

The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Established 1842

ANNUAL REPORT

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ANNUAL REPORT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION:

2018-2019 Operating Budget: \$980,000

Adult Members: 780

Church School Enrollment: 135

Contributing Households: 456

CHURCH STAFF:

SENIOR MINISTER

The Reverend Jennifer Nordstrom

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

The Reverend Dena McPhetres

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

Jean Johnson

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Cami Thomas

YOUTH PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Deb Solis

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Lynne Jacoby

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Cindy Lorentzen

OFFICE COORDINATOR

Shari Wright

SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERN

Claire Keyes

MEMBER:

- Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)
- MidAmerica Region, UUA (MAR)
- Common Ground of Southeastern Wisconsin
- Southeastern Wisconsin Unitarian
- Universalist Council (SEWUUC)
- Interchange, Inc.
- Interfaith Council of Greater Milwaukee
- Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAH)

CHURCH STAFF CONTINUED:

LEAD MUSIC DIRECTOR

Alissa Rhode

RESIDENT ARTIST

Jack Forbes Wilson

CHOIR DIRECTOR

Tristan Strelitzer

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Lillian Schley

NURSERY COORDINATOR

Lindsey Porter

PRESCHOOL COORDINATOR

Mariah Groshek

FACILITIES MANAGER

Tom Schroeder

FACILITIES ASSISTANTS

Jim Spice/Andre Singley

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE WORKER

Art Sims

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2018-19 was quite a year! The main focus of the Board of Trustees for this past year was continuing our work to establish a spiritually grounded governance practice that fulfills our fiduciary responsibilities.

As you will recall, last year was all about building First Church's vision for the future through establishing our desired outcomes, known as our Ends. Our Ends focus us on making a real difference in people's lives through community, outreach, and social justice. This year, the Board dedicated itself to developing a comprehensive set of policies designed to ensure that we are making progress on those Ends through the use of acceptable means. The Board drafted and revised these policies over the course of several months and many hours of retreat with the guidance of a consultant from Unity Consulting who has been our trusted advisor throughout our journey to adopt a model of governance known as "Policy Governance." The Board adopted the new set of policies and associated bylaw changes in April 2019 and will begin to live into them in the 2019-20 church year, knowing that the policies and process will continue to evolve over time as we learn, grow, and change. See policy governance here: uumilwaukee.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PG-description-4.23.19.pdf

This year we also made progress on developing other key ingredients of the Policy Governance model in partnership with Senior Minister Jennifer Nordstrom. The Board approved Reverend Nordstrom's interpretations of First Church's eight Ends as well as a plan and proposed measures for determining progress on achieving each of the Ends. See interpretations and measures here: uumilwaukee.org/ends-interpretations.

A key source of data in the plan for measuring progress on our Ends over time is an annual congregational survey. The Board conducted an inaugural survey in the fall of 2018 to provide a reference point and ground our ongoing practice of determining how well First Church reflects each End and the impact our community is having on each other and the wider community. See results here: uumilwaukee.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Survey-of-Ends.pdf.

Finally, I would like to highlight the significant activity that occurred this year to propose and determine initiatives to put our dreams into action in support of our Ends through the generous Lu Krug bequest. The Krug Gift Acceptance Team (KGAT) put together an application process which yielded 19 thoughtful proposals totaling over \$700,000. In February 2019, the Board of Trustees approved KGAT recommendations totaling \$150,000 for this round. A sincere thank you to all who submitted proposals and to the dedication and diligence of the KGAT in leading this process. There is so much to look forward to as we look to the future!

All my best,
Michelle Naples, Congregation President, 2018-19

ENDS STATEMENTS 2018

We, the people of First Church, build community where we:

1. Value, develop, and celebrate the gifts that come from authentic connection across difference, emphasizing racial, ethnic, and generational difference.
2. Recognize power differences and challenge injustice where it arises.
3. Follow the leadership of people most affected by injustice, partnering to move the Milwaukee community toward justice.
4. Generously give and receive support, connection, and care in times of joy and challenge.
5. Promote Unitarian Universalism and our shared values in the world.
6. Open ourselves to wonder, making ourselves vulnerable and available to find meaning, inspiration, and transformation.
7. Create communal experiences celebrating our interconnectedness.
8. Create accessible, courageous, and innovative welcome to people who might find a sense of belonging and a spiritual home with us.

VALUES

At the heart of First Church, we value:

Wonder

Authentic Connection

Love

Justice

MISSION STATEMENT

We gather together to:

Nurture the Spirit. Engage the Mind. Inspire Action.

2017-2018 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Overview

In its oversight of the financial condition of the church, the Finance Committee:

- Monitors financial performance to determine if it is in compliance with the budgeted performance;
- Analyzes financial data and develops alternatives and strategies when necessary;
- Prepares the budget for each new fiscal year;
- Serves as a resource for the various committees and the Board concerning financial matters.

The Finance Committee closely monitors the financial results of our church and keeps the Board of Trustees and the congregation informed of any significant developments. We generate projections to help forecast the financial condition of the church over the near and long term and to assist with the formation and maintenance of a balanced budget. We develop strategies to help improve the financial status of the church as needed, while trying to fulfill the diverse goals established for the church and meeting the needs of the various committees, groups and members of the congregation.

Thank you to the committee members: Tom Briscoe (Treasurer), Gordon Mueller, Trent Muller, Ron Oshima, and Laura White, and the staff liaisons, Jean Johnson and Lynne Jacoby, for their many hours of hard work and valued input. Without their dedicated involvement, this committee could not accomplish its important responsibilities.

Income and Expenses

July 1, 2017 — June 30, 2018

The following page shows the budget and final income statement for the 2017-2018 church year. The first section shows the income while the second section shows the operating expenses for the year. Ideally, the income should balance the expenses to yield an Income Net of Operations of \$0 or a balanced budget. The Finance Committee projected a negative balance of -\$124,516 for the church year. Final numbers, not including extraordinary income, show that a negative balance of \$105,501 – nearly \$20,000 better than expected. Total income was \$8,975 above budget and the total expenses were \$10,040 below budget.

Income – total income was up 1% (+\$8,975):

Pledges and other contributions were down 1% (-\$8,774)

The apartment income was up 76% (+\$13,529)

Expense – total expense was down 1% (-\$10,040):

Human Resources expense were down 4% (-\$24,328)

Capital Maintenance was down 37% (-\$6,277)

Extraordinary Income – unexpected and unusual income – saved the bottom line for the year:

Lu Krug bequest of \$850,000

Tom Thaney for the Arts - \$2,655

Gain/Loss on Investments - \$8,199

Additional 175th Anniversary Donations - \$18,787

Income Net of Operation was -\$105,501. The pledges in future years must increase to cover this cost in order for First Church to become fiscally sustainable.

FUSM 2017-2018 INCOME & EXPENSE HIGH LEVEL SUMMARY

	'17 - '18	'17 - '18	Variance	
ITEM	BUDGET	FINAL	Amount	%
Contributions				
Pledges	706,287	696,174	(10,113)	-1%
Bequest Income	20,000	20,000	-	0%
Other Contributions	34,000	35,339	1,339	4%
Total Contributions	760,287	751,513	(8,774)	-1%
Transfer from Fund Balance	27,133	30,885	3,752	14%
Activity Income			-	
Feast for Funds	25,000	26,108	1,108	4%
R E Fees	9,000	8,923	(77)	-1%
Other Sources	9,800	7,278	(2,522)	-26%
Total Activity Income	43,800	42,309	(1,491)	-3%
Investment Income	17,000	18,959	1,959	12%
Apartment Income Net of Expenses	17,900	31,429	13,529	76%
TOTAL INCOME	\$866,120	\$875,095	\$8,975	1%
Human Resources				
Salaries, Wages & Minister Housing Allowance	565,759	544,012	(21,747)	-4%
Professional Expenses	29,706	27,125	(2,581)	-9%
DRE Transition	-	26,355	26,355	
Insurance - Health & Disability	74,383	71,369	(3,014)	-4%
Retirement Savings - all staff	39,908	41,795	1,887	5%
Payroll Taxes	28,063	27,383	(680)	-2%
Sabbatical Minister Cover	10,000	9,960	(40)	0%
Other	14,114	13,205	(909)	-6%
Total Human Resources	761,933	761,203	(730)	0%
Budgeted Contributions	22,881	23,509	628	3%
Building Expenses	76,260	71,155	(5,105)	-7%
Basic Operations	69,349	69,436	87	0%
Religious Education	7,050	7,256	206	3%
Committees	26,030	27,178	1,148	4%
Extra Operations				
Capital Maintenance	17,133	10,856	(6,277)	-37%
Website Development	10,000	10,004	4	0%
Total Extra Operations	27,133	20,860	(6,273)	-23%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$990,636	\$980,596	-\$10,040	-1.01%
INCOME NET OF OPERATIONS	-\$124,516	-\$105,501	\$19,015	-15%
Extraordinary Income				
Krug Bequest		\$830,080		
Tom Thaney for the Arts		\$2,655		
Gain/Loss on Investment	\$0	\$8,199		
175th Anniversary	\$0	\$18,787		
EXTRAORDINARY INCOME	\$0	\$859,720		
NET INCOME	-\$124,516	\$754,219	\$878,735	

Investment Report

Investments are made according to the First Church Investment Policy Statement, which states:

- First Church should maintain an amount equal to the safety net (15% of total budgeted expenses) in cash and/or certificates of deposit with a maturity of less than or equal to one year.
- A second amount, equal to the safety net, should be invested in cash and/or certificates with a maturity of less than or equal to three years.
- Any additional cash and the Memorial Trust Fund may be invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund or a mutual fund that has maintained a Morningstar rating of at least four stars for at least the prior three years that has a ratio of bonds and equity similar to the UUA Common Endowment Fund ratio of bonds to equity.

