

First Unitarian Church Louisville, Kentucky



2016-2017 Annual Report to the Congregation

June 4, 2017

We are a church of reason and spirit, that
Witnesses for progressive faith,
Nurtures our community, and
Transforms our world.

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Reports from Elected Bodies/Officers

Board of Trustees Report

Purpose:

The Board of Trustees is charged with the general administration and fiscal operation of the church. This means monitoring the budget, reviewing policies, and overseeing the operations of the church.

Members

Members included Devi Pierce, Board President, Jill Sampson, Vice President, John Grossman, Treasurer, Claire Vanlandingham, Secretary, Nancy MacPherson, Bill VanRooy, Kathy Drehmel, and Kristi Drehmel. Devi will rotate off this year. Bill has resigned his position, effective in June 2017. Jill Sampson was elected by the Board in mid-session to fill a vacancy and agreed to be Vice President.

Activities

The Board had a very busy and productive year – created two new committees under the Board: Fundraising, and Media and Technology Management; Voted to pay off the remaining portion of the Capital Campaign Loan; Revised the Board Welcomes and Intro to Generosity pulpit announcements; Sponsored a Board/Lay Leadership Retreat, which reviewed church leadership, church structure, and governance; Voted to ordain our former student intern, Chris Rothbauer; Revised the Rental Staffing policy; Developed a draft Strategic Plan with the help of a consultant; Voted in a revised Personnel Policy Manual and helped to update staff contracts; Did the member count in January – 167 members, which was then reported to the UUA; Agreed to the creation of a labyrinth in the courtyard by a Boy Scout, Bradley Waller, after reviewing information presented by several other committees; Made changes to the Endowment language in the By-laws; Voted on a 2017-2018 fiscal budget to be presented at the Annual Meeting.

The major focus of the Board's activities, though, centered on hiring an Interim Minister, which was delayed until the spring of 2017 in order to be assured a better list of candidates. Because of this, a Transition Team was developed in the fall. The Board negotiated with Christe Lunsford (Student Minister) and Linette Lowe (RE Director) to provide increased ministerial services for the remainder of the year. The Interim Search process included writing a detailed application to submit to the UUA, discussion and approval of a compensation package for the Interim Minister, an extensive review of interested applicants, and multiple interviews. Our first choice for the Interim position was Rev. Kathy Hurt from the Birmingham Unitarian Church in Michigan. We were also her first choice of a church, so the match went well. A contract was negotiated and signed.

Respectfully submitted,
Devi Pierce,
President, Board of Trustees

Reports from Elected Bodies/Officers

Ministry Council

Purpose

As provided in the Church bylaws, the Ministry Council coordinates the activities of the Worship, Member, Mission & Outreach, Religious Education, and Resources Ministries. The Ministry Council is responsible for periodically reviewing the effectiveness of Church programs and recommending to the Board new programs and activities to serve the needs and interests of the Congregation and to support Church goals. The Ministry Council meets monthly and reaches its decisions by consensus of the Council members.

Members

Those who are members of the Ministry council include Trish Ramey, Worship Ministry, Mary Ballard, Resources Ministry, Maureen Taylor, Connections Ministry, Del Ramey, Mission and Outreach Ministry, and James Jeffries, RE Ministry. Kristen Drehmel acts as the Board liaison. Ministry council meets every fourth Tuesday at 5:30.

Treasurer's Report

See Finance Report, page 28

Minister's Report

Letter from The Rev. Dawn Cooley, July 27, 2016

It is with a whole spectrum of emotions that I write to let you know that my time as your minister will end on October 23, 2016. I have accepted a job as Congregational Life Staff with the Southern Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association, serving over 215 congregations in 12 states, Mexico, and the US Virgin Islands.

This does not come out of any conflict with the congregation. In some ways, that might be easier to accept. I love you all, individually and collectively. I have simply found that my vocational has shifted from parish ministry to the sustainability of religious life. In short, I am called to help congregations (plural) learn to adapt to the changes churches are experiencing in this 21st century. And the Southern Region, with its reputation for innovation and its cutting edge growth, is the ideal place to answer the call.

While I am very excited about my new position, I am also full of sorrow to say goodbye to such an amazing congregation. It has been an honor and a privilege to be your minister, to walk with you the past 7 years, to watch you grow into a delightful and inspiring church.

In the next few months, we will have time to more fully process our grief, express our gratitude for one another, honor what has been, and say goodbye. I have attached a document (*Q&A below*) that I hope addresses many of the questions you might have. I will be speaking about this transition in a homily on July 31 – I hope to see you there.

In Love and Faith,

The Rev. Dawn Cooley

Q & A from The Rev. Dawn Cooley

Why are you leaving?

For the past few months, I have been trying to reconnect with the passion I had for parish ministry, and slowly coming to a realization that my passion, and my vocation, has moved elsewhere. Rather than serving as a parish minister, I have realized that I am called to help congregations (plural) learn to adapt to the changes churches are experiencing in this 21st century.

I did not *want* to experience this shift in vocation. I tried to deny it. I love First Unitarian and have been honored and privileged to serve as your minister. However, I have realized that it is imperative for me to step down in order to both pursue my vocation and to allow the church to thrive.

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What happens to us now?

While an individual minister may be transient, the office of the ministry in a congregation is enduring. I will leave, as ministers before me have left, and you will, in good time, find another minister.

Most likely, there will be a period of transition, during which volunteer and professional staff provide ministerial support to the congregation. At the end of that period, the Board will hire an Interim Minister who will help the congregation through the search for a new settled minister.

All will be well. First Unitarian's reputation in the larger UUA community is very positive right now – that should give you choices when it comes to both an interim and a settled minister.

What about your family?

Though my work for the UUA will have me traveling frequently, my family will remain in Louisville. John, Evvie and Josie will continue to participate at First U, as will my mother, Laurie Clark.

This is an uncommon arrangement nationally that is surprisingly common at First Unitarian – the Rev. Bob Reed's wife, Jeanne, stayed several years after her husband left for ministry elsewhere, as did Joan Beale, the Rev. Richard Beale's wife. What allowed these situations to work is that the congregation was respectful about maintaining appropriate boundaries with the remaining family members. I ask that you observe the same for my family. Here are a few helpful pointers:

Do not expect them to serve in leadership roles as that can be a conflict of interest for the new minister;

Do not critique the new minister in front of them, or tell my family how much you miss me;

Don't invite John and I (as a couple) or our family to participate as a unit in an social engagement as I will not be able to attend;

Do not ask them to pass messages to to me;

Do love them and invite them to continue to participate fully into the life.

Can we be friends?

The UU Minister's Association's Code of Ethics dictates that I will no longer have contact with First Unitarian Church and its members. This is complicated by the fact that we are staying in town. If we encounter each other in the grocery store, please feel free to say hello, but do not tell me anything about how the church is doing. If I am dropping off a child at your

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house for a playdate, we can make small-talk but, again, must avoid the topic of church.

Social media also complicates this departure. I have a policy of saying “yes” to anyone who “friends” me on facebook. However, most of these people end up in a “Restricted” category so that they see only public posts, nothing personal. I will be placing all First U congregants into this “Restricted” category. In addition, I will no longer be following your posts.

These boundaries are not about my affection for you – it is about giving you and the new minister a space to forge a new, healthy relationship.

When is your last day with us?

My last day will be Sunday, October 23, 2016.

What will you be doing between now and then?

I will spend the vast majority of my time in these coming months trying to say goodbye in a healthy, loving way. This means closing any loopholes that might exist, making sure any special knowledge that I have is shared with appropriate people, and, of course, talking to you, visiting with you, crying with you, and, hopefully, envisioning with you what wonderful things might be coming up for you.

I am available to meet with any of you who would like to do so – at church, at your home, at a coffee shop – whatever suits you. Just send me an email or give me a call to set something up.

Dawn

Staff Reports

Transition Team Leader Report

Upon Rev. Cooley's leaving in October, the Board asked me to take on half of the ministerial duties as the Transition Team Leader. My hours were increased to full time and an RE Assistant was hired to free up some time from RE duties. As the Transition Team Leader, I have supervised staff, excluding the Student Minister who is supervised by their internship supervisor. I have taken on the administrative portfolio, to include running staff and worship planning meetings, conferring with staff as needed, working with Personnel and the Board on staff contracts and the Personnel Manual revisions, doing annual staff evaluations, and attending Board, Ministry Council, Personnel Committee and other meetings as needed.

The Student Minister and I shared pulpit supply and pastoral care responsibilities as each of us was available to fill the need. I have been in the pulpit at least once a month since October, and I've enjoyed that opportunity. Pastoral care has been an area of growth for me, as we have had a number of crises and deaths since October. I have found that I very much enjoy making visits to those in the hospital, rehab, or who are homebound. I had the opportunity to be the officiant for the memorial services for both Joe Hodge and the Rev. Bob Reed, and I assisted at several other memorials. It is a great honor to be asked to eulogize our beloved elders, and I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to get to know those who have passed and their families on a deeper level.

