

# 2018/2019 Annual Report



## MISSION STATEMENT:

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

## Congregational Meeting, May 19th, 2019

### Agenda

#### OPENING

Call to Order & Establishment of Quorum

Jane DeWitt, Board President

Chalice Lighting & Opening Words

Rev. Diane Dowgiert, Interim Minister

#### ACTION ITEMS

Recognition of Outgoing Committee Members

Jane DeWitt

Presentation of Leadership Nominees

Kirk Witzberger,  
Leadership Development Committee

Nominations from the Floor & Vote to Elect:

Jane DeWitt

Board of Trustees

Leadership Development Committee (LDC)

Endowment Committee

Presentation of Minister's Compensation Package

Chris Rode

Vote to Approve

Jane DeWitt

Presentation of Candidates for Ministerial Search Committee

Vote by Printed Ballot

Presentation on Freethinker Friendly Congregation Resolution

Vote by Printed Ballot

Collection of Ballots

Information on Fire & Tornado Emergency Procedures

Announcements

#### CLOSING

Motion for Adjournment

We extinguish this flame  
but not the light of truth,  
the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment.  
All these we carry in our hearts and in our minds  
until we are together again.

Extinguishing the Chalice & Closing Words

Rev. Diane Dowgiert

#### Slate of Leadership Nominees

**Board of Trustees:** Joe Rasmussen, Vice-President; Allison Bettine, Secretary; John Raley, Finance Trustee

**Leadership Development Committee (LDC):**  
Marsha Cheyney

**Endowment Committee:** Kris Canfield

#### Printed Ballot

UUS voting members will receive a printed ballot along with their voting card. The ballot includes two sections. The first is the election of members to the Ministerial Search Committee. The second section is a vote on approval of the Freethinker Friendly Congregation Resolution.

Absentee ballots are not allowed. No nominations from the floor, write-in names, or amendments are allowed.

#### Minister's Compensation Package Budget

**Motion:** That we approve the following Minister's Compensation Package Budget resolution.

WHEREAS, the UUS 2020 budget will not receive approval until our December 2019 congregational meeting; and  
WHEREAS, the Ministerial Search Committee must include our next settled minister's compensation package in materials submitted to UUA prior to that December meeting; and

WHEREAS, UUS intends to comply with the UUA Fair Compensation Guidelines and seeks to attract a strong pool of interested ministers;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the congregation approves the inclusion of a competitive compensation package in the 2020 budget, with the final offer to be commensurate with experience. And further, that the maximum compensation is set at \$140,825 (salary & housing – \$85,250; benefits – \$29,325; professional allowance – \$6,000; and moving expenses – \$20,250).

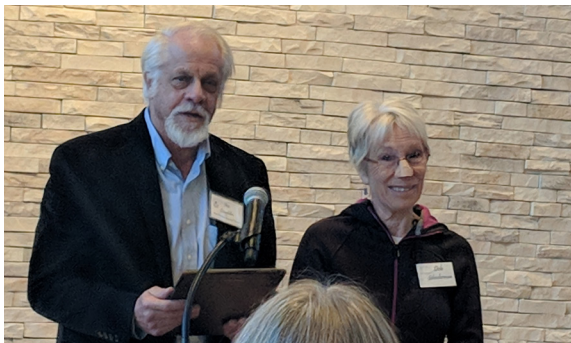


## From Your Board President, Jane DeWitt

This past year continued to be an exciting and challenging time of transitions. You will see in the various accounts shared in this Annual Report that members of the Society have been busy with the work that helps maintain our building and land, our beloved community, and our engagement with the broader world. Whether contributing as individuals or groups, our congregation has accomplished much this year. As a Board, we are motivated by your energy and commitment.

We celebrated our One-Year Anniversary in the building in October with an event sponsored by the Secular Humanists. Invited speakers Ed Folsom and Christopher Merrill were the highlights of "An Evening with Walt Whitman." In the weeks preceding the anniversary event, a serious effort was made to record the names of all the groups and individuals who worked to bring our new building to reality. The Board created the Augusta Chapin Meritorious Service Award and honored its first recipient, Deb Schoelerman, for her extensive, selfless and tireless efforts on behalf of the Society.

*(Below) Jim Laughlin presented Deb Schoelerman with the first Augusta Chapin Meritorious Service Award on October 21st, 2018.*



Even though we moved into our new building over a year ago, we continue the process of settling into the building and the surrounding land. We are still on a slow learning curve as we adjust to the complexities of our building. We have incurred unexpected costs, but have made some good decisions for our future. In September 2018, the Board approved the Solar Power Purchase Agreement between UU Solar, LLC (UUS member solar panel investors) and UUS. In February 2019, the Board approved a request from Land Ministry to fund a comprehensive landscape design to be undertaken this year.

In 2018, the Board approved two proposals that connected UUS with other churches working together in our community. In July, the Board received a proposal that UUS join in the work of the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition and

heard from Joel Gilbertson-White, who provided an overview of the Coalition's history and the role we could play in their work. Following the receipt of additional information and further discussion, the Board approved the proposal in September. In October, the Board received a proposal from the Green Sanctuary Committee that UUS be a charter member of a new formal chapter of Iowa Interfaith Power and Light (IIPL) being established in this area. The Board unanimously supported UUS involvement and signed a Congregational Covenant with IIPL.

Following a tradition of many years, two members of the Board, Amy Fretz and Jane DeWitt, attended the week-long Midwest Leadership School on the Luther College campus in Decorah. Our treasurer, Chris Rode, who attended the school in the summer of 2017, returned as a staff member in 2018.

In June, ten members, including three Board members, attended General Assembly in Kansas City, where we were able to meet our new Interim Minister, Rev. Diane Dowgiert. In August, we welcomed her to UUS. A Transition Team with members Tom McMurray (co-chair), Diane Martin (co-chair), Virginia Melroy, Gary Lawrenson, Jeanette Carter, John Lanaghan, and Pete Brokaw helped introduce Rev. Diane to our congregation and activities and provided support as she became familiar with us. Overall, the Team provided significant assistance to Rev. Diane as we entered into the interim ministry period. In February, as required by the UUA Transitions Office, a 6-month Interim Ministry Assessment was completed by the Board, discussed with Rev. Diane, and submitted.

The UUA recommends that during a period of Interim Ministry, congregations should put their Committee on Ministry (COM) on hiatus. Through conversation and consultation with others, it was determined that our Committee on Congregational Life and Ministry was sufficiently like a COM that it should be suspended. At our September Board meeting, a proposed change to the by-laws that would allow for that to occur was approved. That change was then approved by the congregation at the December Congregational Meeting. Thus, the work of CCLAM was suspended during the Interim.

***"A Governance Committee has been formed and begun work on reviewing and revising policies [as we begin to] transition to a new organizational structure for both governance and ministry."***

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*(President's Report, continued)*

The MidAmerica Region offered us a Start-Up Workshop as we began the Interim Ministry period. That retreat took place on Saturday, September 8th, and was led by Nancy Combs-Morgan; all Board members and Rev. Diane were in attendance. We focused on clarifying roles and responsibilities and establishing clear goals and tasks for the coming year. The retreat took the place of the usual fall Board retreat.

At the December meeting, the Board spent the majority of its time discussing a transition to a new organizational structure for both governance and ministry. Rev. Diane provided background and information for moving forward with staff and other lay leaders. Since then, a Governance Committee has been formed and begun work on reviewing and revising policies. Other committees have yet to be formed or begin their work, but planning is underway.

On March 24th, 2019, our assigned Transition Coach, Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs, was in the pulpit at UUS. Following the service, she led a forum with the congregation and met with the Board. These meetings provided an opportunity for Rev. Eller-Isaacs to provide guidance as we enter into the search process for a new settled minister. As I write this report, we are beginning the search for the search committee! In coming weeks, we will be working to identify those among us who are willing and able to serve our Society in this way.

We have had a productive year and have made progress on the work of the Interim. With able guidance from our Interim Minister, the Board is preparing for a successful search and continued growth and engagement within UUS and beyond.

—Submitted by Jane DeWitt

### **From Your Interim Minister, Rev. Diane Dowgiert**

It has been a joy to serve as the Interim Minister at UUS for this past year. I was drawn to come here by your commitment to living your Unitarian Universalist values both collectively and individually, to the courage and generosity it took to build and move into your new home, and your engagement with the social issues of your local community and the world. You have proven to be all of that and so much more. I am honored that your Board of Trustees has extended my contract for one more year. There is much to accomplish in the coming year—and it is good to pause and reflect on where we have been.

An interim ministry is a time of transition from the departure of a settled minister to the arrival of a new settled minister. Transitions inevitably bring shifts and changes in the ways you've done things before. This is a momentous time of transition and change in the life of your Society. In addition to the ministerial transition, I see two others that are happening simultaneously: transition to a new building and a transition in membership size.

Given all of this, your congregation is not just changing. It is transforming.

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***"Your congregation is not just changing. It is transforming."***

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Your building is in almost continual use by congregational groups, community groups, and rental events. The technical systems of the building are complex and therefore require new learning and acquisition of new skills. You are serving greater numbers of people: members, friends, and visitors. Experts in church growth refer to this as a size transition from "pastoral" to "program" size.



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***(Above) Rev. Diane "unpacks her bags" during one of her first services at UUS.***

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In a pastoral size congregation, the ministry centers around the minister. Each member will experience a personal connection to the minister. In a pastoral size congregation, the organizational structure is committee driven. This structure is functional up to about 150 members.

In a program size congregation, the ministry centers around programs. Each member is primarily connected to the congregation not through its minister but its programs. Another way to think about it is transforming from a single-celled to a multi-celled organism. Program size congregations are mission driven and are functional from about 151 to 400 members.

In February, you reported to the UUA that your voting membership is 257. Your general membership roll is currently 371 (not all are voting members). You are clearly a program size congregation.

*(Continued on next page)*



*(Interim Minister's Report, continued)*

Taken together, the transition to the new building and the current size of the Society, the work of this interim ministry includes significant changes to your organizational structures. A large part of this interim ministry year has been shifting more fully into policy-based governance. What this means is that your elected Board of Trustees spends its time on mission and vision, creation of policies, fiduciary responsibilities, oversight, and assessment. The Board delegates the day-to-day management and operations to the minister and staff. This form of governance clarifies roles and responsibilities and frees energy to focus on mission and vision.

In every interim ministry, the congregation and minister engage in addressing five interim tasks. Congregations that faithfully fulfill these five tasks are more likely to enjoy a subsequent, fruitful ministry with a called and settled minister. Working closely with the Board of Trustees and the Interim Transition Team, the five tasks are addressed in a variety of ways, from listening circles, to various workshops and forums, to sermons and worship services, to one-on-one conversations, to intentional outreach to our UU siblings in faith locally, regionally, and nationally.

The five interim tasks are:

- **Heritage:** Claiming and honoring its past and engaging and acknowledging its grief and conflicts.
- **Mission:** Recognizing its unique identity and its strengths, needs, and challenges.
- **Leadership:** Understanding the appropriate leadership roles of minister(s), church staff, and lay leaders and navigating the shifts in leadership that may accompany times of transition.
- **Connections:** Making appropriate use of regional, UUA, and other outside resources.
- **Future:** Renewing its vision, strengthening its stewardship, preparing for new growth and new professional leadership,

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***“You will see that how I have spent  
my time is reflective of how a  
minister functions in a program size  
congregation.”***

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ready to embrace the future with anticipation and zest.

In addition to working on the five tasks, an Interim Minister performs all the usual duties of the minister of a congregation. What follows is a summary of my activities this year. You will see that how I have spent my time is reflective of how a minister functions in a program size congregation.