First Church has two CD's valued at \$210,692. A third CD for \$100,000 is currently being renewed. This money satisfies the safety net of 15% of budgeted expenses as well as the additional 15% to mature in less than three years. The remaining funds in the General Fund as well as the Memorial Trust Fund are invested in the UU Common Endowment Fund, which is managed to approximate 60% bonds and 40% equities.

The UUA Common Endowment Fund has a return on investment of 8.7% for the Fiscal YTD and 5.5%/year for the last three years ; Landmark CU's of 1.14% fixed for two years, and Brewery CU of 1.35% for two years. Money Market rates at Associated Bank vary but are low, around 0.14%.

Balance Sheet

June 30, 2018

Total net assets increased by \$724,747 primarily due to the Lu Krug bequest. The assets were decreased by \$105,501 due to the income deficit shown in the Income and Expense table. Investment income increased our assets by \$27,158.

Notes to the Balance Sheet

Restricted (by donor) Funds

Morter Fund: This fund was established in accordance with a bequest of a former member. The funds are designated to sponsor seminars on individual responsibility.

Memorial Trust Fund: This fund contains unspecified bequests. Money placed in the fund can be expended or borrowed against only by a super majority of the congregation. The Finance Committee manages it. A fixed percentage of the fund's assets provide quarterly income to the church's operations.

Designated (by Board) Funds

Capital Maintenance Reserve: This fund contains unrestricted bequest and donations that the Board designated for capital improvements.

Unrestricted Funds

Unrestricted Fund Balance: This fund is the amount retained after payment of expenses or the allocation to designated funds. It increases during fiscal years in which there is an operating surplus and decreases during years in which there is an operating deficit. For fiscal security, the Board has adopted a policy of maintaining a balance in this fund that is equal to or greater than 15% of the operating expenses for the most recent fiscal year. If the balance drops below this 15% level, the restoration of the fund becomes a fiscal priority.

Lu Krug and McLaughlin Bequest: This fund includes the remaining unrestricted bequest balance that has not been designated for other purposes by the Board.

Noreen Gilbertsen, Finance Committee Chair

FUSM BALANCE SHEET FOR JUNE 30, 2018

6/30/2018

ASSETS		
	6/30/2017	6/30/2018
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$17,980	\$14,087
Money Manager	\$105,209	\$307,510
Other	\$8,409	\$12,696
Total Current Assets	\$131,599	\$334,294
INVESTMENTS		
Memorial Trust Fund - UUCEF	\$325,668	\$337,169
Oikocredit USA	\$10,616	\$10,616
CD's	\$308,339	\$210,692
General Fund - UUCEF	\$256,086	\$864,285
Total Investments	\$900,709	\$1,422,762
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,032,308	\$1,757,055
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Prepaid Pledges	\$42,218	\$41,061
Apartment Security Deposit	\$3,486	\$4,269
YRUU Account & Mission Trip Savings	\$7,569	\$6,382
Prepaid RE Fees & Silent Retreat	\$7,922	\$2,631
27th Pay Period Accrual	\$12,669	\$13,634
Accounts Payable	\$5,939	\$1,739
Sabbatical Accrual	\$20,000	\$5,184
Total Current Liabilities	\$99,803	\$74,899
RESTRICTED FUNDS		
Morter Fund - Donor Restricted	\$79,319	\$74,106
Memorial Trust Fund	\$325,668	\$337,169
Total Restricted Funds	\$404,987	\$411,276
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS		
Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$375,768	\$467,073
Net Income	\$91,305	\$754,219
Capital Maintenance Fund	\$60,445	\$49,589
Total Unrestricted Funds	\$527,517	\$1,270,881
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	\$1,032,308	\$1,757,055

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is charged with nominating members for the Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee. Upon request, we assist with recruiting members for the Finance and Personnel Committees.

The members of Nominating Committee, in line with a request from the Board of Trustees several years ago, have continued to participate in Common Ground's training on how to conduct one-on-one relational meetings with members of the congregation. This year, the six members of the Nominating Committee conducted approximately 25 one-on-one meetings. We found this process to be very valuable in community building, uncovering talents and interests of members, and hearing their thoughts on lay leadership. The Nominating Committee considers these meetings helpful/essential for our work and intends to continue the practice. We continued our practice of assisting Membership Development Coordinator Lynne Jacoby and Director of Administration Jean Johnson by sharing names of willing members whose interests align with other church groups. Beginning in the spring, we expanded our one-on-one meetings to include church members who joined during the senior minister transition with the purpose of future leadership development. In addition, we have refined our system so we will start the 2019-20 church year with a strong list of potential candidates to fill openings in 2020-21.

In making recommendations for positions, the Nominating Committee considers factors such as skills, demographics, and diversity needed in each committee.

Nominating Committee members this year, in addition to myself, were: Michelle Boehm, Scot Henry, Kathy Porter, Joe Schuller, Patricia Witt, and Jean Johnson staff liaison. We offer deep gratitude to those many generous and talented members who have responded to the call of leadership.

Beth Bender, Chair

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee provided support to Senior Minister Jennifer Nordstrom during this past year.

Thank you to Sarah Stehly, Amanda Panciera, and Cheryl Maranto for sharing their time and expertise.

Nancy Spransy, Chair

THE LU KRUG GIFT ACCEPTANCE TEAM

Lu Krug was a dedicated leader within our congregation and the greater Milwaukee community for many years including on the Milwaukee Human Rights Commission, the Urban League, and the Milwaukee League of Women Voters. When she died in 2016, at the age of 100, she left First Church a generous \$850,000 bequest.

MAJOR ALLOCATIONS

In accordance with Board policies, the Lu Krug Gift Acceptance Team (KGAT) was created to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees as to its use. In March 2018, the Board of Trustees approved KGAT's recommended allocation of the bequest in line with the Board's policy recommendation as follows:

- 30% (\$255,000) for short-term needs (operating budget) over the next seven years;
- 50% (\$425,000) for medium-term needs (funding visionary programmatic initiatives to implement our Ends) over the next eight years; and
- 20% (\$170,000) for long-term needs.

THE FUNDING PROCESS

In March 2018, the Board agreed with KGAT's recommendation to solicit the congregation for projects to be funded from medium-term monies. KGAT received 19 applications requesting over \$700,000 and representing a broad and inspiring range of interests. After carefully reviewing and discussing all of the applications, KGAT made recommendations to the Board in February 2019, which the Board approved in March 2019. No single project requesting more than \$5,000 was fully funded and no multi-year project was funded for the full number of years requested.

The funding approved in March 2019 totaled approximately \$150,000. The "jump start" projects approved in March 2018 (last church year), totaled approximately \$30,000, for a grand total of approximately \$180,000 approved thus far for medium-term visionary programmatic initiatives to implement our Ends.

FUNDING OUR ENDS GOALS

KGAT recommended funding to projects that further all eight Ends, grouping the Ends into three primary areas:

1. Social Justice Ends (Ends 1, 2, and 3)
2. Worship, Pastoral Care, and Community Ends (Ends 4, 6, and 7)
3. Growth, Outreach, and Welcome Ends (Ends 5 and 8)

KGAT distributed the financial support for these outcomes relatively evenly, recognizing that some projects spanned more than one group. The team also made an effort to maintain First Church's tradition of tithing 10% of major bequests to outside organizations. Thus, KGAT recommended giving \$20,000 of the allocated \$180,000 medium-term monies to local outside organizations as part of this tradition of support, as well as \$10,000 to the UUA in honor of Lu Krug.

LU KRUG FUNDED PROJECTS

Action Mobilization Network: Create and manage a network to facilitate turnout for major Milwaukee protests and build relationships across faith communities regarding same.

Beloved Conversations: Purchase the Beloved Conversations curriculum to facilitate congregation-wide discussions of race and ethnicity.

BLUU Donation: Provide partial payment of First Church's one-time commitment to support the UUA Board of Trustees' commitment to Black Lives of Unitarian Universalists (BLUU).

BLUU Worship: Provide space and resources for people of color to participate in a monthly online UUA Black Lives of Unitarian Universalists (BLUU) worship service.

Choral Scholars: Continue the program.

Expanded Music Ministry: Expand the reach of our music ministry by developing a variety of ongoing musical programs and events.

Interfaith Earth Network - Lead Filters Project: Support lead exposure education and distribution of lead filters in the inner-city Milwaukee neighborhoods.

Livestream Sunday Services: Purchase and install equipment to enable livestreaming and full video archives to broaden access to our services and promote Unitarian Universalism.

Mothers for Justice United: Support the creation of a national model of peer support and advocacy for mothers whose children have been killed by police or vigilante violence.