Immediately following Rev. Cooley's departure, the nation was thrown into turmoil by the results of the Presidential election. Anxiety everywhere rose. The Transition Team and leadership focused on being a non-anxious presence and meeting the emotional needs of our community. Christe and I implemented a monthly Wednesday night vespers services for quiet contemplation and several Friday night pot-luck and game nights to help our community come together in healing ways. We worked on our understanding of ourselves as a mosaic of multicultural people and we addressed the needs of those who fear further marginalization from the new presidential administration. The church received hate mail, perhaps for the first time, and the leadership smoothly followed all the necessary procedural steps. Safety protocols were reviewed and improved.

The Board initiated the process for obtaining an interim minister, including completing a long-overdue process of strategic planning with myself, several congregants, and a consultant. We have increased our engagement with social justice organizations in the area, including LSURJ, and we had a year of thought-provoking worship services thanks to the worship planning team and Worship Ministry. There have certainly been some bumps in the road, but overall, I am extremely proud of our congregation who has not only survived a year without a minister, but has in many ways thrived. We know ourselves better than ever, and we are ready for interim work. We took care of each other, we learned together, we mourned together, we celebrated together.

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I am indebted to many who have made this time as Transition Team Leader a success, but most of all to Christe Lunsford, our Student Minister. We work extremely closely as a team, and Christe's support and wisdom have been priceless to me. The entire staff has been wonderfully supportive during what could have been a very stressful time, as has the Board of Trustees. The Transition Team ensured that the congregations questions and concerns were addressed and offered helpful insight and support along the way. I am proud of and grateful for what we have done together this year.

With gratitude,
Linette Lowe

Letter from the Student Minister

As I write this, I realize that I am at the mid-way mark of my time at First as Student Minister. While a year seems like such a long time, I have begun the process of leaving. We all fall into a lull where time slips away and events sneak up on us. Having served First as both Music Director for several years and now Student Minister, it makes the idea of leaving far more difficult. This congregation has definitely loved me into ministry.

The Rev. Elwood Sturtevant, senior minister of Thomas Jefferson Unitarian, agreed to be my Teaching Pastor for this year. Having served the congregation in leadership as Music Director through a ministerial sabbatical I felt confident that the church and its leaders could weather the 9 months needed to be in the proper rotation for an interim. The Rev. Kathy Hurt will be joining First in August as Interim Minister and my Teaching Pastor.

With the resignation of Rev. Dawn Cooley, I agreed to provide pastoral care and pulpit supply in addition to my learning the systems in each of First's committees. Linette Lowe was asked to take the ministerial administrative duties. I believe we all know that life cannot be divided so cleanly, but having worked so closely with Linette over past years, we felt we could work well as a team to serve the needs of First.

The anxiety and grief a congregation feels with the loss of a settled minister and the work that they undertake to search for an interim is difficult enough. However, this year the national presidential election and subsequent political stress called UU justice seekers to the frontlines of protest over upcoming legislation and change in the U.S. political climate. All of this added to the anxiety many individuals felt. And then, just when the external anxiety seemed to ease off a bit, the UUA began its upheaval and ramped up the anxiety for internal change and growth needed within our denomination.

It became clear that the First U community needed a stronger spiritual connection to deal with the hurt and anxiety in the world. Linette and I designed a new monthly

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Vespers service to allow a quiet contemplative space for folks to let go and recharge. I reached out to those in the congregation that I knew were struggling and to those who I felt were less able or unlikely to ask for themselves, but who could use support with the newly added stresses in life.

Our first monthly vespers service was incredibly time consuming to plan and we realized that we would not have been able to sustain that level of planning each month. However, when the response was positive and continuing services were asked for, we found that offering a half hour service of individual candle lighting, singing, a prayer, and a few readings was enough. The space and presence held for the community that collected together was precious and allowed those who attended to heal and be recharged.

Under normal circumstances, an intern or student minister would preach maybe twice in a year, follow the senior minister from meeting to meeting, and probably serve as the worship associate for funerals and weddings. But when Rev. Dawn Cooley left First Unitarian in October, I was granted a larger role in collaborating with both staff and lay leadership and, as a result, created many more Sunday worship services than I had anticipated. I also had the opportunity to plan and lead several memorial services. There has not, to date, been an opportunity to conduct a wedding service.

Even when I have not delivered the Sunday sermon, I have been in the pulpit to serve as the primary liturgist. First U has a strong sense of the arc of a service and it is the liturgist's responsibility to create and hold the container for others. As liturgist, I have led the congregation in opening and closing readings, the covenant and mission, joys and concerns, prayer and meditation, and the benediction.

Although there are monthly themes to guide sermons and suggested days of observance, I have been free to preach on any topic. This year I have focused heavily on multicultural identities, in our comfort in the dis- comfort of uncertainty and anxiety and lifting voices of the global majority, and in pulling those people who are marginalized into the center of my work in the world. My sermons this year have been scheduled on specific observances; Lammas, Mosaic Makers, Transgender Day of Remembrance, Christmas, New Years, Easter, and Beltane.

Finding the right balance between congregational work, denominational work and social justice connections outside the church has been overwhelming. Where we are often called to do more, there is often a need to prioritize where a minister's presence is most effective.

I found it important to maintain First's community connections as well as a denominational connection to the larger faith through my engagement with our religious professional groups. The following is a sample of these connections:

Local: 1) Louisville's Interfaith Paths to Peace Community, participating as a local representative of Unitarian Universalism 2) represent First U at Concerned Clergy for Choice 3) Louisville Youth Group - safe gathering for LGBTQ teens -

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serving as a trans mentor 4) Indivisible KY - 4 Tuesday rallies during the first 100 days of the Trump Administration 5) United As One For Trans (fundraiser) 5) Central Louisville Community Ministries fundraiser - serves low-income residents in the church neighborhood 6) Louisville-Showing Up for Racial Justice training events at First U.

Regional: Meeting regularly with my ministerial cluster has helped me navigate some of the external expectations of the church as an organizational member in the association. This has helped me to see the benefit that services the UUA can supply First Unitarian and they have been a great source of support, for example, when the church received hate mail, both personally and congregationally.

National: I am a member of the UU Ministers Association and will again attend Ministry Days and the UU General Assembly.

This year I am also able to return to the UU Musicians Network (UUMN) conference in an effort to build collegial bridges between differing ministerial identities and institutions of learning. As a member of TRUUsT, I'll be working to invite others to have open dialogue about joining and/or support each other as Allies. I was asked to serve on the UUMN Board for 2017 but chose to decline due to my seminary load. I am grateful that the UUMN asked me again this year. I am on the nomination slate for the UUMN board members that begin in January 2018. The slate will be voted on this summer at the UUMN conference.

I am a member of Transgender Religious professional UUs Together (TRUUsT) and with that group will work to build resources to help congregations grow in their Welcoming to the LGBTQ+ community.

I am finding that I am called to disrupt the silo-ing of groups and build bridges for shared ministry among those that are called to progressive and inclusive faith.

In closing, I would add that the leadership of First Unitarian has been instrumental in the continued growth of First Unitarian even when the tasks have seemed daunting. They have strived for excellence and ever increasing curiosity toward how best to lead in the midst of extreme social concern while maintaining their dedication and their humor. This is a blessing and a testament to the strength of this congregation.

I feel the opportunity of serving this congregation over the past year has prepared me far beyond expectation. I look forward to this next year together.

Blessings,
Christe Lunsford, Student Minister

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Director of Religious Exploration

This year has been an exciting and challenging one, as always. When Rev. Cooley left in October, I was asked to take on half of the ministerial duties. My hours were increased to full time, and an RE Assistant was hired to take on the classroom preparations for Sundays in order to make hours available for ministerial work. The Transition Team Leader Report can be found in a separate document.

In my role as DRE, I have again enjoyed the opportunity to acquire continuing education. In the summer I attended a Spirit Play training which gave me an in-depth view of the Spirit Play model of doing RE. Spirit Play is a Montessori-inspired method that relies on storytelling with baskets of items that represent the story, then allowing the children to either play with the story baskets or create art. If and as our program grows, this could be a valuable resource to us. In the summer I also took an online class with Sarah Ruddell Beach, a former public school teacher and a mindfulness instructor, in order to learn about, model, and teach mindfulness practices in RE. I attended the annual Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) fall conference which focused on money, death and other hard to approach issues. My time together with colleagues there was invaluable, as always. I attended webinars on supporting non-gender-conforming youth and on creating and sustaining an inclusive youth group. In the fall, a group of lay and staff leaders attended and presented at the Mosaic Makers Conference on multicultural competency, which was inspiring and challenged us to look deeper. As a consequence, I took a class at Meadville-Lombard Theological School on Multicultural Ministry in January, where I was able to explore in depth my own multicultural competencies, our congregation's multicultural work, and ways to continue the work. This spring I was privileged to be part of the UUA's online interim training for religious professionals, which will help me support the incoming interim minister and the congregation during our interim time. It is hard to separate out the value of these learning opportunities for the DRE and the Transition Team Leader; they have all been valuable in both roles! My busy church schedule has kept me from meeting with my Heartland DRE colleagues as regularly as I would have liked, but I did attend our annual Heartland retreat with several of them late in May. The wisdom and love of DRE colleagues is so crucial to this work!