This year, I led 27 worship services. Two services were canceled due to weather. I missed three Sundays due to total knee replacement surgery.

I officiated two memorial services and dedicated six children.

I met with the Core Staff a total of 34 times, the Board of Trustees 11 times, the Program Staff 11 times, the Executive Committee seven times, the Interim Transition Team 10 times, the Worship Associates five times, the Pastoral Care Team three times, the Social Justice Coordinating Committee three times, the Stewardship Committee three times, the Staff Relations Committee two times, the Finance Council two times, the Capital Campaign Committee two times, the Social Justice Action Fund one time, the Green Sanctuary Committee one time, the Building and Grounds Committee one time, the Endowment Committee one time, and the Leadership Development Committee one time.

I attended the Iowa Cluster of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA) seven times, the Prairie Star Chapter of the UUMA one time, the Regional Assembly of the UUA one time, and the annual seminar of Accredited Interim Ministers one time.

I facilitated 11 Listening Circles.

I frequently met one-on-one with individual staff members and various lay leaders of the congregation. I engaged in pastoral care for many individuals.

I met with the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition two times.

I created monthly Covenant Group materials.

One-time events that I participated in included: Endowment Party, Covenant Group Potluck, New Member Dinner, Walt Whitman One-Year Anniversary event. I attended the dedication of the new Shelter House facility Cross Park Place, represented the Unitarian point of view at a talk-back after a play at the Riverside Theatre, presented a State of the Society Forum, facilitated a Freethinker Friendly Forum, and facilitated a meeting of the leaders of all the various groups involved in upkeep of facilities.

This year, the Society said final goodbyes to the following beloved members:

- Kurt Frieze
- Bill Eginton
- Faye Strayer

Each of their deaths leaves an empty place in the heart of the congregation. Each of them lives on in loving memories and in their legacies of dedication and commitment to UUS.

A full year it has been! I am grateful for all the skilled, caring, thoughtful, and dedicated leaders who make UUS a vibrant beacon for Unitarian Universalist principles and values. I look forward to what comes next in the year ahead as we work together to bring the congregation into a fruitful new ministry.

Yours in the interim,

Rev. Diane Dowgiert

## Interim Ministry Transition Team

During an Interim Ministry, such as we have now with Rev. Diane Dowgiert, the Unitarian Universalist Association recommends that an Interim Ministry Transition Team be established to be of assistance to the Interim Minister.

In August, the Board appointed this seven-member team to serve from August 2018 to July 2020. Members are: Jeanette Carter, Virginia Melroy, Gary Lawrenson, Pete Brokaw, and John Lanaghan. Diane Martin and Tom McMurray are the co-chairs.

This interim period between settled ministers offers an opportunity for the congregation to evaluate our past, to review our goals, to assess our programs and the health of the congregation, and to “tune up” in preparation for a new settled minister and the future.

The role of the team is to assist the Interim Minister by providing insight, organizational and facilitative help, and willing hands. The team serves as an informational resource, a planning group, and a progress monitor.

Initially, the team set up introductions and meetings between Rev. Diane and the staff, the Executive Committee, the full Board, and various committees and groups and their leaders.

The team also set up small-group meetings with almost every Past-President of the Society spanning the last 25 years or so. From these meetings Rev. Diane learned of the triumphs and challenges they faced during their terms of office.

We also set up a meeting and discussion with Rev. Diane at Oaknoll, where approximately 25 UUS members reside.

Three small-group meetings were also held with members and friends who wanted the opportunity to meet and interact with Rev. Diane.

These meetings provided the background for Rev. Diane to better understand our congregation—our values, how we function, and our place in the community.

The Transition Team has been meeting monthly with Rev. Diane and will continue to do so.

In recent months we have been interviewing staff and members of the congregation and analyzing our congregational systems in order to better understand what is working really well and what as a congregation we need to work on, all with an eye to completing a successful interim ministry and transition to a new settled minister.

—Submitted by Tom McMurray and Diane Martin

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*(Right) Deer are a common sight on our eight-acre grounds.*

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## Leadership Development Committee

The purpose of the Leadership Development Committee (LDC) is to provide qualified candidates for those leadership positions that are elected by the congregation; assist the Board in supporting active, ongoing intentional cultivation of UUS leaders; and help develop leadership skills at every level, including individual members, committees, and Board members.

The Leadership Development Committee is made up of five elected members who serve three-year terms. This year's members are Maureen Patterson, Jim Olson, Jean Hood, Cindy Spading, and chair Kirk Witzberger.

This past year the LDC encouraged members to attend the regional and general assemblies, and we encouraged members in elected positions and candidates to elected positions to attend the MidWest Leadership School. We also led planning for the Beyond Sunday Activities Fair, which highlighted activities in the church and encouraged members and friends to sign up and participate in them.

Our most visible function was to identify candidates whom we recommend be elected by the congregation. This year we identified members to serve in three roles on the board (VP, secretary, and finance trustee) and one position each for the Endowment Committee and the LDC.

—Submitted by Kirk Witzberger



## From Your Board Treasurer, Chris Rode

2018 was another year of tremendous change for UUS. It marked our first full year in the new facility; it also saw the end of our shared ministry with Rev. Steven Protzman, and the beginning of Rev. Diane Dowgiert's interim ministry with us. The budget process for 2019 revealed a challenging financial road for the Society, which culminated in a stewardship campaign goal that increased 30% over the previous year.

### 2018 Year-End

Considering the ministerial transition and the compensation changes that were incurred because of it, the Society did quite well in 2018. Our revenues fell short of expectations by about 3.5%, which can almost entirely be attributed to not having a Treats & Talents Auction, a choice made in order to get back onto a spring auction schedule in 2019. Expenses were only 5% more than we had budgeted for, which is remarkable considering we faced about \$17,000 in unplanned expenses in the hiring of our interim minister, Rev. Diane Dowgiert, and our mortgage expense ended up being about \$27,000 more than we had planned. We ended the year just under \$30,000 short.

2018	Budgeted	Actual	Variance
Revenues	\$557,054	\$556,695.24	\$26,791.45
Expenses	\$559,821	\$586,602.06	-\$40,215.14
<b>NET</b>		<b>-\$29,906.82</b>	

Table 1: 2018 Year-End Actual vs. Budget

***“The 2019 budgeting process bore out what we already knew—2019 is going to be a challenging year, financially.”***

### 2019 Operating Budget

The 2019 budgeting process bore out what we already knew—2019 is going to be a challenging year, financially. Both the mortgage and the additional staffing that had been funded by the Staffing Toward Expanded Ministry (STEM) Fund in years past are now absorbed into the general operating budget. At our December 2018 congregational meeting, a budget of nearly \$615,000 was approved for 2019. This represents about a 10% increase in expenses over 2018. The increase in necessary pledge revenue, however, was over 22% because we didn't have the carry-over from the previous year that we did in 2018 (we carried over about \$43,000 from 2017 into 2018 due to mortgage expenses that were not incurred because of construction delays).

As of mid-April 2019, pledging for 2019 is at \$426,720, which is up 13.5% over 2018, but still about \$42,000 short of what we need to break even. That said, because of a very successful Treats & Talents Auction this spring, our revenues for 2019 are exceeding our expenses by \$32,000 as of the end of March.

### New Facility & Mortgage

As of mid-April, our mortgage balance on the new facility is \$916,450, which is down from \$1.2 million a year ago. In Fall 2018, we paid \$160,000 toward the principal from the Jean Reese bequest. This is the maximum additional we can pay in a calendar year without incurring prepayment penalties from the bank. We will be paying an additional large sum toward the principal from the Reese bequest again this spring. At that time, I will work with the bank to re-amortize the outstanding balance to improve our cash flow.

### Endowment

Our endowment remains strong. We received gifts to the endowment of \$9,600 in 2018. It ended the year down about 7%, which is in line with what the broader markets experienced in 2018. The year also ushered in a change in management for most of our endowment funds. The Carr and Whitaker funds remain invested in the UUA Common Fund, but the remainder of the endowment funds (Detiger, Music, Myrl Bristol, Reese, and the general endowment fund) have been transferred to the Wealth Management division of the University of Iowa Community Credit Union.

Our long-time financial advisor, Dick Stevenson, retired early in the year. The Endowment Committee interviewed several financial advisors and ultimately recommended UICCU to the Board, which approved the recommendation unanimously. The funds were transferred shortly after the first of the year. In the first quarter of 2019, the endowment is up 9%, and as of mid-April, its value stands at \$1.29 million.

### Uncertainties

2020 should see a lot of the financial uncertainty we have faced over the past couple of years fall away, but I expect it will be another challenging budget year. This is a risk we accepted when we embarked on building the Greenest Church in Iowa. I see no reason to not remain optimistic, however. We are about to embark on some of the most important work during our interim period of ministry—mission and vision work and the formation of the search committee for our new settled minister. As we undertake this work, we should not lose sight of what it will take to broaden our appeal, and to get the word out to the community at large about the good things we do. In order to grow our revenues to keep up with expenses, we are going to need to be strategic about growing our membership while also working to strengthen the connections within our already existing community.

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*(Treasurer's Report, continued)*

I would encourage us to continue to take risks, to not be so afraid to step outside of our comfort zone, and to be even more welcoming—especially to people from historically marginalized communities, for we are uniquely positioned amongst most religious communities to serve their spiritual needs. If we continue to focus on what we bring the broader community that other organizations don't offer, we can grow into an even more vibrant spiritual community for the growing population that doesn't identify with traditional religion but is looking for a place to embark on a journey to discover their own truth and meaning. We are on the cusp of great things—let's live into our potential.

—Submitted by Chris Rode

***“Go out on a limb. That's where the fruit is.”***

***—Anonymous***

## **Finance Council**

The Finance Council met seven times between May 2018 and March 2019. Major activities included 1) exploring 2019 budget alternatives in light of significant increases in fixed expenses, 2) beginning to discuss the possibility of bringing accounting in-house, and 3) starting to plan for a transition of the Finance Council to a structure and function that would better share responsibilities for finance with the Treasurer.

Members are determined by role and include the Board treasurer (Chris Rode), the Interim Minister (Rev. Diane Dowgiert), the Board Finance Trustee (Sara Feldmann, Council chair), the Stewardship Committee Chairs (Jeffery Ford and Vanessa Taylor), and a representative from the Endowment Committee (Pete Brokaw).

—Submitted by Sara Feldmann

## **Stewardship Committee**

Current members of the Committee include Matthew Martin, Diana Miller, Michael Schmitz, Elizabeth Swanson, Vanessa Taylor (co-chair), and Jeffery Ford (co-chair). We would note the current committee members have all served less than two years.

The Stewardship Committee has been actively evaluating the 2019 stewardship pledge campaign with an eye to the fall 2019 campaign for 2020. We were pleased with the growth in contributions in general. In 2019 the congregation pledged approximately \$426,600 as compared to \$376,025 in 2018. In 2019 we have 194 pledge units and 28 non-pledging donors (compared to 217 pledge units and 30 non-pledging donors in 2018).

We currently have roughly 20 families or individuals that have not pledged or donated, some of whom did not complete their 2018 pledge. Nearly all pledging units who have been slow to pledge or are not contributing have been contacted by volunteers via phone, letter and/or email. Stewardship will follow up again in a few cases where the reasons for not pledging are not clear.

Stewardship plans to work with the Board and Finance Council to set a clearly defined vision and goal for the campaign as early as possible this year. We believe the next campaign will be best served by clearly stated goals and updates on our progress towards those goals during the course of the campaign. Our intended focus will be upon the nature of commitment to the Society. Plans at this point include a kickoff on October 13th and closing celebration on November 17th. Stewardship wishes to emphasize that the campaign is designed to build up to a Celebration Sunday on November 17th.