Social Justice Intern: Hire a social justice intern to resource and support our Social Justice Teams and connect with community organizations.

Social Justice Singers: Support establishment of a group of singers to be available to attend and support public protests and/or rallies.

Sound System improvements: Upgrades in the Sanctuary.

UUA Assembly Scholarships: Provide support for members of our congregation to attend regional and national UUA assemblies.

Youth Pilgrimage to Boston: Provide partial support for a trip by our youth to Boston to learn about the history of UU'ism and visit significant UU sites.

KGAT is grateful to all those who submitted requests and for the passion, vision, and excitement from the congregation as we move to implement these projects.

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES: May 20, 2018

Call to Order

Congregation President Julie Bock called the meeting to order at 12:36 pm after a congregational quorum was achieved, with 106 members attending. Michelle Naples lit the chalice. Jeremy Koenen and Michelle Naples acted as Recording Secretary.

II. Approval of Minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting

Motion of approval by Bruce Wiggins. Seconded by Jeff Pearcy?. Motion passed.

III. Remarks from the President

Julie recognized all of the wonderful contributions by the individuals who acted on member led teams, staff led teams, committees serving the Board of Trustees, and those who helped serve continuously. Furthermore, there was a personal recognition of the many contributions Beryl Aschenberg.

There was then a summary of the approach that was taken to form the ends statements. This included engaging about 250 congregation members in visioning workshops., The Board then had a workshop where it distilled those many details down to a list of values and ends. The mission was previously determined during the interim period with Elaine. The next steps will include staff drafting operational goals and timeframes in the upcoming year. As part of this, the Board will be establishing the metrics to be used in assessing success towards those ends.

Julie then concluded her remarks by thanking the church for opportunity to serve as president of the Board of Trustees.

IV. Nominating Committee Report

Patricia Witt reported on the incoming and outgoing members of the Board of Trustees. Pete Koneazny, Holly Patzer, and Julie Bock are leaving the Board. Joining next year, for a 3 year commitment, will be Jane Peterson, Melinda Vernon, and Mark Bender. Chris Aiken will be joining for one year in filling a vacant seat.

Moved by Elizabeth Lentini, and seconded by Kathy Rivera?.

Patricia covered the processes that involved 40 one-on-one connections with individuals throughout the congregation. Furthermore, there was recognition of the retiring members JoAnn Bishop, and Don Weimer, continuing members Patricia Witt, Joe Schuller, Kathy Porter, and Beth Bender, and newly joining member of the Nominating Committee, Michelle Boehm and Laura Ehlers.

Moved to accept the new members of the Nominating Committee by Kathy Rivera, seconded by Connie Craig.

Recognition was given of Noreen Gilbertsen as the chair of the finance committee, and Nancy Spransy as chair of the Personnel Committee.

V. Financial Condition Report

Noreen Gilbertsen, Finance Committee chair, presented the financial condition report.

Noreen thanked Tom Briscoe for acting as treasurer, as well as other members of the committee. Noreen then laid out the high-level functions of the Finance Committee in monitoring finances and preparing the budget, as well as acting as a resource to the Board. There was then a walkthrough of the financial line items of the 2017-2018 budget. Highlights included that the income net of operations was \$125,000, and the 175th anniversary brought in an additional \$185,746. Additional stress was given on needing to increase pledges to balance the budget. Total income forecasted for 2017-2018 will be targeting a smaller deficit than the prior year. Assets were presented as \$1,891,000 for the church, which were broken down into the individual line items.

A question was asked if the assets included the Lu Krug bequest. Elizabeth Lentini as part of the Lu Krug Bequest Team will address where that money has been placed.

A question was asked how recent the amounts were. Noreen indicated the presented details were as of the end of April 2018. Numbers in the Annual Report were the prior church year's finances.

A question was asked about where excess money goes. Noreen replied that it goes into the general fund.

Additional information is provided in the Annual Report.

VI. Stewardship Report

Stacy Koenen presented on behalf of Tony Panciera. The Stewardship Council consists of various committees and teams that have more specific goals. The Council provides oversight and strategic thinking. A culture of abundance was a focus of this past year, as well as how to relate the needs of the church in effective ways and encourage additional contributions to the church. Feast for Funds was bid on by 207 individuals, 134 winners, of 1028 bids, raising \$25,650. They are still looking at improving the interfaces for bidding on the website. Recognition was given to Tom and Sue Thaney, chairs of the Feast for Funds Committee, as well as the rest of the committee's members. There was recognition of the Heritage Society, including details on upcoming programs and outreach planned for next year. Recognition was also given to the group's chair and members.

The new Income Opportunity Team is helping to investigate additional income streams for the church. Two informational sessions titled "Our Financial Future 2018" were hosted that focused on income streams and how they are utilized by the church for funding, and were attended by 60 members.

Pledge goal for 2018-19 church year was \$735,000 (an average pledge increase of 5%), which was not met with the current amount pledged being ~\$700,000. Over half of the membership increased their pledges, and over 40% increased between 5% and 10%. In the next church year they will be focusing on continuing the dialogue with church members about our financial state, and how they can help contribute financially and through action towards the church's ends.

VII. Lu Krug Bequest Team

Elizabeth Lentini and Dave Becker presented on behalf of the Krug Gift Acceptance Team (KGAT).

Teams are formed for bequests over \$50,000 to make recommendations on how the funds are to be allocated, and to its use. Team members were recognized, including, Gordy Mueller, Lianna Bishop, and Holly Patzer (departing the team coinciding with her departure from the Board?), as well as staff representatives Jennifer Nordstrom and Jean Johnson.

The team recommendation accepted by the Board is that 30% of the money, which is \$255,000, is for short-term needs at the discretion of the board. This is used to help cover the gap between income and expenses.

50% of the money, which is \$425,000, is dedicated for medium-term needs, defined as visioning, programmatic initiatives.

20% of the money, which is \$170,000, is dedicated for long-term needs, which are not yet defined. The funds may end up going into the Memorial Trust Fund, which utilizes interest for immediate needs, but the principal cannot be tapped without approval of a super majority of the congregation.

Dave Becker elaborated on those medium-term initiatives to assist in meeting the "ends". Covered three projects for immediate funding, which includes:

Hiring four choir intern scholars for a year.

Hiring a social justice intern for a year to help focus and work with us on accomplishing social justice ends.

Growing our means of remote accessibility by members and others to attend or experience sermons and other events happening at First Church.

These are examples of how the Lu Krug bequests funds can be aligned with the ends. Next week an application for church members to request or recommend projects for funding by the Lu Krug bequest will be released. The team will then take those recommendations and assess them, presenting recommendations to the BOT that are feasible and aligned for funding with the Lu Krug bequest.

A question was asked for confirmation of how much had been dedicated so far for those mid-term needs . 5% (\$20,000) of

the mid-term funds have been dedicated.

A question was asked about the final placement for the McLaughlin fund amounts, and that has been confirmed by Elizabeth as having been rolled into the general fund.

A question was asked about when those three already approved projects are going into effect, which was answered as the 2018-2019 church year.

VIII. Remarks from Associate Minister

Rev. Dena McPhetres highlighted that a group of 10 new pastoral care associates has been selected, who are planned to attend training this fall and begin serving after the October commissioning ceremony.

Rev. Dena announced that we have recently filled the social justice intern position with an individual from Marquette University. They will work 10-12 hours a week for a 9 month internship. They will help serve as the Social Justice Council coordinator, as well as community engagement coordinator. The community engagement coordinator will help work toward ends 1, 2, and 3. The intern will be announced after they are formally approved, likely the weekend of Flower Communion.

Rev. Dena outlined the history and impacts that Chalice Circles have had on individuals and the community. However, participation was in serious decline, so the program was put on hiatus. This coming fall will launch a new evolution of chalice circles, called Theme Circles. They are meant to deepen and support the spiritual journeys of participants in community with each other, and in connection with the church's monthly worship themes. Participants will have access to various media to help dive into the month's theme, and then members will be able to come together once a month to a committed group to discuss those themes further. Several personal testimonials were presented in support of what Chalice Circles have provided, and the promise of the Theme Circles to come.

These is an upcoming celebration of what the Chalice Circle program has given and meant to us, as well as look into where the new Theme Circles will take us.

IX. Remarks from the Senior Minister

Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom began by acknowledging the great amount of change that has happened within the church, and thanked the church community for their support of each other through that time. She highlighted the four key areas that she focused on over the past year, which include worship, the staff, the Board, and stewardship. There was an overview of the pilot projects from the Krug Gift Acceptance Team. The pilot projects match up with specific areas of the new ends statements. This includes social justice, community, and outreach.

Rev. Jennifer detailed that we are using the predictive model to help transition into a pledge sustained congregation over the next 7 years. This requires hitting a 5% pledge base increase each year. Even with the abundance of contribution by the stewardship committee and the congregation's pledges, we unfortunately did not reach 5% this year. The Income Opportunity Team is planning a raffle next spring to help bridge that gap. The raffle will attempt to attract funds from both within the congregation, as well as from networks outside of the church as well.

6 staff members departed over the church year, and 5 have been onboarded. Special recognition was given to Beryl Aschenberg, and her incredible contributions to the church over her time with the church.

