

2019/2020 Annual Report



MISSION STATEMENT:

We are a welcoming, spiritually diverse home. We act on our values:

- *Honor the Earth*
- *Advocate for racial and social justice*
- *Foster deep connections*
- *Embrace the ongoing quest for meaning*

(Virtual) Congregational Meeting Agenda, May 17th, 2020

OPENING

Call to Order & Establishment of Quorum

Amy Fretz, Board President

Chalice Lighting & Opening Words

Michael Honey-Arcement, Board Trustee

ACTION ITEMS

Vote to approve the January 5th and May 3rd, 2020 Minutes

Amy Fretz

Recognition of Outgoing Committee Members

Amy Fretz

Presentation of Leadership Nominees

Jim Olson,
Leadership Development Committee

Nominations from the Floor & Vote to Elect:

Amy Fretz

Board of Trustees

Leadership Development Committee (LDC)

Endowment Committee

Presentation of the Covenant of Right Relations

Jane DeWitt

Vote to Approve the Covenant of Right Relations

Amy Fretz

CLOSING

Extinguishing the Chalice, & Closing Words

Rev. Diane Dowgiert

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.

Motion for Adjournment

Outgoing Members of Elected Committees

The Board of Trustees, Leadership Development Committee, and the entire congregation thank the members of our elected committees and Board whose terms are ending for their service to UUS:

Board of Trustees

Jane DeWitt, Past-President

Chris Rode, Treasurer

Michael Honey-Arcement, Trustee

Leadership Development Committee

Jim Olson

Maureen Patterson

Endowment Committee

Pete Brokaw

Slate of Leadership Nominees

The Leadership Development Committee is pleased to announce this year's nominees for positions on the LDC, Endowment Committee, and Board of Trustees. We sincerely thank them for their willingness to serve:

Board of Trustees

Alan Swanson, Vice-President

Michael Pavelich, Treasurer

Lucy Choisser, Trustee

Leadership Development Committee

Susan Salterberg

Sue Otto

Endowment Committee

Liz Swanson

Absentee and Electronic Ballots

UUS voting members who indicated they only will receive election materials online will be emailed an election ballot and voting materials. Those who did not specify will receive an absentee ballot and an email ballot if we have an email on file. The ballot includes two sections. The first is the election of members to the board, LDC, and Endowment Committees. Brief biographies of the member candidates were shared with the congregation in the May 2020 newsletter (www.uusic.org/news/monthly-newsletter). The second section is a vote on approval of the Covenant of Right Relations. The Covenant of Right Relations was revised by the Right Relations Committee and passed by the Board. For more information about this work please look online or in the May Newsletter.

Because of the unique circumstances of voting this year due to the Pandemic, nominations from the floor and amendments and write-ins are not allowed.

From Your Board President, Amy Fretz

What a year it has been at UUS! As I am writing this, we are well into our society's time of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has certainly been a transformative year, and it is an honor to serve on the Board of Trustees with such a phenomenal group during this transitional period.

Ministerial Search Committee

In May of 2019, the Congregation and Board voted for the Ministerial Search Committee. Members include Dave Martin, Alison Oliver, Jodi Linley, Carolyn Johnson, John Bowman, Jerry Wetlaufer, and Carol Adamson. Thank you all for your dedication and hard work in finding our ministerial candidate!

Governance and Ministry Work

This past year, with the guidance of Rev. Diane, the Board continued the transition of our governance model to a policy-based, shared ministry model. This model is most in-line with the work of Daniel Hotchkiss as is outlined in his book, *Governance and Ministry 2nd Edition*. Hotchkiss divides the power that a congregation can delegate into two major categories. The first is "governance," which includes top-level tasks of articulating mission, strategic planning, and ensuring people, property, and money are free from harm. The second is "ministry," which is the congregation's daily work, including the rest of the decisions about how and what to do. The board is the chief decision maker around governance, and the minister and staff are the chief decision makers for ministry. For it all to be successful, there needs to be collaboration, planning, accountability, and mutual support between the board, staff, and congregation, and policies which govern decision making.

"The board is the chief decision maker around governance, and the minister and staff are the chief decision makers for ministry."

Board Oversight Committees

The Board's five oversight committees have begun meeting.

The Finance Committee, chaired by John Raley, includes the following members: Jeffery Ford, Pete Brokaw, Vanessa Taylor, and Chris Rode. Congregational Administrator Emma Barnum is an ex-officio member. This committee advises the Board concerning matters requiring financial and business expertise, such as the annual budget, banking, and investment. The committee oversees financial activities of the congregation including bookkeeping, communication, and fundraising. This committee

is creating policies that center around the financial management within UUS. In February the Board voted to move all our financial management in-house which will aid us to better be able to manage our finances and create reports tailored to our needs.

"In the fall the Board approved the revised Bylaws which the congregation voted to approve in January."

The Governance Committee, chaired by Amy Fretz, included Mary McMurray, Paul Pomrehn, Joe Rasmussen, and Steve Locher. Steve left our committee in March, and Tom Larkin took his place. Thanks to both of you! In the fall the Board approved the revised Bylaws, which the congregation voted to approve in January. We removed all references to CCLAM, as CCLAM does not function in Interim Ministry. We changed the terms of Membership so that a member is recognized as someone who pledges and gives to the operating budget. There will be procedures for membership to address when someone has hardship and cannot pay dues. We changed the role of the minister to Head of Staff. This change was recommended by Rev. Diane as well as the UUA. Finally, we simplified the staffing section. The committee is currently working on creating a board policy manual that will provide guidance in decision making.

The Right Relations Committee is chaired by Jane DeWitt and includes the following members: Colleen Higgins and Sharon Booker. This committee revised the Right Relations agreement, which the Board approved and the congregation will be voting on in May. In addition, they revised the Conflict Resolution Policy, which the board voted to accept. In March, Jane presented the revised Right Relations Agreement at the Board's first Town Hall meeting.

The Personnel Committee is chaired by Joe Rasmussen and includes the following members: Mary McMurray, Sherri Zastrow, and Carmen Griggs. Emma Barnum is an ex-officio member. This committee revised the Personnel Policies in the fall, and the Board approved these changes effective January of 2020.

The Mission and Vision Review Committee is led by Amy Fretz. Committee members include Sharon Booker and Winnie Ganshaw. This is the last committee to get up and moving, and they have only met once. They will look at how best to review our congregation's minister and the ministry program, the Board's effectiveness, and how well the congregation is working toward our mission and vision.

(Continued on next page)

(President's Report, continued)

New Mission and Vision

On November 2nd of 2019, 83 of our congregation's members and friends participated in the Mission and Vision Workshop facilitated by Kirk Witzberger. Before the workshop, twelve people were selected to be Visioneers and did the workshop the night before the congregation. That Saturday, there were twelve groups, who wrote two draft mission and vision statements after sharing about their best experiences with UUS and their brightest dreams for the future with a partner. The Visioneers considered the words people felt were most important as well as the drawings the youth did in RE prior to the event. Finally, they weighed the input from those who could not attend but came to the next day's service. Then they diligently met and wrote the final version of our mission

and vision statement. The congregation voted to accept these statements at the January 5th Congregational Meeting.

COVID-19

March 2020 saw the beginning of COVID-19 and its impact in Johnson County. The Board made the tough decision to close our doors in an effort to support social distancing as a way to slow the hospitalizations and risk for our members and friends.

Your Board continues to meet regularly to discuss the issues surrounding UUS in the face of the pandemic and all its challenges. We will continue to keep you updated. We are in uncertain times and uncharted territory right now. Let us continue to reach out to one another with love and support in the days and months ahead.

—Submitted by Amy Fretz



(Left and below) UUS members and friends participate in the Mission & Vision Workshop on November 2nd, 2019.



Our Mission: We are a welcoming, spiritually diverse home. We act on our values:

- Honor the Earth;
- Advocate for racial and social justice;
- Foster deep connections;
- Embrace the ongoing quest for meaning.

Our Vision: We aspire to be a more inclusive, loving, diverse congregation that welcomes all people. We will defend and celebrate the Earth, confront racial and social injustice, and nurture deep connections.

Leadership Development Committee

The members of the Leadership Development Committee (LDC) are Maureen Patterson, Jean Hood, Marsha Cheyney, Dave Tokuhisa, and Jim Olson (chair).

Most of the committee's work was the identification and recruitment of candidates for election to the Board, the Endowment Committee, and the Leadership Development Committee. As part of this work the committee met with President Amy Fretz to understand the impact of changes in congregational governance as they impact the responsibilities

of board members. A particular concern was the evolving job description of the treasurer.

The committee is meeting in May 2020 with Peggy Garrigues, Director of Congregational Life (DCL), to discuss the respective roles of the DCL and the LDC in developing leadership.

The LDC worked with Peggy Garrigues and the Membership Associates in organizing the Connect Beyond Sunday Activity Fair on Sunday, September 29th, 2019.

—Submitted by Jim Olson



(Right) Rev. Diane Dowgiert leads a virtual Sunday service from her home during the COVID-19 closure.

From Your Interim Minister, Rev. Diane Dowgiert

It has been a year for the history books—for the world and for UUS—a year unlike any other. Even though what will undoubtedly be most remembered about 2019-2020 is the outbreak of COVID-19 and its impact, this was a pivotal year in the life of the Unitarian Universalist Society.

Highlights of the year included a Sharing Our Stories potluck, a Mission and Vision workshop led by Kirk Witzberger, revisions to bylaws to support the shift to policy-based governance, and a Changing Landscape of Religious Education and Faith Formation workshop led by Nancy Combs-Morgan of the UUA's MidAmerica regional staff.

Beloved member Joe Brisben was lost to death. His memorial service has been postponed indefinitely.

Your Board of Trustees made the hard but necessary choice to cease in-person gatherings due to COVID-19. Your staff and lay leaders then worked at lightning speed to move worship services, meetings, Covenant Groups, and other small groups to on-line formats. A plan was developed and implemented for every member and friend of UUS to be contacted and supported during this public health crisis.

The brightest highlight of the year was the invitation to the Rev. Diana Smith as the candidate to be the next called and settled minister at UUS. Heartfelt thanks go to the Ministerial Search Committee for their countless hours of work and their diligent commitment to the search process.

What follows is a brief synopsis of my activities for the past year.