We are also working on suggestions to the Board for new ways to improve financial integrity and effectiveness in planning our finances, including moving the stewardship campaign from the fall to the spring; basing the budget on a three-year average of contributions, inflation, and program goals; and requiring new or expanded programming budget requests to include specific goals and plans that can be presented to the congregation to garner support for those visions/goals.

—Submitted by Jeffery Ford and Vanessa Taylor



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***(Left) On Sunday, November 4th, 2018, the congregation gathered for a ceremony of commitment to our Stewardship Campaign and to our future together at UUS.***

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## Capital Campaign Committee

The Capital Campaign Committee (CCC) met quarterly in 2018. The focus of the committee's work focused on follow-up and campaign wrap-up. As of December 31st, 2018, the campaign results were as follows:

- Pledged: \$2,110,043.50
- Pledge balance: \$108,327.27
- Non-Pledge gifts: \$26,630.81

We had 242 total giving units. 38 were unpledged gifts. Of 204 pledges, 165 pledges were paid in full (38 overpaid). 28 pledges were partially fulfilled (6 of which had the balances officially forgiven because of death, moving away,

or unexpected financial hardship). Only five pledges were completely unfulfilled.

**Donor Recognition:** Artist and UUS member Julia Audelhelm drew an original piece of art entitled "Our Tree of Gifts" that included all donor names, including the "in memory of" and "in honor of" names. The art work (pictured below) was unveiled on December 2nd and hung in the Fellowship Hall.

Jamie Sharp chaired the CCC. Jeffery Ford served as Vice-Chair. Members were David Martin, Diane Martin, Vicki Siefers, Jim Laughlin, Barbara Haring, Alan Swanson, and Liz Swanson. We gratefully thank everyone who contributed to *Building a New Way*.

—Submitted by Jamie Sharp

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*(Below) UU member and artist Julia Audlehelm created an art piece depicting the names of all recognized Capital Campaign donors.*

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## Treats & Talents Auction

The annual Treats and Talents Auction took a hiatus in 2018 because of our move to the new building. The 2019 auction was scheduled for Saturday, March 9th, much earlier than usual because later spring dates were unavailable. The planning team selected Mardi Gras as a theme and set about creating a fun and profitable event. The event was well-planned and organized with significant participation—fundamentally a success. Many participants applauded the food, music, variety of offerings, and the overall organization of the events.

The lineup of auction events started Saturday afternoon with setup of the silent and live auctions while volunteers provided a fabulous children's auction event with crafts and activities including float making, noisemakers, parades, and more. The day transitioned into an evening for adults with a mocktail hour with live jazz band, a performance by the Brick Street Ramblers, silent auction, dinner, and live auction. Dan Gall stepped in to MC the event when our Mardi Gras Queen, Brenda Linley, had to cancel due to illness. The auction ended the following day with a cake walk, cash-and-carry table, and final bidding for the silent auction.

*Table: Auction Comparison 2017 vs 2019*

	2017	2019
<b>Donors</b>	79	78
<b>Items offered</b>	209	195
<b>Items sold</b>	205	168
<b>Items unsold</b>	6	27
<b>Dinner tickets sold</b>	130	123
<b>Dinner tickets used</b>	135	115
<b>Live auction items #</b>	13	15
<b>Live auction income raised</b>	\$6,360	\$7,867
<b>Silent auction income raised</b>	\$14,105	\$10,610
<b>Cash and carry income</b>	\$3,110.95 (\$1000 donation)	\$603
<b>Total auction income raised</b>	\$24,815.95	\$21,619
<b>Expenses</b>	unknown	\$2,107
<b>Expenses donated</b>	unknown	\$266
<b>Total raised</b>	\$24,815.95 (less expenses)	\$19,511.17
<b>Uncollected</b>	\$1,159	\$4,185
<b># of Volunteers</b>	unknown	Nearly 100

Auction Chair: Judy Tokuhisa. Auction Members: Sharon Booker, Hazel Seaba, Emily Johnson, Al Thomas, Joe Brisben. Team leads and additional adjunct members: Sally Hartman, Carol Throckmorton, Diane Martin, Sarah Ross, Dave Tokuhisa, and Ian Cawley.

—Submitted by Judy Tokuhisa



*(Left and Below) Volunteers pose in Mardi Gras getups ahead of the Auction festivities on March 9th, 2019.*





## From Your Director of Congregational Life (DCL), Peggy Garrigues

### Visitors

UUS had 194 first-time visitors attend Sunday services between April, 2018 and April, 2019. In the year prior to that, we had 282 first-time visitors. The discrepancy between the numbers can largely be attributed to the many visitors who came to services during the first five months the building was open.

### Inquirer Sessions

We continued with the rotating series of nine Inquirer Sessions for newer folks to learn about Unitarian Universalism, tour our building and land, learn about Realm, meet with the Minister, and meet leaders from a variety of groups in the congregation. Between October 2017 and April 2018, we had 172 people attend Inquirer Sessions. Between May of 2018 and April of 2019 we had 144 attend Inquirer Sessions.

### New Members

We had 28 individuals join UUS since our last annual report:

- 5/17/18: Simon C. Tunstall
- 7/29/18: John and Valerie Bowman, Mary E. Dix, Dave Gallaher, Andy Douglas, Kathy Hotsenpiller, Alyssa Selmer, Arlys Joy Thompson
- 10/21/18: Alan Brink, Sherry Mangold, Alexandra Curtis, David Kramer, Susan Kramer, Laurie Neuerberg, Mike and Pat Pavelich, Mark Profit, Jenny Reynolds, Paula Sanan
- 12/16/18: Rev. Lois Cole (our Community Minister)
- 3/10/19: Craig Mosher, Erica Reschly, Julie Reynolds, Mike Schmitz, Cheryl Tugwell, Dana and Steve Van Abbema
- 5/12/19: Raymond D. "Butch" Perry, JD, Jackie E. "Jack" Waters, and Heidi Sinderman

A number of others have expressed their interest in joining at one of the next opportunities and/or have already attended some of the Inquirer Sessions or the Pathway to Membership class.

Approximately 1 in 7 visitors ends up joining UUS. The UUA Membership Assessment tool indicates that between 1 in 5, and 1 in 6 is a good ratio of visitors who end up joining. The Membership Associates will do some assessment to determine ways to better engage visitors in congregational life.

In August the Membership Associates hosted two dinners, to which all the new members from the previous 12 months were invited. Most of the new members attended one of the two dinners, and Rev. Diane, Jessica, myself, and one or two Membership

Associates engaged them in conversation. Almost all new members reported that they were involved in at least one group or volunteering opportunity. Several were involved in more than one group, and some had already taken on leadership roles.

### Other Membership Associates Activities

In October 2018, the Leadership Development Committee worked with Membership Associates to host an Activities Fair. We had 37 UUS groups participate in the fair by hosting informational tables in the Fellowship Hall on October 7th.

We are beginning conversation about creating a new print picture directory of members and helping to get more member photos into Realm.

We are also aware that there is a large discrepancy between the number of listed members, and the number of listed voting members. So we are having conversation about whether there is a different way to count members, and if there are new ways to keep all of those on our membership rolls more fully engaged.



*(Above) New members are welcomed to UUS in a Covenant Ceremony on October 21st, 2018.*

### Hospitality Teams

153 members and friends of UUS serve on our 12 Sunday Hospitality Teams, which serve, cleanup, and provide food for our Sunday social hours, as well as being greeters at the door and serving as ushers for the services. Kim Palmer, our head coordinator, does a fantastic job of asking newer people to join hospitality teams. Six of our 12 teams are led by people who have joined or become involved in UUS over the past three years.

Kim has instituted a make-up list of those who were not able to help on one of the Sundays that their team was assigned. That way, if a team is running short on volunteers for an upcoming Sunday, they can ask people from other teams who had to miss their own team's Sunday.

*(Continued on next page)*

*(DCL Report, continued)*

Carol Nordquist and Carol Throckmorton, with help from Lori Marshall and the Facilities Coordinator as needed, have agreed to coordinate special receptions—primarily for memorial services for UUS members or their immediate family. We have a list of volunteers willing to be contacted to help with those receptions.

One of the challenges we faced since moving into our new building is how to coordinate occasional potlucks after the services without asking a Hospitality Team to do a much larger job than usual, and without leaving people out who aren't staying for the potluck. This especially has an impact on our Memorial Day and Labor Day Sunday picnics, which in years past took place in a city park and never really required a Hospitality Team. Now that they are taking place at our building, we have to find a new way to recruit folks to help on those Sundays. We are still having conversation about how to help logistics work well on those occasions.

In July 2018 we hosted a meeting of hospitality team leaders to assess how procedures were going in the new building, and also to check in on the value of having such a large spread of food on Sundays. We wanted to be sure we weren't asking for too much work from the teams. Overall the response was that teams enjoyed providing a variety of food, and they felt like it was an incentive for people to stay for more conversation.

#### **Group Engagement**

- Out of our 533 listed members and friends in Realm, 293 are involved as a member or leader in at least one group in our congregation. That is an involvement level of 55% for members and friends combined.
- Of our 371 listed members in Realm (this includes both voting members and non-voting members), 247 are involved as a member or leader in at least one group in our congregation, for a 67% involvement level. This includes committees, nurturing mind and spirit groups, interest and activity groups, teaching RE, volunteering groups, or social justice groups.
- Of our 371 listed members, 94 are listed as group leaders in Realm, which is a 25% rate of member involvement as leaders.



*(Above and Right) Members and friends explore ways to get involved at a "Connect Beyond Sunday" Activities Fair, October, 2018.*

- Of the 73 people who have joined UUS in the last three years, three moved away, one deactivated membership, and one (Kurt Frieze) died. Of the other 68, 57 are involved as member or leader in at least one group in our congregation. That is an engagement rate of 84% for those who are still members and in the area.

#### **New Groups and Programs**

**UU Wellspring:** I took an online version of the UU Wellspring program for religious professionals during 2017-2018 and am leading our first group here at UUS this year. UU Wellspring™, developed at the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, is a heart-opening, small-group experience grounded in deep listening. Five UU Wellspring programs are available, each lasting nine months. Each UU Wellspring program incorporates five elements designed to balance knowledge of UU history and theology with personal spiritual growth and engagement with the world:

- Participation in a small-group community.
- A commitment to daily spiritual practice.
- Individual work with a spiritual director.
- Readings and resources for knowledge and reflection.
- Commitment to live out our values in the world.

Materials used in UU Wellspring include books, sermons, articles, blog posts, YouTube videos, TEDtalks, podcasts and other easily accessible resources.

The program began in the fall with a day retreat with outside facilitator Sara Smalley, and seven members—all women this year. We have been meeting twice a month, and will continue through June.

We plan to repeat the first-year Wellspring curriculum this fall with a new group. Then, hopefully we can add one of the other curricula the following year.

*(Continued on next page)*





*(DCL Report, continued)*

**Johnson County Interfaith Coalition:** In 2018, UUS joined the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC), a new group for faith-based community organizing on local issues of social justice. The initial impetus was to address hate crimes, especially in the form of racism. Joel Gilbertson-White has taken an active role, and a number of members of the Racial Justice Circle have attended meetings. I was part of a similar group in the Detroit area, so Joel and I will be the UUS representatives on the newly forming board of JCIC. Rev. Diane will represent UUS on the Faith Leaders Caucus. JCIC took an active role in organizing a local vigil after the synagogue shooting in Pittsburgh, and also coordinated a vigil at the Greater Iowa City Church of the Nazarene, which does a lot of work with immigrant populations after they had hate-based graffiti painted on their building. There are currently 16 local congregations who have joined JCIC.