A small search team composed of incoming religious education chair Sarah Richards, Board member Maria Dorsey, and personnel committee member Sarah Stehly are working with Rev. Jennifer to find an interim director of religious education, who is planned to be with us for one year. They will work with staff, members, and youth, to discern what is desired for the next phase in the church's religious education.

The Board of Trustees was recognized regarding its work on the visioning and ends, concluding with special recognition of Julie Bock's contributions as president.

X. New Business (Comments from the Congregation)

Question from Rod DePue: Rod mentioned that he has had difficulty and questions regarding who to go to regarding questions he might have, such as operations or religious education. It would be helpful to have a flowchart for who handles various sorts of

requests. It is unclear of who to go to for specific types of requests.

Response from Julie Bock: Said it was a great question, and was possibly amplified due to the shift of the Board of Trustees out of an “ask me everything” role, and into a more strategic policy focused group. Julie recognized that it sounds like a reasonable and doable action item.

Comment from Christian Becker: Mentioned that the chair of the Building and Grounds Committee is working with a consultant on the feasibility of air conditioning for the church’s sanctuary. He feels it is important due to the increasing number of hot days due to climate change, and the effect on choir and congregation. He hopes that Russell Drewry is able to get a plan presented, and the congregation agrees to it.

Comment from Bruce Wiggins: Bruce encouraged anyone to go to general assembly in Kansas City this June. We don’t have the 16 member delegate slots filled yet, so there is room. It is a wonderful way of connecting with the larger national UUA movement. The President of the UUA was arrested due to civil disobedience in support of the Poor People’s Campaign. Members can see Bruce if interested in attending.

Question from Linda Mistele: Linda requested adding gender and economic difference to the first of the ends.

Response from Julie Bock: Julie pointed out that we are emphasizing racial, ethnic, and generational. Julie recognized that gender and economic are important, but the Board has reaffirmed these and stand as stated, and recommended working with KGAT to form a team for a project in support of those efforts. However, the ends stand as presented.

Additional response from Linda Mistele: Invited anyone interested in such a project team to come see Linda after the meeting.

Question from Terry Wiggins: Terry noted the minutes from the prior year’s annual meeting, at which time she asked about the divestment of fossil fuels from the church finances. She does not recall having seen an article intended to address the item.

Response from Julie Bock and Noreen Gilbertson: Noreen acknowledged that it had not been followed up on yet, but would be addressed in the upcoming church year.

Comment from Juliet Hills: Juliet wanted to recognize that music was not seen in this year’s report, and to acknowledge the wonderful year of music, and would like some additional recognition of the music program in the Annual Report.

Comment from Rev. Drew Kennedy, First Church’s Minister Emeritus: Drew recognized this as his first annual meeting in four years. He attended the ends presentation, and has recognized that and other areas of leadership at work. He feels the leadership transition has been very successful. He says the First Church vitality and good judgment in the complexities of a large church are apparent on the Board and other committees. He is thrilled that we have done a very successful transition.

Comment from Jessie Moffet: Jessie thanked all of the leaders. She also gave a shout out to Omega Burckhardt who is active in the Midwest Leadership School, and Kaetryn Koneazny who reminded the congregation at the youth service that Midwest Leadership School is for youth and adults. Jessie encouraged anyone interested in adult Midwest Leadership School to see Omega.

Follow-up response from Omega Burckhardt: Omega mentioned that she is acted as a lay staff member of the Midwest Leadership School who attended as a student four years ago. Omega encouraged members to consider attending the week long class, for doing a deep dive into Unitarian Universalist history, denominational politics, and opportunities for shared small group ministry.

Comment from Kathy Porter: Kathy recognized the great work that the staff contributes both visibly, as well as behind the scenes, to everything that First Church does.

XI. Adjournment

Moved to adjourn at 2:03pm by Don Weimer, Beryl Aschenberg seconded.

2018 - 2019 CHURCH LEADERSHIP

CONGREGATION OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Michelle Naples
VICE PRESIDENT
Mark Bishop
SECRETARY
Jeremy Koenen
TREASURER
Tom Briscoe

BOARD MEMBERS

Chris Aiken
Mark Bender
Mark Bishop
Omega Burckhardt
Maria Dorsey
Jeremy Koenen
Michelle Naples
Jane Peterson
Melinda Vernon

COMMITTEES AND GROUPS

AUDIO

Mike Paulson

BOOK SALES

Nancy Pajewski
Barb Lancelot

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Chris Linder

BUDDHIST STUDY GROUP: GATHERING WATERS SANGHA

Steve & Jeanne Lowry

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Russ Drewry

CHANCEL CHOIR

Tristan Strelitzer

CHILD CARE

Sonya Fitak

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sarah Richards

CHRONOLOGICALLY GIFTED (TCG)

Sharon DePue
Cecile Langford

CIRCLE SUPPERS

Sam Mueller

COFFEE, CHRISTMAS

TBA

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

Jeff Pearcy

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

Bruce Wiggins

FEAST FOR FUNDS

Sue Thaney

FINANCE

Noreen Gilbertsen

FLOWERS

Shari Wright

FORUM

Lorraine Jacobs

GALLERY

Alisha Koneazny

HERITAGE SOCIETY

Lisa Koneazny

HISTORY/ARCHIVES

Linda Presto

INCOME OPPORTUNITY

Holly Patzer

IT TEAM

Allan Ries

LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT

TBA

MEMBERSHIP

Susan Borri

MORTER LECTURE

Lorraine Jacobs

NOMINATING

Beth Bender

PASTORAL CARE ASSOCIATES COORDINATOR

Jane Peterson

PASTORAL CARE PROVIDERS COORDINATOR

Heather Hansen
Jane Dorweiler (since January 1, 2019)

PERSONNEL

Nancy Spransy

PLEDGE DRIVE TEAM

Fred Gutierrez

PULPIT GUEST COMMITTEE

Kristine Hansen

SCRIP SALES

Stewardship Council

SPIRITUAL RETREAT COMMITTEE

Rollie Hanson
Chris Aiken

SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS GROUP

Diane Horne
Candice Haight

STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

TBA

SWANS (Seasoned Women Are Naturally Social)

Camille Johnson
Barbara Kloman

THEME CIRCLES

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS UNDER
FORTY DOING ACTIVITIES (UUUFDA)**

Susie Seidelman
Yalanda Ludtka

USHERS

Cheri Briscoe

UU PARENTING GROUP

Stacey Thieme
Brooke Worzella-Best

UU+ STUDY GROUP

Nancy Pajewski

WORSHIP ASSOCIATES

Beth Monhollen
Bob Balderson

YOUTH STEERING COMMITTEE

Matthew Finco (adult)
Celie Koneazny (youth)

SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNCIL

Claire Keyes

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Kenyatta Yamel

BLACK LIVES MATTER 2 WIUUs

Mary Devitt

EARTH JUSTICE MINISTRY

Bruce Wiggins
Tree Moore

IMMIGRATION ISSUES

Pat Geenen
Birger Pahl

SHARE THE PLATE

Bob Monahan
Nancy Spransy

**OUTSIDE FAITH-BASED
ORGANIZATIONS**
COMMON GROUND

Jerry Fredrickson

INTERCHANGE

Susan Mitten
Beth Bruch

**INTERFAITH CONFERENCE OF GREATER
MILWAUKEE**

Patricia McFarland

**MICAH (Milwaukee Inner-city Congrega-
tions Allied for Hope)**

Pete Koneazny
Bob Monahan

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE
COMMITTEE**

TBA

OTHER LEADERS**THEME CIRCLE FACILITATORS:**

Jeanne Durnford
Alexis Fielek
Juanita Mast
Matthew Rochte
Nancy Spransy
Robert Szymanski

PASTORAL CARE ASSOCIATES:

Andrew Alden
Logan Garcia
Julie Hamrick
Bob Kollmeyer
Donna Moberg
Susan Nolte
Jerilyn Pearcy
Sarah Richards
Dale Skaggs
Jen Vargas

We would also like to thank some of the people who, week in and week out, do so much for the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee:

- Our Office Volunteers — for Chanticleer and Order of Service Assembly
- The MANY, MANY volunteers who make our Religious Education program possible
- Our dedicated and talented choir members
- Collection counters
- Shawl Ministry knitters

2018-2019 Sermon Schedule

JUNE 4

"Communal Joy: Flower Communion"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

JUNE 10

"Gender and Sexual Identity as a Blessing"
Vicky Hess, Carla Ernst, Kaetryn Koneazny
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

JUNE 17

Chanting Service
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

JUNE 24

"Blessings and Curses"
The Rev. Sara Goodman

JULY 1

"Music: Comforting the Afflicted and Afflicting the Comfortable"
Katie Dahl, Pulpit Guest

JULY 8

"In the Eye of the Beholder:
Thoughts on Beauty"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

JULY 15

"That Time the Rabbi Spiked the Punch"
The Rev. Misha Sanders

JULY 22

"The Road Seen, Then Not Seen"
The Rev. David Schwartz

JULY 29

"Seeking Justice, Needing Beauty"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

AUGUST 5

"Don't Borrow Trouble"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

AUGUST 12

"In the Footsteps of Gandhi: Achieving Nonviolence in a Violent World"
Monica Kling, member

AUGUST 19

"Don't Show Up Empty Handed:
Unlearning Lessons from a Southern Childhood"
Beth Monhollan, member