Worship Services: 30

Weddings: 1

Memorials Postponed: 1
(Joe Brisben)

Meetings and groups attended:

- Board of Trustees 8x
- Executive Committee 8x
- Interim Transition Team 7x
- Ministerial Search Committee 10x
- Staff 34x
- Program Staff 15x
- Pastoral Care Team 5x
- Worship Associates 4x

"It has been a year for the history books—for the world and for UUS ..."

- Finance Committee 6x
- Stewardship Team 5x
- Social Justice Team 4x
- Oaknoll Residents 6x
- Hawkeye Cluster of the UUMA 5x
- Faith Leaders Action Group 3x
- Covenant Group Leaders 1x
- Pathway to Membership Class 3x
- Engaging Our Theological Diversity 7x
- House for Hope 5x
- Congregational Meeting 2x
- COVID Care Calls Training 3x

One time events:

- Guest Speaker at People's Church in Cedar Rapids and the Ames UU Fellowship
- Interim Ministry Network Training
- Sharing Our Stories Potluck
- Staff Retreat
- Board Retreat
- Endowment Party
- Habitat for Humanity Interfaith Build House Blessing
- Staff Winter Holiday Potluck
- State of the Society Presentation
- Mission/Vision Workshop
- Prairie Star UUMA Chapter Retreat
- Labyrinth Blessing
- Farewell Party for Peng Zhang
- Changing Landscape of Religious Education Workshop

It has been my honor to be on this journey with you. I look forward to seeing how your ministry unfolds in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Diane Dowgiert,
Interim Minister



(Above and right) The congregation participates in an exercise in "Engaging Our Theological Diversity" during the service on Sunday, August 25th, 2019, with responses woven into a chalice. Rev. Diane then led an eight-session monthly forum delving deeper into this topic.



Interim Ministry Transition Team

The Transition Team (TT) was appointed by the Board in August 2018. The members are Jeanette Carter, Virginia Melroy, Gary Lawrenson, Pete Brokaw, John Lanaghan, Tom McMurray, and Diane Martin.

As reported last year, the TT set up introductions and meetings between Rev. Diane and the staff, the Executive Committee, Board, and with various committees, groups, and leaders. These were followed by meetings with Past Presidents of the Society and small group meetings with members and friends who wanted the opportunity to meet Rev. Diane. The

purpose of these meetings was to provide the background for Rev. Diane to understand our values, how we function, and our place in the community.

The primary task during the second year of the Interim was to interview staff and members of the congregation to analyze our congregational systems. Conversations covered how we're structured as well as which systems work well and where we need to improve.

We've enjoyed our interactions with Rev. Diane and hope we've served her well.

—Submitted by Diane Martin

Ministerial Search Committee

Alison Oliver (co-chair), Dave Martin (co-chair), Jodi Linley, Carol Adamson, John Bowman, Carolyn Johnson, Jerry Wetlaufer.

These seven individuals were appointed to the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) in May 2019. We began weekly meetings in June 2019 and continued meeting weekly through April 2020. The last few meetings were via Zoom. We spent the summer and fall creating an all-member survey and then writing a congregational record for potential candidates. Our regional coach was Rev. Jan Eller-Isaacs (First Unitarian in St. Paul, MN). We also had lots of conversations with the UUA Transitions office (Rev. Keith Kron and his staff).

Our congregational survey went live in late August, and we had over 200 responses by late September. We used the results of that survey to inform our congregational record. On October 5th and 6th, we held a Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop at UUS with Rev. Keith Kron leading the workshop. Over 80 folks attended.

Our congregational record went live at the end of December. At that time ministerial candidates could look at our information. In early January 2020, we received the names of 11 candidates who expressed an interest in UUS. During January we interviewed (via Zoom) eight of those interested. We narrowed it down to three. Those three

were invited to travel to Iowa City for an in-person interview where they met with the MSC, toured Iowa City and UUS, and then delivered a Sunday morning service in a neutral pulpit. These interviews happened during the first three weekends of February. We checked multiple references for each candidate and continued to ask questions (as they did of us). After considerable discussion, we decided to invite Rev. Diana Smith to be our ministerial candidate.

Our ten-day candidating week started on Wednesday, April 22nd and ended on Sunday, May 3rd. During those ten days, Rev. Diana met with various groups, committees, teams of UUS. She also met individually with our five principal staff. All meetings were conducted via Zoom because of the COVID-19 virus. Scores of members attended the various Zoom sessions with Rev. Diana. She led two services via Zoom, on April 26th and May 3rd.

After the May 3rd service there was a congregational vote to accept Rev. Diana as our new settled minister. The vote was conducted electronically with mail-in absentee votes for those who chose to do so. 241 members voted (80% of our congregation); 243 voted "yes," one voted "no," and there were four abstentions. The motion passed by 99.6%. Rev. Diana Smith will be our next settled minister beginning August 1st, 2020.

—Submitted by Dave Martin



Rev. Diana Smith gives her sermon "from the UUS pulpit" during the service on Sunday, May 3rd (left). Afterwards, Board President Amy Fretz led a congregational meeting to call Rev. Diana as our new settled minister (above).

From Your Board Treasurer, Chris Rode

2019 was a pivotal year in the life of UUS. Our interim ministry with Rev. Diane Dowgiert was in full swing; the Board was working hard on governance changes to facilitate more efficient operations for a congregation our size; work began to move our bookkeeping and accounting in-house; and the search for our 30th settled minister began. In terms of our financial story, 2019 was relatively low-key—we did not experience any surprises. Little did we know what 2020 had in store...

2019 Year-End

Our 2019 financials ended the year about \$35,000 short, but the numbers do not paint the entire picture. We had very ambitious revenue goals, and despite falling nearly \$42,000 short against our budgeted income, pledge gifts were up by \$56,000 over 2018, or over 14%. This is something we can be exceedingly proud of. We have a strong history of generosity, and our financial gifts in 2019 were no exception. In addition, 2019 was the first year we folded our expanded staffing (full-time Director of Congregational Life) and our mortgage into the operating budget. While we came up short, we did learn some lessons that were applied to the 2020 budgeting process.

Table 1: 2019 Year-End Actual vs. Budget

2019	Budgeted	Actual	Variance
Revenues	611,491.76	569,614.59	-41,877.17
Expenses	611,491.76	604,066.08	-7,425.68
NET		-34,451.49	

2020 Operating Budget

The 2020 budgeting process was as challenging as the previous year, but we were able to craft a budget that balanced, and asked for less than a 4% increase in pledging over what we actually received in pledge gifts in 2019. We were able to do this in large part by using unspent funds from the capital campaign to finance the mortgage in 2020.

As of this writing, pledging for 2020 is at \$456,438, which is less than \$4,000 short of our goal. That said, everything is up in the air now, financially speaking. The COVID-19 pandemic will almost certainly have a detrimental effect on giving. In mid-March, the Board of Trustees made the decision to close our doors and move to virtual platforms for both meetings and Sunday morning services. Shortly after we made this decision, the entire country started enacting social distancing, and the economy started circling the drain. We do not yet have the financials for April, which is the first full month that will feel the effects of the pandemic, but revenues were already down in March, and we can expect that trend to continue.

In addition, the value of the endowment has dropped by about 9% since the beginning of the year, but the general endowment fund still sits at about \$1.1 million.

“I fully expect that we will ride through the pandemic without too great a hit.”

I fully expect that we will ride through the pandemic without too great a hit. At the end of March, Congress passed the CARES Act, which provided hundreds of billions for small businesses and non-profit organizations in the form of the Payroll Protection Program (PPP). This program provides funding for loans equal to two and a half times an organization's average monthly payroll expenses, to be spent over the eight weeks following approval and funding of the loan. The funds disbursed can be used to offset payroll, mortgage interest, and utility costs. If an organization retains their staff and spends no more than 25% of the disbursed funds for non-payroll expenses, the loan is 100% forgivable. UUS applied for—and received—\$72,400 in funding through this program. I will be keeping a very close eye on how these funds are spent, and I fully expect our loan to be forgiven. In addition to the revenue provided by the PPP loan, we will also see some decreased expenses as a result of the pandemic. Because the building is closed, our utility costs should decrease, but the biggest savings we incurred was a result of having a virtual candidating week with our newly called settled minister, Rev. Diana Smith. While we did not get to spend time with her in person over the course of the week, our virtual sessions with her were very successful and saved the Society several thousand in travel expenses.

Conclusion

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as the Society's treasurer for the past three years. I will cherish the relationships I have formed, and the work that has been accomplished for years to come. When I look back at where we were when I began my tenure (renting space at the Sanctuary for services, and having Board meetings in the house where our solar panels now proudly stand), the transitions we've weathered (construction of a new facility, growing into our new space, two years of interim ministry, and a successful search for a new settled minister), and the hope of a vibrant future as we embark on a new shared ministry with Rev. Diana Smith, I am exceedingly proud to call UUS my faith community, and I feel quite blessed to be able to call each of you a friend. We have much work ahead of us, but it is an exciting time to be a Unitarian Universalist, and through our shared gifts and talents, we are poised to accomplish really great things.

—Submitted by Chris Rode

“We have much work ahead of us, but it is an exciting time to be a Unitarian Universalist.”

Endowment Committee

Our endowment remains strong. We received gifts to the endowment of \$7,031 from the annual endowment party in 2019. In addition, \$100,000 was added from the Jean Reese bequest, and it will become the Jean Reese Dedicated Fund to support outdoor development of our property. The total endowment fund totaled \$1,380,619 at the end of 2019, although it is down significantly since then due to COVID-19. The general endowment fund is up 9.84% for 2019.

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, Jean Reese, and the general endowment fund) have been transferred to United Iowa Financial (UIF). Early in the year the Endowment Committee worked with UIF to decide on the investment policy for the endowment. The tools of UIF that measure investments in socially responsible funds rates us having just over 50% in such funds.

—Submitted by Ken Atkinson

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee meets monthly throughout the year. Members are determined by role and include UUS Board Members Chris Rode (treasurer), Rev. Diane Dowgiert (minister) and John Raley (chair). Stewardship representatives are Jeffery Ford and Vanessa Taylor, Endowment representative Pete Brokaw, and non-voting member Emma Barnum (Congregational Administrator).

The Finance Committee has been helping with the budget process, checks and balances with gifts, endowments, and other money requests. We continue to review, change, and create new policies and procedures. We are proud of the progress shown in the 2019 report:

Started a new accounting practice, bringing it in-house, and making the treasurer's position more transparent, easier to collaborate, and less burdensome.

A shout-out to our treasurer Chris Rode who has worked tirelessly on all of the never-ending changes in this transition.

