked to complete them as part of their becoming a member process. These forms provide information not only about their skills, talents, and interests, but also Society activities in which they are interested in participating or volunteering. The surveys have been very helpful in matching volunteers with opportunities to serve. We are exploring an online system for members of our congregation to use as a more efficient way to share their skills and talents.

Goals for next year:

- Offer "Journey of Discovery" new-member, three-part series four times per year
- Continue improving our new-member classes for the purpose of meeting the needs of prospective members
- Implement new-member class evaluations, six-month new-member surveys, and six-month and one-year post-membership surveys
- Design a mentor program for new members
- Post membership information on the website
- Invite inactive members to become involved in Society activities
- Continue to encourage "radical hospitality" for our visitors, members and friends
- Encourage and recognize volunteerism in our congregation
- Coordinate Opportunity Fairs

—Carol Throckmorton

Music Director, Gloria Corbin

Upon examining the work of the Fireside Choir and the Children's Choir through the lens of the UUSIC mission and vision, there are two areas that can be strongly linked to the efforts of the two choral groups: touching hearts and nurturing the journey of mind and spirit. It is important that the music selected enhances the theme of each and every service. An effort is made to draw upon many styles of music to define that goal, including traditional, folk, gospel/spiritual, madrigal, contemporary, and "classical popular" venues. We are very pleased when the music is readily accepted not only by the singers but is familiar, comfortable, and appreciated by the congregants. It is important that the work of UU composers is represented and that instrumental (e.g., guitar, bells, trumpet, oboe, violin, recorder, flute, etc.) are integrated to enhance the music. It is the desire of both choirs to perform well, and the quality of the music making is on an upward trajectory. The learning that occurs (i.e., music theory, ear training, improved vocal production) impact the "workings" of the mind and spirit.

Congregational singing, a critical component of music making in the church, continues to improve. It is a joy to present the congregation with challenges (e.g., rounds, the melody with choir accompaniment, and new hymns), as you rise to each occasion. You are alert and follow directions. It is especially gratifying to me as I stand in front of you and can see the joy in your faces when called upon to wiggle out of your personal comfort zone when it comes to singing. If your personal comments to me count, those compliments are made and received each and every Sunday.

The Fireside Choir also continues to improve. That improvement is multifaceted: numerous styles of singing (e.g., gospel, Sacred Harp, contemporary), music theory (e.g., notation, ear training, improved vocal production), Choir membership has increased from seven to a high of twenty voices, the number willing to sing solos has increased, and leadership has blossomed (e.g., music librarian, substitute conductors, personal recommendations to improve choir practices, etc.). A men's group will begin working on gospel music and the ladies will be presenting literature just for treble voices. The Fireside Choir will be directly involved in the Wassail Ceremony to be staged December 31st, 2016. All of this (and more) is both invigorating and challenging for this group of faithful servants.

Establishing a Children's Choir has been challenging. "Miss Colleen" (Higgins) is my helper and we continue to work with the singers who show up after the worship service on the first three Sundays of the month. This little group performed for the congregation one last time during the month of April (call to worship "concert"). For certain, when the new church is completed and we return to a morning worship time, the interest in the Children's Choir will be renewed.

My personal development has taken me down many roads. I am very grateful for the UU Musicians Network (UUMN) as via the Internet I can learn from seasoned UU choir directors simply by reading their comments. The UUMN library is sophisticated and presents many topics; one that I find most helpful is a listing of music for specific church year themes. Rev. Steven is generous with his time and has been a valuable "coach" for the musical planning of UUSIC. Should a UUMN music conference happen in the Midwest, it is my intention to attend the conference. I have reached out to other Iowa UU choral directors and plan on establishing relationships with them.

A sincere appreciation is extended to virtually everyone I come in contact with at UUSIC. I am so very comfortable and enjoy my position immensely.

Respectfully submitted,

—Gloria Corbin

FINANCE GROUPS: Treasurer's Report

In spite of unprecedented fundraising activities, property transactions, and relocation to temporary quarters, UUSIC's finances in 2015 continued their pattern of stability and growth. Our operating budget has increased by 20% since 2009, and revenues exceeded expenses in each of those seven years. Pledge commitments for 2016 are at an all-time high, and we have an expense budget for 2016 that is manageable.

We thank the Society's staff and committee leaders for their thoughtful planning and sound fiscal management throughout the year. 2015 operating expenses were nearly exactly on-budget overall. 2016 will be remembered as an unusual year in UUSIC's history, and the budget reflects these unique circumstances. We are fortunate to be in an environment in which our congregation and its financial health is strong during this once-in-a-century transition.