I was asked to work with the UUA Office for Youth and Young Adult Programming on the Bridging Think Tank at the LREDA fall conference, and so I met virtually with several other DREs and UUA staff to work on ways to keep youth who are transitioning to young adulthood as active participants in the church. Our work culminated in a report to the UUA recommending a number of priorities for the Office.

I continued to support the Southern Cluster of DREs and congregations in OH, IN, and KY by planning and hosting the third annual Middle School Youth Retreat at YMCA Camp Piomingo on the fourth weekend in September. It was well-attended once again, and we all had a great time getting to know each other and bonding as UUs. This year I

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was asked to take on the Treasurer position for the Heartland LREDA Chapter of DREs, and so I have worked to learn that role, transfer all accounts, and work on the annual retreat.

Our Religious Exploration programming here at First U has gone well this year. We continue to offer Children's RE in age-appropriate classes, including The Growing Tree Nursery, Preschool-1st Grade Explorers (Picture Book World Religions and Bible Tales), 2nd-4th Grade Seekers (Love Will Guide Us curriculum), and 5th 8th Grade Padawans (Jedi Academy). We offered Apprenticeships for interested High School youth, such as working in the nursery, learning to run tech deck, and assisting in Jedi Academy. We offer Children's Celebration most Sundays during the sermon portion of the service for children preschool through upper elementary age, and we continue using mindfulness practice weekly during our time together. One Room Schoolhouse meets on second Sundays with Linette and helpers to explore the Ministry Theme for the month with song, a wisdom story, mindfulness practice, and then activity stations. We offered two OWL sessions again this year, both of which were well attended: K-1st grade in the fall and 7th-9th grade in the spring. Adult RE has offered interesting opportunities this year as well: Coffee and Social Justice, and The Garden weekly, Spirit in Practice, Michael Moore's Where to Invade Next, Poetry readings, Popcorn Theology, Justice Readings, including the UU Common Read, a Writing and Journaling Group, Hindsight, Humor and Hope: Who Me, and Elder? As well as Fifth Sundays speakers, and special series on Social Justice for Families with Louisville Showing Up for Racial Justice (LSURJ). Our programming is vibrant!

We offered several service opportunities again this year: our annual Trick or Treat for UNICEF collected a great amount—over \$250! We also sponsored the annual UUSC Guest at Your Table collection during the winter holidays. The RE Ministry partnered with Brightside and Courtyard Friends to pick up trash around our neighborhood and on the church grounds. The Chalica Challenge to bring food and socks, gloves and hats to our Chalica service, exceeded all expectations.

Our staffing increased by seven hours a week this year with the addition of Na'Queesha Puckett as our RE Assistant. Our two Child Care Providers, Na'Queesha Puckett and Elena Meeks, both continue to bring their boys with them to staff the nursery each week. It has been great to continue working with Christina Roberts, our Child Care Coordinator and P-1 teacher, and with the RE Ministry. We have a full complement on the RE Ministry, which is working to support the work of RE throughout the church. And many of our RE Leaders continue to return year on year, allowing us to provide a stable and loving presence for all involved. I am deeply grateful for everyone who makes RE happen at First Unitarian! I look forward to the coming year with a new interim minister and all that we will learn about ourselves.

In gratitude,
Linette

Staff Reports

Music Director

I've declared every year since I arrived and I continue to believe that the music ministry at First Unitarian is vital to the life of this congregation.

This year we went back to having a Choir Director instead of a Music Director after Rev. Dawn Cooley announced she was leaving. I served in that position through Christmas before our accompanist Ethan McCollum assumed the role. This allowed Ethan time to adjust to his Master's in Music program at the University of Louisville before taking on the full responsibility of leading the choir.

It was and still is difficult for the congregation to fully grasp the difference between Music Director and Choir Director. Music Directors are responsible for developing a music program, participates in worship planning, helping to craft the arc of service by the integration of all music, manages multiple music groups and their leaders and coordinates guest musicians. Choir Directors are responsible only for the choir and are not able to participate fully in worship planning because they are not given the authority or the extra hours to do so.

Choir Director

This year the choir performed music that tied closely with the theme of each service and the sermon topics. I was transparent with the choir about the change of direction as we worked through the first several months. There was the opportunity for Ethan to step in and rehearse the choir while I was out of town so that he could reflect on how he wanted to lead. I chose music for the fall that leaned more toward Ethan's love of accapella music to allow the choir to get a taste of what Ethan would eventually ask of them. This in part helped make the transition not so abrupt.

Vespers

In previous years the Vespers service was structured to have a half hour of musical preludes prior to the start of the service. In past years I have hired outside instrumental musicians but this year I hired a vocal soloist and prepared the choir to sing for the preludes in addition to the service.

I began rehearsing the Vespers music with the choir in September and each piece reflected a major theological theme of the Vespers service. This lengthy rehearsal period is vital for this music. Because the holiday season can be so very chaotic and can pull people in so many directions, there is not enough energy left to focus on learning holiday music. Starting so early helps to ensure the music learning process gets its fair share of attention and I knew that this year they would need the time to learn all 12 pieces for one event.

As to the technical production elements of Vespers, the choir has not been part of the service procession for several years and this year was no different. The processional

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featured soloist Kristi Dremel chanting Benjamin Britten's *Hodie Christus Natus Est*. The hymns for this service were again carefully chosen making sure each one's copyright status was in the public domain. This made it possible to legally print the lyrics in the order of service. All photocopied songbooks have now been destroyed, bringing the church into compliance with copyright law. This year when we sang Silent Night, we dedicated it to the memory of Jesse Schreiber (who passed away this year), who for years lead the congregation in German and then in English. Kristi Dremel sang the piece in German as a touching memorial, which was very well received.

Solstice Singers

This group of talented women, who were originally gathered to sing, "A Winter Solstice Singing Ritual," have continued to sing together throughout the year.

While they gave two performances for Winter Solstice and they love singing together – they are extremely busy people and it is hard to get them together for rehearsals. I continue to receive requests for recordings of this group and the music they performed.

UU Music Network

I am still an active member of the UUMN and I have been asked to join the Board at the end of this year. I find that this connection with UU musicians is an important part of my spiritual life and it connects me to the larger music ministry within the UUA. Ethan has yet to be connected into this community but he has expressed interest and will be encouraged to join

Children's Music

A children's music program has slowly been integrated into RE. At present Ethan works with the DRE to teach one new song to the children during One Room Schoolhouse each month. Teaching the children UU hymns is a part of their faith formation.

Submitted by Christe Lunsford,
previous Choir Director and current Student Minister

Staff Reports

Office Administrator

Coordinate office volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of the office and church success, whether working behind the scenes organizing, creating reports and bulletins, or answering the phone. The volunteers are the first person many see when they arrive and their diligence keeps things running smoothly. In early fall, I began working an additional job while continuing my work at First U. I am so grateful for the volunteers that have made this transition possible. Thank you to Carol Findling, Pam Middleton, Trish Ramey, Clare Zigner, and Gary Drehmel for your service. Carol has retired and we lost Dorothy Grossman this year. I miss them both.

Foster effective communications; Assist with Sunday Service

This is the most well known aspect of my job to most people. Each week I create the printed Order of Service using information supplied by the speaker, staff, and the Worship Ministry. Communication also includes the slides for the pre-service announcements and regular email updates (Joys and Sorrows, Mid-Week Update, and What's UUp?) which are shared on the website and on Facebook. Getting material to those that don't access it electronically is an issue of concern to me, and is being considered by a group tasked with meeting the church communication needs.

Building use coordination

It is my responsibility to schedule building use and keep the online church calendar updated, (firstulou.org/calendar), making sure we don't have conflicts. This includes scheduling church groups as well as rentals from outside groups. The Building Supervisor, Custodian, and I collaborate frequently regarding scheduling and the needs of those using the space. There have been two weddings and six memorial services, some members, some outside groups. Due to the frequent use by a variety of users, there are occasionally concerns about space allocation, cleaning, and security. As the Resource Ministry has reminded us all, it is important to be respectful of others, and to clean up after you or your group uses space. Keeping the doors closed and locked is essential. Please report it if you see a group misusing the space, especially propping open a door, which is a security problem. It is First U policy that each group is responsible for letting their own people in the building in order to prevent entry by unauthorized guests. Do not open the door to let someone in unless you are positive they are allowed.

Along with the weekly church service and RE classes, there are approximately 30 First U groups that meet weekly, twice a month, or once a month. We provide space for church and community groups, social justice and environmental groups, and other meetings.

In addition to short term rentals, Central Louisville Community Ministries (CLCM) rents rooms upstairs for \$500 per month. Spiritual Israel and Its Army pays \$150 per month to use the choir room for church services, as well as weekly staff meetings and a Bible Study. They've had two youth rallies here with youth from their region.

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Presentation Academy rents the middle of our parking lot for \$250 per month when school is in session. Until December, Forward Radio was paying \$250 per month to rent the room that was previously a nursery. There is a potential replacement renter that I have just started talking with, so hopefully, that will work out.