—Submitted by John Raley

Stewardship Committee

Current members of the Stewardship Committee include 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 three years.

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. For 2020 we collectively pledged \$456,438. In 2020 we have 228 pledge units and 34 non-pledging donors.

We have been contacted by a few families indicating that they will not be able to meet their 2020 pledge goal until the pandemic and or economy improves. This reduction is not clear as of this writing but will be monitored closely.

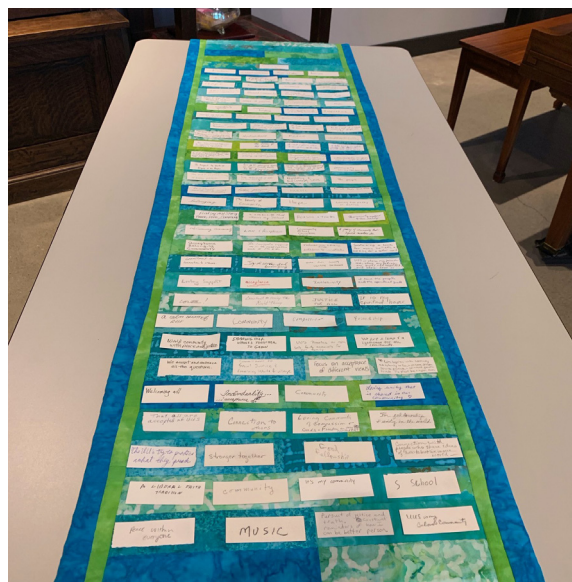
Stewardship plans to work with our new minister Rev Diana, the Board, and the Finance Committee to set a clearly defined

vision and goal for the 2021 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. Stewardship wishes to emphasize that the campaign is designed to build up to a Celebration and Commitment Sunday in November. 2019's celebration included a beautiful commitment quilt reflecting our shared values, made by Diana Miller.

We continue to explore 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

(Right) On Sunday, November 17th, the congregation gathered for a ceremony of commitment to our Stewardship Campaign and to our future together at UUS. During the service people shared the reasons they were committed to UUS, which Diana Miller incorporated into a beautiful quilt which is now displayed in the Fellowship Hall.



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

Visitors

UUS has had 141 recorded first-time visitors to our Sunday services between April 15th, 2019, and April 15th, 2020. In the previous twelve months, we had 194 recorded first-time visitors to Sunday services.

Inquirer Sessions

We continued with the rotating series of Inquirer Sessions for newer folks to learn about Unitarian Universalism, tour our building and land, learn about Realm, have a general Q&A with a Membership Associate, meet with the Minister, and learn about the wide variety of groups in the congregation. Between May of 2018 and April of 2019 we had 144 people attend Inquirer Sessions. Between May of 2019 and April of 2020 we had 95 attend Inquirer Sessions. No visitors attended Inquirer Sessions after we began Zoom services during the COVID-19 crisis, so we will be rethinking how to engage visitors while we are having virtual services.

New Members

We had 12 individuals join the UU Society since our last annual report:

- (3 joined in May 2019, but were included in the last annual report)
- August 11th, 2019: Hilary Higgs, Marcy Neumann, Daniel Walls
- November 3rd, 2019: Joyce Bernardy, Thomas Larkin, Paul Kohnhorst
- February 2nd, 2020: Richard D. Anderson, Jeanette M. Corley, Beverly Bullard, Karin Hoth, Peter Hoth, and Halie Lopez

Three individuals are ready to join at the next opportunity, and several others are in process of taking steps towards membership. We were planning to have our next opportunity to join on May 10th, but that will be postponed until we can welcome new members in person.

“As of our May 3rd congregational meeting to call a new minister, we had 299 members eligible to vote.”

In January of 2019 we reported 257 members to the UUA (for which we count members eligible to vote). As of our May 3rd congregational meeting to call a new minister, we had 299 members eligible to vote. Amy Fretz is responsible for contacting quite a few members to encourage them to renew their membership by making a current donation in advance of the meeting.

New Definition of Membership

Membership Associates had a number of conversations about the definition of membership. Up through 2019, the definition of membership caused the numbers to fluctuate regularly. If people kept up their donations, they were considered voting members and eligible to vote at congregational meetings. However, we had many members listed who were not actively participating in programs or consistently offering financial support to the operating budget. We had 364 members listed, while only 257 were considered voting members at the beginning of 2019.

Membership Associates proposed a new definition of membership that was put into the Bylaws in January. They have also created initial procedures for checking in at least annually with members who aren't as engaged either with programs or with donations in order to encourage them to re-engage, or to clarify whether they still wish to remain a member.



Other Membership Associates Activities

In September 2019, the Leadership Development Committee worked with Membership Associates to host an Activities Fair. We had 35 UUS groups participate in the fair by hosting a table in the Fellowship Hall on September 29th (pictured above).

Because of the COVID crisis, Rev. Diane asked the Membership Associates to forgo the round of calls that we were going to make to ask members to renew their membership by making current donations. Instead, most of the Membership Associates were part of the calling team to contact all the members and friends of UUS to ask how they were doing, what they most needed from UUS, and if they had skills or resources to offer.

We had a list of almost 500 people to contact, and with 27 volunteers plus some staff members, most of those calls have been made. All of the calls should be completed with at least a phone or email message by the time of the May 17 meeting. Some urgent requests for support were passed along to Rev. Diane, the Pastoral Care Team, and UNI-Care.

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Hospitality Teams

146 members and friends of UUS serve on our twelve Sunday Hospitality Teams, which serve, clean up, and provide food for our Sunday social hour, 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. Five of our twelve teams are led by people who have joined or become involved in UUS over the past three years.

Obviously, Hospitality Teams are not needed in the same way during the COVID-19 crisis. I will be working with Kim over the next couple of months to find a replacement for him, as he has decided to step down, and to be ready with more sanitary procedures as needed once we are back to physical services at UUS.

Picture Directory

Jean Hood agreed to be main coordinator of a new printed picture directory through LifeTouch, while I worked as staff support. Jean worked with me, Nancy Lynch, Jamie Sharp, and a number of other volunteers to get about 175 households photographed. Most families got their pictures taken early enough to get their photos for the holidays. Because of the intervening time of the holidays, it took longer than we had hoped to get all the address listings updated in Realm and passed along for printing. They were supposed to arrive by mid-April but got delayed. They arrived in the week before the May 17th meeting. There were a number of unexpected challenges along the way. Luckily, we were able to get an electronic version of the proof to Rev. Diana Smith for her to use during candidating week. Going forward, any time we get 25 new households ready to be photographed, we can get updated copies of the directory, for up to four years from now, without having to redo everything. So we hope to be able to make an update shortly after Rev. Diana begins here as minister.

“Out of our 497 listed members and friends in Realm, 259 are involved as a member or leader in at least one group in our congregation. That is an involvement level of 52% for members and friends combined.”

Group Engagement

- Out of our 497 listed members and friends in Realm, 259 are involved as a member or leader in at least one group in our congregation. That is an involvement level of 52% for members and friends combined.
- Realm has 356 people listed as members. (This is using the old definition that includes both voting members and non-voting members. We are almost ready to update Realm to the new definition of membership, but that has not been completed yet.) 222 of that 356 are involved as a member or

leader in at least one group in our congregation, for a 62% involvement level by members. This includes committees and leadership groups, nurturing mind and spirit groups, interest and activity groups, teaching RE, volunteering groups, and social justice groups.

- Of our 356 listed members, 97 are listed as group leaders in Realm, which is a 27% rate of member involvement as leaders.
- Of the 56 people who have joined UUS since the building opened, two moved away, one is inactive, and 53 remain active. Of those 53, five have attended Regional or General Assembly, 16 have served in leadership roles including one on the Ministerial Search Committee, and 45 of them are involved as member or leader in at least one group in our congregation, quite a few of them in several groups. That is an engagement rate of 82% for those new members who are still active and in the area.

“That is an engagement rate of 82% for those new members who are still active and in the area.”

UU Wellspring

Our UU Wellspring program is nearing the completion of its second year. The first year had a group of seven participants, along with me as facilitator. This second year we have a group of six participants, with Jan Locher and myself working as co-facilitators. Many of the participants from the first year continue to meet in more of a covenant group format, while we wait until there are enough who have gone through the basic course that we can have a critical mass for one of the supplementary curricula.

UU Wellspring™ is a heart-opening, small-group experience grounded in deep listening. Each UU Wellspring program lasts nine months and 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.

We began with a daytime retreat in September and have been meeting twice a month since then (recently by Zoom), and we will continue through June.

We plan to have a new “Sources” group this fall with new participants. We hope to add one of the other curricula also this fall if there enough former participants who wish to continue on.

(Continued on next page)

(DCL Report, continued)

Johnson County Interfaith Coalition

UUS is a member of the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC), which is focusing on racial justice issues in the Iowa City area. Joel Gilbertson-White and I currently serve on the board, and Rev. Diane attended several faith leaders meetings. In 2019 JCIC helped to encourage the Iowa City Council and University Heights to pass hate crimes bills, and JCIC continues work in that area, focusing next on North Liberty. In January 2020, many UUS members volunteered at a voter registration event held at the Kingdom Center in the south end of town, which received a lot of publicity, including by the BBC. Many people attended, a number registered to vote, and a lot of voter and community information was available.

Habitat for Humanity Interfaith Build

A number of UUS members and friends volunteered with the Interfaith Build homes for Habitat for Humanity in 2019. However, although individuals may have donated, as a congregation we have offered almost no financial support to Habitat in the last year.

Denominational Connections

Regional Assembly: Four UUS members and staff attended Regional Assembly, which was a virtual gathering on April 18th. Three of those were elected by the UUS Board as our official delegates: Dave Martin, Vicki Siefers, and Elaine Waples. I also “attended.”

General Assembly: In 2019, GA was held in Spokane, Washington. Sally Hartman and Colleen Higgins were our delegates, but Colleen ended up being and attended virtually rather than in person.

GA 2020 was to be held in Providence, Rhode Island, but the event has now shifted to a completely virtual event.

Unitarian Universalist Association of Membership Professionals: I was elected in 2019 to serve on the board of the national UU Association of Membership Professionals (UUAMP). I currently serve as their treasurer. I will be working with the UUAMP board to prepare for their annual Professional Day, which will be a virtual event this year.

—Submitted by Peggy Garrigues



UUs participate in a Build Day for Habitat for Humanity on June 8th, 2019.