Financial highlights:

- 100% of our Sunday offerings, as well as many other fundraising efforts, continue to benefit social justice work in our community and beyond
- We funded the Social Justice Action Fund for the third straight year and will do so again in 2016 with proceeds from the Treats and Talents Auction
- We will pay 100% of our Fair Share denominational dues for the fifth year in a row
- We are proud to continue to be a UUA Fair Compensation Congregation, meeting all eight compensation principles for our staff
- Our wildly successful Capital Campaign approaches \$2.1M and has been supportive of, rather than detracting from, members' generous giving to our operating budget
- Our endowment crested \$1M in 2015 and is positioned to support our transition to a new building as we will be carrying a mortgage
- Our operating expenses in a transitional space vs 10 S. Gilbert have been roughly a wash financially and possibly even a gain. Energy-wise, by sharing another congregation's modern and efficient space, we have already reduced our energy footprint
- The sale of our 10 S. Gilbert property closed (finally) without incident for a price of \$2,050,000, and we are optimistic that a proposed development at Gilbert St and Iowa Ave will result in the permanent preservation of the historic sanctuary and net another \$400,000 in sale proceeds for UUSIC. We are told this would be a price/square foot record for Iowa City.
- We now own nearly 9 acres of beautiful property in Coralville, valued at \$600,000.

Financial challenges:

- We experienced a net loss in pledge units from 2015 to 2016. This was not wholly unexpected as we have faced difficult and at times contentious questions, such as whether to sell our old building, throughout our facilities journey.
- Sunday services at a transitional location and in the afternoons has diminished attendance, particularly in RE. If this proves to be more than a temporary blip, we would likely see lower operating budget pledges and resulting difficulties. We are optimistic we will more than rebound as we transition into the new building, and a broad range of initiatives and investments are proposed to ensure we will rebound.
- Designing a new building is a financially complex endeavor. We are working hard to stay within budget and avoid unpleasant surprises during construction.
- We have already received roughly half of committed Capital Campaign funds. The sooner we receive the additional pledge installments, the less loan interest we will pay.

—Adam Ingersoll

2015 Income & Expense Summary

	2015 Budget	2015 Actual	2016 Budget
Revenues			
Pledges and Donations	\$350,000	\$362,529	\$366,500
Other Revenues	\$19,000	\$18,873	\$10,500
Totals	\$369,000	\$381,402	\$377,000
Expenses			
Salaries and Wages	\$188,504	\$186,451	\$200,358
Employee Benefits	\$56,431	\$56,520	\$56,092
Administrative	\$40,520	\$40,855	\$27,990
Denominational Dues	\$21,398	\$21,248	\$23,184
Utilities & Insurance	\$20,712	\$23,711	\$5,737
Facilities Rental	\$0	\$11,560	\$29,200
Professional Allowances	\$8,915	\$7,009	\$10,340
Lifespan Religious Education	\$8,360	\$4,304	\$6,100
Buildings & Grounds	\$6,750	\$5,822	\$2,250
Adult Programs	\$4,910	\$1,722	\$4,350
Other	\$12,500	\$9,635	\$11,399
Totals	\$369,000	\$368,837	\$377,000

Balance Sheet Highlights as of April 30th, 2016

Unrestricted cash + building funds	\$2,702,085
Endowment restricted	\$1,053,492
Other current assets	\$208,475
<u>Fixed assets (Oakdale property)</u>	<u>\$603,280</u>
Total Assets	\$4,594,268

Liabilities \$3,173,732

Equity

Unrestricted funds	\$3,226,954
Restricted funds	\$1,053,492
Deferred annual pledges	\$207,861
<u>Board designated funds</u>	<u>-\$3,120,679</u>
Total Equity	\$1,420,536

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY \$4,594,268

Auction Committee

For the fourth consecutive year, Sharon Booker and Mary Jepsen co-chaired the 2016 Treats & Talents Auction. Because of the transitional issues for the Society this year, the Auction Committee members demonstrated flexibility in terms of finding new locations for all aspects of the auction, silent and live, and the annual cakewalk. Our goals for the Treat & Talents Auction are to provide the UUSIC community with opportunities to socialize, have fun, and to raise money for the UUSIC. This year, the following were introduced:

- Thanks to the leadership of Brigette Ingersoll and Judy and David Tokuhisa, Charity Auction Organizer, a software program was introduced, which not only performed much of the bookkeeping, but also allowed us to create our first online auction catalog.
- Diane Martin and Joe Brisben spearheaded an effort to publish a chapbook with 13 poems written by Al Thomas (aka the Bard of Tower Court) for past Treats & Talents Auctions. Copies of the chapbook were sold for \$15, with the proceeds going to the Auction.
- Two auction committee members were honored by UUSIC. Jeanette Carter was honored with a lifetime membership, and Dorothy Paul was honored with a Courageous Love Award. Both Jeanette and Dorothy have distinguished themselves not only for their works for the Society but also to the much broader, sometimes international, community. We are extremely fortunate for their contributions to the Treats & Talents Auction Committee.