AUGUST 26

"Between Here & Now & Forever"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

SEPTEMBER 2

"Pews Aren't Meant to be Comfortable"
Amanda Panciera & Celie Koneazny

SEPTEMBER 9

"Pandora Got a Bad Rap"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

SEPTEMBER 16

"Sins of Omission: What Are We Not Seeing?"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

SEPTEMBER 23

"The Sculpture is in the Stone"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

SEPTEMBER 30

"Like a Feather on the Breath of God"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

OCTOBER 7

"All Your Heart Longs to Set Down"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

OCTOBER 14

"Inviting the Whole of People"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

OCTOBER 21

"And a Time to Every Purpose... But How Do We Know What Time It Is?"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

OCTOBER 28

"The Container for the Holy is a Cauldron"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

NOVEMBER 4

"Memory as Time Travel"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

NOVEMBER 11

"Memory Creates Community"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

NOVEMBER 18

"Traditions Create Memories"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

NOVEMBER 25

"Working Towards Hope"
Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson, Pulpit Guest

DECEMBER 2

"Mystery: The Gift of Not Knowing"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

DECEMBER 9

"Standing Still During Change"
Michele Grove

DECEMBER 16

"Mystery: The Pain of Not Knowing"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

DECEMBER 23

Multigenerational Holiday Pageant
Cami Thomas, Religious Education Coordinator
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

DECEMBER 24

CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

DECEMBER 30

"Trucks, Freedom, and Religion"
Lynne Jacoby, Membership Development Coordinator

JANUARY 6

"You Can't See Meteor Showers If You Don't Go Star-Gazing"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

JANUARY 13

"Possibility's Paradox:
Letting Go to Hold On"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

2018-2019 Sermon Schedule

JANUARY 20

"What's the Best That Could Happen?"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

JANUARY 27

"Hell in the Hallways"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

FEBRUARY 3

"Trusting Self, Trusting Others"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

FEBRUARY 10

"Trust is a House of Cards"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

FEBRUARY 17

"We Need One Another"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

FEBRUARY 24

"Trusted with the Future of our Faith:
Someone is Learning How to Be a Person
of Faith by Watching You"
Kimberly Sweeney

MARCH 3

Annual Youth Service
"Why are You You? Where Did We Come
From? Where are We Going"

MARCH 10

"We're All in This Boat Together: Steward-
ship Ritual Celebration"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

MARCH 17

"Speed Bumps, Flat Tires and
Unexpected Waystations"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

MARCH 24

"Closer to Fine"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

MARCH 30

"Sometimes You Pick Your Journey; Some-
times You Pick Your Team"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

APRIL 7

"A Path to Wholeness"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

APRIL 14

"The Difference Between Whole and Not
Whole Is Love"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

APRIL 21

"Wholeness is Not Binary"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

APRIL 28

"Finding Wholeness in Nature"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

MAY 5

"Curiouser and Curiouser"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

MAY 12

"Curiosity Is a Guiding Light"
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

MAY 19

Religious Education Sunday
"Rites of Passage"
Cami Thomas, Religious
Education Coordinator
The Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom

MAY 26

"Expectations Are..."
The Rev. Tony Larsen, Pulpit Guest

Wheel of Life

May 10, 2018—May 30, 2019

New Members

Fall 2018

Allen Jacobson
Cheyanne Anglin
Jill Anglin
Gina Diliberti
Jessie Diliberti
Ruth Gibbons
Beth Gosnell
Barbra Lancelot

Winter 2019

Anne Alexander
Erik Alexander
Dana Brooks
Laurel Brooks
Sophie Crangle
Diana Granger
Richard Granger
Dana Jones
Katie Kalt
Chris McAuliffe
Joe Riepenhoff
Marisa Riepenhoff
Gary Schultz
Allen Sells
Demetria Smith

Spring 2019

Greta Andrews
Janine Chambers
Mark Chambers
Wesley Edens
Pete Hill

New Members continued

Spring 2019

Caroline Kuebler
Kathy Papineau
Andy Pottinger
Judy Pottinger
Hannah Purnell
Phil Pyne
Justin Robbins
Katrina Willer

Dedications of Parents and Children

November 2018

Milo Andrew Strelitzer
Child of Tristan Strelitzer & Anna Strelitzer

Lorelei Anneliese Hutchings
Child of Brian & Jessica Hutchings

Hanna Leta Koenen
Child of Stacy Ellen & Jeremy Jay Koenen

May 2019

Forrest Irving Seidelman-Maker
Asa Martin Seidelman-Maker
Children of Susie Seidelman & Laura Maker

Zoe Maryanne Panciera
Child of Amanda Christine Smidt Panciera
& Anthony David Panciera

Deaths and Memorial Services

Andrew Agacki
Kathleen Frink
Jan Gottschalk
Jeffrey Alvin Harsch
Gloria Rodriguez Kappel
Bea Grace Ludtke
Philip Nevin Martin
Daniel Steffen
Bettie Zillman

High School Seniors

Abby Aiken
Cecelia Groshek
Celie Koneazny
Nyanna Krajewski
Leah Nyholm
Jonah Roth
Clarity Saigh
Austin Straub

Weddings

Timothy Joseph Nees
and Jamie Lynn Wang
Officiated by Sarah Oelberg

Andrew Barton Stevning-Roe
and Aryn Lea Sternweis
Officiated by Rev. Joyce Palmer

Katherine Elizabeth Hannah
and Charles Cornelius Woodward
Officiated by Rev. Dena McPhetres

Heritage Society

Judy Anderson
Paula & Keith Anderson
JoAnn Bachar
Bob Balderson
Christian Becker & Christina
Zawadiwsky-Becker
Jo Ann & Mark Bishop
Rod Botts
Cheri & Tom Briscoe
Susanne & Paul Carter
Susan Comstock
Steven Culver & Sally Heuer
James & Judith Ford

Jill Erickson & Jerry Fredrickson
Scot Henry & Laura White
Nelson Kading
Linda & Mike Katz
Tina Keppel
Pete & Lisa Koneazny
Hank Kulesza
Michael & Jeanne Lewis
Adele Kaferly & Loren Leys
Patricia McFarland & Nick
Bokas
Kate Marrs
Liz Irwin Moore & Bob Moore

Mark & Lonni Mueller
Mike & Ellyn Newman
Janet & Marlowe Nortrom
Mimi Notestein
Patrick & Barbara Patterson
Holly Patzer
Kathy & Bob Porter
Will Fellows & Bronze Quinton
Tom Radoszewski
Michael & Lisa Radtke
Miriam Reading
Sally Lewis & Kathy Rivera
Patricia & Max Scharmach

Dale Skaggs & Lynda Lambert
Nancy & Dick Spransy
Robert Szymanski
Kit & Melinda Vernon
Don Weimer & Chris Linder
Lois Wesener & Drew Kennedy
Terry & Bruce Wiggins
Ted Wiley

Staff Reports

MINISTRY

SENIOR MINISTER

This has been an extraordinary year for First Church moving towards our vision together, as well as a painful year in terms of death and loss. As I reflect on our third year together, I am reminded how love weaves joy and sorrow so closely together, intertwining our lives with those of our community. It pulls us together in beauty and loss, and I am grateful to be woven into this journey with you.

To lead us forward in shared ministry, this year I have again prioritized:

- Leading worship, where we share spiritual practice, search for meaning, and cast vision together;
- Collaborating with the Board, the folks you elect to govern, identify vision, and maintain oversight for its achievement;
- Leading the staff, who are responsible for implementing our shared vision, and accountable for the outcomes of our shared ministry; and
- Stewardship, which enables all we do together.

In this first year of living in to our Ends, the outcomes we will achieve through our shared ministry, we have made significant first moves in their direction. Some highlights:

Worship: Nurture, Engage, Inspire, and Share

In worship, we have celebrated, grieved, marked births and deaths, and honored humanity's beauty and complexity. We have discovered new things about ourselves and explored the world, opening to wonder. We have found new meaning, deepened previous understandings, been inspired, and made ourselves vulnerable to transformation. We have moved our bodies, joined our voices, engaged our minds, and nurtured our spirits. We have shared worship in 38 two-service Sundays, 15 one-service Sundays, one Vespers service, and three Christmas Eve services. Our new Choral Scholars strengthened our choir, who grounded us in beauty at 12 services. We began livestreaming our services this year, providing access to those who cannot make it to church. We also promoted our Unitarian Universalist values in the world by sharing the posted sermons and Worship Associate stories on Facebook, where they have been viewed thousands of times.

Board: Vision, Ends, Limitations, and Collaboration

Collaborating with the Board has been truly powerful year this year, developing plans for how we will implement our Ends, and how the Board (Governance) will hold the Ministry (Operations) accountable for doing so. The Board approved the staff's interpretations of the Board's Ends, which explain what will be true in 5-7 years if we are successful in achieving the outcomes of the Ends. The staff also developed measurements for each End: how we will determine if the Ends have become true, which the Board approved. Finally, the Board developed comprehensive policies that set limitations for how ministry will achieve the Ends, which ensure the church will be safe, fair, sustainable, and healthy.