Pastoral Care

The mission of the Pastoral Care ministry, as shaped by the UU principles, is to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to practice compassion in human relations by providing a ministry of support, hope and caring so that no one connected to this congregation needs to feel alone. This goal furthers the vision of UUS to be a caring, inclusive community. In collaboration with interim minister Rev. Diane Dowgiert, Winnie Ganshaw chairs this ministry and, along with the Pastoral Care Team, has served as primary pastoral care provider during this interim period.

During this past year we furthered this mission through 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, losses, and transitions.
- Offered pastoral care 57 times through a variety of means including phone calls, emails, and conducting visits that

provided support to 34 UUS members and friends.

- During December distributed amaryllis plants to 21 individuals who experienced a death in their immediate family during the previous year.
- The PC team worked closely with UniCare to provide transportation and meals as requested by members.

Our goals for 2020-2021 will be:

- Continue these ministries through nurturing and encouraging a culture of pastoral care in the congregation by helping members and friends understand that every conversation or interaction offers an opportunity to minister to others.
- Deepening our pastoral care skills.
- The team looks forward to collaborating with our new minister, Rev. Diana Smith, who comes to us with a new perspective and diverse experience in pastoral care.

—Submitted by Winnie Ganshaw



(Right) The Mother's Day/Flower Communion display for the Sunday service on May 10th, 2020. Because of COVID-19, members and friends brought flowers to the building a few days before the service and had a chance to participate in an independent ritual of consecration.

Unicare

By providing mutual support to members of our congregation, Unicare can be a source of resilience for all of us. Caring for each other by providing meals, transportation, and small chore services helps us through challenging times, and by doing so, we strengthen the bonds of fellowship and assure members they are cared for at every age and circumstances of life.

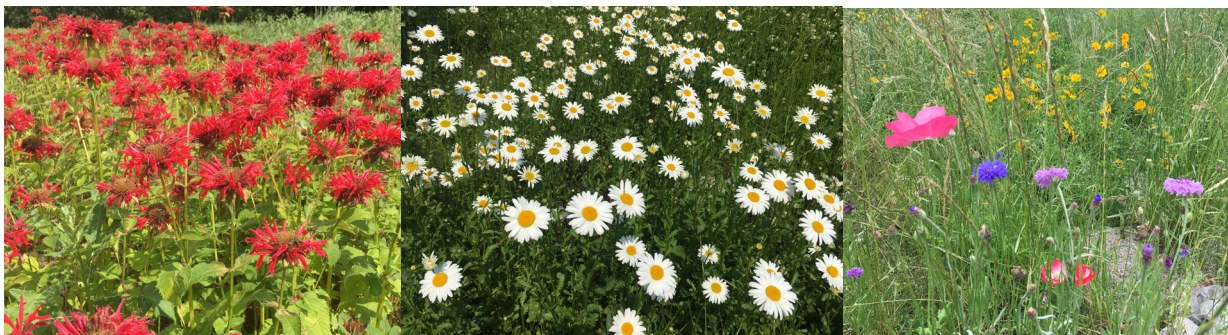
In order to facilitate scheduling volunteers, the Unicare Coordinators use an online application, Take Them a Meal, and communicate with the congregation through

Wednesday emails. Between April 2019 and March 2020, Unicare volunteers provided approximately 90 meals to eleven individuals and families, including two families with new babies, and several meals for Joe Brisben's family and housemates at the time of Joe's death. Two food pick-up and deliveries were requested and fulfilled. Transportation to doctor's appointments were provided thirty-three times.

Marianne Mason schedules transportation; Diane Martin and Mary McMurray organize food and other requests. Calls can be made directly to Marianne, Diane and Mary or through the UUS office.

—Submitted by Mary McMurray

(Left) Wildflowers bloom abundantly on UUS grounds.





(Above) The 2019/2020 UUS Adult Choir. This annual report is dedicated to Mr. Joseph Brisben (bottom left). Our friend Joe was a staunch supporter of choral music and sang in the Choir for more than four decades. We will miss Joe's music making, his voice in the bass section, and his observations on life.

From Your Music Director, Gloria Corbin

UUS is the home of music makers. Participation in music programming continues to expand and flourish. In addition to lending one's voice to Sunday morning hymns, singers and instrumentalists can participate in the Adult Choir, the House Instrumental Ensemble, the String Ensemble, and the Piano Ensemble.

UUS Adult Choir

Each Thursday evening the members of the UUS Adult Choir meet in the Sanctuary to rehearse. They prepare choral octavos to sing for three Sunday services each month, Christmas Eve, and for special events. The choir has a second rehearsal on the Sunday mornings that they sing for the service.

- The soprano section, nine singers strong, includes Colleen Higgins, Kaye Winder, Bonnie Penno, Laurie Neuerburg, Jennifer Mordan, Diane Dowgiert, Miriam Kashia, Winnie Ganshaw, Virginia Melroy, and Beverly Bullard.
- The alto section has six regular altos and one singer shared by the sopranos and altos. The voices include Sandy Keller, Cec Owings, Carol Adamson, Christine Etler, Dixie Cassady, Kim Friese, and Colleen Higgins.
- Mason Montuoro is the tenor section leader/soloist and joins his voice with Gerry Pearson, Jim Olson, and Elaine Waples.
- The baritone/bass part is sung by Damian Pieper, Jim Laughlin, David Gallaher, Paul Kohnhorst, and Peter Hoth.

Choir members that are instrumentalists enhance our music making. Bonnie Penno, Laurie Neuerburg, and Beverly Bullard play flute; Gerry Pearson plays numerous woodwind Renaissance instruments; and Peter Hoth plays cello.

Individual choir members lead the Gathering Songs on Sunday mornings and perform as soloists.

During the course of the "choir year" (September through May) the sopranos and altos form a Treble Ensemble. In September they performed "Bring Me Little Water, Sylvie." It was an interesting and challenging arrangement as the singing also required body percussion.

In the course of the year the choir prepared 35 anthems, introduced and led the congregation in Gathering Songs, participated in the Christmas cantata, responded to special requests from worship leaders/associates, and served as "back up" singers for soloists.



Dr. Peng Zhang (pictured above) served as our staff accompanist for 3.5 years. After completing his doctorate from the University of Iowa in December 2019, Peng returned to China to perform and teach. We valued his service to UUS and bade him farewell with good wishes, a gift, and a request that he stay in touch with his UUS family.

(Continued on next page)

(Music Report, continued)



Dr. Aura Strohschein (pictured left) joined UUS as staff accompanist in January 2020. Aura holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Iowa. Aura teaches piano at Iowa Wesleyan University, is on the piano faculty at the Marion Music Academy, is in demand as a professional accompanist, and maintains a private piano studio. The staff accompanist is the foundation for music making. Responsibilities include

leading the hymns from the Steinway, preparing the Prelude, Interlude, Meditation and Traveling Music, accompanying guest soloists, and the choir—that exceeds 150 preparations during the church year!

Ensembles

The **UUS House Ensemble** organizes to perform for the Christmas and Easter seasons. The Ensemble is an eclectic gathering of instrumentalists interested in exploring music from the Renaissance through contemporary compositions. Hour-long rehearsals are scheduled on Thursday evenings six weeks in advance of Christmas and Easter. The music arrangements allow the musicians to select the part that best suits their instrument.

The membership of the ensemble varies, depending on personal schedules. Those who have played include Jeanette Carter and Russ Lenth, French horns; Mike Pavelich and Sam Cochran, trumpets; Linda Fisher, baritone; Gerry Pearson, recorders; Bonnie Penno, Alice Atkinson and Beverly Bullard, flutes; Carolyn Johnson, baritone saxophone; and Jane DeWitt, piano.

The **Piano Ensemble** prepares solos, duets and eight-hand arrangements of piano literature. Alan Swanson played a variation on *Faith of our Fathers* on Father's Day, June 16th, 2019, and accompanied soloist Connie Peterson on June 9th. Andy Douglas offered a piano solo for the summer music line-up on July 14th. Jane DeWitt, Lynette Marshall, Nik Jakob, and Peng Zhang were featured in the first half of the Steinway-In-Residence Concert and performed the first movement of the *Peer Gynt* for the December 1st, 2019, service. Jane and Lynette treated the congregation to a piano duet, *Noel Festival*, on December 15th.

Pianists are called upon to assist with four-hand accompaniments for the UUS Adult Choir, pinch-hit for Sunday services, and accompany soloists. We are fortunate to have two grand pianos, the Sanctuary Steinway and the Fellowship Hall Rasmussen grand, that make it possible to play literature requiring two pianos, and they look very handsome at the front of the Sanctuary.

The **UUS String Ensemble** began as a string quartet, grew to a string quintet and the present name was a necessity when even more talent stepped forward to join the ensemble. The

current ensemble—Tabitha Rasmussen, Sarah Alward, and Peggy Garrigues, violin; Alex Curtis and Rochelle Honey-Arcement, viola; and Ian Cawley, cello—play for Sunday services, enhanced the Christmas pageant, appeared as soloists, and accompanied the UUS Adult Choir.

Music Events

Steinway-in-Residence Holiday Concert: Mr. Thaddius Goldner, West Music Company's Piano Sales Consultant, offered to place, on loan, a new Model B, seven-foot Steinway Spirio in the UUS Sanctuary. Among the many highlights featuring the Steinway Spirio was the Sunday, December 15th, 2019 Steinway-in-Residence Holiday Concert. The first half of the early evening concert featured four UUS pianists: Jane DeWitt, Lynette Marshall, Nik Jakob and Peng Zhang. After the intermission, concert goers were delighted with a gifted performance of Franz Liszt's *Sonata in B minor, S178* by Hsin-Hui Liu. A roaring standing applause closed the concert after the eight-hands-at-one-piano performance of *Le Grand Galop* by Albert Laviograc by guest quartet Ming Hu, Heqing Huang, Hsin-Hui Liu, and Peng Zhang.



The Spirit of the Christmas Tree, written by Joyce Poley and Frank Henning, was presented on Sunday, December 22nd (pictured above). This intergenerational worship service/pageant celebrated the Christmas nativity story from a Unitarian Universalist perspective. The production involved the congregation, seventeen costumed pageant players, the UUS House Ensemble, the UUS String Ensemble, UUS Piano Ensemble members, and the UUS Adult Choir.