The Treats & Talents Auction Committee meets the mission and vision of UUSIC in the following ways:

- Membership and/or attendance at meetings is open to all
- The committee is diverse in terms of age and gender
- Proceeds from the auction have been used to support the social justice mission
- The primary goal of the Treats and Talents Auction is to build community

—Sharon Booker

Capital Campaign Committee

Building a New Way: Cultivating the Future of our Congregation

The Capital Campaign Committee (CCC) began meeting on May 28th, 2015, and was charged with raising capital to support the building of our new facility. Initially, the Board suggested that the congregation needed to raise 3-5 times the annual budget, or about \$1.4-1.5M.

Supporting the UUSIC Mission and Vision:

- The CCC led the congregation in raising funds that will ensure an environmentally sustainable church home accessible to everyone seeking a liberal religious community. Our new church will be a place where everyone can be together in fellowship and worship, lead social justice work, heal the earth, and nurture the lifelong journey of mind and spirit.

CCC achievements and goals:

- Worked with UUA Consultant, Mark Ewert
- Conducted a feasibility study to determine the “giving resources” of the congregation:
 - Following the feasibility study, Consultant Ewert suggested that a “stretch goal” for UUSIC would be ~\$1.7-1.8M. \$1.9M would be an extreme stretch
 - The CCC set a goal of \$2M despite skepticism from the Board
 - Created all campaign materials including an 8-page Campaign brochure
- Sponsored and participated in 4 coaching workshops in which 52 congregational stewards were prepared for the all-congregation canvass
- Conducted the Campaign in 3 Phases:
 - Phase 1: The “quiet/leadership” phase. From October 5th to the 23rd, 26 stewards canvassed their workshop partners, congregational leaders, and most participants in the Feasibility Study. 35 givers pledged \$875,600.
 - Phase 2: The “general congregation” phase. From October 25th to November 18th and beyond. 26 stewards canvassed their workshop partners, if not previously contacted, and all remaining congregational pledging members. A total of 202 members/friends have pledged or given \$2,082,241. Of this total, \$845,662.64 has been paid. 40 pledges/gifts have been paid in full (The “100% Club”).
 - Phase 3: Friends and former members who no longer attend UUSIC and “young adults” who grew up in the UUSIC RE Program were contacted in spring 2016. 65 former members/friends have received a packet about UUSIC with an invitation to contribute. It is still too early to know the results of this special campaign; however, we have received a few gifts. Approximately 20-30 young adults have been contacted by email (‘honorary’ chairs: Zach Wahls and Katharine Marshall). Several gifts have been received through our “donation button” on the UUSIC web page.

Jamie Sharp chaired the CCC. Jeffery Ford served as Vice Chair.

The CCC extends our most sincere thanks to everyone who participated in the Feasibility Study and canvass workshops and to everyone who gave generously to our future.

—Jamie Sharp

Endowment Committee

The purpose of the Endowment Committee (EC) is to oversee the Endowment Fund investments, provide an annual report to the Board, and identify ways to increase the fund through education and preservation of capital for future needs.

We were asked to be part of the September 13th Celebration at the new building site, where the Endowment Fund contributors were honored for reaching one million dollars in our combined funds. An insert in the program from the Endowment Committee noted: "Thank you. Year after year, friends like you have responded to our request to build our Endowment Fund and together we have created a legacy for our Society." Present and past committee members who were not present were sent copies of the program and insert. Donors provided \$51,900 in 2015, acknowledging the importance of the Fund for our Society's future.

- Our financial advisor provides guidance for investments. We continue to move a portion of our portfolio to Socially Responsible Invested Funds.
- A major rewrite of the Endowment Fund Policy was achieved with significant help of committee members Jerry Nordquist and Pete Brokaw, along with the Board and Finance Council. The EC appreciates the guidance and input from the Finance Council, Board, and Treasurer and the revised Gift Policy.
- We write thank you notes for contributors to the Endowment Fund and for memorial gifts.
- We review proposals for the Detiger Program Fund that underwrites the cost of community-wide programs that raise the visibility of the Society.
- We placed a paragraph in a December email regarding the IRA Charitable Rollover which is now a part of the permanent tax code.
- We confirmed with the Board the function of the Endowment Fund and then reviewed and advised on the spending of the Endowment Fund.
- We moved the EC files to the chair's home, and members sorted files and took inventory of supplies, which will be transferred to the Oakdale House.
- With our budget of \$550, we will be planning Chalice Society recognition programs and another fall Endowment Party to encourage present and deferred giving to support the Society.

Members are elected for a five-year term with one member rotating from the committee each year. Current members are Jerry Nordquist [term ending 2017], Barbara Haring, chair [2018], Larry Audlehelm, recorder [2019], Pete Brokaw [2020]. Ken Atkinson [2016] is completing a term for Tom Rocklin who needed to resign. We meet six or eight times a year as needed.

—Barbara Haring



2014 Endowment Party at John Raley's home



*Alice Atkinson, Committee Chair
and Vicki Siefers, UUSIC President, 2014*

Finance Committee

The Finance Council (FC) was formed in June 2015, providing guidance and support for financial matters of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Iowa City. As an advisory group, the FC has no decision-making authority and reports to the Board of Trustees.