There are Ongoing Renters that are not First U groups, meaning that they meet at First U on a regular basis, either monthly or weekly. Most have been here for multiple years and have proven to be good stewards of the shared space. These groups include:

Travelers (AA) 2 hours per week

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth – 2 hours per month; They have collected money a few times to donate; A number of additional rentals have resulted from other groups that attended their meetings and events

LACNA (a planning group of 4-6 people planning NA activities held elsewhere) 2 hours per month; have donated a small amount several times

LSURJ – Louisville Showing Up for Racial Justice has held various big workshops, a few small gatherings; recently signed up for bi-monthly planning meetings

Inner Voices Ensemble - 2.5 hours per week (12 people)

Drama/Theatre groups – Louisville Repertory Group, Finnegan, and Larry Muhammad schedule practice times before their performances. They make donations or pay small fees.

RCWP (Roman Catholic Women Priests) – met on the first Sunday evening of the month for several years, but are not currently meeting at this time. They still have a 2 hour meeting the first Thursday of the month during the day. They also recently gave a baby shower to a mother-to-be in need.

The following came to church for free space, but have since come under the umbrella of Mission and Outreach:

Hands Across Louisville Planning Meeting

Trans Children/Youth Family Gatherings - 3 hours per month

Really, Really Free Market - 4 hours quarterly

Moms Demand Action for Gun Violence - 2 hours every other month and various other meetings

First U has been used for approximately 15-20 one-time events this year, which include workshops, social justice presentations, recitals, banquets, and graduations. While some have been free to the user, rentals have brought in approximately **\$17,000.00**.

General Comments

As Office Administrator, I'm part of the support system for the staff and the church. I am available by e-mail whenever not in the building. The Resource and Worship Ministries, Building Supervisor, Bookkeeper and Treasurer, and the Building Use Committee are my partners as we work together.

Submitted by Barbara Creasy, Office Administrator office@firstulou.org

Staff Reports

Building Supervisor

Goals

The Building Supervisor will maintain the physical resources of the Church, assist and coordinate effective building use, and supervise or coordinate needed repairs.

Activities

- Supervised the schedule and physical set up of the social hall and other areas, directing changes as often as needed. Changes are determined by the needs by the many groups using the space. A few weeks it was changed two or three times within the week.
- Monitored and complied with various state codes regulations requiring routine inspections and repairs as needed. (example: Fire system, Sprinklers, Stove hood inspection, elevator, security system) I coordinated inspections and repairs by specialists as needed.
- Organized and scheduled repairs and tasks needed within the building such as roof leaks, lock replacements, repairs to windows, and security needs. Replaced things, such as faucets, as needed. Coordinated with the House and Grounds frequently. They are an important yet sometimes ignored treasure.
- Supervised, and trained as needed, the janitor on routine cleaning such as weekly dust mop and spot mopping, monthly social hall mopping, and cleaning bathrooms.
- Researched and found best prices for supplies such as paper and cleaning products. I ordered and restocked supplies as needed.
- Worked closely with office administrator, house and grounds, and resource ministry

Concerns for Next Year

Each user of the building needs to be concerned with the security of the building, taking care to lock up doors when leaving. It is expensive and time consuming to maintain an old structure in a cost effective manner so we need to try to catch problems as soon as possible, before more damage is done. I seek cooperation from the congregation leaving shared space as it was found, especially picking up food in order to keep bugs and mice out of the building.

A Personal Note

This year has been a difficult year with unexpected health issues. I am so grateful for the encouragement and support of the church members on my work anniversary and always. The Office Administrator and I have worked closely together as she co-supervised the custodian, helped with ordering supplies, and monitored the church needs. We worked together to monitor areas of concern and delegated to those that can take care of it. Thanks to the Staff and the Resource Ministry for all you have done.

Submitted by: Earl Reynolds

Ministry Reports

Connections Ministry

Purpose

To strengthen the connections among members and friends of First Unitarian Church, enriching their involvement in activities and helping to retain them as long-term participants in the life of the Church.

Members

Brian Daly (Greeters), Gary Drehmel (Caring Team), Joan Johnson (Visitor Cards), Nancy MacPherson (Caring Team), Trish Ramey (Newcomers), Claudia Runge (New to First U), Jill Sampson (Photo Directory), Maureen Taylor (Coordinator/Connector)

Activities in 2016-2017

The Connections Ministry added one member this year: Joan Johnson, who sends welcoming postcards to any visitor providing us with a name and address. Joan has been diligent about making that first connection with those who visit us, and her welcoming message written on a beautiful postcard designed by Trish Ramey represents First Unitarian well.

The rest of us have continued several projects carried over from past years:

- The Greeters, led by Brian Daly, have added a few faces to their group and have continued to train to deal with various emergency situations, everything from fire drills to suspicious-looking strangers. (One change this year: The door is now locked, and Greeters are charged with opening it.)
- There are also some new members of Nancy Macpherson's Congregational Care Team, maintaining its membership at about 14. Each member continues to make regular contacts—letters, emails, and phone calls—with the Church members in their assigned group, making us all feel cared for.
- Jill Sampson oversaw the production of our first Photo Directory in six years. This time, there is a bonus—a photo app for our phones. That part of the Directory has so far been rolled out only to the staff and a few “testers,” but, with the help of Claudia Runge, who has volunteered to keep the Directory up to date, it should be ready for all of us to use this summer.
- Again, we offered two sessions of the New to First U class (10/23/2016 and 3/5/2017), organized by Claudia Runge. Both were well attended and were followed a few weeks later by New Member services, where we all had a chance to welcome the newest First U members.
- As usual, Vespers was a big focus of ALL our efforts. It was a special challenge this year after Dawn's departure, but after the beautiful and fulfilling service, the whole

Ministry Reports

Connections Ministry, helped by dozens of others, worked to provide a tasty and *filling* reception.

- On top of all this, special holiday cards were selected, signed, and sent out to shut-ins on holidays like Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day, thanks to Gary Drehmel, and name tags magically appeared for new members (and those who lost their old name tags under the car seat), thanks to Trish Ramey.

What's in the works for next year?

Acting on a suggestion from Kathy Kremer, Connections is starting to plan a "Committee Fair" as an after-service event for some Sunday in September. We hope to get more of our members involved in the lifeblood of the church.

Maureen Taylor, for the Connections Ministry.

Mission and Outreach Ministry

Purpose

To aid our community in carrying out our mission statement: A church of reason and spirit that witnesses for progressive faith, nurtures our community and transforms our world.

The M&O Broadside, distributed approximately weekly, lists events and opportunities related to the broad area of social justice. To be added to the distribution or to bring an event or issue to my attention, email me at del.ramey@ieee.org.

CLOUT

CLOUT, Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together, is an association of faith groups united to influence local government and agencies. Each year CLOUT selects a small number of specific issues to address with the backing of all its congregational members. CLOUT has been credited with bringing the issue of funding the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to a higher level of visibility in local government and media. While last year's funding of \$2.5M was a significant step relative to the zero funding since the creation of the fund, it fell far short of the annual \$10M called for in the original ordinance. CLOUT is continuing to work hard for the full \$10M. First U Lou is a significant presence in this work.

Forward Radio

Unfortunately Forward Radio imploded over the issue of acceptable language and music. The original directors and programmers sought to include rap music of

Ministry Reports

significance to the African American community. While some bleeping would have been required, others in the Fellowship of Reconciliation organization, which holds the license from the FCC, opposed even the presence of bleeps, as the deleted wording would be easily understood. This escalated into a major schism, with the original directors and the bulk of the programmers leaving. While not directly involved in the organization, I supported the original directors and programmers, as I believe our UU values require us to listen to others when they speak of their troubles and pains, regardless of the emotions, anger or words with which they speak.

The Forward Radio volunteers reorganized eventually to continue the project. But as part of the transfer of the rental agreement from the original directors to the actual Forward Radio organization, First U Lou held meetings with the radio folks, making clear that we were concerned about the issues that brought on the schism and how well the more narrowly defined programming would address the needs of all under represented communities in central and western Louisville. Shortly after this, Forward Radio notified us that they were moving into an office in the Heyburn Building.

An effort to rent space to the original directors for their other work was not successful, as they would, of necessity, be operating as a for profit business. The restrictions on churches renting to for profit business are very strict!

Fresh Stop

Fresh Stop completed it's first season of operation at First U Lou. They are returning, on Wednesday nights, for a second season. The level of involvement by First U Lou folks was low this first year. More volunteer involvement and more purchasing of farm fresh produce during this second year would be appreciated.

Other Stuff

Louisville Showing Up for Racial Justice, LSURJ, has used the sanctuary for a few meetings and presented a three Sunday Adult RE program on discussing race with children. They have been encouraged to consider our building for future events.

Moms Demand Action holds alternate monthly meetings at First U Lou. They prefer using churches, as public spaces such as libraries cannot stop open carry people from attending their meetings.

The Second Annual Hands Across Louisville event to oppose violence was held on 13-May-2017. While smaller than the first event, held during the NRA national convention here last year, the event was the result of work by people from across Louisville. The main event happens on west Broadway, in a community dealing directly with Louisville's violence problems. First U Lou invited Clifton and TJ members to stand with us on Broadway, between Third and Fourth. We had about twenty people.