Staff: Teambuilding, Support, and Transition

This year on staff, we have continued to build our team, weathered transition, and set a course for the future. We celebrated Director of Administration Jean Johnson's 20 years of service to the congregation on Nov 18, 2018, with reflections in worship from leaders who have had the privilege of working with her over the years. We had several new staff members join us this year: Cami Thomas, as our interim Religious Education Coordinator; Cindy Lorentzen as our settled Communications Coordinator, and Claire Keyes as our Social Justice Intern. Our four choral scholars, NAMES, also joined us. RE Coordinator Cami Thomas skillfully navigated us through a year of discernment in Religious Education, leading us in an exploration of our First Church RE history, values, and identity while also coordinating the current program. Our Director of Religious Education Search Team has also been hard at work, putting the knowledge gleaned from that interim process to work finding a new DRE! Joyfully, Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson will be joining us as our settled DRE on Aug 1, 2019. After deep discernment, Dena and I have also initiated a transition in our portfolios, spending time this year to plan and train each other so that beginning in the fall of 2019, I will be leading the Social Justice program, and Dena will be leading Lifespan Religious Education, with me supervising the Social Justice Intern, and Dena supervising the new Director of Religious Education.

Stewardship: A Bold Step and Lu Krug Projects

Our congregation responded to our Pledge Team's call for a Bold Step towards our shared future this year, the first step towards achieving our medium-range financial plan. I am so grateful to be in this committed, generous congregation, and I look forward to taking another step each year towards a pledge-sustained operating budget. In pursuit of this goal, I

Staff Reports

am working with a small team of lay leaders to have individual stewardship dinners with First Church members, inviting members to step into financial leadership in our congregation and help steward our shared future. Finally, the Lu Krug Gift Acceptance Team has had the joy of sharing Lu Krug's generous bequest through allocating a portion of it for medium-term visionary projects to achieve our First Church Ends. The projects they chose will lead us towards making our First Church Ends and dreams come true!

With love,
Jennifer

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

My love for this congregation grows each year and I feel blessed to serve you. The serious diagnoses and deaths of several members this year broke our hearts and drew us closer together as a community. These losses changed us. We might not know how yet, but we are changed.

PASTORAL CARE

Ten new **Pastoral Care Associates** completed twenty hours of training and were commissioned during Sunday services October 28. PCAs offer a quiet listening presence to members who face significant life events including illness, accidents, surgeries, death of a loved one, separation and divorce, hospice, home-bound elders and the stress of caregiving.

PCAs made contact with 70 members since the last annual report and Jennifer and I gave pastoral care to at least 72 members. Much informal support also happens in many relationships throughout our congregation. Thanks to PCA Coordinator Jane Peterson and Lead Trainer Laurie Petersen who co-led the PCA training with me and support the team with continuing education and coordination. Jennifer and I are deeply grateful to this staff-led team. It is only by working together that we are able to care for our large congregation.

Twenty-five members served as **Pastoral Care Providers**, providing meals and rides for short-term needs. Meals were brought to nine households and several rides given to medical appointments. Jane Dorweiler stepped into the position of PCP Coordinator in January. Members express great appreciation for the kindness of a warm meal upon return from the hospital, after the birth or adoption of a baby, or during difficult medical treatments.

The **Memorial Service Reception Team** served their third year providing simple yet elegant receptions after a memorial service, upon the family's request. This ministry both supports a grieving family at a vulnerable time and allows members to give back to the community. They provided receptions at five memorial services this year.

The **Shawl Ministry** completed their second year creating shawls and lap robes to comfort members going through difficult times. This year they added baby blankets. We gave six baby blankets and 34 shawls and lap robes this year. About 15 members and friends knit or crochet these offerings. Although we cannot take away another's suffering, we show our care through the gentle embrace of the shawl, which serves as a visible symbol of the love of our community.

SMALL GROUPS

We have nine active Affinity Groups including Book Discussion, Gathering Waters Sangha (Buddhist Study Group), Chancel Choir, The Chronologically Gifted, SWANS (Seasoned Women Are Naturally Social), UUUFDA (Unitarian Universalists Under Forty Doing Activities), UU Parenting, UU+ Study Group and WomanSpirit. Two groups dissolved due to lack of activity: FFUUN (Forties and Fifties UU Network) and Pagan Celebrations. These Member-Led Ministries gather around shared interests or demographics to find friends and deeper belonging. Affinity Groups are open to everyone to come and go as they wish.

We launched **Theme Circles** this year, an evolution in our small group ministry program that invites members and friends to gather in groups of eight with a trained facilitator to delve deeper into our monthly worship themes. Theme Circles include homework with suggestions for spiritual practice, questions for reflection, and multi-sensory resources, which can be done at your own convenience at any level. Participants must make a commitment to attend once a month October – June. Theme Circles proved very popular, with full enrollment of 48 members and friends for a total of six circles. I hope to expand this program by recruiting more facilitators this spring with training this summer. Registration for Theme Circles will open late August and run through September.

Two **Spiritual Direction Groups** were facilitated by Diane Horne and Candice Haight, supporting eight people in their prayer practices and discernment of their spiritual journeys.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Our Social Justice Council is an umbrella organization of lay leaders who engage our congregation in Member-Led Ministries of service, learning and action, addressing many compelling and urgent justice needs in our city and world while building relationships in the community. We have eleven different justice initiatives open to all!

Thanks to the Krug Bequest, we hired our first Social Justice Intern, Claire Keyes, from Marquette University to work quarter-time September – May as our Social Justice Coordinator and Community Engagement Facilitator. You can read her report elsewhere in the Annual Report, along with the Social Justice Member-Led Ministry reports. It was a joy to work with Claire, supporting her accompaniment and gentle development of our leaders and enthusiastic support of their social justice activities.

Staff Reports

Also thanks to the Krug Bequest, we will hire our next Social Justice Coordinator half-time for two years to support our current program, our work toward achieving Ends #1, 2 and 3, and to support plans for social justice activities at General Assembly 2021 in Milwaukee.

PORTFOLIO TRANSITION

After careful thought and conversation, Jennifer and I decided to realign our portfolios. Beginning this fall, Jennifer will be the staff lead on Social Justice and I will be the staff lead on Lifespan Religious Education. I will supervise our new Director of Religious Education and Jennifer will supervise our new Social Justice Coordinator. We anticipate this portfolio change will increase clarity, efficiency, and effectiveness for ministers, staff and congregation, since we were both working with different aspects of these areas the last few years.

ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Lifespan Religious Education is in transition at First Church and throughout our denomination. Our interim workshops this year explored the demise of the effectiveness of 1950's Sunday School model and current flourishing experiments with family ministry, multi-age activity stations, and theme-based religious education. Adult religious education's purpose is in transition, too. Last summer, this program came into my portfolio and I began meeting with our former DRE's re-visioning team. We leaned fully into the new name Adult Spiritual Development to reflect the team's vision and the 21st century shift in UU religious education.

Several programs come under this umbrella: Theme Circles, Spiritual Direction Groups, Silent Retreat, intellectual and spiritual-oriented Affinity Groups (Book Discussion Group, Buddhist Study Group, UU+ Study Group), and Forum. Adult Spiritual Development collaborated with the Heritage Society to offer "Getting Your House in Order," an End of Life Planning program attended by 35 people. We also offered Yoga, Adult "Our Whole Lives," and a "Geography of Grace" pilot group.

Adult Spiritual Development is a career-long passion of mine (going on 23 years). I look forward to continuing our re-visioning process and further development of this program next year in collaboration with lay leaders and our new DRE!

SUMMER SERVICES

Our doors are open with one worship service and religious education program at 10:00 a.m. throughout the summer. I work closely with the Pulpit Guest staff-led team to plan and coordinate summer services. I also provide one-to-one coaching for each member who leads a service. We held 13 summer services in 2018, including four clergy guests, six services from me, and three member-led services. Average adult attendance was 124, down 18 from summer 2017. Highest attendance was 140; lowest 95. Although some folks avoid our sanctuary and coffee hour due to lack of air condi-

tioning, many guests search for a spiritual home during the summer. I am grateful that our members continue to provide a warm welcome with greeters, ushers, music, hospitality, Religious Education, child care and more.

Our Pulpit Guest team also hosted five guests during the regular church year: Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson (intern minister at Unitarian Universalist Church West), Lynne Jacoby (our Membership Development Coordinator), Rev. Tony Larsen (retired from Olympia Brown Unitarian Universalist Church), and two Religious Education consultants with the Unitarian Universalist Association, Michele Grove and Kim Sweeney.

After almost ten years serving as your Associate Minister, I have deep roots here, remain grateful to be among you, and look forward to the future with hope and trust.

Yours,
Dena

ADMINISTRATION DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

Reporting to the Senior Minister, I am responsible for overall administrative functions of the church including financial management, human resources administration, and facilities management. I manage these areas with a combination of talented staff, expert and dedicated volunteers, and contract services.

ADMIN STAFF TEAM

I focused considerable time on transition in the half-time Communications Coordinator position this year. This position was vacated last spring, and I decided to work on establishing more structure and processes before looking for a replacement. Church member Phil Martin was our volunteer Interim Communications Coordinator for about six months during this transition. He had served on the First Church marketing committee for several years and provided the church professional skills in publishing and marketing. Phil worked with me to finish parts of our new website, develop processes and structure, and ultimately he did extensive training with our new Communications Coordinator. My search in fall attracted numerous strong candidates and we hired Cindy Lorentzen mid-November. Cindy comes to us with degrees in business & management and leadership studies. With over 20 years of communications and marketing experience in higher education and finance, Cindy has already made an impact on the quality of our communications in the few months she's been on the staff team.