- The chairperson for the FC is the Finance Trustee from the Board. Pete Brokaw acted as chairperson for the FC's first year.
- In its first year, the FC created policy statements on fundraising and gift-giving and worked with the Endowment Committee which updated the Endowment Fund Policy.
- The FC worked closely with the Capital Campaign Committee and the Board in developing guidelines for financing the new facility.
- The FC developed the preliminary budget for 2016, incorporating changes as a result of moving to transitional facilities.

—Pete Brokaw

Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Campaign was conducted at the same time as the Capital Campaign during the fall of 2015. The goal of the Stewardship Campaign was to at least stay even and possibly increase the amount pledged for 2015 (\$350,000).

Fifty-five visiting stewards attempted to contact and visit all members and friends of UUSIC in order to discuss both the stewardship and capital campaigns. Our stewards ranged in age from 20-something to 80-something.

We ended with a commitment of just over \$366,000 in pledges for the operating budget for 2016. A very high percentage of folks increased their pledges from 2015. In fact, these folks increased their pledges by a little over \$32,000. We had a total of 208 pledges for 2016 as of January 31st, 2016. This compares to 228 for 2015. We lost 29 former pledges and gained 9 new ones. The 29 pledges lost totaled \$21,000 and the 9 new ones totaled \$4,000. The average pledge for 2016 was \$1,761 and the median was \$1,200. 105 pledges were over \$1,000 and 103 were below \$1,000.

—Dave Martin

Social Justice Action Fund

The Social Justice Action Fund (SJAF) was established in 2013 as a way to support projects, events, and groups that address social justice issues both locally and beyond.

The funding for SJAF has come from generous contributions from the Endowment Fund and the annual Treats & Talents Auction. The funding model for SJAF will be shifting in 2016, and the committee will be looking at innovative ways to raise funds to support this ongoing work.

The SJAF committee meets the mission and vision of UUSIC by helping to fund projects, events, and groups who focus on social justice every day.

In the past year, SJAF has helped to support a wide variety of efforts, including:

- Nepal earthquake victims (matching grant for RE bakesale) [\$250.00]
- The Chico Mendes Reforestation Project [\$250.00]
- The Iowa City Out of the Darkness Walk [\$150.00]
- The Eastern Iowa Miles for Myeloma Run/Walk [\$250.00]
- The PEACE Iowa Organization - annual dues [\$250.00]
- Ten Thousand Villages [\$2,500.00]
- Mittens for Grantwood school childre [\$93.32]
- The Center for Worker Justice [\$2,500]

—Pete Brokaw

BUILDING GROUPS: Buildings & Grounds Committee

The basic goal and mission of the Buildings & Grounds Committee (B&G) is to maintain and facilitate repairs of our buildings and grounds as well as facilitate needed inspections or repair of the boiler, elevator, appliances, etc.

- We strive to provide a safe and comfortable space for our members and friends to gather. We do that with the help of many volunteers.
- With the move from 10 South Gilbert to 2355 Oakdale Road, the focus of B&G has changed from a focus on the building to a focus on the grounds. We anticipate the formation of a Land Ministry group to manage and care for our new land.
- Our Committee helped to write the new B&G policy for 2355 Oakdale Road.
- During construction of our new building, we will still need a Building Committee to take care of basic maintenance of the house, but that is minimal.

We appreciate all of the volunteers who have helped to maintain the building. We couldn't do it without you!

—Deb Schoelerman and Kurt Hamann

Green Sanctuary Committee

Our goal is to build awareness of societal environmental issues among congregants and motivate them to take action to rectify environmental injustices. We lead work that heals the earth.

This year we:

- Provided petitions against the Bakken pipeline for members to sign
- Offered a series on climate change for Welcome Home Wednesdays
- Demonstrated at the corner of Gilbert St. and Iowa Ave. for Climate Action Day in October (pictured below)
- Helped (and continue to help) to organize the Land Ministry group for our new property
- Our Earth Day speaker was David Osterberg from the Iowa Policy Center who spoke on water quality in Iowa

—Deb Schoelerman



*Miriam Kashia, Gay Mikelson,
Deb Schoelerman on Climate
Action Day,
October 14th, 2015*

ADMINISTRATIVE GROUPS: Communications Committee

The Communications Committee of UUSIC promotes and facilitates effective communication within the Society and between UUSIC and the wider community, in accordance with the Society's mission and principles. This includes recommending print and electronic communication policies and practices to the Board of Trustees, and providing guidance on those policies to committees, groups, and staff to help achieve their goals.

Personnel

- Ron Pile and Bob Richardson resigned and were replaced by Bailey Kelley and Carol Adamson.
- Bailey replaced Bob as the 'B' member of the website backup team (BAM) along with Adam Tatro and Michael Honey-Arcemont, and she also partnered with Adam in managing the Society's Facebook page.
- Carol applied her policy-writing experience to the final preparations of the UUSIC Communications Policy.