Ministry Reports

The Louisville Planning Commission spoke at Adult RE about the 20 year planning process they are currently engaged in. Kathy Kremer, Trish Ramey and Del Ramey have attended a few working meetings. Upcoming meetings are listed in broadsides.

Air Pollution in Rubbertown - American Synthetic Rubber Company, a Rubber Town chemical plant, is requesting a waiver on permitted levels of 1,3-Butadiene in adjacent residential areas, to permit about 3 times the original permitted levels of this known carcinogen. The Rubber Town community is not happy. Just started following this issue by attending the Air Pollution Control District meeting.

Supported the appointment of **Dr. Ricky L. Jones** to the Citizens Commission on Police Accountability Board. Those opposed to Dr. Jones appointment claimed he was biased against the police due to his outspoken statements in local media and the community. While I have only heard Dr. Jones speak a few times, I read what I could find of his articles in the Courier-Journal. I found nothing unreasonable and have heard expressions of distrust and fear from others that need to be heard in a forum such as this board.

Submitted by Del Ramey

The Religious Exploration Ministry (REM)

Purpose:

The Religious Exploration Ministry works closely with the Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) to provide an excellent Unitarian Universalist program of Faith Development for infants, children, youth and adults.

Members of the Religious Exploration Ministry:

Members usually serve a three-year term, and will accept a leadership position at some time during their term. Bill Van Rooy (4th year) James Jeffries (3rd year), Christiana Roberts (3rd year), Elizabeth Fairhead (1st year), Misty Trunnell (1st year), Ashley Queen (1st year), Claire Gervasi (1st year), Linette Lowe, DRE, ex-officio member.

Goals of Religious Exploration Ministry—2016-2017:

1. Continue the momentum and support for Adult Religious Exploration as an important and varied Church program. Offer different models of class experiences including drop-in, structured curriculum, semester-long and short-term, including:

Spirit in Practice, Michael Moore's *Where to Invade Next?*,
The Garden, Coffee and Social Justice, Popcorn Theology,
Writing and Journaling Group, Poetry Readings,
UU Common Read: The Third Reconstruction

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Writing and Journaling Group, Poetry Readings,
UU Common Read: *The Third Reconstruction*

Two Fifth Sunday programs: Linda Berry and Michael Tee-“Rosa Parks and Frederick Douglass,” and Lee Wells--“Required Voting” A workshop taking place outside of the Sunday morning RE hour: “Hindsight, Humor and Hope: Who Me an Elder?”

2. Continue to offer children’s religious exploration classes including:
PreK-1 “Picture book: World Religions”
Grades 2-4 “Signs of our faith” rituals and ceremonies,
Grades 5-7 “Jedi Academy.”
These classes are provided with a healthy snack and support for teachers.
7th-9th Grade OWL (in conjunction with TJ)
Children’s Celebration so the younger children have a place to go during the sermon.
3. Expand multi-generational programs outside of RE hour including:
One three-week Social Justice for families program in collaboration with Louisville Standing Up for Racial Justice (LSURJ).
Reintroduce “Potluck and Game Night” on two Friday nights during the year.
Expand Chalica service to include challenge to the provide gifts for the community. This year the challenge collected over 40 bags (over 700 items) to donate to the food and clothes closet at Calvary Episcopal Church.
4. RE Ministry will host and sponsor the All-Church Picnic on May 21, 2017.

Report submitted by Elizabeth Fairhead

Resource Ministry

Purpose

The charge of the Resource Ministry is to work with the Minister, the Building Supervisor, Church Staff, Team Leaders, and Congregants to keep building operations running smoothly, to oversee the aesthetics of the building and grounds, and to be responsible for building maintenance.

Members

Resource Ministry Chair – Mary Ballard

House and Grounds team leaders – Joe Kremer and Roger Ohlman

Churchyard Friends team leader – Kathy Gapsis

Aesthetics team leaders – Kathy Thackeray and Bev Daly

Kitchen Wizards team – Claudia Runge, Lois Allen, Jill Sampson, Kathy Thackeray

Archives team – Kathy Kremer and John Findling

Solar Array Project team leader – Joe Kremer

Ministry Reports

Goals and Status

We are very fortunate as a congregation to have such a beautiful and historic building in which to gather, worship, celebrate, and be in community with each other. Of course we all know that anything that is beautiful, historic (i.e. old) and precious also tends to be high maintenance, and our church is no exception. The goal of the Resource Ministry is to keep our building beautiful and functional, as well as in compliance with all current codes and requirements. Our goal is never fully met, and our status is always “a work in progress.”

Activities

During the 2016-2017 church year, the teams that make up the Resource Ministry have worked VERY hard to keep our beautiful and historic church building maintained and operating smoothly. In order to facilitate coordination with church staff and other church ministries, the Resource Ministry Chair participated as a member of the Ministry Council, and collaborated with our church Building Supervisor, Minister, Office Manager, Board of Trustees, and Church Treasurer. Following is a summary of the highlights of the work teams.

Aesthetics Team

The Aesthetics team members are Carol Tobe, Laurie Clark, Kris Philipp, and co-chairs Bev Daly and Kathy Thackeray. They work closely with the House and Grounds team and other members of the congregation.

Projects and activities of the Aesthetics team this year have included the following: cared for all indoor plants; decorated for the holidays in early December, and for Vespers, with the help of Christe Lunsford, the House and Grounds team, and Lee Wells of Worship Ministry; organized the sale of poinsettias to help with the cost of Vespers; chose paint colors for courtyard labyrinth; sorted books for library and Minister’s study; rearranged several pieces of artwork on the first floor; developed and hung written descriptions for all major pieces of artwork; took responsibility for tablecloths used during church luncheons and other events. They are currently cleaning, decluttering, and organizing the library to make it a more attractive, useful space. Aesthetic team members have taken responsibility for areas of the first floor, to keep the areas uncluttered and attractive: Bev Daly – parlor; Kris Phillip – volunteer area and Library Lane lobby; Kathy Thackeray – Social Hall and Library (room 103).

Archives Team

John Findling and Kathy Kremer completed the Oral History Project. Ten people were interviewed: The Rev. Richard Beal, Joan Beal, John Grossman, Joan Johnson, Anne Miller, Claudia Runge, Carol Tobe, Ann Ulinski, Susan Wilburn, and Pete Webber. John and Kathy hope to digitize three 2005 taped interviews by Carol Tobe and Barbra Donnelly, Charlie Mitchell, and The Reverend Bob Reed. All of these recordings will be stored at the Kentucky History Center’s Oral History Commission, the University of Louisville’s Archives and Records Center, and First Unitarian Church.

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At this year's Women's Alliance Retreat at the Hopscotch House, Kathy Kremer presented a session on three interesting First Unitarian Church members: Maxine Whedbee, Olga Tafel, and Joan Johnson. Archive photos of the church were used in the church directory. Archives presented the original 1916 blueprints of the West Louisville Evangelical Church, where First Unitarian members met during the rebuilding after the 1985 fire, to Reverend Emery Scott Lee, pastor of the building's current tenants, No More Limits Christian Church, 245 S. 41st Street, Louisville. Church Member Sean Barron spent the summer organizing photos. Olga Tafel's materials were donated to the Filson Club.

Churchyard Friends

The Churchyard Friends have met informally over the year to beautify church grounds, concentrating on the Courtyard, the butterfly garden and daylily hill on Library Lane, and on the north (York Street) side of the church. Kathy Gapsis organized volunteers for the Operation Brightside annual cleanup day. Kathy is also working with a teenage volunteer to coordinate installation of the labyrinth in the courtyard. Any church member and friend can join in on any work date, no experience necessary – just an enjoyment of being outside and caring for our church home. Our grounds receive many compliments from visitors, and contribute to the spiritual life of our congregation.

House and Grounds team

The House and Grounds team consists of Bob Ballard, Roger Ohlman, David Runge, Kathy Gapsis, Uwe Eickmann, Pete Weber, Joe and Kathy Kremer, Carol Findling, John Peabody, Lee Wells, and Kyle Ellison.

Routine and ongoing maintenance included cleaning and straightening the storage room and basement; repairing and strengthening dozens of Sanctuary chair legs; changing regular and fluorescent bulbs and ballasts; addressing indoor and outdoor lighting issues; converting some bulbs to LEDs; replacing stolen gutters; changing HVAC filters; cutting grass; checking thermostats monthly; maintaining plastic on windows as needed.

Additional projects: iron fence repair; down spouts/guttering; repair of splines for art glass windows; replacement of church carbon monoxide detectors; discussion of modifications needed for accessibility; fulfillment of numerous other requests for work projects as ability and time allowed. Additional volunteers for the House and Grounds team are always needed and welcomed – on the job training provided!

Kitchen Wizards

The mission of the Kitchen Wizards is to clean and straighten the kitchen two or three times per year. This year they have cleaned the kitchen, organized cabinets, and cleaned out the refrigerator and freezer on at least two occasions.