**Habitat for Humanity Interfaith Build:** Last year a number of UUS members and friends volunteered some work time on a Habitat for Humanity house and at the Habitat Warehouse. This year, Iowa Valley Habitat is organizing an Interfaith Build. About a dozen religious congregations in town, including the Iowa City Mosque, Agudas Achim Jewish Congregation, a number of Christian churches, and UUS are working together. We will jointly build a duplex that will house two families. Dave Gallaher and Jan Locher are working together to coordinate volunteers, meet with the Interfaith Build Organizing Committee, and raise funds to help support the house. Peggy led a couple of UU blessings on behalf of UUS at the groundbreaking for the new duplex. Look for a variety of opportunities to volunteer at various stages of building the new duplex, while working with other UUS friends, or working alongside people from other congregations.

**Knitting Circle:** After a number of people gathered to knit prayer shawls for the January Day of Service, Vicki Siefers and Colleen Higgins coordinated an ongoing Knitting Circle.

They gather both to knit as a spiritual practice, and to create prayer shawls, preemie caps, baby blankets, and other items to donate to local organizations.

**Family Social Justice Group:** This past year Sally Hartman and Peggy Garrigues offered several service opportunities for youth and their families. In September, the group hosted a party for a family newly-arrived from Sudan. In March, folks painted a mural designed by Justine Reschly in the children's room at the Center for Worker Justice in Iowa City. There are plans for a work day in May to plant trees at UUS.

### **Denominational Connections**

**Regional Assembly:** Sixteen UUS members and staff attended Regional Assembly in St. Louis, Missouri, April 5th through 7th, 2019. Six of those were elected by the UUS Board as our official delegates: Jane DeWitt, Russ Lenth, Dave and Diane Martin, Joe Rasmussen, and Vicki Siefers.

We had worship and heard a sermon from UUA President Susan Frederick-Gray, sang music led by UU composer Jason Shelton, learned how the UUA is assessing and addressing racism and white supremacy within UU structures and processes, voted on bylaws and board members for the region, and attended workshops on a wide variety of topics.

**General Assembly:** Thirteen UUS members and friends attended General Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri, June 20th through 24th, 2018. We had our full complement of six delegates voting onsite. The UUS Board elected the following delegates: Jane DeWitt, Sally Hartman, Colleen Higgins, Jim Laughlin, Mary Losch, and Dave Martin.

In 2019, GA is farther away, in Spokane, Washington. At this point, we expect that Colleen Higgins and Sally Hartman will be our only members in attendance.

**Unitarian Universalist Association of Membership Professionals:** I continue to work on the reading and writing required to become a Certified UU Membership Professional.

—Submitted by Peggy Garrigues



*(Left) The UUS Knitting Circle works on prayer shawls during the January 2019 Day of Service.*



*(Left and Below) UUS members and friends participate in a Habitat for Humanity Build in Iowa City, Summer 2018.*



## Pastoral Care

In collaboration with interim minister Rev. Diane Dowgiert, Winnie Ganshaw chairs this ministry and, along with the Pastoral Care team, serves as primary pastoral care provider during this interim period. Members of the team include Jeffery Ford, Jean Hood, and Paul Pomrehn.

During this past year we furthered our mission to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to practice compassion in human relations in a number of ways:

- Continued with “Cards of Caring and Support,” a program to send cards to people in the congregation who experienced any of life’s challenges and losses.
- Offered pastoral care 62 times through a variety of means including phone calls, emails, and conducting visits that provided support to 37 UUS members and friends.

- During December, we distributed amaryllis plants to 22 individuals who experienced a death in their immediate family during the previous year.
- The Pastoral Care team worked closely with Uni-care to provide transportation and meals as requested by members.

Our goals for 2019-2020 will be to:

- Continue these ministries of 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.
- Once again seek to start up the Friendly Visitors program.
- Deepen our pastoral care skills.

—Submitted by Winnie Ganshaw

## Uni-care

Uni-care’s purpose is to provide support to members of our congregation when they might want some hands-on assistance, such as meals, transportation, or occasional house and yard work. By providing mutual support, we strengthen the bonds of fellowship and assure members they are cared for at every age and circumstance of life.

In order to facilitate scheduling volunteers, the Uni-care Coordinators use an online scheduling program (Take Them a Meal) and communicate with the congregation through Wednesday emails.

In 2018, Uni-care provided approximately 40 meals to eight individuals and families helped with a couple of moves. Transportation to doctor’s appointments were provided for seven individuals between March 2018 and April 2019. Some recent requests were for multiple appointments on the same day.

A few people requested rides to Sunday services. Marianne Mason schedules transportation; Diane Martin and Mary McMurray organize food and other requests.

—Submitted by Mary McMurray





(Above) *The 2018/2019 UUS Fireside Choir.*

## From Your Music Director, Gloria Corbin

Music is flourishing at UUS. Many UUS members have stepped forward to share their music talents with the congregation. We can boast of an Adult Choir, a House Ensemble, a String Quintet, a Piano Ensemble, a professional staff accompanist, and gifted vocal and instrumental soloists.

### UUS Adult Choir

The UUS Adult Choir numbers 21 singers. Some of the UUS Adult Choir members have been singing with the choir for more than four decades. The choir rehearses for 90 minutes on Thursday evenings and for 45 minutes on Sunday mornings before the church service. Singers include:

- Sopranos: Colleen Higgins, Kaye Winder, Bonnie Penno, Vicki Siefers, Dixie Cassady, Laurie Neuerburg, Jennifer Mordan and Diane Dowgiert
- Altos: Sandy Keller, Cec Owings, Carol Adamson, and Christine Etler
- Tenors: Gerry Pearson, Jim Olson, Elaine Waples, and Mason Montuoro (a University of Iowa graduate voice student hired through an anonymous donor to lead the tenor section)
- Bass: Joe Brisben, Damian Pieper, Jim Laughlin, Chris Johnson, and David Gallaher

The UUS Adult Choir prepared and sang 35 anthems, introduced and led the congregation in numerous new hymns/songs, prepared “rally” songs for the stewardship campaign, led musical requests from the worship associates and served as “back up” singers for guest soloists.

Several UUS members provide support and enhance choral anthems: Bonnie Penno and Laurie Neuerburg, flute; Carol Adamson, guitar; Joe Brisben, guitar/banjo, and Gerry Pearson, recorder.

Mr. Peng Zhang has been at the Steinway for more than two years. Special offerings from Peng include

the prelude, interlude, meditation, and traveling music—that exceeds 150 special preparations during the course of the church year! Peng also accompanies guest vocal and instrumental soloists.

Peng returned to China during the summer of 2018 to visit family, study and compete in Europe. Mr. Arlen Ottmar was welcomed as our guest accompanist for the months of June and July. Mr. Ottmar is not a stranger to UUS as he has been our substitute accompanist in the past. In addition to being a professional accompanist, he is a piano technician, and he tunes and cares for our three UUS pianos.

### Ensembles

The **UUS House Ensemble** activates for the Christmas season and the Easter season. The goal for the ensemble is to prepare special music for each season. The ensemble has 10 members: Linda Fisher, baritone; Jeanette Carter and Russ Lenth, French horns; Mike Pavelich and Sam Cochran, trumpets; Gerry Pearson, recorders; Bonnie Penno and Alice Atkinson, flutes; Carolyn Johnson, baritone saxophone; and Chris Johnson, keyboard.

The hour-long rehearsals take place on Thursday evenings at 5:30 pm for about 6 weeks prior to their performances. There is considerable freedom in the arrangement voicings which allows for players to pick and choose the part they feel comfortable playing.

The **Piano Ensemble**, made of all UUS pianists, was formed amidst initial efforts to welcome the Martha and Joe Rasmussen grand piano into UUS residency. The Rasmussen piano resides in the Fellowship Hall and is wheeled into the sanctuary for literature requiring two pianos. Membership includes Lynette Marshall, Jane DeWitt, Nik Jakob, Chris Johnson, Alan Swanson, and Peng Zhang. The group rehearses and performs playing 2- and 4-hand literature for Sunday services, accompanies the choir on 4-hand accompaniments, and performs as soloists.

*(Continued on next page)*

*(Music Report, continued)*

The **UUS String Quintet**—yes, our very own ensemble—prepares and plays as an ensemble for Sunday services. In their first year they also accompanied the Adult Choir, and individuals from the quintet performed as soloists. Members include Tabitha Rasmussen and Peggy Garrigues, violin; Alex Curtis and Rochelle Honey-Arcement, violas; and Ian Cawley, cello.

### Music Events

**Harmony & CommUUniTea:** A community music event featured the LIROS wind ensemble concert in the Sanctuary followed by an Afternoon Tea in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, October 28. Profits from the event benefited the Oakdale Community Choir and the UUS Music Fund. Carol Throckmorton, Judith Leavitt, Russell Lenth, and Gloria Corbin planned the successful sold-out event.

**Community Events:** The UUS Sanctuary has acoustical qualities that are drawing outside musical bookings. Other UUS sanctuary music events open to the community were concerts by The Family Folk Machine, a benefit for Uptown Bill's, the International Guitar Festival, and a Red Cedar Duo concert.

### Appreciations

The UUS Board of Trustees generously provides a budget that allows the purchase of music, tuning of the pianos, a professional staff accompanist, funds to pay guest musicians, and professional development funds for myself. My membership in the Association for UU Music Ministries is



*(Above) The 2018/2019 UUS String Quintet.*

extremely valuable, and networking with other UU church musicians has benefited my personal growth. I am very grateful for the partnership with Rev. Diane and appreciate her support/guidance in planning service music and her interest in singing in the Adult Choir (saves communication time). The members of the congregation do not fail to show their appreciation for the work of all of the UUS musicians, and that support is motivating. It is a pleasure to make music at UUS, and I look forward to another year of exploring new musical ideas and styles. Thank you for this opportunity.

—Submitted by Gloria Corbin

### Publicity Committee

The Publicity Committee began the 2018/19 church year by searching for a new part-time Publicity Coordinator to replace Bailey Kelley, who resigned in April. Jeff Walberg was hired in July. He had been serving as a volunteer on the committee and had previous background in marketing, particularly as the Director of Web Content at Cornell College.

Sally Hartman, Wendy Brown, and Mary McCann continued as volunteer members. Peggy Garrigues also participated in her role as Director of Congregational Life.

Under Jeff's leadership, the committee shifted its role somewhat, focusing more on strategy, budgets, major project guidance, and assessment. While committee members were still invited and encouraged to assist with more hands-on activities, they were no longer assumed to be lead players in Facebook posting, website content or administration, photography, etc.

The committee spent \$2,500 from its operating budget, as well as a little more than \$4,000 that remained from a 2017 Chalice Lighters grant through the UUA's MidAmerica Region.

Major projects and accomplishments included:

- Developing and mailing a large postcard to 5100 households in Coralville and North Liberty, funded by the

Chalice Lighters grant.

- Purchasing a suite of videography equipment, conducting a workshop to cultivate a wider base of volunteer users, and making a few recordings of major events available to the congregation. This project was also funded by the Chalice Lighters grant.
- Using Facebook more intentionally and effectively. The Congregational Administrator began posting all public events and upcoming services on Facebook. The Publicity Coordinator supplemented these efforts with news posts and event reminders, often targeting a wider audience through paid ads. Several successful posts reached 3,000-5,000 people, and our Facebook page followers increased by more than 25% to about 780 by the end of the congregational year.
- Enhancing the design and content of the website with large photos, a new history section, improved information on sustainability, a new UU Voices blog section, integration of language for the Free-thinker Friendly campaign, and other efforts.
- Developing integrated print and digital campaigns for several major events, including a direct mailing for the "Night with Walt Whitman" event that coincided with the building's one-year anniversary.