Facilities Manager Tom Schroeder is responsible for managing the complexities of our building use, directing our friendly and capable Facilities Assistants Jim Spice and Andre

Staff Reports

Singley to assure we accommodate all program needs. With decades of large facilities management experience, Tom manages repairs and improvements of our facilities with the assistance of part-time Maintenance Worker Art Sims and the expertise of the talented Building and Grounds staff-led team, headed by Russ Drewry. Tom and the Building & Grounds Team have done a great job managing numerous projects this year including: updating the Senior Minister's office, apartment bathtub surround replaced, installed storm windows in the Whitney Young Room, refreshed the courtyard landscaping using a professional plan, and replaced the commercial range with two user-friendly electric ranges.

In her first full year on our staff, Office Coordinator Shari Wright has really learned the ropes. Shari ably shepherds our regular publications: *The Chanticleer*, orders of service, and announcements. Among a myriad of important duties, she also manages our database, forms, and the facility scheduling calendar.

This year, Shari and Membership Development Coordinator Lynne Jacoby, took on the project of upgrading our database to ACS Realm. This software was selected to move the church into new technology that offers members easy access via a web-based member portal to current member contact information and photos, better communication tools, and web-based or mobile phone contribution options. This project supports Board Ends #8, "Create accessible, courageous, and innovative welcome to people who might find a sense of belonging and a spiritual home with us."

Members were invited to create their password to access their personal profile, their giving information, and their groups. First Church now has 256 members registered on the member portal, 30% more than registered on the previous MyFirstChurch member portal, and nearly two-thirds of those registered have a profile picture. Thank you to the Membership Team's support of the member portal campaign by organizing five photo Sundays with Photographer Rikki Thompson. The membership and administrative staff also collaborated in three trainings for leaders about how to use ACS Realm's Groups function. Many of these leaders are using their group page to manage communication and event planning. The new ACS Realm software package reduced our Church Management Software expense by \$1,322.00 per year.

Finally, as the church's administrator for nearly 21 years, I have a long and broad overview of church operations. I am a key person to provide newer staff a larger context for our work, both "historical" perspective and systems dynamics.

OTHER STAFF TEAMS

The Staff Executive Team's primary project this year has been to provide an interpretation of the Board's End Statements and metrics for measuring progress. The Staff Finance Team focused on sharpening our processes and establishing

appropriate monthly reports generated from our upgraded database.

COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD AND STAFF-LED TEAMS

I work with two Committees of the Board: Finance and Nominating. You can find reports from these committees in this annual report. The Nominating Committee secured wonderful candidates for top leadership positions again this year. In addition, they've been conducting numerous relational meetings with church members to help them engage in church life and potentially bring them into leadership.

I support the Finance Committee and the Treasurer with accurate monthly financial statements and leading the development of the annual budget. We are happy to welcome three new members to the committee this year and have been particularly focused on investments issues this year.

I am also a member of the Krug Gift Acceptance Team, which is developing plans for use of Lu Krug's generous gift per our unrestricted gift acceptance policy. It's especially satisfying to assist this work, which will increase the impact of programs we will develop to implement our newly-developed Ends Statements.

The staff-led teams I am responsible for are: the IT Team, Sunday collection counters (Shari works closely with them), Building & Grounds (as reported above, Tom leads them), and History/Archives.

The IT Team is comprised of expert and experienced members working in the information technology field who assist with various church projects. I "represent the client" at the table. Most of their work is done behind the scenes supporting the staff and our enterprise-level computing infrastructure. They also are tech support for staff, answering technical questions when they arise. This year the IT Team worked on finishing our new Social Justice Intern's office and her IT needs, installing and making operational two smart TVs, and per our protocol, we upgraded some work station computers. The team also supported the Sunday service live stream effort. The live streaming project led to a small cascade of issues. It required expanded bandwidth, which created issues with new static IP addresses that were blacklisted and resulted in numerous failed outgoing emails. It's hard to run a church without email!

OTHER PROJECTS

Two other important projects the admin staff worked on this year are parking solutions and livestreaming of Sunday services.

Jennifer Nordstrom initiated the Sunday Service livestreaming project with contracted expertise this summer. There were several unforeseen issues getting things going. When the contractor was finished, it was clear more work needed to be done to smooth out its operation, procedures, and presentation on Facebook and YouTube. Shari Wright

Staff Reports

stepped in to troubleshoot numerous technical problems to great success. She continues to manage the livestreaming extremely capably. Cindy Lorentzen worked on the social media presence. Things are going smoothly now with hundreds of people sharing short videos of portions of the service.

Late in August, we got word that another church was beginning to rent the Lincoln School for its worship services on Sundays at the same time as we hold services. I convened a task force to look for possible solutions to being displaced from that parking lot. We did a survey, brainstormed many solutions, investigated nearby parking lots, and considered ride-sharing in different forms. Ultimately, the first best solutions were renting Cass Park from MPS and promoting use of the new streetcar service, which stops on our corner. Other ideas for which I'm trying to find help to implement are organizing ridesharing from designated lots in certain neighborhoods and valet parking in winter.

This has been another year filled with changes and transitions, and looking forward to a bright future for First Church. It is exciting to imagine together all the possibilities the next years hold for the church as we develop programs which will fulfill our new Ends Statements. Let's move toward a shared vision for First Church with grace, holding each other with care.

Love to each of you on your journey,
Jean Johnson, Director of Administration

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Vision: Rooted in the church's mission, we envision a church community modeling and teaching children and youth to embrace a strong core of UU values, both influenced by the needs of our world, and influencing their way of being and acting in the wider world.

Mission: The mission of the Children's Religious Education Ministry Team is to nurture spiritual growth by engaging and inspiring our children, youth, & volunteers.

~Rev. 2017 2017-18

Goal: "We will build relationships throughout the church." This year in CRE we focused on ENDS Statements numbers 1, 2, and 6. Statement 1 is to value, develop, and celebrate the gifts that come from authentic connection across difference, emphasizing racial, ethnic, and generational differences. Statement 2 is to recognize power differences and challenge injustice when it arises. Statement 6 is to open ourselves to

wonder, making ourselves vulnerable and available to find meaning, inspiration, and transformation. To focus on these statements, we kept the foundation of our programming but gently stretched and flexed where appropriate to encourage innovation from our volunteers.

2018-19 CHURCH YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

Intergenerational Social Action- Our traditional social action programs were largely held during coffee hour after service so the whole congregation could participate. Children and adults alike assembled "Good Neighbor Bags" of toiletry items that were given to Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative; took part in the "Giving Tree" project giving gifts to those in need through United Way; donated outerwear to Sojourner Peace Family Center through the "Mitten Tree"; created valentines on "Friendship Day" for members of the congregation who could use a smile. Children and Adults also learned about social justice together through our "Black People Matter" curriculum as well as our "Environment Justice Month" curriculum.

Multigenerational Services - This year all ages of the congregation gathered for a delightful Thanksgiving service; our Holiday Pageant which highlighted several cultures' celebrations, RE Sunday to celebrate our rites of passage, and the Flower Communion to end the church year.

Mystery Friends - Brought together 23 sets of multigenerational friendships in our community, led by Jenny Schmidt and Katie Kalt.

Share the Plate - The children & youth selected Kyles Korner an organization dedicated to helping grieving children, teens and their families who are coping with the death of a loved one as the Share the Plate recipient for May 2019.

First Sundays - The first Sunday of each month we held multi-age activities for grades 1 through 7 in the Young Room and focused on the theme for the month. These were led by the CRE Coordinator for the first semester and lead by volunteers during the second semester.

Children and Youth RE Numbers: It takes a village to support a child in faith formation. This year we had thirteen teachers, 41 assistants, 10 Youth/OWL Advisors, and 10 committee members, and 1.7 FTE hours divided among five staff. Here is a look at RE registration and attendance:

2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	Year
135	163	207	Number of Registered Children and Youth
68	78	93	Average Attendance Actual
53%	48%	45%	Average Attendance Percentage

Staff Reports

THE INTERIM PROCESS

The 2018-2019 church year was one of transition as we journeyed through the interim process to find a new Director of Religious Education. We held three workshops with religious education expert consultants to take stock of our program's history, purpose, and future. A search team was charged with the process creating a job posting, interviewing candidates, and recommending a candidate for the position. An interim report was also written to highlight some important themes relevant to hiring a new DRE.

Honoring Religious Education at First Church

September 15, 2018

Michele Grove

This workshop honored the past of religious education here at first church and highlighted the progress we've made in intergenerational worship and service.

ReVitalize!

December 8, 2018

The Rev. Christina Leone Tracy

This workshop used an example of "Robin" a 2-year-old child just starting in CRE to understand what it means to move through our CRE program to YRUU and then out into the world as a adult.

The Power of We: Finding Inspiration, Possibility, and Purpose in Religious Education

February 23, 2019

Kimberly Sweeney

This workshop showed the urgency of rethinking faith formation not only for the sake of your children's faith formation, but also for the future of Unitarian Universalism as a faith.