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Solar Array Project

The Solar Array Project team (Joe and Kathy Kremer) raised \$704.41 this fiscal year. This includes generous in-kind contributions from Eugenia Willner and Rita Sasse. The Project has raised \$11,110.76 since it began in June, 2008, not including the \$15,000 2014 Capital Campaign contribution. Currently, 14 panels are installed on the church roof. Between July 1, 2016 and April 30, 2017, these panels produced 3,092 kilowatts of electricity, or approximately 5% of the energy the church used. This means the Church did not emit 1,546 pounds of carbon dioxide into the air because of the energy produced by solar panels instead of coal. Additionally, the Solar Array Project team helped sponsor, and participated in, the Louisville Earth Day walk in April, 2017.

Lots of good works by many busy, talented, and dedicated volunteers!

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ballard, chair of Resource Ministry

Worship Ministry

Purpose of the group

The purpose of Worship Ministry is twofold. First, our focus is on the Celebrations of Life – to plan and coordinate services when our minister is out of the pulpit and to provide support in the creation and implementation of every service during the church year. Second, we handle the logistics of every worship service, i.e., sanctuary slide production for every service, as well as coordinating ushers, chancel decorations, chalice lighters, and sanctuary layout.

Members

Jane Martin-Buckley (Tech deck representative), Linda Berry, Brian Daly (Scribe, Chancel Decoration team liaison), Pam Middleton (Chair, Usher task team leader, Chalice Lighter coordinator, Sunday Slides producer), Trish Ramey (Ministry Council representative, Signs task team leader, Music liaison, Worship Associate coordinator, back-up Sunday Slides producer), Lee Wells (Sanctuary logistics task team leader), Clare Zigner

Goals

- To produce stimulating, moving, and thoughtful lay-led Celebrations of Life. This church year we organized and presented services on 26 Sundays. In addition to the one to two services each month Worship Ministry normally covers (the minister is in the pulpit three weeks of every month and there are occasional five-Sunday months) plus the eight Sundays of the minister's vacation and study leave, this year we also provided service coverage for the Sundays that Rev. Dawn would be out of

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town for her responsibilities on the Board of the UUA Mid-America Region [Note: This plan was revamped completely in November. See comments in the Status section.]

- To improve the seamless use of technology for enhancing the Sunday service
- To continue to support the minister in worship services with volunteers to create the vessel for making worship open and welcoming to all

Status

It was an eventful year for Worship Ministry as our minister, Rev. Dawn Cooley resigned and left the service of the church effective October 23, 2016. The Board decided not to hire an interim to work with us until August 2017. In the ensuing 10 months, Worship Ministry was asked to be responsible for two to three services each month, in addition to being in charge of the Christmas Eve Vespers service.

The responsibilities of Director of Religious Exploration Linette Lowe were expanded to include providing one service per month; the same was true of our student minister Christe Lunsford. Christe also resigned as our Music Director and our accompanist Ethan James McCollum, who began work on his Masters in Choral Conducting at University of Louisville, was hired as Choir Director in January 2017. Ethan will continue as our twice monthly accompanist. Brytner Evangelista, also a UofL student, was hired as our choir rehearsal pianist and service accompanist on Sundays that the choir sings.

Recruitment of new members is an on-going process. This spring we agreed to try and recruit more men to the Ministry. Pam Middleton has agreed to continue as chair for the coming year. Pam endeavored this year to move more of written documentation for Worship Ministry to Cloud sharing and storage. Trish Ramey will leave the ministry after six years serving in multiple capacities over her two terms. We continue to be grateful to all the ministry members and others who took the “Sharing the Pulpit” training sessions two summers ago for their yeoman efforts in keeping the pulpit supplied with interesting and challenging sermons and homilies.

Activities

The Worship Associate Team, led by student minister Christe Lunsford, held one training session for four new Worship Associates in March. We sponsored an Ableism Sensitivity training workshop attended by several ministry leaders and some of the ushers and greeters. The Monthly Worship Service Planning meeting continues to operate fairly efficiently with DRE Linette Lowe guiding the discussion. This activity is separate from the Ministry meetings because it deals with coordinating the nuts and bolts of services, whereas the Ministry meetings set the theme and determine who will conduct and coordinate the services. The increased number of volunteer and outside speakers sometimes provided a challenge for getting the Order of Service done correctly and on a timely basis, apologies to our long-suffering and patient office administrator, Barbara Creasy.

Ministry Reports

The Worship Ministry and other First U members created the following Celebrations of Life:

1. 7/10/16 Video --Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd's GA Sermon SC: Trish Ramey
2. 7/17/16 *"Balance in Our Lives"* Jill Sampson
3. 7/24/16 *"Harmony with Nature"* Pam Middleton
4. 7/31/16 *"Lammass"* Christe Lunsford and Debbi Gilbert
5. 8/7/16 *"Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing"* Daryl Harris, NKU SC: Pam Middleton
6. 8/21/16 *"Practicing Sabbath"* Jane Buckley (Cassandra, Lee, Linda, Clare)
7. 9/11/16 *"Pathways to Enlightenment: Seeking"* Rev. Doug Slagle SC: Trish Ramey
8. 9/25/16 *"UUs Rejoice"* Devi Pierce
9. 11/6/16 *"Revival: A Moral Agenda"* Trish Ramey
10. 11/13/16 *"Mosaic Makers"* Christe, Linette, Jill Sampson, Trish and Del Ramey
11. 11/27/16 *"Walking in the Light"* Linda Berry SC: Brian Daly
12. 12/11/16 *"Camouflage and Communion"* Rev. Dr. Brent Smith SC: Pam Middleton
13. 1/8/17 *"Let the Journey Begin for Non Violence"* Mark Steiner SC: Brian Daly
14. 1/15/16 *"Social Change through Nonviolent Communication"* Jane Martin Buckley SC: Pam Middleton
15. 1/22/17 *"Breaking Down Walls"* Rev. Alonzo Johnson SC: Trish Ramey
16. 2/12/17 *"A Passion for Generosity"* Del Ramey, Jane Buckley, Trish Ramey and Jane Buckley
17. 2/19/17 *"A Study in Generosity"* Devi Pierce SC: Brian Daly
18. 3/5/17 *"History That Heals"* Jane M Buckley, Trish Ramey, Pat Allison, Pam Middleton, Kathie Johnson
19. 3/12/17 *"Mystics and Social Change"* Rev. Claudia Ramisch SC: Trish Ramey
20. 3/26/17 *"Credo: I Believe"* Rev. Peter Connolly SC: Trish Ramey

Ministry Reports

21. 4/2/17 *"Beauty Will Save the World"* Elizabeth Fairhead SC: Brian Daly
22. 4/9/17 *"Healing the World: A Message in Word and Song"* Michael Jacobs & Trish Ramey
23. 5/7/17 *"We Drink From Wells We Did Not Dig"* Jane Martin Buckley
24. 5/14/17 *"Reflections on The(o)logy"* A Multi-Religion Panel SC: Brian Daly
25. 6/11/17 *"LGBTQ Pride and Power"* Michael Aldridge SC: Jane Buckley
26. 6/25/17 *"Experiencing General Assembly... at a distance"* Trish

Recommendations for the next church year

We continued the practice of weekly and monthly evaluations of each worship service for things that worked and things that didn't. A concern for sound projection for the hearing impaired has come up. We are looking into upgrading to a loop system. Speakers continue to experience difficulty either when bringing in their own slides or videos, when speakers would prefer to control the advance rate of the slides. We are looking into ways to upgrade the projection equipment.

Respectfully submitted;
Trish Ramey
Pam Middleton

Other Committees

Endowment Trust

Background & Purpose

The Endowment Trust was established on June 2nd, 2003 by First Unitarian Church to ensure the long term viability of the Church. Three members are elected to staggered three-year terms to invest and grow the endowment of the Church. One requirement of the Endowment is to provide an annual disbursement of five percent to the Church in support of its operations. The Endowment Board was also tasked to loan funds to the Church when financially necessary and at a rate that provided a financial return to the fund. An initial \$530,000 was deposited in the Endowment Trust.

Members

John Scruton (chair – 4th year)
Del Ramey (2nd year)
Jill Sampson (2nd year)

Activities

Following the vote of the Congregation at the June 2016 annual meeting, the Endowment made payments to the Church operating fund at a rate of six percent rather than the usual five percent for the 2016-2017 Church year. We expect that those payments will revert to the standard five percent for the 2017-2018 year. The Church made the final payment on the loan from the Endowment fund, so that debt is paid in full. Following review and approval of revised documentation for the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF), an alternative fund offered by the UUA for socially responsible investment, we plan to invest the available funds into the UUCEF.

Submitted by John Scruton

Finance Committee

Purpose and Function

The Finance Committee oversees and directs the financial affairs of the Church.

This committee should consist of three members, all of whom are members of the Church. Members this year were Roger Bradshaw (3rd year) and Cindy Van Rooy (2nd year); Angela Voyles (1st year). Members are appointed for staggered three-year terms. Members may serve two consecutive terms but committee not entirely clear when terms end. The Treasurer serves as an ex-officio, voting member of the committee; the Treasurer this year is John Grossman.