Website and Social Media

There were 19,389 visits to the website in 2015. The most popular spots were "About Us," "Services-Events," and "News." From January 1st to December 31st, we increased our Facebook likes by almost 40% (242 to 337) and committed BAM to creating engaging and timely posts. We expanded the use of Facebook events and began posting from the page more regularly in order to boost UUSIC's presence in our followers' news feeds per Facebook's algorithms. Page analytics provide evidence that more people are actually seeing our posts.

Communications Policy

When it was first formed, the Committee was charged with writing a comprehensive Communications Policy for UUSIC. We began work on it the previous year, and completing it became our main goal of 2015. The Board of Trustees approved the final draft in June. At year's end, we were waiting for it to be added to the Policies and Procedures Manual on the website, making it accessible to all members.

In a joint decision with the Board, it was decided that the Board would form a separate committee to handle publicity for the Society.

—Phil Beck

Historical Records Committee

The Historical Records Committee furthers the mission and vision of the congregation by celebrating our liberal tradition, nurturing the lifelong journey of mind and spirit, and honoring those who have led this congregation through decades of sometimes difficult times by maintaining, preserving, and publicizing our rich history.

Our focus during this transition year has been on preserving the congregation's history. Since May of last year, we have worked on the following projects:

- We inventoried archival materials and framed photographs in Henriksen Library and the 10 S. Gilbert sanctuary; then we packed, transported, and stored them in members' homes and at Oakdale House
- We published short historical articles for *The UU News* under the heading *From Within These Walls* on the following topics: "Miriam Taylor's Puppets;" "The UUSIC Historical Records Committee;" "Early Choir Members in the Universalist Church of Iowa City;" "Celebrating 100 Years in the Little Church That Looks Like a House" (revised and updated); and "Worthley House"
- In collaboration with the Membership Committee, we researched and published full-page articles about those members who were honored as Life Members—Carol and Jerry Nordquist and Jeanette Carter
- Prior to our move out of 10 S. Gilbert, we created and installed the following exhibits in the Horack cabinet at the back of the sanctuary: "Miriam Taylor's Puppets" (May) and "10 S. Gilbert" (September)
- We made a presentation about UUSIC history for new members twice during the year
- We contributed photos to the Iowa City Public Library Digital History Project, and we plan to continue to work with them on preserving the history of our larger community
- Three members of our committee helped to form the 175th Anniversary Celebration Committee, for which we are writing newsletter articles and a script for a summer service, and planning and participating in other events

—Marilyn Jennewein

Pastoral Care Committee

The mission of the Pastoral Care ministry, as shaped by the UU principles, is to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to practice compassion in human relations by providing a ministry of support, hope, and caring, so that no one connected to this congregation needs to feel alone. This goal furthers the vision of UUSIC to be a caring, inclusive community. In collaboration with Rev. Steven, Winnie Ganshaw chairs this ministry and serves as primary pastoral care provider when Rev. Steven is away.

During this past year we furthered this mission through a number of ways. We continued the “Honoring Your Wishes” Program, which provides resources and helps people make decisions about health care planning, and offered the UU Grief Group. We facilitated “Cards of Caring and Support,” a program to send cards to people in the congregation who experienced any of life’s challenges, losses, and transitions. A list is provided to office volunteers, who write and mail the cards. We offered pastoral care through a variety of means including phone calls, sending e-mails, making announcements in the services and our communications media, and conducting visits that provided support to UUSIC members and friends. We referred people to community services as needed and worked with UNI-Care to provide services that included transportation, meals, and hospitality at memorial services. Rev. Steven also participated in Honoring Your Wishes community events, including being part of a short film about Advance Care Planning, which can be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Za6NjJgsAgk&list=PLtRBZUudSYW-BxrjodKBQM_YYqsfkgZNo

Our goals for 2016-2017 will be to continue these ministries through nurturing and encouraging a culture of pastoral care in the congregation by helping members and friends understand that every conversation or interaction offers an opportunity to minister to others, promoting and offering the Advance Care Planning “Honoring Your Wishes” program and the UU Grief Group, starting up the Friendly Visitors program once again, and deepening our pastoral care skills.

—Rev. Steven Protzman

Staff Relations Committee

The Staff Relations Committee provides support to supervisors and staff to maintain a positive and effective workplace for UUSIC. Our actions include:

- Proposing personnel policies and procedures to the Board
- Providing consultation to individual staff and supervisors
- Developing processes and forms for staff and minister evaluations
- Providing guidance for employee/supervisor practices
- Facilitating staff discussions
- Updating job descriptions
- Leading requested staff workshops.

We will soon complete a staff personnel handbook and provide the Board of Trustees with a complete set of personnel policies. Members (assigned by the Board) include: Mary McMurray (2 years remaining), Brigette Ingersoll (agreeable to continuing another year beyond her original commitment) and Nancy Noyer, chair (in final year).