UUS Music Program and Future

On February 6th, 2020, all UUS musicians were invited to join a brain-storming session to 1) review the status of the current program and 2) to project future growth of the UUS music program. The session and email responses yielded a diverse list of potential ideas/observations. A summary of the meeting ideas is available in a document that will be forwarded to the incoming minister and president of the Board of Trustees. The strength of the complete list of next steps is reflected in the first statement: "Embrace music as a spiritual practice, participatory (encourage others to join), seek training regarding music as ministry and community building."

(Continued on next page)

(Music Report, continued)

Appreciations

The UUS Board of Trustees generously provides a budget that allows the purchase of music, tuning and care of the pianos, a professional staff accompanist, funds to hire guest musicians, and professional development funds for the music director.

In addition, this year, the UUS Endowment Committee in conjunction with the Board of Trustees responded positively to two grant requests.



Through their generosity the budget provided funds to engage a tenor section leader/soloist. Mason Montuoro (pictured left), a second year graduate student in opera studies at the University of Iowa, has faithfully served UUS for two years. His presence/voice has enhanced not only the tenor section but the entire choir. He is skilled on the podium as a director and conducted the section rehearsals of the tenors and basses. Mason, a graduate of Luther College and soon the University of Iowa, will be leaving this area to begin his professional singing career. He has grown dear to us and we wish him the best.

In April, 2019, a second proposal request was granted to

enhance the music department. The beautiful and acoustically perfect sanctuary is a draw for many outside events, and bookings for music making events continue to grow as does the number of participating UUS musicians. Music making at this level requires ample basic equipment. Additional music stands, a caddy to systematically store the stands, a much-needed Djembe (drum) and property labels for the new stands were granted. West Music was chosen as the vendor and provided a nearly 50% discount to UUS.

Rev. Diane's presence as an active participant in our music program, singing soprano in the UUS Adult Choir, is so appreciated. Her guidance and support in planning music for services weaves so many aspects of the service into one grand theme. The congregational singing continues to grow and has become robust. More and more of the congregants are joining in the Gathering Songs and hymns, and "hold their own" when singing with the choir. 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.

The total number of music makers that enhanced Sunday and special services is long, and not all could be reviewed in this report. A sincere thank you to all UUS members who took the time to prepare music and share their talents and all of the guest musicians who so joyfully performed for us.

It is a pleasure to make music at UUS. I look forward to exploring new musical ideas and styles. Thank you for this opportunity.

—Submitted by Gloria Corbin

(Right) Gerald Pearson and Kira Zielinski perform with Renaissance instruments during the service on Sunday, July 21st, 2019.



(Left) Aizay Etler performs an original song during the service on Sunday, December 8th, 2019.



From Your Director of Religious Education, Jessica Zimmer

Over 120 children and youth have participated in Religious Education (RE) program this year with an average weekly attendance of 32 children and youth. The significant difference between total participants and average attendance is common across UU and non-UU RE programs.

“Attendance patterns have shifted greatly even within the last decade and are highly variable. We can now expect to see only a small portion of our children and youth each Sunday ...”

Attendance patterns have shifted greatly even within the last decade and are highly variable. We can now expect to see only a small portion of our children and youth each Sunday with approximately 1/3 of our families attending one Sunday per month, 1/3 attending two Sundays per month, and 1/3 attending three Sundays or more per month. Like many other UU congregations, we have also seen an increase in the number of families that are choosing to attend worship together each Sunday, and those children and youth are not reflected in RE's attendance data.

Children & Youth RE

Some of RE's favorite programs this year have been our one-off classes, social justice projects, community service projects, and community-building events, like:

- Raising Monarch butterflies
- Fleece blanket making
- Making the snack and main meal for Free Lunch
- Game days in the Fellowship Hall
- Our Community Meal

The 5th-6th grade class, with help from a CUUPs event, raised 154 lbs. of food for the “Spread the Love” campaign by the CommUnity Food Bank.



(Above) Members of the Jr. High class wash the cars of winning bidders on this item from the Treats & Talents Auction, August 2019

We also added a Montessori-based program, *Spirit Play*, to our Preschool-Kindergarten class (pictured right).



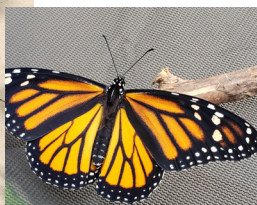
Our Whole Lives

This year we offered our Jr. High Our Whole Lives program for 7th-9th graders, and we had 12 youth from UUS and the wider community participate. We were not able to complete the program before we closed due to COVID, and based on the recommendations from the UUA, we decided not to move OWL to meet online. We are currently planning on offering the final sessions next RE year.

(Continued on next page)



(Left) Youth release Monarch butterflies raised from caterpillars, September 2019.



(Above) The 2019 RE Garden.

(DLRE Report, continued)

Adult RE

In addition to the many wonderful adult learning opportunities offered by our Justice Teams and Mind and Spirit Groups, the Adult RE program offered several series and one-time programs, including:

- ACLU Candidate Engagement Workshop, July 21st, 2019
- Rev. Diane's "Engaging Our Theological Diversity" monthly forum series, August 2019 through March 2020
- Winnie Ganshaw and Jeffery Ford's series "Living Fully, Aging Gracefully, Befriending Death (again!)," Wednesdays in October, 2019.
- *A House for Hope* book study, monthly series October 2019 through February 2020
- "Gender 102: Pronoun Workshop," October 17th, 2019
- Lois Cole's Writing Meditation series, Thursdays in February, 2020
- UUA Common Read: *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* and *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People*. Virtual discussions on March 24th and March 25th, 2020
- Val Bowman's "Declutter for More Peace, Space and Freedom" virtual class, April 1st, 2020



RE Assistant

An increase to the RE staffing budget allowed us to modify the Nursery and Childcare Coordinator position (held by Anna Rode, pictured left) to a quarter-time RE Assistant who will provide administrative support to RE volunteers and the RE program, and will assist with planning and coordinating programming for children, youth, and families.



(Left) The RE classes work on a shared covenant, September 15th, 2019.

RE Revisioning

As part of our revisioning of the RE program, we hosted a regional workshop on Saturday, March 7th, 2020, that was led by MidAmerica and Southern Regions' Congregational Life Consultant, Nancy Combs-Morgan. The workshop focused on shifts in Religious Education and Faith Development, specifically whole-church Faith Development. While the RE visioning has been postponed due to COVID, the work that came out of the regional workshop showed that UUS members want their RE program to be engaging; they want to provide programming that supports children, youth and families; and they want children, youth and families to be included and engaged with our justice and spiritual groups, events and programming and congregational life.

RE During COVID-19

As UUS closed for in-person meetings in mid-March, many of UUS's RE spaces transitioned to meet online. After conversations with our families about their needs, and hearing feedback from many other UU congregations and RE professionals, it was decided to focus on providing spaces for children, youth and families to connect, share, and support each other, rather than content or curriculum-based meeting spaces. We scheduled a variety of online events and opportunities to connect, including weekly story times, virtual Family Nights, a virtual Community Meal, weekly 5th-6th grade group meetings, and various youth events.

—Submitted by Jessica Zimmer



Children and youth especially loved Sunday RE game days in the Fellowship Hall.



From Your Congregational Administrator, Emma Barnum

The office continues to be a place of evolution as we find better and new ways to support the needs of the congregation. Here are some of the administrative highlights from this past year:

Human Resources

Over the summer of 2019 I worked with the Staff Relations Team (which has since become the Personnel Committee) to review and revise our Employee Manual. The new Manual was approved by the Board at the end of 2019.

Security

We added four more video cameras to the building to increase our internal security. Luckily, the cameras were installed only a few days before we had a break-in in late January of 2020. Although nothing of value was stolen, the intruder did damage to several doors and filing cabinets. The footage from our cameras was shared with the Coralville police.

Finance

Working with a nonprofit CPA consultant, the Finance Committee and I have been working for the past several months on moving our accounting in-house. This switch should make our bookkeeping more efficient and easier to access. It also gives us an opportunity to simplify our chart of accounts, implement more financial controls in our policy and procedures, and review the roles and responsibilities of the administrative staff to decrease the day-to-day responsibilities of the Board Treasurer and Finance volunteers. We hope to officially make the switch to in-house accounting in late May, 2020.

COVID-19

The coronavirus has affected every aspect of administrative life at UUS. In mid-March 2020 the Board closed the UUS building and we moved to virtual meetings and services using two paid Zoom accounts. Although the normal office operations have been mostly suspended, the administrative responsibilities of coordinating virtual events, maintaining our online resources, and ensuring the congregation stays informed and engaged while we operate remotely has kept me busy. The most significant change in my responsibilities has been a much larger role in coordinating the technical aspects of Sunday services. Working from home has also presented its own challenges.

2019/20 Volunteers

This year's Office Volunteers included Gay Mikelson (leader), Dave Martin (left in 2019), Lucy Choisser (left in 2019), and Jeanette Carter. The Volunteers had a meeting in July, 2019, revising their role and chose to each take on certain tasks to handle at their leisure, rather than having weekly shifts. Both current and past

members of the Office Volunteers have stepped in as necessary to assist the staff with special projects

Linda Fisher, Wendy Brown, and Gay Mikelson continued as our excellent and reliable proofreaders.

Chris Rode, Christine Etler, and Alex Curtis served as our Sunday AV volunteers. During the shutdown, Kirk Witzberger, David Martin, and Russ Lenth all served as virtual AV volunteers helping run the Zoom meetings and PowerPoint slide shows.

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 administrative support to the rest of the staff.

Building Steward

Ron Wright continued to ensure our building and equipment were 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. He stepped away from the position for a few months in early 2020 but has since resumed his role.

Facilities Coordinator & Rentals at UUS

Lesanne Fliehler was hired in June of 2019. She has spent the year revitalizing our rental program, reviewing our procedures and agreement terms, hiring a Facilities Worker, Christian Ireland, to provide as-needed late-night cleanup after big parties and all Saturday night events, and working with rental parties to implement cleaning checklists and stronger rules to ensure safe and responsible use of our building. Unfortunately, Lesanne stepped down from the position in April of 2020 to enjoy her retirement.

Rentals at UUS are currently on hold, both because of the coronavirus, and also because the Board is reviewing how rental use of our building fits into our mission and budget needs. There are currently no plans to rehire the Facilities Coordinator position until the Board completes its review.