Other Committees

Tasks

- a. Recommend annual budgets to the Board of Trustees and work with the Board in presenting the budget to the Congregation.
- b. Advise the Board concerning church finances.
- c. Conduct and/or arrange an annual review of all Church finances.
- d. Arrange triennial audits of Church finances.
- e. Coordinate collections and offerings from worship services and other meetings.
- f. Coordinate follow-up of annual pledges to ensure collections are accomplished.
- g. Working with Stewardship and the Endowment Committee, promote grants and bequests to the Church.

Committee Work – FY 2016-17

- a. Roger Bradshaw continued as Chair of Finance Committee for 2016-17.
- b. Church's bookkeeping has fully transitioned to staff bookkeeper (Michael Purintun). This transition has worked very well.
- c. Met monthly (usually 2nd Tuesday) to review monthly finance reports (prepared by First U bookkeeper, with assistance from Treasurer.
- d. Discussed payments from Endowment Fund (Fund 98) to support operations with the Endowment Committee including past amounts due and additional 1% approved at last annual meeting.
- e. Repaid the amount owed by the church to the endowment per the \$250,000 loan for capital improvements taken in April-June, 2013.
- f. Reviewed income and spending from Fund 01 (Operating) as part of monthly review meetings.
- g. Reviewed income and spending from Fund 02 (Program & Mission) as part of monthly review meetings.
- h. Coordinated with the Board and Stewardship to prepare the FY 2017-18 annual budget recommendations.

Coordinates with

Board, Resource Ministry, Stewardship Committee, Ministry Council, and Minister.

Submitted by John Grossman

Other Committees

Personnel Committee

Background and Purpose

The Personnel Committee oversees personnel functions, including involvement in hiring all church employees with the exception of the Minister, and makes recommendations to the Board about personnel policies and issues.

Members

John Scruton (chair – 3rd year), Pat Triplett (2nd year), Rose Stevens (4th year). Nancy MacPherson is the Board Liaison.

Activities

The Personnel Committee has had an active year, including regular monthly meetings. We interviewed for a new custodian, resulting in the hiring of Vantreasea Jones. We revised and updated the contracts of all employees and portions of the Personnel Policy Manual, which involved some new issues including the new position of Transition Team Leader and RE Director. In March, we organized the annual staff appreciation lunch.

Future Plans and Activities

The Personnel Committee will continue to work on the Personnel Policy Manual, in addition to routine monitoring of personnel issues.

Submitted by John Scruton

Stewardship Committee

This year the Stewardship Committee consisted of Devi Pierce, who also had assistance from Jill Sampson and Jill Sherman. The purpose of the Stewardship Committee is to manage a Stewardship Campaign, encourage generosity of time, talent, and treasure, and finally, to solicit and maintain pledges.

This year the Stewardship Campaign took place in the spring and included a sermon on generosity, stewardship moments from the pulpit, and a free pledge breakfast for congregants. Information regarding pledges was disseminated from the pulpit, via emails, by post, and by direct communication. Congregants were able to pledge by pledge card and also online.

This year, a total of \$176,000 was pledged by 79 pledge units. At this time there are approximately 130 total pledge units in the church. The amount pledged this year was much less than last year. Last fiscal year approximately \$200,000 was pledged.

Devi Pierce,
Stewardship Committee

Groups

Archives Team; a part of the Resources Ministry

John Findling and Kathy Kremer completed the Oral History Project. Ten people were interviewed: The Rev. Richard Beal, Joan Beal, John Grossman, Joan Johnson, Anne Miller, Claudia Runge, Carol Tobe, Ann Ulinski, Susan Wilburn, and Pete Webber. John and Kathy hope to digitize three 2005 taped interviews by Carol Tobe and Barbra Donnelly, Charlie Mitchell, and The Reverend Bob Reed. All of these recordings will be stored at the Kentucky History Center's Oral History Commission, the University of Louisville's Archives and Records Center, and First Unitarian Church.

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Submitted by Kathy Kremer

Brownbaggers

This year the Brownbaggers ...

- Took a trip to Spain with the Eickmann's
- Gazed at the stars with David Ross Sevens who told us about the astronomer Hubble
- Trekked through the Louisville Nature Center with Roger Ohlman
- Heard Nina Mosley of Wayside Christian Mission tell us about the unique Louisville Hotel - both a business and a social service provider,
- Examined the Louisville waterfront through the rain after a field trip to Kingfish Restaurant
- Listened to a lecture from Dr. Suzzane Meeks on aging and were enthralled by Darryl Darby a "professional patient" from the Louisville Med School

Important Notice: Starting in September, the Brownbaggers will move back to meeting on the **Second Monday** of Each Month. Mark your calendars – Our next meeting will be 9-11-2017.

Submitted by Gary Drehmel

Groups

Book Club

UU Book Club meets the second Monday of every month in the Parlor. The participants of this book club suggested titles for books and voted on books to read and discuss. Book selections have been made through August 2017. The books alternate between fiction and non-fiction. Discussion leaders are the people who suggest each book when the group votes on titles.

There were normally between 5 and 10 adults in attendance.

Books read and discussed July 2016-June 2017

Irrepressible: The Jazz Age and the Life of Henrietta Bingham by Emily Bingham.

Discussion leader Jill Sampson

The Slaves of Solitude by Patrick Hamilton. Discussion leader Henry Lieberg

My Father the Pornographer: A Memoir by Chris Offutt. Discussion leader Rita Sasse

Rubyfruit Jungle by Rita Mae Brown. Discussion leader Carol Uebelhoer

Tambora: The Eruption that Changed the World by Gillen D'Arcy Wood. Discussion leader Jill Sampson

Holiday Celebration. We shared holiday short stories, poems, quotes or other creative pieces.

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress by Dai Sijie. Discussion leader Rita Sasse

When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi. Discussion leader Kathy Rogers

Cloudsplitter by Russell Banks. Discussion leader Jill Sampson

Hidden Figures: the American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race by Margot Lee Shetterly.
Discussion leader Del Ramey

Degrees of Elevation edited by Charles Dodd White. Discussion leader Jill Sampson

Victoria: The Queen: An Intimate Biography of the Woman who Ruled an Empire by Julia Baird. Discussion leader Henry Lieberg

Groups

CUUPS

As above, so also below, as the universe, so also the soul...

Purpose:

The First Unitarian of Louisville Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans or CUUPS is a free and open community of people who practice earth-based spiritualities. All on a positive path are welcome, from beginners to experts.

Activities

CUUPS turned the Wheel of the Year with public Sabbat Celebrations in 2016-2017. These Sabbat Circles were held in the sanctuary and were well attended by the church community and visitors alike. Ritual attendance ranged from 20 to 35. CUUPS have enjoyed many new faces at our classes, circles and other church activities this year. Many are not only new to First U Church but are also just beginning to explore Earth based traditions as well.

CUUPS participated in Sunday services this year, including Vespers. We celebrated Beltane by dancing the Maypole with the congregation in May 2017.

In addition to public Sabbat Circles and fellowship, CUUPS offers classes on the first and third Wednesday during the year. We have enjoyed a range of classes that centered on Earth based spiritualities.

A series of classes on individual topics allowed for depth of discovery and discussion. We had a series of classes that focused on Divination and included Tarot, Pendulum and Oracle Cards. Another series of classes about the Hermetic Principles including the Law of Attraction. We also had lots of fun singing Yule carols, playing "What's your Magickal IQ" game and created a Beltane ritual together.

Our classes are free and open to the public. They have been well attended with a mix of participants new and experienced with paganism.

We, individually and as a group, have networked with others exploring an earth based path in our community including participating in the local Pagan Pride Day, teaching at Pagan festivals and serving on the National CUUPS Board. Another exciting opportunity presented itself when First UU CUUPS was represented at CUUPS Convocation in Salem, MA in August 2016. "Awaking Our Tribe" marked the first CUUPS convocation in a decade and was attended by CUUPS groups across the country.

We are proud to be a part of the First Unitarian Church family.

Blessed Be,
Debra & Ron

Groups

ROMEOS

We Retired Old Men Eating Out continue to meet at the Golden Corral Buffet on Taylorsville Road. So if you are male and are free on the first Wednesday of the month come on by at 1:00 PM - we won't bite (unless you are a pot roast).

Submitted by Gary Drehmel

Solar Array Project; a part of the Resources Ministry

The Solar Array Project team (Joe and Kathy Kremer) raised \$704.41 this fiscal year. This includes generous in-kind contributions from Eugenia Willner and Rita Sasse. The Project has raised \$11,110.76 since it began in June, 2008, not including the \$15,000 2014 Capital Campaign contribution.

Currently, 14 panels are installed on the church roof. Between July 1, 2016 and April 30, 2017, these panels produced 3,092 kilowatts of electricity, or approximately 5% of the energy the church used. This means the Church did not emit 1,546 pounds of carbon dioxide into the air because of the energy produced by solar panels instead of coal.

Additionally, the Solar Array Project team helped sponsor, and participated in, the Louisville Earth Day walk in April, 2017.

Submitted by Kathy Kremer

Groups

Women's Alliance

Purpose

The First Unitarian Women's Alliance continues to be an organization that fosters fellowship and action to improve our community for women and families.