—Nancy Noyer

PROGRAM GROUPS: Buddhist Sangha

The UU-Buddhist Sangha is a community of people who gather weekly to meditate and discuss contemporary Buddhist practice and teachings in the context of Unitarian Universalist principles. Diversity of view and practice is welcome as a foundation for collective wisdom. Our mutual support promotes clarity, compassion, and ethical behavior through the practices of mindfulness. We respect and nurture our unique journeys of mind, body, and spirit.

Weekly meetings start with 30 minutes of silent meditation, continue with check in, a 45-minute discussion, and conclude with a short silent meditation. The reading for each weekly discussion emphasizes the work of Western teachers. Discussions are held in a spirit of free and responsible inquiry, helping guide members in the application of the teachings in their daily life. We offer support for those new to meditation as well more experienced practitioners.

—Brian Glidewell

Circle of Friends Immigration Issues Study and Action Group

The goal of the Circle of Friends (Immigration Group) is to support two immigrant families in the community.

In coordination with SJCC and the holiday giving project, gifts and gift cards were collected and delivered to our two families. Support is offered to one family by interpreting at the elementary school.

On January 4th we hosted a family gathering and potluck supper at the Oakdale House to celebrate “King’s Day,” a holiday celebrated in Latin American countries. Before eating we played games and visited. The Three Kings, bringing gifts to the baby Jesus, arrived at UUSIC to share their story and give gifts to the children (pictured right).

Our goal is to continue to interact and support our families. We hope to have a spring or summer picnic at the Oakdale House.

By supporting and being friends with our families, we are touching hearts, changing lives, and transforming the world.



—Deb Schoelerman

Free Lunch Program

The UUSIC Free Lunch Team takes “Deeds, not creeds” seriously, putting this philosophy into practice on the second Friday of every month. In our interactions with one another, as well as with the guests we serve, we celebrate the inherent worth and dignity of us all.

Last year, 64 UUs (who ranged in age from 8 to 80+) prepared more than 1,680 meals. For the first nine months of 2015, we served an average of 125 meals each second Friday, but during the last three months of the year that average jumped to 155.

Enthusiastic and committed UU volunteers provide ingredients for the meal and prepare and serve the lunch. Our menu always includes omnivorous and vegetarian main dishes, fruit and green salads, cooked vegetables, beverages, and desserts. We take pride in knowing that our UU free lunch has earned a reputation among diners as a meal you don’t want to miss.

Last year several generous UUs and UU groups each provided a meal’s main dish. The Wednesday Afternoon Covenant Group made a great cheesy ham and hash brown casserole that has become a real favorite. Energetic RE students prepared hot chicken sandwiches for our July meal. Other openhearted donors provided fried chicken from John’s Grocery for two separate Friday meals—one during the holiday season in honor of her children, and another in May as a Mother’s Day remembrance. A generous couple provided pulled pork sandwiches, baked beans, and corn bread. Every month, a dedicated UU makes our vegetarian option, lasagna.

In 2015, Sherry Dolash and Lee and Sue Eberly continued to coordinate Free Lunch activities, with the able backup of experienced Free Lunchers Jeanette Carter and Bonnie Penno.

At every Friday meal, we are thanked by diners who tell us how much they have appreciated both the food and the camaraderie. And as we finish up our work at 1105 S. Gilbert Court on each Free Lunch Friday, we are also grateful for having had an opportunity to work alongside friends to accomplish something so worthwhile. —Sue Eberly

OWL Moon CUUPs

OWL Moon Covenant of UU Pagans (CUUPs) is a community of people that gathers to celebrate earth-centered traditions. It is a part of the larger UU tradition, and brings awareness of Unitarian Universalism to the greater Pagan community in Iowa City and the surrounding areas. This group furthers the mission and vision of the UUSIC by expanding outreach to the community, drawing new membership to the UUSIC, and bringing perspectives from the sixth source of wisdom to this congregation. It is led by Marsha Cheyney and Dawn Marshall.

Our goals this year were to bring more experiences of Earth-centered traditions to the congregation and to provide worship opportunities for those drawn to Earth-centered spiritual paths, both in the UUSIC congregation and those in the community who may not have a spiritual home. We did this by hosting and collaborating on a number of special events:

- Ostara (Spring Equinox): a ritual focused on the emergence of Spring, and our ability to plant those “seeds” that we wish to grow in our lives.
- “Wake Up, Spring” service for the UUSIC congregation (led by Marsha Cheyney and Allison Oliver)
- Beltane (May 1st): “Birds & Bees Ritual: a Celebration of Blossoming,” with special guests from the Cedar Rapids CUUPS group, focused on the interconnectedness of all life.
- Summer Solstice: “Indulgence ritual,” an evening experiencing of the magic that is asking for what you want and receiving it (every time!).
- Workshops with pagan author and ritual presenter Shauna Aura: “Sacred Sound: Dynamic Chanting for Ritual and Personal Practice” and “Finding Your Personal Magic.”
- Mabon (Fall Equinox): “Gathering In—A Harvest Ritual,” focused on naming that which will sustain us through the coming seasons, so that we can bring in the harvest we need.
- Samhain (October 31st): “Ancestors Ritual,” a modern twist on the traditional “Dumb Supper,” we honored our ancestors in silent communion.
- Yule (Winter Solstice): “Into the Light.” In collaboration with WomanSpirit, we hosted a celebration of the returning light. Thank you to our friends at Agudas Achim Synagogue for the use of their beautiful space! Cash donations were collected for Shelter House at this event.
- Imbolc (February 2nd): “Chasing Away Winter” ritual, a fun, family-friendly ritual to chase away the winter blahs!
- New moon meditation and divination nights sprinkled throughout the year.
- Full moon ritual to bless the land at 2355 Oakdale Road.

—Marsha Cheyney



Pictured above: Altars for Fire, Water, Earth, and Air

Partner Church

This has been an exciting year in our partnership! We've been matched with our Partner Church, Parocia Unitariana, in the village of Janosfalva, Transylvania, Romania since 1993. Our UUSIC Partner Church team strives to enhance awareness of our shared religious Unitarian heritage, provide needed financial support and deepen, widen and strengthen our partnership with those in the small village of 150 people located in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains.

Achievements:

- Through our annual Festival of the First Bread and the following Sunday program we sent \$3,000 to our partners to aid in meeting village needs. (Despite the small population, village needs continue to increase. Youth move away and elders remain on their farms.)
- From April 15th to the 28th, 2016, we hosted six visitors from Janosfalva: the Rev. Simo Family and Family Mezei. The visit was highly successful: they spent time with the Davenport congregation, visited Chicago and participated in many activities in Iowa City including:
 - A congregational potluck held prior to the teen coffee house and concluding with a video of Janosfalva
 - They became acquainted with Iowa City and our everyday life
 - They participated in our ground breaking ceremony
 - They spent time in several American homes
 - They made trips to Kalona, Amana, museums
 - Rev. Sandor presenting the Sunday sermon followed by a congregational reception
 - They received gifts of handmade lap quilts from our congregation to theirs
 - We received the gift of a Transylvanian tablecloth with green embroidery as an addition to our new "greenest church in Iowa"
- New members joined our team

Future Goals:

- To have an intergenerational service trip to Janosfalva in 2017 or 2018.
- Offer a pilgrimage to Janosfalva
- Increase regular contact through Skype.
- Enroll new leadership for our Partner Church team and Festival of the First Bread
- Strengthen contact with the Davenport Unitarians who also are paired with Janosfalva

—Mary Kathryn Wallace & Joe Brisben

Secular Humanists

Church-state issues, religion in politics, book reviews, historical Jesus—no, it's not CNN or the *NY Times*, it's UUSIC Secular Humanists. Reflecting on our 13th year, we're not just feeling "lucky," we're joyfully thriving. With the Common Room at Old Brick as our new home, we gather 40 to 50 young, old, and in-between monthly.

We are most pleased with the 20 to 25 Secular Students at Iowa (SecSI) who attend meetings and add fresh voices to discussions. This has more than surpassed our goal of the past years to reach out to the UI community. We shall continue to nourish this relationship with SecSI and with the various UI professors who have joined us at meetings and on our email list.

We strive to be a more visible and accessible home for atheists, freethinkers, agnostics, and the curious of the UUSIC community, UI, and beyond. We strive to better utilize social media to this end.

A goal for the next couple years is to guide UUSIC toward the UUA designation of a Freethinker Friendly Congregation. News of this program and process will be forthcoming.

After a hiatus of several years, Mark Yuskis is again Secular Humanists Coordinator. For more information or to be added to our email list, contact Mark at resdoggie@aol.com.

—Mark Yuskis

Social Justice Coordinating Committee

The Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC) applied UU principles in 2015 as we coordinated projects and events related to social justice. We offer information and education about issues regarding social inequality and distribute funding to agencies selected by the congregation. Achievements in 2015 included:

- Two days of service in which more than 100 volunteers participated in projects throughout the community that included gardening, cleaning a home, knitting caps for premature babies, working at the Food Bank and Crisis Center, and cleaning a wilderness area.
- SJCC recruited walkers and collected pledges for the annual interfaith Crop Walk. Our local Crisis Center receives 25 percent of the money raised locally, and UUSIC is among the group of international organizations that receive designated contributions. UUSIC was recognized for its participation in Crop Walk.
- A half dozen sewers made 50 cloth book bags for Grant Wood School children.
- Sabri Sky and Jane Slaymaker maintained the Little Free Library in Iowa City's Forest View Mobile Home Park.
- Raised \$900 for Access2Independence at a Valentine's Dance at which Smith Studio Jazz performed music.
- Continued to have members represent UUSIC at the monthly meetings of the Consultation of Religious Communities (CRC).
- Collected winter clothing for the CRC's annual drive and helped with the sorting and distribution.
- Organized several social occasions with Circle of Friends families. For the December holidays we collected items such as gift cards for gasoline and for Hy-Vee and Target stores, as well as personal gifts for each member of the two families.
- About 50 gifts were donated for the Homeless Children's Trust Fund Party.
- We have followed through with the congregation's vote on selecting the 12 agencies that should receive funds from our Sunday offerings. In months that have a fifth Sunday, the SJCC identifies a specific need, and the funds are sent there accordingly. A report on those distributions follows in this report.
- Designated the late Barbara Curtin as the 2015 recipient of the Evans Worthley Award. Rev. Protzman presented it to Curtin's wife, Jane Slaymaker.