—Submitted by Emma Barnum



Safety Team

A new UU Safety Team was formed in the fall of 2019 out of concern that the congregation may not be prepared to respond effectively in an emergency. The Team members, Peg Bouska, Sherry Dolash, Kim Palmer, and Paul Pomrehn, with staff support from Emma Barnum, met several times to consider what types of training might be useful to the membership to better prepare us to respond to life-threatening emergencies.

The Team identified two local programs to offer training at UUS. "Stop the Bleed," a program developed by the American College of Surgeons, was to be presented by staff from the Department of Surgery at UIHC in late March. Also

scheduled in March was a training offered by volunteers from the Rotary-Kerber Heartsafe Community Initiative to teach hands-only CPR, proper use of an AED (Automated Electrical Defibrillator), and the Heimlich maneuver. The Endowment Committee approved \$2,000 from the Detiger Fund to support these programs and the purchase of an AED. Both of these courses were canceled because of COVID but will be rescheduled after UUS resumes normal operations.

The Safety Team will be expanding its agenda next year. If you are interested in participating please let Paul Pomrehn know at paulpomrehn@gmail.com or 594-2371.

—Submitted by Paul Pomrehn



(Left) In September of 2019, volunteers were able to salvage two of the original 100+ year-old pews from the sanctuary of the 10 S. Gilbert building in Iowa City. At least one of the pews will be kept in our new building.

Historical Records Committee

As the Society continues to enjoy our new building and sets about making memories for future members, the Historical Records Committee (HRC) meets frequently to work with our archives to make them as useful and accessible as possible.

We continued this year to sort and organize the many records brought from the old building. As we do this, we are able more easily to assist with inquiries from members and non-members who want to find answers from our past. Examples include:

- Provided the Ministerial Search Committee with previous information packets for prospective ministers.
- Researched an early Universalist minister for an out-of-town request.
- Searched for a record of a same-sex commitment ceremony officiated by Nancy Haley (prior to legalization of gay marriage).
- Researched Dee Norton's involvement in UUSIC for a dedication service of the labyrinth.
- Provided the Iowa City Public Library with photos of all previous meeting houses for their digital archive.

Other activities included:

- Developed a sign-out sheet to maintain records of materials checked out in-house.

- Helped pay for lighting in the Horack cabinet.
- Commissioned the framing of a beautiful picture of all previous Society buildings, which now hangs in the office area (pictured right).
- The UUS website now has an Historical Records section which includes full

text documents relating to the early history of the Society.

Our interim minister, Rev. Diane, recently commented that we have a wonderful archive. HRC will strive to maintain this collection as completely and as accessibly as possible.

Current members of the HRC are Diana Miller (chair), Sherry Dolash, Susan Eberly, Carmen Griggs, Diana Henry, Emily Johnson, Bob Littlehale, Kären Mason, Paula Miller, Cheryl Tugwell, and Jeanette Carter.

—Submitted by Jeanette Carter



Building and Grounds Teams

Members include Jim Laughlin, Dave Gallagher, Rick Bradshaw, Larry Kent, Emily Peck, Lois Hughes, Joe Rasmussen, Bruce Alexander, Gary Lawrenson (Grounds Team Chair), Kurt Haman, Ron Wright (Building Steward), Elaine Waples, Steve Van Abbema, and Deb Schoelerman (Building Team Chair).

The tasks involving both the building and grounds have increased and the Building and Grounds Team has been divided into two groups: the Building Team and the Grounds Team, although several people serve on both.

Building Team

The Building Team continues to monitor and maintain all the building HVAC systems, control panels, etc. This is done through our service contract with RM Boggs. We also manage, to the best of our ability, the storage areas and the many items stored in those spaces.



Shelves for storage were built in Storage Room A by a team led by Steve Van Abbema (pictured left).

Mechanical room E was subsequently cleaned out and those items stored in Room A. Steve also designed and built shelves in storage room D.

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.

There were some repairs needed this year. Members of the Building Team managed minor ones. For instance, the sink faucet in the all-gender restroom was replaced by Larry Kent. Others were outsourced. In June there was a leak in the roof after a heavy rain (pictured right). Damon Keen from MLC determined that there was an issue with a roof drainpipe not being supported enough and fixed the problem. In February heat pump motor #1 was not working well and was rebuilt by RM Boggs. The ice machine was also cleaned and repaired by RM Boggs.



Kitchen Team

The Kitchen Team is a sub-group of the Building Team. Members include Vicki Siefers, Diane Martin, Deb Schoelerman, Jane Slaymaker, Cindy Spading, Jill Stephenson, Carol Throckmorton (Chair), and Peg Voelker. The kitchen and pantry continue to be rearranged as needs come up. The Kitchen Team also maintains the tablecloths for society events. There were no major expenses this year other a new large coffee pot.

Grounds Team

The Grounds Team manages tasks outside the building, including the outdoor storage shed and its contents. The Grounds Team coordinates with the Land Ministry Team to maintain and care for the grounds. Sustainable Solutions was hired to mow the grass in the bio-retention cells. Turf Masters Lawn and Landscape, Inc. has been hired for snow removal of the parking lot and sidewalks.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman

(Below and right) Deer and wild turkey both frequent the UUS grounds and are not shy about visiting the building.



Land Ministry Team

The Land Ministry's mission is to prepare and implement plans for the use of the Society's grounds in order to protect and enhance the property and its flora and fauna through sustainable practice. The team has the ongoing responsibility for updating and implementing this plan. More than 40 members and friends volunteered their time and effort on Land Ministry projects this year:

Community Garden



Facilitated by Vicki Siefers. A generous donor provided funding for three additional garden panels, so now there are seven panels representing the UU principles. The panels were designed and created by Jase Septer of Washington. Many

volunteers helped to place the new panels in September of 2019 (pictured above). There are plans for additional landscaping in the garden including grasses, conifers, shrubs, and other plantings around the perimeter, a design created by David Selmer.

The RE classes helped sow flower seeds and plant bedding plants in the spring. The garden bloomed all summer with zinnias, sunflowers, petunias, and others. Hummingbirds and butterflies were frequent visitors.

Woodland Management

Facilitated by Tom and Mary McMurray. Many volunteers worked in the woodlands to maintain the trails and to remove invasive plants including garlic mustard, oriental bittersweet, and honeysuckle. Outdoor work sessions will be scheduled for the spring, summer, and fall of 2020.

Landscape

In early May 2019, a group of hardworking volunteers from Land Ministry and the Grounds Team planted 59 conifers on our site. The project was organized and coordinated by David Selmer and workers from Sustainable Landscape Solutions (SLS). The area around each tree was covered with cardboard and then mulched with wood chips. Throughout the dry summer many volunteers helped to water these newly planted trees on a weekly basis. All trees survived. For much of the summer, several hundred feet of hose could be seen around the property. Our water bill increased enough that the City of Coralville noticed it and called to see if we had a leaking pipe somewhere in

the building! Once the trees are established, such intense watering will not be needed.

A "Sponsor a Tree" program was created so that individuals and families could sponsor a tree, bush, or perennial grass or flower in honor of, or in memory of someone. There were many participants who helped to offset the cost of the trees. In the fall, volunteers placed fence posts and deer netting around all of the new trees. A tree tag has been ordered for each tree that will be attached in the spring. Each tag provides the common name of the tree, the Latin name, and the year planted.

For the 2020 planting season, David has created plans for the west side of the property near the sign, the west side of the community garden, and the parking lot median.

Memorial Garden

Julia Audelhelm is helping to design the memorial garden. The proposed location has been changed to one that will be more accessible on the east side of the Fellowship Hall. The limestone path can be extended from the south side. Planning is still underway.

Worship and Meditative Spaces

Facilitated by Virginia Melroy. The labyrinth has been completed, including landscaping that coordinates with the other landscaping on site (pictured below). On December 8th, 2019, Rev. Diane facilitated an official opening of the labyrinth with a Blessing and Inaugural Walk. A sign will be installed soon and the labyrinth is registered with the Labyrinth Locator app.

(Continued on next page)



(Land Ministry Report, continued)

Outdoor Play and Recreation

A new planning group is being formed, facilitated by Alice Atkinson to oversee completing construction of the active play areas of the playscape, including the stage, mud sink, and art wall. Later this spring, the RE garden boxes will be planted with flowers and plants that the deer like least.

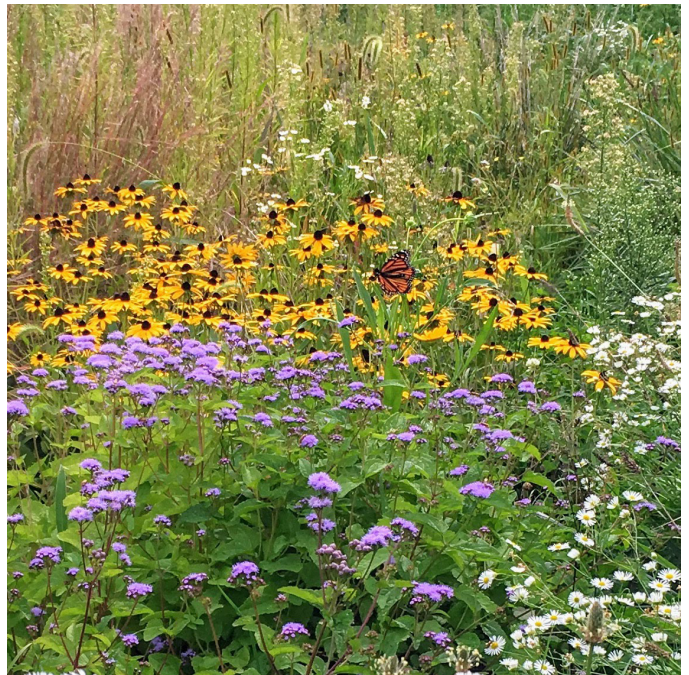


Last fall David Gallaher and Jeffery Ford built an accessible wooden bridge across the dry creek (pictured above). This bridge connects the two sections of the path on the south side of the building.

Bio-Retention Cells

In April of 2019, we noticed that a “gully” was forming at the outlet of Bio Retention Cell # 2 (the large one south of the driveway). After heavy rains, the erosion continued and SLS

installed a temporary solution: a PVC drainage pipe attached to the outlet pipe opening to carry the water further down the hill nearer the tributary. HBK Engineering Company, who originally designed the retention cells, was consulted and a solution has been proposed. The Land Ministry Team is seeking more information before we proceed.