—Submitted by Jeff Walberg



## From Your Director of Religious Education, Jessica Zimmer

Over 110 children and youth have participated in the Religious Education (RE) program this year with an average weekly attendance of just under 30. This significant difference between total participants and average attendance is common across UU RE programs. Attendance patterns have shifted greatly even within the last decade, and we can now expect to see approximately one-third of our children and youth each Sunday, with one-third of our families attending one Sunday per month, one-third attending two Sundays per month, and one-third attending three Sundays or more per month.

Much of the RE program's energy this year has been focused on piloting a new model and philosophy of RE for the 1st through 6th grade with the goal of creating spaces that would be adaptable to the attendance patterns we have, simpler for adults to volunteer in, and honoring each participant's agency and passions. Instead of grade/age based classes, the children were able to pick between two or three groups that rotated between creative expression, mindfulness, STEM, nature, and social justice, all of which were connected to the Sunday's worship theme. Overall, the model has worked well, and the initial feedback has been positive from both participants and volunteers. As the year comes to an end, we'll be evaluating the program further and looking at improvements we can make going forward.

Our Junior High and Adult RE programs partnered to do a year on world religions. The Junior High group learned about our neighboring faith communities during their Sunday morning class, including speakers on Hinduism and Christianity. For adults, we hosted several forums after services,



*(Above) UUS youth engage in sand play during Sunday morning religious education.*

inviting representatives to speak on Judaism, Islam, Pentecostalism, and Jainism. We also visited a few of our neighboring faith communities, including group visits to Agudas Achim, Iowa City Islamic Center, and, still New Creations International Church (date TBA), and individuals were encouraged to visit a humanist event, the Winter Solstice Vigil, and the University of Iowa Powwow.

After some experimentation with an evening youth group program and requests from the youth, we applied and were accepted to field test the newest update to the Senior High Our Whole Lives (OWL) program. We have a dedicated group of youth, including two community members, going through the program this spring, deepening their sexuality education and helping us evaluate the program.

Some of RE's favorite programs this year have been our one-off classes, social justice projects, and community-building events like December's Family Night Out; the Family Easter Egg Hunt; our adult series "Living Fully, Aging Gracefully, Befriending Death"; CommUnity's Spread the Love campaign (156 lbs. of peanut butter and jelly donated); Pre-k/K making the snack and Jr. High making the main meal for Free Lunch; a Jr. High overnight; and our Community Meal that brings approximately 30 UUS members and friends of all ages together each month.



*(Left) Elementary RE made this Kandinsky-inspired tree to represent this poem by Edwin Markham: "He drew a circle that shut me out—Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout. But love and I had the wit to win: We drew a circle and took him in!" and how Unitarian Universalism draws our circle wider and wider to include everyone.*




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*(Left) UUS member Lois Hughes shows children a fostered hummingbird during social hour.*

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*(Right) UUS youth play with hula hoops in the Atrium.*

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## Historical Records Committee

After several years of planning, preparing, and settling into our new building, the Historical Records Committee (HRC) spent the past year primarily sorting and organizing the many files brought from 10 S. Gilbert. When this task is completed, we hope to have greater accessibility to the Society's records. Several committees donated their records to HRC for permanent storage. A policy for accession and retention of materials was developed.

The committee purchased keys for the HRC cabinets and the Horack cabinet. We also arranged to put a quotation from Soren Kierkegaard—"Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forward"—on the Jennewein cabinet.

We began putting historical materials on our website, starting with the various histories of the Society. This process will continue.

In cooperation with the Aesthetics Committee, several objects and photographs were mounted on walls in the Conference Room and Fellowship Hall, including a framed Stan Haring drawing of 10 S. Gilbert, along with the original "10" which had been on the outside wall of the Worthley Building. Books written by UUS members were secured in the Horack cabinet.

Again this year we lost a beloved and valuable member of the committee. Faye Strayer's long connection to UUS proved helpful many times when we were trying to solve Society history puzzles.

Charity Rowley resigned as chair, to be succeeded by Diana Miller. We added two new members, Bob Littlehale and Emily Johnson. Those continuing are Sue Eberly, Carmen Griggs, Diana Henry, Kären Mason, Aiden and Allison Bettine, Diana Miller, Cheryl Tugwell, and Jeanette Carter.

—Submitted by Jeanette Carter



## From Your Congregational Administrator, Emma Barnum

It was yet another year of transition in the UUS office. Having made it a full year in the new building, we have now turned our attention to reviewing our administrative procedures to best support our congregation and facilities management. In addition to providing staff/board/group support and working on other projects listed in this Report, here are some administrative highlights from the year:

- The office implemented several measures to make our publications greener, cheaper, and more efficient. In January 2019 we discontinued the practice of printing monthly booklet covers for the Sunday orders of service. In March 2019 we asked members and friends to opt into a new monthly newsletter mailing list (which dropped our subscription numbers from 200+ to about 40 mailed issues a month). In 2019 we also discontinued an outdated “All Member” email list, and we now use our Weekly Email mailing list for closure announcements or congregational news (as well as posting on Facebook, our website, and KCRG as appropriate).
- After a security incident in July 2018 where a trespasser loitered in the building after it was locked and attempted to break into staff offices, we upgraded our security system so that specified staff can access the security cameras and automatic door locks remotely.
- Administrative Assistant Nik Jakob continued to provide excellent support to the office, assisting members and teams with special requests, prepping the weekly orders of service, announcement and service slides, and providing clerical and administrative support to the rest of the staff.
- Building Steward Ron Wright has reviewed our

buildings systems and equipment to ensure everything is cleaned and maintained correctly and on schedule. He also provided setup and cleanup assistance for many events and programs in our building, both congregational and rental.

- Our Facilities Coordinator Lori Marshall announced in October that she needed to leave the position for personal reasons. She stayed on to train her replacements—first Della McGrath, who was hired at the end of November and stepped down in late January, and Atticus Roberts, who was hired in March and who will be moving at the end of May to accompany his partner to grad school. We thank all our Facilities Coordinators for their hard work in making our facility an attractive and accommodating venue in our community, especially Lori for her commitment to ensure that the responsibilities of the job were not left hanging as new hires were found and trained. We hope to have a permanent hire in the position by June.
- The 2018/19 Office Volunteers included Gay Mikelson (leader), Dave Martin, Diane Martin (left in August), Lucy Choisser (joined in October), Jeanette Carter, and Cari Malone (left in March). This year they switched to one weekly Friday shift. Their biggest new project is sending birthday cards to members and friends each month.
- Linda Fisher and Wendy Brown continued as our two main excellent and reliable proofreaders.
- Gay Mikelson (leader), Sue and Lee Eberly, Donna Johnson, Jane Slaymaker, and Jeanette Carter made up our Newsletter Team, which disbanded in February after we cut down our mailed subscription list. This team has been in existence at UUS, with several of the same members, for many years before me, and I’ll miss seeing them all each month. Thank you!

## Staff Relations Committee

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

- Proposing personnel policies and procedures to the Board
- Providing consultation to individual staff and supervisors
- Providing guidance for regular employee/supervisor practices and during disciplinary actions
- Facilitating staff discussions
- Updating job descriptions
- Assisting search committees for staff vacancies.

A complete set of personnel policies is available online. Members (approved by the Board) include Carmen Griggs, Sherri Zastrow, Mary McMurray (chair).

—Submitted by Mary McMurray





*(Left) Members of the Corridor Wedding Professionals group enjoy our patio and learn about the benefits of UUS as a rental venue.  
Photo by Carter Photography.*

(Winding Path Buddhist Retreat), 1 art show (A5), 1 ongoing parking lot rental

We have 15 more events booked for 2019 (with several more actively being negotiated), and two events already on the calendar for early 2020 (rental events can be booked up to a year in advance per our current policy).

So far in 2019 we have collected \$11,755 in fees for 2019 events, plus \$2,320 in refundable deposits for 2019 and 2020 rentals.

The rentals we have had at UUS, many of which were for non-profits, have brought hundreds of new people through our doors and introduced UUS both as a rental venue and as a congregation, to many who would not know of us otherwise. We have received glowing feedback from nearly every renter praising our beautiful and accessible facilities and grounds, as well as our competitive rates, which include many amenities, such as AV or kitchen equipment, other venues do not.

In order to serve our mission, we offer 50% off our rental rates to qualifying non-profits, and 75% off for private events for UUS members (event space for certain rites of passage are offered to members at no charge). Several of the events listed above were sponsored by a UU group or committee and received greater discounts or waived rates (or the UU group paid the fee/deposit on the renter's behalf). Many other community events held at UUS were not considered rentals or charged fees at all because a UU group volunteered to sponsor the event (organized, coordinated, cleaned up after, and ensured all UUS policies were followed during the event). There is still a lot of confusion around what procedures, requirements, and fees should be applied to a community group using our facilities in cooperation with a UUS group. Clarifying those issues is a high priority for us in the coming year, as is a general review of our rental policies, procedures, fees, and usage guidelines.

—Submitted by Emma Barnum

## Rentals At UUS

We have only recently been organized enough to collect data on our rental use of our facilities. It took until roughly mid-2018 to find an adequate way of tracking rental use of our facilities that also allowed us to easily compile figures for review. This is an ongoing process, but we're excited to be able to report some data on how our building has been used by the public this past year, and what amount of income we have raised towards the UUS budget.

In 2018 there were 35 successfully completed rentals in our facilities:

- 6 weddings
- 7 music events (including performances by Red Cedar Chamber Music, the International Guitar Festival, two Community Sings, and some private recitals/rehearsals)
- 2 memorials
- 7 parties (personal parties, baby showers, group potlucks or celebrations)
- 3 gala fundraisers (NAACP, Center for Worker Justice, Shelter House Friends of Friends party)
- 5 trainings/staff retreats/workshops
- 1 ongoing kitchen rental, 1 ongoing parking lot rental, 1 cooking class, 1 festival (VegFest)

\$15,767.25 was collected from renters in 2018. \$8,709.25 of that was for rental fees for events happening in 2018, and \$2,200 was prepaid fees for 2019 events. The remaining \$4,858 was for refundable deposits for events in 2018 or 2019 (a deposit is required, along with a signed agreement, to reserve space on our calendar, and it is returned in full after a rental, minus any damage or cleaning fees). We raised \$10,909.25 in income from renting our building in 2018.

As of May 12th, we have completed 17 rentals in 2019:

- 2 weddings
- 4 musical events (Family Folk Machine, Red Cedar, Orchestra Iowa, Mason Montuoro voice recital)
- 1 memorial
- 3 parties
- 1 gala fundraiser (Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County)
- 2 trainings/meetings
- 1 book reading (Andy Douglas), 1 podcast live show (Harry Potter & the Sacred Texts), 1 community retreat



*(Above) The Fellowship Hall arranged for a wedding.*



## Building and Grounds Team

Members include Jim Laughlin, Peg Voelker, Dave Gallagher, Rick Bradshaw, Larry Kent, Mark Bulachek, Emily Peck, Lois Hughes, Gary Lawrenson, Kurt Haman, Garrett Saltzman, Ron Wright, Steve Van Abbema, and Chair Deb Schoelerman.