The SJCC's goals for the next 12-15 months are to:

- Increase our membership and to encourage more UUSIC members to participate in our activities.
- Continue to develop projects and events.
- Collaborate with Green Sanctuary on environmental and educational projects and events.
- Coordinating mutual interests with the Social Justice Action Fund.

The SJCC meets at 7 pm on the first Tuesday of the month at the Oakdale House. We encourage anyone interested in social justice to attend meetings and consider joining the committee. —Joe Brisben and Gay Mikelson

SJCC Contributions in 2015

2015 Total Giving: \$30,515

(2014 Contributions: \$29,347)

(2013 Contributions: \$29,806)

(2012 Contributions: \$26,840)

Agency Schedule

January: DVIP	\$1,600
February: Hospice	\$1,200
March: Crisis Center	\$1,600
April: Elder Services	\$1,650
May: Table to Table	\$1,425
June: Comm. Mental Health	\$1,150
July: Free Medical Clinic	\$1,200
August: United Action for Youth	\$1,600
September: Emma Goldman	\$1,650
October: Shelter House	\$1,700
November: Free Dental Clinic	\$1,700
December: Free Lunch	<u>\$1,500</u>
	\$17,975

Misc. Contributions & Expenses

CRC Dues	\$150
Common Fund of CRC	<u>\$1,200</u>
	\$1,350

Other UUSIC Fundraising in 2015

Partner Church (Dinner/Jan. 5th Sunday)	\$3,000
Access2Independence Valentine Dance	\$900
CROP Walk	\$1,665
UUSC Earthquake/CYC Bakesale	\$250*
Shelter House (Benefit Luncheon)	\$1,050
Chico Mendes Reforestation	\$1,610*
Myeloma Walk	\$550*
UUSC Refugee Relief	\$1,300
Circle of Friends (Gift Cards)	\$540
Shelter House (Solstice Service)	<u>\$325</u>
	\$11,190

*Additional contribution from the Social Justice Action Fund not included.

Worship Associates

Worship is the central act of the religious community, a time to remember, to come together, as Judith Frediani says, “to make meaning of life and to discover how to live a life that is meaningful.” The Worship Associates (WAs) play a vital role in the worship life of the congregation by living out our mission, which is to work closely with our minister to plan and conduct worship services and to develop our skills in creating and leading worship. Our shared vision of worship is that of a communal activity that utilizes as many of the senses as possible and creates opportunities for embodied worship, allowing us to participate with our whole self. It invites us to ask and to wrestle with the deepest questions of life and reminds us that we are connected with each other and with all of creation. It lifts up the mission and vision of the church and challenges us to discern how we are called to live out our faith in the world.

- On the Sundays when Rev. Steven is in the pulpit, the WAs assist with the service by welcoming members and visitors, leading the congregation in the lighting of the chalice, inviting the giving and receiving of the offering, and delivering the readings, plus assisting in other ways as needed.
- When Rev. Steven is not in the pulpit, the WAs lead services or help identify and recruit guest speakers and programs.
- Other responsibilities of the WAs include leading worship during the Welcome Home Wednesday series in fall and spring, planning and hosting the Memorial Day and Labor Day all-congregation picnics, and leading and coordinating summer services.
- The WAs also met monthly with Rev. Steven for scheduling, planning, and discussing worship, and we held regular retreats to deepen our relationships and build community, gain experience in creating and planning worship, and share worship resources and ideas.
- For the services last summer, in consultation with Rev. Steven and the Social Justice Coordinating Committee, the WAs chose the theme of “Giving Life the Shape of Justice.” There was so much energy around summer services that explored the topic of racial justice that the Racial Justice study/ACTION Circle was formed to help the congregation explore and deepen its commitment to racial justice.
- For Summer 2016, the WAs are working with the 2016-2017 year’s theme “Odysseys: Stories of Our Past, Dreams of Our Future” in which speakers will “tell of their personal odysseys—their intellectual or spiritual journeys or experiences through which they have discovered greater knowledge or understanding of their beliefs and values as Unitarian Universalists.”

—Rev. Steven Protzman



Unitarian Universalist Society of Iowa City

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Congregational Life Coordinator:	Carol Throckmorton
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