Again we look forward to the seeing growth and flowering of the grasses, coneflowers, black-eyed Susan, western sunflower, butterfly milkweed, coreopsis, prairie phlox, and other native flowers (pictured above). Volunteers periodically remove weeds from the retention cells.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman

Aesthetics Team

The Aesthetics Team is made up of Gay Mikelson, Deb Schoelerman, Theresa Ullerich (Chair), Connie Peterson, and Julia Audelhelm. The Team works to create and maintain a beautiful and welcoming environment for UUs and the community.



We continued to sort and find spaces for art from 10 South Gilbert and, with the Historical Records Team, found space in the conference room for pictures of settled ministers and past church buildings.

With the help of electrician Emily Peck, the Aesthetics Team and Historical Records Team installed new lighting in the Horack Cabinet in the Fellowship Hall showcasing UUS

artifacts, books by and about UUS members, and other interesting items.

To enhance the beauty and peace of our light-filled Sanctuary, Connie Peterson and Julia Audelhelm are leading the effort to provide arrangements of flowers and natural materials for Sunday services and special occasions, including seasonal arrangements that can be re-used whenever needed.

We are setting up a procedure for members and friends to sign up to provide arrangements and hope to have the process up and running smoothly in 2020. Filling and decorating pots, outside the building, with help and materials from Lori Marshall, has been a fun project this year.



—Submitted by Theresa Ullerich

Program and Activity Groups

The following Program and Activity Groups were active during the 2019/2020 liturgical year. Many were either forced to cancel their events or meet virtually after the Board closed UUS due to the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-March, 2020.

- **UU Board Gaming Club** (leader: Phil Beck; met most months on a Friday at the Hobby Corner)
- **UU Book Discussion Group** (leader: Mary Lou Welter, met the 2nd Monday of months September through March 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 Sarah Ross; see report on page 25)
- **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)
- **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)
- **Knitting Group** (leader: Colleen Higgins, met most months on Saturdays in the Oak Room)
- **Mens' Sunday Social** (leader: Nik Jakob, met the first Sunday of most months beginning in December, 2019, at 2 Dogs Pub)
- **Owl Moon CUUPs** (leaders: Marsha Cheyney and Paula Miller; see separate report on page 25)
- **Racial Justice Team** (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; met monthly on the third Tuesday at Old Brick)
- **Vegetarian Community** (leader: Carol Throckmorton, met most months on the third Saturday in the Fellowship Hall or at the Prairie Hill Common House)

Dinners for Eight

Fifty-three UU's registered for this church year's dinners. These are adult-only social gatherings in members' homes for conversation and a potluck-style dinner. The host provides an entre and the guests supply the remainder of the meal. These dinners provide an opportunity to get to know other Society members in

an informal setting. Dinners were scheduled for the first Saturdays in October, December, February, April, and June with three or four dinners held each date. Dinners for Eight is seeking a new coordinator for the 20-21 church year. Please contact Joe Rasmussen for more information.

—Submitted by Joe Rasmussen



(Left) UUs enjoyed several family bike rides in the summer and fall of 2019. Most featured a stop at Heyn's Ice Cream. The rides were sponsored by the Bicyclists of Iowa City.

Owl Moon CUUPs

The Owl Moon Covenant of UU Pagans (CUUPs) is led by Marsha Cheyney and Dawn Marshall. Our goals this year were to bring more experiences of Earth-centered traditions to the congregation and to provide worship opportunities for those drawn to Earth-centered spiritual paths, both in the UUSIC congregation and those in the community who may not have a spiritual home. We did this by offering a variety of gatherings, rituals, and workshops:

Exploring spiritual practices:

- Full moon gatherings each month to explore our spirituality by acknowledging our ancestors, making offerings to the moon, and drumming for intention. In the cold weather months, we also explored how we, individually and as a group, use tarot. (attendance 6-16 each month)
- Food for Thought, a potluck dinner and discussion of topics relevant to pagan life (attendance 4-8 each month)



(Above) CUUPs leaders lead an interactive working on the topic “We Are Who We Believe We Are” during the service on Sunday, July 14th, 2019.

Celebration: We hosted seasonal rituals for many of the Pagan holidays:

- May 5th, 2019: Beltane ritual: *Celebrating the Fertility of the Earth*, followed by a Maypole dance (attendance ~24)
- September 28th, 2019: Mabon ritual: *Harvest Home: We are Who We Say We Are* (attendance 3)

- November 2nd, 2019: Samhain ritual: *Encounters with the Ancestors: the Journey Forward* (attendance 9)
- December 21st, 2019: Yule ritual: *The Gifts of Community Winter Solstice Celebration* (attendance ~60)
- March 21st, 2020: Ostara ritual: *Egg Magic*: a ritual focused on energizing eggs with intention and offering them to the land. We participated together while apart by posting online and performing individual actions during the ritual time. (11 participating)

Workshops/classes: we held a number of workshops and classes this year:

- July 20th, 2019: *Exploratory Tarot: The Cards in Conversation*, led by invited presenter River Roberts (13 participants)
- July 20th, 2019: Intro to West African Drumming, led by invited presenter River Roberts (18 participants)
- August 24th, 2019: *Rising! Rising Signs and Rising Loaves:*

building community through baking and decorating loaves of bread together, and shared a community pot of Stone Soup. We also learned about astrological chart by creating a beaded necklace that represents the heavens at the moment we were born. (12 participants)

Membership and looking ahead:

Membership in the CUUPS group has expanded over the course of the year, with newcomers joining us for many events.

Looking forward, we will be continuing a monthly moon-based schedule for drumming and divination work, and starting 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.

We are developing virtual options for these gatherings while observing social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

—Submitted by Marsha Cheyney

Covenant Groups

Covenant group membership is in the high 90s for the total program, and the 9 groups range from 8 to 14 members. Each group has two co-facilitators. The co-facilitators met twice during the year. New members continue to join or move to another group on a regular basis.

Monthly topics continue to be taken from the monthly Soul Matters material Rev. Diane is using. Groups appear to find these topics lead to deeper discussion, stimulating both ourselves and other members' spiritual growth.

Groups continue to do two service projects a year. Examples include making a main dish for free lunch, pulling garlic mustard in the church's woods, and playing bingo with residents at a nursing home.

Sarah Ross replaced Russ Lenth as program co-chair with Jan Locher. Other leaders include Phil Beck, who does the article in the monthly newsletter.

—Submitted by Russ Lenth

Social Justice Team (SJT)

This year's Fifth Sunday offerings benefited the Angry Tías, Common Fund, ANSWER, Uptown Bill's, and Eastern Iowa Community Bond Project 2019-2020.

The "Tías from the Prairie" traveled to Brownsville, Texas four times to assist asylum-seeking refugees across the border in Mexico. Activities included purchasing food, shoes, medicines and other necessities, delivering donated items such as hats, shampoo and washcloths, interpreting at a medical clinic, and helping at the temporary schools.

At least 58 people participated in the UUS Day of Service. Projects included cleaning the Winter Shelter, assisting at Uptown Bills, making tied blankets, and knitting prayer shawls. Members also gathered to make main dishes that would be served at the Free Lunch Program and the Bird Hospice House.

We partnered with the IUUWAN (Iowa Unitarian Universalist Witness and Action Network) at the Annual IUUWAN Conference in October. Members from UUS Green Sanctuary Team presented "An Introduction to Drawdown: Reducing Global Warming Workshop" to UUs around the state. Many congregations requested the Workshop for their congregations.

Members brought salads and desserts and then helped with serving and cleanup for the annual Shelter House Luncheon. For 14 years this event has provided additional funds to reach out to the homeless. About 30 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. UUS members gathered 90 pounds of supplies to support the CommUnity Crisis Center's annual Baby Shower. Barrels overflowed with gift cards, diapers, and baby wipes that are always in short supply.

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. SJT partners with many outside groups including the Consultation of Religious Communities, Johnson County Interfaith Coalition, Johnson County Health and Human Services Disproportionate Contact Committee, CommUnity Center, Common Fund, Center for Worker Justice, InsideOut/Reentry Community, and Death with Dignity.

SJT Contributions in 2019

2019 Total Giving: \$33,007

2018 Total Giving: \$35,689

2017 Total Giving: \$32,583

Community Partner Donations (Sunday offerings)

January: Abbe Center	\$1,700
February: DVIP	\$1,400
March: Inside Out Reentry	\$1,700
April: UAY	\$2,100
May: CommUnity (Crisis Center)	\$1,800
June: JC Neighborhood Centers	\$2,400
July: Table to Table	\$1,700
August: Free Medical Clinic	\$1,700
September: Emma Goldman Clinic	\$2,000
October: Shelter House	\$2,000
November: Free Dental Clinic	\$2,000
December: Free Lunch Program	<u>\$1,800</u>
	\$22,300

Misc. Contributions & Expenses

Common Fund, CommUnity	\$1,500
Border Refugees (diapers)	<u>\$100</u>
	\$1,600

Other UUS Fundraising in 2019

Common Fund*	\$800
ANSWER*	\$900
Angry Tias*	\$1,450
E. IA Community Bail Bond Project*	\$600
CROP Walk	\$550
Shelter House Luncheon	\$1,050
Guatemala Volcano Relief*	\$1,000
Circle of Friends (plus indiv. gifts)	\$810
Minister's Discretionary Fund (Christmas Eve)	<u>\$1,117</u>
*Fifth Sunday Offerings	\$7,277

CommUnity Food Bank: 90 lbs. of baby supplies

2019 Contributions from New Budget Line

CRC Dues	\$150
Center for Worker Justice Dues	\$250
IUUWAN Dues	\$275
Nat'l Partner Church Org. Dues	\$200
JCIC Dues	\$200
Peace Iowa Contribution	\$100
One Iowa Contribution	\$100
E. IA Community Bail Bond Project	\$250
CWJ Gala Sponsorship	\$100
Days of Service Expenses	\$105
Border Refugees (diapers)	<u>\$100</u>
	\$1,830

—Submitted by Gay Mikelson,
and Mary McCann



(Left) UUS donated 90 lbs. of baby supplies to CommUnity in June of 2019.



(Right) Cleaning out the trash and recycling enclosure was a project during the January 2020 Day of Service.



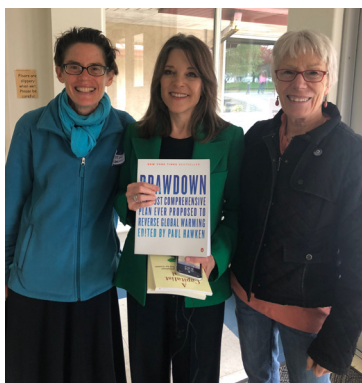
(Left and above) UUs march in the Iowa City Pride Parade, June 2019.