Women's Alliance Steering Committee

President – Rita Sasse (rotating off 2017)

Secretary – Linda Parry

Treasurer – Jane Martin Buckley

Historian – Kathy Gapsis

Pam Middleton – At Large

Kris Philipp – At Large

Kathie Johnson – At Large

Activities:

General Meetings included our Spring Tea, fall meeting, membership drive and retreat planning meeting. Our emphasis was on bringing in members of Thomas Jefferson and Clifton to join First U Women's Alliance since neither of these churches have an alliance. We were successful in this effort, recruiting several new members. We also grew our First U numbers. Together we are larger and stronger

Activities included the annual Pie Sale which resulted in a \$300 donation to CLCM. This is the first time funds from this effort were used to benefit the community.

We also had ongoing support of the Black Lives Matter initiative, the annual Social Justice Shower benefitting Scholar House, the yearly Clinic Escort breakfast and a hugely successful retreat in April (thanks in large part to Kathy Gapsis).

We are in the process of awarding 3 \$500 grants to worthy causes proposed by Women's Alliance members.

Official Records

2016-2017 Transitions

Births

None on record

Child

Dedications

Keagon Booher
Francis Gervasi
Joshua Kaminer
Kashton McCown
Gareth Millwood
Saoirse Reed
Marie Wright

New Members

Erica Brady
Donna Corbett
Eric Finney
Clare Gervasi
David Johnson
Kat Joyner
Lon Kaminer
Kristin Millwood
Kay Powers
Josh Reed
Samantha Reed
Kenton Rossman
Jeffrey Warner
Sam Webb
Jessi Wiggers
Jacob Wilson-Haynes

Deaths

Dorothy Grossman
Betty Hertz
Joe Hodge
Pallen Izetta Nubia
Rev. Bob Reed
Jeanne Reed
Jesse Schreiber

Ordinations

Christopher Allen Rothbauer

Installations

Christe L Lunsford,
Student Minister

Minutes of the Annual Meeting May 15, 2016

Meeting begins at 12:38 pm
Opening Words From Dawn

Certification of Quorum – We have Quorum of 51 (Rita Sasse)

Overview of Roberts Rules

Heather Teason went over Roberts Rules of Order
Difference between point of interest and point of order, and calling a question were noted.

Announcement of the Meeting:

There may be an issue with announcements according to the Constitution: if there is any contestation of the proceedings of the meeting it needs to be addressed at the present moment.
There were letters of the meeting that were received 5/14/16, postmarked 5/12/16. Letters had been sent to be mailed several days prior.
No other concerns.

Board President's Report

Jill Sherman reviewed the actions the board has taken over the preceding year.
Thanks given

Official Records

New Business

Election of officers for the Board of Trustees

Secretary: Clair Vanlandingham

Treasurer: John Grossman

Member at Large: Kristi Drehmel

Brian Daley moves to approve the slate, all in favor.

All Members of the Board were then named

Are we short a member at large?

There is another opening which will be filled by Nominating

The board has had difficulty filling the other board position.

Election for members of the Nominating Committee

Are there any nominations?

Kailoa Ben Avraham

Rae Kopps

Jill Sherman

All in favor of approving

Election for members of the Endowment Committee

John Scruton

All in favor

Other Members on the endowment committee were named

A point of order: Call for cards as those who are proxy can only vocally vote once.

Presentation of Annual Budget

Announcement from Stewardship from Devi Pierce

Presentation by John Grossman

The church is currently looking at a deficit of about \$7000.

There is a discrepancy in the amount being distributed to the DRE Medical fund, which may raise the total amount of the deficit approx. \$4,500.

Those building improvements that are for long term improvement or unexpected improvement will be taken from the capital expenses fund instead of the buildings and grounds maintenance fund.

The capital investment fund is currently invested in Morgan Stanley funds. \$5998 is currently in that fund. Its income is earnings from investment.

Official Records

How much of the UUA pledge has been raised by donation
Approximately \$6,000. Our fair share is approximately \$15000.

The capital campaign is not shown on this budget.
It will be wrapping up this year, and those funds are separate from the budget funds.

The bookkeeper is now a staff position; the service we had been getting from an outside company will be filled that way.

A recess was proposed at 1:30
All in favor. We will reconvene at 1:40

The projected amount is more like \$30,636 for the endowment disbursement for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Keeping it at 5% we should get \$32,550, putting the deficit at about \$10,082. If the endowment were increased to 6%, it adds \$5800 to bring the endowment contribution to \$38,350. This will reduce the deficit to 4,282.

It was stated that congregants need to see the documents on the endowment to see what the use of the endowment will be. This was brought up at the previous meeting, and some congregants are uncomfortable making an uninformed decision.

We currently owe \$107,000 to the endowment.
There was a request for a comprehensive budget to see all the numbers.
Numbers were available, and meetings were held that were open to congregants.

Questions and discussion of the presentation
It was requested to send in an email what we owe the endowment and how much is in the fund.

What happens to the current projected deficit?
Deficit is reflected in what is currently in the bank – what we start with reflects the deficit.

We are not carrying last years deficit over to the next year?
Because our budget takes from the reserves. Ideally there would be \$25- \$30,000 in our operating fund at the lowest.

Point of procedure: There is a need to line up for questions.

Point of information: What are bank fees and changes as stated in the proposed budget?

Official Records

Charges for banking and fees related to banking accounts

There was a suggestion to cut something to reduce deficit/take it away.

Question of who is going to do the work the choir director currently does?

Currently she is a Music director, and the position is dropping to that of a Choir director.

The budget is the suggested expenditure, there are two solutions: Cut items, or increase revenues. We need to be involved and have commitment.

Question: When we get ready to vote, are we voting on the 5% to 6% on the endowment?

Do we need to vote on an amendment?

Comment: Thank you that we don't have to discuss the UUA contribution.

Point of information: The next line item is about the use of the endowment fund; After discussing that line item we will go back to vote on the budget.

Question: On the endowment, the total amount on the endowment is fairly stable. Do we have an number on what the endowment was when it was created?

Yes: \$500,030 in 2003. This has grown slightly over the years. Taking more out will reduce the growth of the endowment, which currently grows at more than the 5% that is currently taken. To change this amount it will take a 2/3 vote from the current members attending.

Question: If we take money from the endowment are we making less money?

No, since the assets are changed. It is a loan to the church which the church pays interest on.

Use of Endowment

Bill Van Rooy motions to make a permanent increase of the amount we get from the endowment to 6%, Claudia Runge seconds.

There is a point that the status of the endowment fund is in a state of flux: there are two parallel definitions of the endowment fund:

Constitution and by laws are unclear. This person also feels we need to hear from the endowment fund board of trustees as they are charged with the maintenance and improvement of the health of the fund, and with the unclear references in the constitution and bylaws feels the congregation is unprepared to make this decision. Feels we should stay with the current percentage.

Official Records

Alternating opinion: the founding document for the endowment fund states that the church has the ability to adjust the endowment fund in a meeting such as this.

There was a Comment to leave the endowment fund contribution at 5% unless the congregation amends it.

There was a suggestion to keep the endowment at 5% to protect “the seed corn” We are still, however, making gains at 5%. If we vote a deficit, then we will have to make cuts.

The opposing member calls on the congregation to choose what to cut. If we are flush next year, we should reduce it back to 5%.
This proposal is not made lightly.

An amendment to the motion is unneeded as that is what the motion is for. Raising the endowment percentage is a good idea if it means we can keep what we currently have.

Another member would favor a 6% raise for one year, but likes that if we are going to go above 5% in any given year to have a vote for it.

Another opposes the motion as the endowment isn't generating enough to cover the extra withdrawal, and the market isn't good.

Question of proper notice, that those who may be interested aren't present.

It was suggested that the congregation needs to come to terms that we are smaller than we think we are.

Jasmine Walston motions to amend the motion to “to increase the payout of the endowment to 6% for the 2016-17 fiscal year”, seconded by Martin English. Majority agree to the amendment to the motion.
42 ayes. 4 nays. 2/3's vote is fulfilled. Motion is accepted.

Budget Motion

John Grossman moves to approve the budget as the board has presented with the 6% with any mathematical corrections needed. The move is seconded.

Discussion

Approval of the budget in favor: The ayes have majority

Official Records

Old Business

Welcoming Statement

We welcome all persons to participate fully, openly, and equally, in all aspects of our congregational life, in ever-widening circles of inclusion. We respect and affirm diversity and its gifts in:

Race, ethnicity, national origin, affectional or sexual orientation, family or relationship structure, gender identity, gender expression, sex, abilities, neurodiversity, age, socio-economic class, political views, religious belief, creed or interpretation of religion.

Presented by Nancy MacPherson.

One correction: there should be no bold print.

Nancy motions to accept the welcoming statement as written

Motion is seconded

Clarification: Sex refers to biological identification.

There are two punctuation errors: strike the colon and add a comma after political views.

A vote for an amendment is not needed.

All in favor of adopting the welcoming statement with the amendments:
the ayes have majority.

A certificate of appreciation for volunteering is to be given to Kathy Gapsis.
Thank you to Devi, Thank you to Jill.

Closing Words

Dawn Cooley “YES!!!”

Meeting adjourned at 3:03

Financial

The Budget Report will be distributed and discussed at the meeting.