### Building:

We continue to learn about our new facilities as we continue to settle into our new spaces. Highlights of the year include the following:

- Budget: \$18,650.00. Since our building is “higher tech” than our previous building, it is necessary to outsource for regular maintenance and inspections. These include fire sprinkler and extinguisher inspections, HVAC monitoring and repairs, kitchen appliance repair, and more.
- We have a larger committee that meets quarterly and maintains monthly updates communication via email.
- Small improvement projects this year included adding a light near the outdoor dumpster enclosure, adding an additional circuit to the beverage counter, and installing automatic soap dispensers in the restrooms. All of the water at UUS is now softened; this decision was made in order to reduce mineral buildup in the pipes and the kitchen appliances.
- Two workdays were held this past year. In June 2018, operational manuals for the HVAC systems that had been downloaded were printed and put in 3-ring binders. Storage Rooms A and B were rearranged for better use of space. Different adhesive products were tested on the caps for the chairs in the Fellowship Hall. Wood chips for mulch were spread in the area next the west side of the building. In November 2018, the focus was on the outdoors. The newly planted trees and bushes were watered once more before winter, hoses were coiled and hung in the shed, bars of Irish Spring soap were hung in the trees (to repel the deer), the area around the shed was cleaned up and some

items taken to be recycled. The patio chairs and tables were moved into the shed or behind it for winter storage.

- There were some repairs this year. Members of the Building and Grounds Team managed minor ones. Others were outsourced. Two leaks in the piping for two of the heat pumps were repaired as well as a leaking valve in the SVR room. One of the sensors for one of the heat pumps in the RE wing became loose and was adjusted. A technician from RMBoggs repaired each of these. The circuit board for the disposal on/off switch was also replaced due to malfunction. A new, larger mailbox was installed on Oakdale Road.

### Grounds: (also see Land Ministry report)

- Forevergreen and Sustainable Solutions were hired to help to mow the grass in the bio-retention cells.
- Turf Masters Lawn and Landscape, Inc. has been hired for snow removal on the parking lot and sidewalks. A Toro snow blower was donated by Gary Lawrenson.
- Tree trimming and tree removal was done by Sebastian Tree Service.

### Kitchen:

- Members include Vicki Siefers, Diane Martin, Deb Schoelerman, Jane Slaymaker, Cindy Spading, Jill Stephenson, Carol Throckmorton, Peg Voelker, and Lori Marshall.
- This year the committee spent their time rounding out the needs of the facility for rentals and big events. Utensils, matching glasses, water pitchers, a microwave cart, and other assorted items were purchased.
- The kitchen and pantry continue to be rearranged as needs come up. The Kitchen Team also maintains the tablecloths for the society events.
- Thanks to Gary Lawrenson for installing new shelving, and to Larry Kent for arranging for the locking cabinet, which was donated by Larry’s friend, Ron Ferguson.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman

*(Right) Members of the Building and Grounds Team and the Kitchen Team pose around a new locking cabinet for the pantry.*



## Land Ministry

The Land Ministry's mission is to prepare and implement plans in order to protect and enhance the Society's property and its flora and fauna through sustainable practice. The team has the ongoing responsibility for updating and implementing this plan. Deb Schoelerman is the chairperson. Budget: \$4,700 new, \$1,723 carry over from last year.

- **Community Garden**, facilitated by Vicki Siefers. The raised garden beds constructed last year were planted with flowers and vegetables, which were donated to the Coralville Food Pantry and the Crisis Center. Garrette Saltzman assembled a raised bed suitable for a wheelchair participant to care for the plantings. Bruce Alexander, Dan Gall, and Merle Ihne, along with David Selmer's guidance, helped to erect four metal panels, which display UU principles around the perimeter of the garden. Three more panels will be placed this summer to complete the 7 principles. The panels were designed and built by Jase Septer of Precision Metalworks in Washington, IA. Julia Audelhelm donated a piece of art to complete the garden with a focal point. The metal sculpture, entitled "Flight," was made by Julia's mother, artist Rosemary Lohrman. Future plans for the garden include shrubs and other plantings around the perimeter. Many hummingbirds were spotted all summer around the flowers, and a rabbit family made a home in one of the beds.



*(Above) The Rock Scramble is assembled as one of the first features of our natural playscape, July 2018.*

- **Woodland Management**, which includes trail management, facilitated by Tom and Mary McMurray. Volunteers worked in the woodlands to remove invasive plants including garlic mustard, oriental bittersweet, and grape ivy. Other outdoor work sessions will be scheduled for the spring, summer, and fall of 2019.
- **Landscape**. David Selmer of Sustainable Landscape Solutions for Landscaping has created a landscape design for UUS. Implementation began in the fall with the planting of prairie drop seed grass near the front entrance and other grasses near the boulder scramble and sundial. Woodland prairie flowers and grasses were planted at the southeast corner of the sanctuary. Many volunteers helped to make these plantings possible. This spring's plans include the installation of more than 40 conifers on the property.



*(Above) Produce grown in our Community Garden was donated to the CommUnity Crisis Center and the Coralville Food Pantry.*

- **Outdoor Play and Recreation**, also called the playscape, facilitated by Jessica Zimmer. After supplier delays and uncooperative weather, work on the playscape is back underway. Many thanks to David Selmer and the crews at Sustainable Landscape Solutions, who worked to make the playscape more accessible by adding a crushed rock pathway through the playscape, a level space for the sun dial, and a crushed rock bed under the children's garden space and musical area. Now that both the slide and spring have arrived, we are focusing on completing construction of the active play areas—including the stage, slide, stairs, deck, and art wall. Later this spring, the children will be planting their garden beds. This growing season we will focus on learning what the deer like least and how to best incorporate the garden into our program.
- **Worship and Meditative Spaces** (labyrinth, ritual space, memorial garden), facilitated by Virginia Melroy. The labyrinth subgroup has been hard at work, making decisions about the design of the labyrinth and the materials to be used. The plantings around the labyrinth have been designed to coordinate with the overall landscape design of the rest of the church site. Construction of the labyrinth should begin this spring and be complete by the fall. The area for the ritual space has been defined. A retractable flagpole has been installed and was used as a May pole last spring. The pole can be easily removed if necessary. Space for the memorial garden has been defined, and planning has begun on policies for using the space.
- **Bio-Retention Cells**, facilitated by Deb Schoelerman. We look forward to seeing growth and flowering of the grasses, coneflowers, black-eyed Susan, western sunflower, butterfly milkweed, coreopsis, prairie phlox, and other native flowers. Volunteers periodically remove weeds from the retention cells.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman





*(Above) UUS members and friends spent hours planting native grasses and prairie flowers, and tending to trees on our grounds in 2018.*

*(Below) In Spring 2019, over 40 conifers were planted around our solar panels and elsewhere on the grounds, many of which were sponsored by UUS members and friends.*





## Green Sanctuary

The mission of the Green Sanctuary Team is to promote stewardship of Earth in our congregation and in our local and global communities. The driving force behind this mission is a commitment to the UU Seventh Principle: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

- Members are Jeanette Carter, Deb Schoelerman, Carol Throckmorton, Sally Hartman, Marsha Cheney, Janet McKee, Linda Fisher, Lois Hughes, Peg Voelker, Peggy Garrigues, and Miriam Kashia.
- We have a budget of \$2,500 for 2019.
- We maintain membership in Iowa IPL (Interfaith Power and Light) and UUMFE (UU Ministry for Earth). We are charter members of the IPL local chapter. In February, UUS was announced as the winner of the Renewable Role Model award in the national IPL Cool Congregations competition. This award came with a \$1,000 monetary award.
- Along with the 100Grannies community group, we co-hosted two workshops in 2018 on "Introduction to Drawdown, Reversing Global Warming." Both were facilitated by Kristen Wildensee. The first was held in

September at the Coralville Library with an attendance of 25 and the second one in December at UUS with an attendance of 31. Sally Hartman, Carol Throckmorton, Virginia Melroy, and Deb Schoelerman are now trained to present the workshop.

- We hosted an IPL legislative workshop, facilitated by IPL director Matt Russell, on April 13th, 2019, to mobilize support against Iowa HF669, which will allow utility companies to raise rates to customers with solar panels. Thirteen people attended.
- We are collecting data to apply for Net-Zero certification with the Living Building Challenge. Our goal is to produce all energy that is used in the building on site.
- We continue to work to educate congregants on how to increase recycling and composting and to reduce landfill waste.
- We have created several educational tri-folds and set up "pom-pom" polls for congregation feedback on environmental issues. We will offer another Introduction to Drawdown Workshop at UUS in the coming year.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman



*(Left) The Green Sanctuary Team hosted several workshops, educational displays, pom-pom polls, and informational tables to inform congregants and the community on ways to protect our environment and combat climate change.*

## UU Solar Array

Construction of the solar array was finished in spring 2018 and went on line on May 3rd. Eagle Point Solar built the array, which consists of 429 panels in total. The panels are located to the west of the building, to the north of the driveway, and on the roof. Linn County REC is the provider of service for UUS and UU Solar. The array is expected to produce 165 Kwh of electricity per year, supplying all of the power needs of UUS. This will qualify UUS for Net-Zero Certification through the Living Building Challenge. UU Solar, LLC, whose members are members of UUS, own the array and sell the electricity to UUS at below market rates through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Steering Committee members are Russ Lenth, Ken Atkinson, Hazel Seaba, Deb Schoelerman, and Adam Ingersoll.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman

## Aesthetics Committee

The mission of the Aesthetics Committee is to make sure our building is beautiful and welcoming. Our goal has been creating a warm welcoming environment for UUs and the community, and providing ongoing guidance for acquisition and placement of art and furnishings.

With the new building open and functioning, 2018 saw the five members of the committee working on a few "settling in" projects:

We enhanced the reception area by adding bookcases and more seating. Art was moved out of storage and placed in common areas. The partner church quilt (or tapestry) was hung in the nursery. The historic Frank Glick desk was refinished, covered with glass, and placed near the doors to the Sanctuary. In collaboration with the Historical Records Committee, pictures of former ministers and a Stan Haring drawing of the 10 South Gilbert church were hung in the Conference Room.

Settling in will continue in 2019.

—Submitted by Theresa Ullerich



## Program and Activity Groups

The following Program and Activity Groups were active during the 2018/2019 liturgical year:

- **UU Board Gaming Club** (leaders: Emma Barnum in 2018, Phil Beck in 2019; met on varying dates and locations)
- **UU Book Discussion Group** (leader: Mary Lou Welter, met the 2nd Monday of months September through May at Oaknoll)
- **Buddhist Sangha** (leader: Cindy Spading, met weekly on Mondays at Oaknoll)
- **Community Meals** (leaders: Sarah Ross and Jessica Zimmer, met the 1st Wednesday of most months in the Fellowship Hall)
- **Covenant Groups** (leader: Jan Locher and Russ Lenth; see report on page 26)
- **Dances of Universal Peace** (leader: Virginia Melroy, met the 3rd Sunday of most months in the RE Commons)
- **Dinners for Eight** (leader: Joe Rasmussen; see separate report below)
- **Friends of Friends (Renamed Accessibility Team)** (leaders: Michael and Rochelle Honey-Arcement, met the 1st Sunday of each month in the Hickory Room)
- **Girls' Night Out** (leader: Jamie Sharp, met monthly at various local restaurants)
- **UU Grief Group** (leader: Gail Garwood, met the 3rd Wednesday of each month in the Oak Room)
- **Kiirtan** (leader: Andy Douglas, met the first Monday of most months in the Sycamore Rooms in Iowa City)
- **Owl Moon CUUPs** (leaders: Marsha Cheyney and Paula Miller; see separate report on page 27)
- **Racial Justice study/ACTION Circle** (leaders: Dave Martin and Peg Bouska; see separate report in the Social Justice section)
- **Scrabble Group** (leaders: Gary Lawrenson and Jeanette Carter, met the 3rd Thursday of most months at UUS or Kim and Lula Palmer's home)
- **Secular Humanists** (leader: Mark Yuskis; see separate report on page 26)
- **Vegetarian Community** (leader: Carol Throckmorton, met multiple times a month for movie nights, potlucks in the Hickory and Oak Rooms and in the Fellowship Hall)

### Dinners for Eight

These are casual adult-only, potluck-style dinners held at members' homes on the first Saturday of designated months. The purpose is to gather informally for conversation and dining to get to know other UUs.