Green Sanctuary

The mission of the Green Sanctuary (GS) Team is to promote stewardship of Earth in our congregation and in our local and global communities. 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. Highlights from the past year include:

- We continue to educate the congregation on sustainability practices. This year (in addition to Drawdown) the focus was on the trash/compost/recycling information: what goes where.
- We maintained membership in Iowa IPL (Interfaith Power and Light) and UUMFE (UU Ministry for Earth).
- Sally Hartman, Kristen Wildensee, Virginia Melroy, Deb Schoelerman, and Paul Pomrehn presented four workshops of *Introduction to Drawdown: Reversing Global Warming* at the Senior Center, at UUS, at First Unitarian Church of Des Moines, and one for IUUWAN in Grinnell.



Four other workshops are planned for the The (Senior) Center, the Iowa Lakes UU Fellowship, the Cedar Valley Unitarian Church, and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames. We also convened a five-session follow-up "Getting Into Action" course at UUS in October, 2019.



- In January, 2020, UUS was awarded a Best Development Award in the category of "New Civic Building" from the 1,000 Friends of Iowa. Peggy Garrigues, Amy Fretz, Sally Hartman, and Deb Schoelerman traveled to Des Moines to accept the award, which was given at the State House (pictured above).
- UUS was one of 70 sponsors of the Climate Crisis Parade on February 1st, 2020, in Des Moines in which 1,000 people marched. Thank you to Miriam Kashia who organized two buses from Iowa City/Coralville area to transport almost 100 marchers to Des Moines (pictured above).
- The GS Team presented the Earth Service via Zoom on Sunday, April 5th, 2020. The theme was "Spring into Action."
- Application for Zero Energy certification with the Living Building Challenge is in process. Based on Linn Co REC electric bills, we are confident that we are "zero energy," i.e., producing all of our electricity needs on site.

—Submitted by Deb Schoelerman



UUs march in the Climate Crisis Parade in Des Moines, February 1st, 2020.

Racial Justice Team

Peg Bouska chaired, as Dave Martin took leave to concentrate on the Ministerial Search Committee. The Racial Justice Team met one Sunday a month in the Oak Room, initially after services, then before services. Attendance averaged 8 people. Activities included:

- Continued our local advocacy activities with community partners, including supporting events and actions by the Center for Worker Justice, Disproportionate Minority Contact Committee, Johnson County Interfaith Council (JCIC), Tias from the Prairie, Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), Neighborhood Centers, African American Museum, and others.
- Marched in protests and attended ally/advocacy events on issues of: gun violence prevention, disproportionate minority contact with law enforcement, Martin Luther King's legacy, immigration reform, African American history and everyday racial oppression.
- Participated in the UUA Common 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. Met for discussions in June and July.
- Purchased a table filled by RJT members and affiliates at the African American Museum's History Makers Gala on October 3rd, 2019.
- Assisted with fundraiser held at UUS for Center for Worker Justice (October 5th, 2019).
- Supported the Vote Truth to Power voter engagement event sponsored by JCIC at the Kingdom Center on January 16th, 2020.
- Watched and discussed videos, including *Civil Rights/Black College Tour*, and *1619*.

- Held a performance by Caleb Rainey (pictured right), "The Negro Artist," a spoken word artist, on February 22nd, 2020, benefiting the Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County.
- Updated the tutoring/mentoring volunteer guide of current local opportunities and made available to our congregation.
- Explored potential curricula for further educating ourselves and the congregation on issues of racial inequality. Plan to offer *Under Our Skin*, dates not yet known.
- Planning a Forum for the congregation featuring representatives from three more organizations on the tutoring/mentoring volunteer list. Date not yet known.



—Submitted by Pat Ryan



(Above) UUs sponsored a table at the African American Museum's History Makers Gala, October 2019.

Free Lunch Program

Since 1986, UUs have come together once a month to prepare and serve a meal to guests at Iowa City's Free Lunch Program.

In 2019, a total of 54 dedicated UUS volunteers participated by donating food, preparing and serving meals, doing dishes, and cleaning up afterward. The average number of active UUS volunteers per month was 31. Over the course of the year, a total of 1,745 meals were served for an average of 145 each month. Guests voiced appreciation and took home left-overs after each meal. In return, UUS volunteers enjoyed



conversing with each other as they prepared the meal and experienced the deep satisfaction of serving our community.

The UUS Free Lunch Team gratefully acknowledges the individuals, Covenant Groups, and Youth Groups who answered the call to purchase or prepare main dishes.

Diana Miller and Carmen Griggs served as team coordinators; Sue Eberly served as secretary/record keeper; and Jeanette Carter and Sherry Dolash served as helpful and knowledgeable support team members.

—Submitted by Carmen Griggs



(Above and left) The UU Free Lunch Team serves a meal every month, even during a pandemic!

Immigration Action Team

A newly named group, the Immigration Action Team, coordinates UUS efforts to support the local immigrant community, including the “Circle of Friends,” the families we have been supporting for several years. Many UUS members participated in providing gifts for the families in December, and hosting a Valentine’s potluck in February.

Additional activities of the Immigration Team included attending Allies meetings, checking with at-risk families, securing a grant for a partner agency, and raising money in crisis situations. The team is also exploring sponsorship of an asylum seeker.

The “Tías from the Prairie” traveled to Brownsville, Texas, four times between October 2019 and March 2020 to support asylum-seeking refugees across the border in Mexico. Actions included purchasing food, shoes, and medicines; delivering donated items such as hats, toiletries, and washcloths; interpreting at a medical clinic; and assisting at the temporary schools.

—Submitted by Sally Hartman

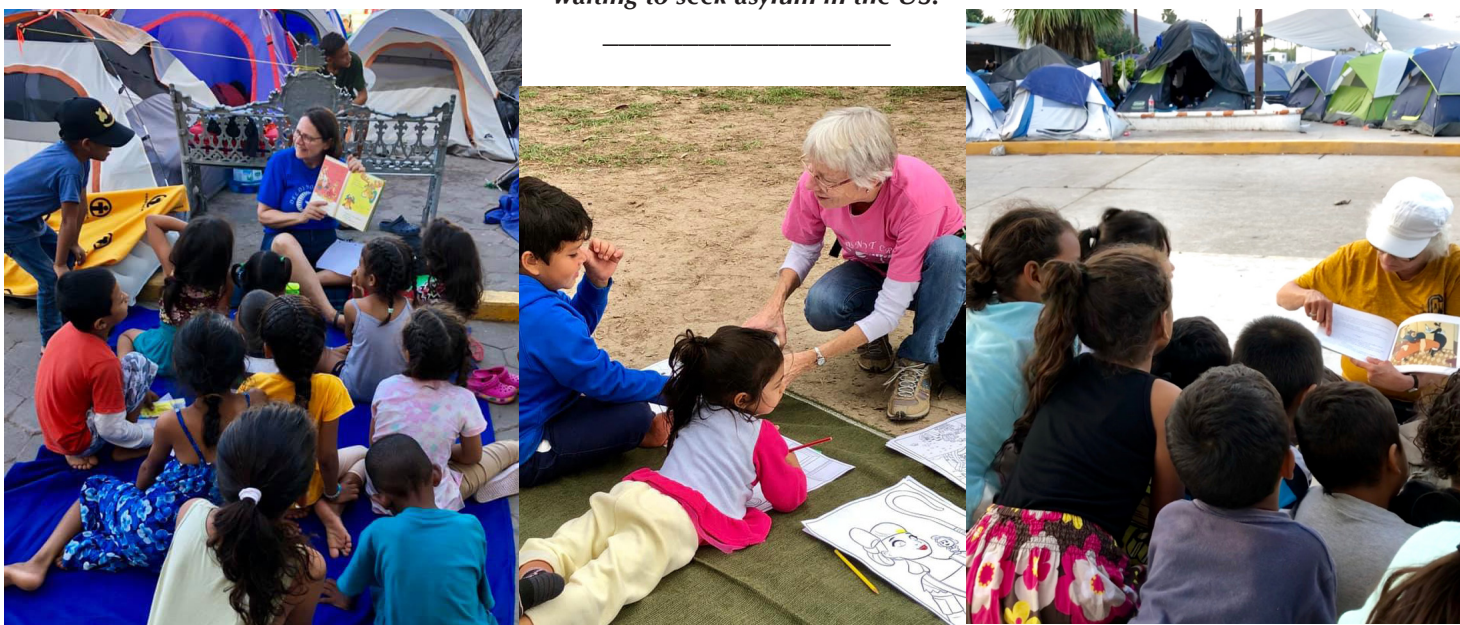


(Above) “Tías from the Prairie” report on the January 2020 trip to the border on Iowa Public Radio’s “River to River.”

(Below) The Immigration Action Team makes hats to be distributed to asylum seekers at the Mexico border.



(Below) The Tías taught and read to children waiting to seek asylum in the US.



2019/2020 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.

2019/2020 Board of Trustees

Amy Fretz, President
Joe Rassmussen, Vice President
Chris Rode, Treasurer (outgoing)
Allison Bettine, Secretary
Jane DeWitt, Past President (outgoing)
John Raley, Finance Trustee
Michael Honey-Arcement, Trustee
Colleen Higgins, Trustee
Paul Pomrehn, Trustee
Rev. Diane Dowgiert, Ex officio staff

2019/2020 Leadership Development Committee

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

2019/2020 Endowment Committee

Pete Brokaw, Chair (outgoing)
Gary Lawrenson
Ken Atkinson
Al Thomas
Kris Canfield

2019/2020 Committee on Congregational Life & Ministry (CCLAM)

Disbanded for the duration of the Interim Ministry

2019/2020 Staff

Rev. Diane Dowgiert, Interim Minister
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, RE Assistant
Lesanne Fliehler, Facilities Coordinator (left 4/20)
Ron Wright, Building Steward
Peng Zhang, Accompanist (left 12/19)
Aura Strohschein, Accompanist (began 1/20)
Mason Montuoro, Tenor Soloist

2019/2020 Childcare Workers

Cassie Kaminsky, Kaylee Lopez, Emily Much,
Abigail & Cora Patterson, and Suzanne Seehusen

2019/2020 Facilities Workers

Christian Ireland, Paul Kohnhurst, Lori Marshall,
Tabitha Rasmussen, and Ron Wright