Volunteer hosts provide the main entree, and assigned guests bring the remainder of the menu. Advance registration is required to identify which months participants want to attend and any dietary-

accessibility-allergy concerns. Registration is available on Realm or in-person on Sundays. We send monthly RSVPs to confirm hosts and attendance before dinner participant assignments are made. Joe Rasmussen is the coordinator.

This year dinners were held in October, December, February, April, and June. There were 24 to 40 participants each month.

—Submitted by Joe Rasmussen



*(Left) Michael and Rochelle Honey-Arcement of the UUS Accessibility Team accepted an award on behalf of UUS from the Arc of Southeast Iowa in November 2018. UUS received the Arc Community Partner Award for our support and participation in Arc programming.*

## Covenant Groups

Each covenant group consists of about 9 to 12 members who meet monthly to discuss topics that connect them more deeply with Unitarian Universalism as well as to one another, and occasionally work together on service projects. The group co-facilitators (usually two per group) comprise the Covenant Group Council. Currently, there are nine groups, totaling 93 members (compared with nine groups and 97 members the previous year).

Activities in the past year included holding two Facilitator Meetings, participating in some Inquirer Sessions, and holding an all-covenant-group potluck. The co-leaders also collaborated on updating the roster of members in a more usable form, and on revising the brochure that we provide to prospective members.

Previously, group leaders had taken turns transforming the SoulMatters booklets to usable discussion outlines for the groups. But starting with her arrival, Rev. Diane Dowgiert has prepared these for us as part of her other work in using these materials to integrate Sunday worship, RE, and other ministries. There was some initial confusion on the use of these materials due to their different form; but they have worked out quite well.

Leaders: Jan Locher and Russ Lenth (co-chairs), Jan Locher (membership coordinator), Phil Beck (past chair and newsletter-article writer), Hazel Seaba (CCLAM liaison). Group co-facilitators: Kris Canfield, Tyler Ellis, Amy Fretz, Sally Hartman, David Jepsen, Carolyn Johnson, Leigh Nida, Lula Palmer, Maureen Patterson, Paul Pomrehn, Shona Roeder, Sarah Ross, Sharon Thomas, Theresa Ullerich, Mary Kathryn Wallace, and Jerry Wetlaufer.

—Submitted by Russ Lenth

## Secular Humanists

Our 15th year of the UUS Secular Humanist Group has been very busy and productive. We began the year approving and adopting new Mission and Vision statements:

**Mission:** We are a secular community promoting the use of reason, scientific inquiry, humanist values, and church/state separation as the bases for a just world.

**Vision:** We provide a socially active and involved secular community for UUS, Secular Students at Iowa, and the Eastern Iowa area. We advance humanist values while working toward social justice and striving to reduce the stigma of non-belief. We enrich the lives of members and visitors through programs, speakers, and special events of interest to secularists.

The Secular Humanists generally meet the third Tuesday of each month at Old Brick in Iowa City, and we generally attract 30 to 48 members, friends. Mark Yuskis is the UUS Secular Humanist Group Coordinator. We again welcomed 10 to 20 Secular Students at Iowa members to our meetings. Program/meeting highlights from this past year include:

- September 2018: “Free Will?” presented by Mark Blumberg, Distinguished Prof., UI Dept. of Psychological and Brain Sciences.
- November 2018: “Discussion with Local Legislators”—Joe Bolkcom, Mary Mascher, and Zach Wahls.
- December 2018: Annual Solstice Party and Potluck.
- February 2019: “Video Night”—Peter Nothnagle presented videos of Sam Harris and Tim Minchin.
- April 2019: “Good Without God: A Secular Foundation for Morality”—Dan Barker, Co-President of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, Madison, WI. Presented by Secular Students at Iowa.

Congregational activities and events included:

- Established a Freethinker Friendly Congregation (FFC) Committee with Board support to work with UUS to earn the FFC designation from the UUA’s UU Humanist Association. A vote is planned at the May 19th,

2019, congregational meeting. Freethinker Friendly Congregation Committee: Jeanette Carter, Caryl Lyons, Hilary Strayer, Jerry Wetlaufer, Mark Yuskis.

- Presented a Humanist Service on August 28th, 2018; Message from Mark Yuskis, “A Secular Humanist Considers Our Fourth Principle: A Free and Responsible Search for Truth and Meaning.”
- Offered “An Evening with Walt Whitman” with Ed Folsom and Christopher Merrill as part of UUS’s First Anniversary Celebration in our new building on October 27th, 2018.



*(Above) Ed Folsom and Christopher Merrill gave an enlightening and stimulating presentation on Walt Whitman in celebration of UUS’s first anniversary in our new facilities, October 2018.*

- Arranged for Rev. Dr. David Breeden, Sr. Minister of First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis and Past President/ current Board member of the UU Humanist Association, to give the Message on Sunday, April 28th, 2019: “A Congregation of Philosophers: Freethought in a Post-Denominational World.” David’s presentation was the last event of the year-long programming by the FFC committee, which also included tabling and forums.

—Submitted by Mark Yuskis



## Owl Moon CUUPs

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 UUS congregation and those in the community who may not have a spiritual home. We did this by offering a variety of gatherings, rituals, and workshops:

- Exploring spiritual practices: In the first half of the year, we met on the New Moons and Full Moons each month to explore our spirituality through meditations, journeys, divination, authentic speaking/listening, and following the moon's cycles with intent. In the fall, we started three new monthly gatherings:
  - Food for Thought: a potluck dinner and discussion of topics relevant to pagan life
  - EarthBeats: an open drumming circle
  - Encounters: a gathering to explore pagan topics and engage in hands-on activities
- Celebration: We hosted seasonal rituals for many of the Pagan holidays:
  - Litha: Midsummer ritual where individuals walked a candle-lit path under the new moon in self-reflection (June 15th, 2018)
  - Mabon: Harvest ritual focused on the abundance in our lives (September 23rd, 2018)
  - Samhain: Ancestors Ritual: Parting the Hedge, a ritual to honor our ancestors (November 3rd, 2018)
  - Yule: Overnight winter solstice vigil and celebration of the returning light (December 21st, 2018)
  - Imbolc: Coming Clean, a ritual to heal the wounds words leave behind (February 2nd, 2019)
  - Ostara: a ritual focused on the "seeds" we wish to plant for our lives this year (March 17th, 2019)
  - Beltane: Celebrating the fertility of the Earth, followed by a Maypole dance (May 5th, 2019)



*(Above) CUUPs Samhain Altar.*

- Workshops/classes: we held a number of workshops and classes this year:
  - Crafting Your Practice: a three-part workshop reviewing the routines and cycles that can be the basis of a regular spiritual practice (July 15th and 29th, August 19th, and October 14th, 2018)
  - Exploring the Elements: a two-part class exploring Earth, Air, Fire, and Water (July 11th and 25th, 2018)
  - Single session classes on: Divination (June 13th, 2018), Days of Balance (September 5th, 2018), the Wheel of the Year (September 14th, 2018), Working with Energy (October 7th, 2018), Playing Tarot Games and West African Drumming Games (April 27th, 2019)
  - Quarterly Craft and Handwork Social: social gatherings with a project to create: painting mandala rocks (August 8th, 2018), holiday cookie exchange (November 14th, 2018), and making beeswax candles (January 20th, 2019)

Membership in CUUPS has expanded over the course of the year, with newcomers joining us for many events. The winter solstice vigil was the largest event we've held at this site. Looking forward, we will be returning to a monthly moon-based schedule for drumming and divination work, while keeping a regularly scheduled monthly event focused on sharing practices and learning new skills. We will continue to bring in regional teachers for workshops and to celebrate seasonal holidays in ritual.

—Submitted by Marsha Cheyney



*(Left) Participants dance around the Maypole during the 2018 Beltane Ritual.*



## UUS Garage Sale

On Saturday, May 4th, 2019, UUS participated in the City of Coralville's Annual City-wide Garage Sale. This was our first time participating in the Sale, and the first Rummage Sale we've had at UUS since we moved from 10 S. Gilbert. It was a wonderful way to bring people together; the volunteers had a great time receiving goods, pricing, displaying and selling them, and, of course, watching the delight as the shoppers



snagged up bargains. Many shoppers had never been to UUS before. We served free coffee and sold cookies. In total we raised about \$2,500 for the operating fund.

The 2019 Garage Sale Team was organized by Carol Throckmorton, Sally Hartman, Deb Schoelerman, Jeanette Carter, and Sherry Dolash. Many others volunteered to help. Thank you to all who donated or volunteered, especially Judy and Dave Tokuhisa and Gary Lawrenson, who assisted with picking up items from members who needed help getting their donations to UUS, and Sally Hartman for delivering furniture to buyers after the sale. Also special thanks to the cleanup crew, who boxed and bagged the items remaining after the sale ended and delivered them to local resale shops. Almost nothing was thrown into the landfill bin.

—Submitted by Carol Throckmorton

*(Left) The first annual UU Garage Sale in our new building was held on May 4th, 2019.*

## 2018 Guatemala Trip

In June of 2018, 14 members from our congregation traveled to Guatemala to volunteer and to serve three organizations committed to making a difference in the lives of indigenous Mayan people. Youth participants were Justine Reschly, Nathan Gall, Leah Kaminsky, Emma Peterschmidt, and Mira DiCarlo. Adults were Jon Buswell, Donna Chandler, Monique DiCarlo, David Kramer, Lisa Lepic, Bailey Wetherell, and Kylie Wetherell. Leaders were Deb Schoelerman and Sally Hartman.

Our first stop was Antigua, a city near the capital. We just happened to be there the day Volcán de Fuego (Fire Volcano) erupted—just 15 miles away. We noticed it was raining; but it was raining ash and sand! Over 2,000 residents near the volcano perished, were injured, or were displaced. So while there, we not only delivered the school supplies we had brought for a local school, but also purchased and delivered emergency supplies for families displaced and injured by the volcano.

The second stop, Chico Mendes Reforestation Project in Pachaj, is in the western highlands of Guatemala near Quetzaltenango. This organization is based on principles of environmental remediation and community awareness. In our five days there, we worked in the tree nursery and planted 500 trees in the nearby hills.

Our third stop was the Centro Maya Project, in San Juan La Laguna, located west of Guatemala City on the shores of the picturesque volcanic lake, Lago Atitlan. We brought nearly 200 pairs of shoes, many of them donated by members and friends of UUS, to distribute to families in need.

All who traveled on the trip learned a lot, provided much service, and made many personal connections with those individuals and families with whom we worked or stayed.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman



*(Left) The 2018 Guatemala trippers wear masks in Antigua after Volcán de Fuego erupted.*



*(Above and Left) The group delivered shoes and planted trees as part of their service trip.*



## Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC)

This year's Fifth Sunday offerings benefited Guatemalan Volcano Relief, FasTrac Civil Rights Tour, Social Justice Action Fund, and UU Free Lunch Expenses for 2019. (See financial report to the right.)

Deb Schoelerman was honored by the congregation with the Augusta Chapin Meritorious Service Award for her exceptional contributions to UUS. These included many service trips with youth and adults to Guatemala, the Land Ministry group which planned and oversaw the extensive changes to our new property, chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, and longtime RE teacher.

Bonnie Penno was selected by SJCC to receive the Evans Worthley Social Justice Award. Among her noteworthy contributions is the gift of her hair several times to Locks of Love for women who experience hair loss following chemotherapy. She has participated in a number of Habitat for Humanity Builds. She has Power of Attorney for Ricardo Sauro, a longtime UUS member, and is helpful to him in many ways.

Four youth and 13 adults traveled to Guatemala for 10 days on a service trip to benefit the indigenous Mayan community (see report on page 28).

Days of Service in January, May, and June included too many volunteers to count, but certainly over 200! Projects included creating supply bags for InsideOut/Reentry, cooking for Free Lunch, making potholders and blankets, working twice on a Habitat Build, cleanup of UUS grounds, and assistance at the Center for Worker Justice, Uptown Bill's, Shelter House, and Transformative Healing.

In April 2018 we partnered with the IUUWAN (Iowa Unitarian Universalist Witness and Action Network) to bring Rev. Steven Schick for a workshop on "Speaking from the Heart," designed to address social justice.

Members brought salads and desserts and helped with serving and cleanup for the annual Shelter House Luncheon on May 11th, 2018, an event that for 13 years has provided additional funds to reach out to the homeless. About 50 people volunteered to make this another success.

UUS members again participated in the annual winter clothing drive sponsored by the CRC (Consultation of Religious Communities). Annual community events supported by UUS members and friends included the CROP Walk, the Homeless Children's Trust Holiday Party, and Project Holiday meals distributed by the Crisis Center.

During the holidays an outpouring of support came from UUS to provide toys, gifts, and gift cards for five immigrant families involved in the UUS Circle of Friends Group.

The Committee frequently receives updates from

UUS groups including Free Lunch, Green Sanctuary, IUUWAN, the Racial Justice Circle, and Circle of Friends. SJCC partners with many outside groups including the Consultation of Religious Communities, Crisis Center Common Fund, Center for Worker Justice, InsideOut/Reentry, and Death with Dignity.

—Submitted by Gay Mikelson,  
Sally Hartman, and Mary McCann

### SJCC Contributions in 2018

**2018 Total Giving: \$35,689**

2017 Total Giving: \$32,583

2016 Total Giving: \$26,432

#### Community Partner Donations (Sunday offerings)

January: Abbe Center	\$2,400
February: DVIP	\$2,000
March: Inside Out Reentry	\$2,000
April: UAY	\$2,200
May: Crisis Center	\$1,700
June: JC Neighborhood Centers	\$1,950
July: Table to Table	\$1,900
August: Free Medical Clinic	\$2,200
September: Emma Goldman Clinic	\$2,200
October: Shelter House	\$2,050
November: Free Dental Clinic	\$1,600
December: Free Lunch Program	<u>\$2,250</u>
	<b>\$24,450</b>

#### Misc. Contributions & Expenses

Uptown Bill's	\$35
Inside Out Reentry	\$150
CRC Dues/Common Fund	<u>\$1,500</u>
	<b>\$1,835</b>

#### Other UUS Fundraising in 2018

UUSC/Rebuilding Houston	\$1,200
CROP Walk	\$610
FasTrac Civil Rights Tour*	\$500
Shelter House Luncheon	\$1,225
Guatemala Volcano Relief*	\$1,000
Social Justice Action Fund*	\$800
Circle of Friends (plus indiv. gifts)	\$325
Minister's Discretionary Fund (Christmas Eve)	\$1,188
UU Free Lunch Expenses 2019*	<u>\$375</u>
*Fifth Sunday Offerings	<b>\$7,223</b>

#### 2018 Contributions from New Budget Line

CRC Dues	\$150
Center for Worker Justice Dues	\$250
IUUWAN Dues	\$267
JCIC Dues	\$200
Peace Iowa Contribution	\$100
Transformative Healing Contribution	\$100
Rheme Worship Center Contribution	\$250
Inside Out Voter Registration Program	\$150
CWJ Gala Sponsorship	\$250
Days of Service Expenses	<u>\$464</u>
	<b>\$2,181</b>

## Social Justice Action Fund

The Social Justice Action Fund (SJAF) Committee oversees the dispersal of funds to support events and projects that promote social justice causes primarily in the local area but sometimes on a broader level. Since April 2018, the SJAF has funded four events and projects (see list to the right). As of March 2019, the SJAF balance is \$2,985.

The SJAF Committee has seven members: Sara Feldmann (co-chair), Pete Brokaw (co-chair), Joe Brisben, Mary McCann, Diana Henry, Jessica Zimmer, Rev. Steven Protzman (left July 2018) and Rev. Diane Dowgiert (began August 2018).

Over the past year, the committee worked on ways to make it easier to submit funding requests. The request form is now available electronically on the UUS website, and it can be submitted directly from the website to the committee.

—Submitted by Pete Brokaw

Date	Event/Project	Amount
April 2018	Food for the Guatemalan Lunch at UUS	\$130.61
May 2018	Crisis Center (purchase of box fans)	\$200.00
July 2018	Compeer of Johnson County (supporting adults who receive mental health treatment)	\$250.00
December 2018	Johnson County Interfaith Council	\$200.00
Total:		\$780.61

## Free Lunch Program

Since 1985, UUS volunteers have come together on a monthly basis to prepare and serve a meal to guests at Iowa City's Free Lunch Program.

In 2018, a total of 61 volunteers participated in the Free Lunch Team by donating food or preparing/serving the meal (or both) on our second Friday of each month. On average, 136 Free Lunch guests were served each month; 22 volunteers donated food; and 18 volunteers prepared meals, served them, or cleaned up afterward. Guests voiced appreciation and took home meals each month. In return, UUS volunteers enjoyed conversation with each other over food preparation and experienced the deep satisfaction of serving our community.

During the year, a call was put out asking UUs to purchase or prepare main dishes. We are very grateful that individuals, Covenant Groups, and the Junior High Youth Group answered the call.

Diana Miller, Leigh Nina, and Carmen Griggs served as Team Coordinators, and Sue Eberly served as Secretary/Record Keeper of the UUS Free Lunch Team.

—Submitted by Carmen Griggs



## Circle of Friends

The Circle of Friends addresses the needs of immigrants and refugees in our community.

- Circle of Friends members are involved in supportive activities including tutoring English, hiring for yard work, accompanying on ICE visits, donating furniture, helping with taxes, and taking immigrant family members to community events.
- Our budget line is a “pass through” account and is not part of the operating budget, but rather, is funded by donations from the congregational friends and members.
- When needed, limited financial support is provided to families.
- Close bonds and friendships have developed and benefit both the immigrant family and UUS members. Our immigrant families are from Guatemala and Sudan.
- In December we organized gift giving for the five families that we support. Our congregants are generous and provide gifts and gift cards for adults and children, and then deliver these to the families.
- Plans for the future include additional social events and continued communication about the unique needs of the families.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman and Sally Hartman

(Left) The 2018/2019 UUS Free Lunch Team.



## Racial Justice study/ACTION Circle

David Martin and Peg Bouska served as co-chairs. The Racial Justice Circle met on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of most months in the Oak Room after services.

Activities included:

- Presented a forum on August 19th, 2018, on tutoring/mentoring kids with representatives from Dream Center, Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County and Big Brothers/Big Sisters (in response to survey on school climate indicating local kids of color lack of comfort in our schools).
- Created a tutoring/mentoring guide of current local opportunities and distributed them to various organizations who would benefit as volunteers or recipients, including our congregation.
- Collaborated with a local African American worship community (Rhema Worship Center) and the League of Women Voters on a Get Out the Vote picnic on September 15th, 2018.
- Assisted three organizations with their fundraisers held at UUS: Center for Worker Justice (October 13th, 2018), NAACP (October 26th, 2018), and the Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County (January 29th, 2019).
- Organized a tour of the African American Museum in Cedar Rapids on January 5th, 2019.
- Presented at School Board meetings in Iowa City and Tiffin to urge their use of curriculum provided by the African American Museum, encouraging year-round education on AA history.
- Initiated a collaboration with Iowa City Police Juvenile Investigator Gabe Cook to advance the Juvenile Diversion Program (to avoid misdemeanor charges and instead use as opportunity for evaluation regarding substance use/learning issues/psychosocial factors, learn new methods of coping/reacting, do community service, etc.).
- Showed the video of Brittney Packnett's WARE lecture from the UU General Assembly followed by discussion on February 3rd, 2019.
- Participated in the UUA Reads program. The book this time was *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersection of Race, Class, and the Environment*, edited by Manish Mishra-Marzetti and Jennifer Nordstrom. Discussions planned for April 2019 were rescheduled for July.
- Attended several vigils in support of local religious communities who were affected by hate speech or hate crimes locally or globally (Iowa City Mosque, Synagogue, Church of the Nazarene).
- Marched in protests and attended ally/advocacy events on issues of: gun violence prevention, MLK events, fair wages and housing, disproportionate minority contact with law enforcement.
- Listened to members/friends share their experiences of visits to Civil Rights Historical Sites in the Southeast.
- Viewed several educational videos as a group, followed by discussion on ways to be effective allies/advocates/accomplices for racial equality.
- Continued our local advocacy activities with community partners, including supporting events and actions by the JCIC (Johnson County Interfaith Council), Iowa City NAACP, Inside Out Re-entry Program, Disproportionate Minority Contact Community, Center for Worker Justice, Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County, Habitat for Humanity, and others.



*(Above) UUS Racial Justice Circle sponsored a visit to the African American History Museum in Cedar Rapids, January 2019.*

—Submitted by Peg Bouska

# 2018/2019 Annual Report

## VISION:

*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.*

### 2018/2019 Board of Trustees

Jane DeWitt, President  
 Amy Fretz, Vice President  
 Chris Rode, Treasurer  
 Peg Voelker, Secretary (outgoing)  
 Jim Laughlin, Past President (outgoing)  
 Kris Barrash, Trustee  
 Sara Feldmann, Trustee (outgoing)  
 Michael Honey-Arcement, Trustee  
 Colleen Higgins, Trustee  
 Rev. Diane Dowgiert, Ex officio staff  
 Jessica Zimmer, Ex officio staff  
 Peggy Garrigues, Ex officio staff

### 2018/2019 Leadership Development Committee

Kirk Witzberger, Chair (outgoing)  
 Maureen Patterson  
 Jim Olson  
 Cindy Spading  
 Jean Hood

### 2018/2019 Endowment Committee

Larry Audlehelm, Chair (outgoing)  
 Pete Brokaw  
 Gary Lawrenson  
 Ken Atkinson  
 Al Thomas

### 2018/2019 Committee on Congregational Life & Ministry (CCLAM)

(Disbanded in August 2018 for the Interim Ministry)  
 Sharon Booker  
 Marsha Cheyney  
 Hazel Seaba  
 Sandy Keller  
 Susan Krohmer  
 Dave Tokuhisa  
 Rev. Steven Protzman, Ex officio staff

### 2018/2019 Staff

**Rev. Steven Protzman**, Minister (Left 7/18)  
**Rev. Diane Dowgiert**, Interim Minister (Began 8/18)  
**Rev. Lois Cole**, Community Minister  
**Peggy Garrigues**, Director of Congregational Life  
**Jessica Zimmer**, Director of Lifespan Religious Education  
**Emma Barnum**, Congregational Administrator  
**Gloria Corbin**, Music Director  
**Jeff Walberg**, Publicity Coordinator  
**Nik Jakob**, Administrative Assistant  
**Anna Rode**, Childcare Coordinator/Nursery Supervisor  
**Lori Marshall**, Facilities Coordinator (Left 4/19)  
**Della McGrath**, Facilities Coordinator (11/18 - 3/19)  
**Atticus Roberts**, Facilities Coordinator (3/2019 - 5/19)  
**Ron Wright**, Building Steward  
**Peng Zhang**, Accompanist  
**Arlen Ottmar**, Summer Accompanist (2018)  
**Mason Montuoro**, Tenor Soloist  
**Cora and Abigail Patterson**, Childcare Workers