The interim report stated this congregation and CRE stakeholders are open to the wonder of transformation having found inspiration of a variety of sources and ready to make new meaning for faith formation. Despite some fatigue from the many transitions the congregation has had over the years, CRE stakeholders are committed to learning with our children and youth in innovative ways. There is opportunity to support volunteers in their comfort and success with the diversity of children in our classrooms. It is evident the CRE program has to potential to rediscover its identity through the dedication of everyone in this congregation.

CONTINUE TO WONDER

There is more change ahead. As your new Director of Religious Education, Kimberlee Tomczak Carlson joins the staff in August. She will bring energy, expertise, and excellence to this program. As I was warmly welcomed, I know that she too will be welcomed into this loving community. I am proud to have served before her and look forward to the generous

love, support, and structure she will provide to the congregation.

I am so grateful to the many folks who support the work of our religious education programming. Our Youth Program Coordinator, Deb Solis, so graciously lead the Young Religious Unitarian Universalist. Our RE Admin, Lillian Schley, who is the back bone of this program. CRE Team Chair, Sarah Richards, who took on much responsibility to ensure the program and I were supported. As well as the entire CRE Team who served us well. Please continue to support these great leaders, as well as your new DRE, by volunteering in CRE through the many options available.

What a gift I have been given to serve as the Interim Religious Education Coordinator here at First Church. As the church year winds down I am in awe of the love this community holds. It has been a challenging year with the interim processes, workshops, evaluations, and mid-semester changes. But, you all loved through it. You served with love. You loved this church. And most importantly, you loved each other. When I joined you all back in August, my first day was at the Children's Religious Education Committee's retreat. I knew then this program and this church are destined for a wondrous adventure into the future. I know that with your new Director of Religious Education you will charge forward with determination and with love.

In service to you,

Cami J. Thomas, Interim Religious Education Coordinator
2018-2019

YOUTH PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The Youth Program Coordinator (YPC) reports directly to the Religious Education Coordinator and is responsible for the planning and coordinating of programs for youth in eighth grade Our Whole Lives (OWL) and grades 9-12 by working with adult advisors, the Youth Steering Committee (YSC), staff, and parents. In addition, the YPC is responsible for coordinating the week-long Habitat for Humanity mission trip, managing communications between all adult volunteers for grades 9-12, planning and scheduling all activities for grades 9-12, coordinating the annual youth service, and communicating with youth and parents.

As a part-time, 18-hour/week staff position, this has been my fifth year assuming these responsibilities, and each year brings me more joy and satisfaction knowing that I can make such a positive difference in the lives of our youth at First Church.

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OUR WHOLE LIVES (OWL: 8th grade) PROGRAM EXPANDED THIS YEAR

Our Whole Lives (OWL) is a lifespan sexuality education Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) curriculum. This past year, we were able to offer two new OWL classes: Grades 4-6 class in the Fall of 2018 with 11 participants and adult class in the Spring of 2019 with nine participants. Our recurrent eighth grade OWL program with 12 participants was offered on Sunday mornings all year long. Our grades 4-6 OWL class facilitators were Bruce Wiggins and Crysta Jarczynski; our adult OWL class facilitators were Liz Hopkins and Shannon Widlansky, and our 8th grade OWL class was facilitated by Jacqi Akert, John Fitak, Lorinda Flores, and Katie Kegel. Thank you to all of our outstanding and dedicated OWL facilitators this past year.

YOUNG RELIGIOUS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS (YRUU: 9-12 grades)

Our ninth graders once again joined grades 10-12 youth in our YRUU Sunday morning classroom from 9:00-10:30 a.m. for heartfelt discussions chosen and led by the youth, with youth advisor guidance as needed.

In fall 2018, we collaborated with 2018 Milwaukee Artist of the Year Tia Richardson to create a wall mural entitled "Growing now; Blooming soon," which is now on permanent display on the lower level at First Church. This collaborative project was made possible through the generous donations from the Tom Thaney Arts for Youth Fund. The completed mural was presented to the congregation in December 2018.

In August 2018, we sent ten youth and three adults on our annual mission trip to work for Habitat for Humanity in Battle Creek, Michigan. Thank you to our 2018 mission trip advisors Don Weimer, Alisha Koneazny, and John Fitak. In July 2019, we will be sending 13 youth and our same three advisors back to the Battle Creek Habitat for Humanity location.

Our YRUU youth continue to be inspirational and dynamic. The annual youth service (March 3), "Why are you, you? Where did we come from? Where are we going?" focused on the theme of identity and examined group identity and identity through time, and included a variety of music. This service raised \$460.00 for our mission trip fund and for Pathfinders of Wisconsin. Additional mission trip fundraisers included our weekly bagel sales at the Religious Education (RE) Table during Coffee Hour, a winter Harry Potter themed YUULE Ball, and the annual Mother's Day Gourmet Dessert Auction.

Highlights of the year included:

- Four lock-ins with themes of community building, YUULE Ball planning, and youth service planning. These lock-ins took place in September 2018, October 2018, February 2019, and May 2019.
- Attendance at two CONS (weekend conference events for youth from UU congregations) in Fall 2018 in Evanston, Illinois, and in Spring 2019 in Brookfield, Wisconsin.
- A new movie night in March 2019 with grades 5-8 youth invited to join the YRUU youth to watch "The Secret Life of Pets."
- An invitation to adult congregational members to join the youth for a two-part, youth-led discussion on Unitarian Universalist History: "The Good and The Not So Good."
- Youth applied for some financial support from the Krug Bequest for a Boston Heritage Pilgrimage trip in 2020.
- For the third year, we offered our four-part series for our graduating high school seniors called Hearts on Fire, which provided them with opportunities to reflect on topics of good and evil, the meaning of life and death, humanity and salvation, what is a life worth living, and UU identity in developing their Credo Statements - under the direction of our senior minister, associate minister, religious education coordinator, and myself.

YOUNG ADULTS (18-23 year-olds)

This year I found it necessary to put my work on hold with developing this group due to my added responsibilities of implementing and overseeing the two additional OWL programs in religious education. I am planning on devoting more time to this much needed and often difficult group to get connected at our church next year.

LEADERSHIP

The Youth Steering Committee (YSC) consists of adults and high school youth that oversee the senior high religious education program. Members are: Celie Koneazny, Ehlona Walker, Gus Pointer-Mace, Jonah Roth, Clarity Saigh, Sam Mulvey, Adena Saigh, Zoe Gulbranson, Andrea Cornwall, Nickolas DaVia, and Matthew Finco.

Youth are given the opportunity to take the lead in planning and facilitating class discussions and activities. Advisors found this a great way to empower youth in shaping their leadership skills and fostering a deeper commitment to Sunday morning classes. Thank you to our caring, supportive YRUU advisor team: Bizzy Schultz, Don Weimer, Nicholas

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DaVia, and Jessie Moffat. Youth continued past traditions, including: an outstanding youth service, several lock-ins, the Gourmet Dessert Auction, and selling yummy bagels on Sunday mornings.

We were able to send four youth to the Midwest Leadership School (MWLS) in Decorah, Iowa in July 2018: Jonah Roth, Sam Mulvey, Adena Saigh, and Clarity Saigh. Two youth, Zoe Gulbranson and Gus Pointer-Mace, plan on attending MWLS in July 2019.

In July 2019, one of our youth, Ehlona Walker, will be attending General Assembly in Spokane, Washington, serving her second year as a Senior Thrive Youth representative. Two of our youth, Celie Koneazny and Ehlona Walker, once again led the Black People Matter three-week program in YRUU in January 2019. Youth watched Brittany Packnett's General Assembly Ware Lecture 2019 speech and participated in a question and answer session.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For me, professional development this past year included the following:

- Anti-Racism Staff Team Member
- Four-part Youth Ministry Webinar series offered by the UUA

Blessings,

Deb Solis

MEMBERSHIP/DEVELOPMENT

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Team: Susan Borri and Jane Cliff, co-chairs, Paula Anderson, Rod Botts, Cheri Briscoe, Lynn Connolly, Lynda Lambert and Tom Radoszewski.

At our September retreat we organized into three 'working groups' to focus our three areas of responsibilities 1. Guest and Visitor Welcome 2. New Member Classes (JTM) to New Member Connection, and 3. General Membership Experience at First Church. We also agreed 'Creating Accessible, Courageous and Innovative Welcome' is the Ends' aspiration closest to our hearts and our role, and prioritized the ideas generated in the retreat accordingly.

Accessible Welcome (via Groups) – Relationships are key to helping the members of our large congregation feel that we are an accessible community both spiritually and socially. To grow relationships one must re-connect with the same individuals regularly. To facilitate access to smaller gatherings at First Church the Team;

- Worked via Member-portal and Group Directory (back-cover) to untangle our Groups and Teams into more navigable categories – and keyed each with a joining status (i.e. Drop-in, Fall Registration, Contact Leader etc.) – Further ideas around using this model to help individuals decode what group might work for them are percolating.
- Scheduled Ushers as 'a team' when possible, giving new and long-term members serving an opportunity to re-connect monthly.
- Invited Members to JTM class to tell their story of how 'getting involved' beyond worship has helped them grow and connect.
- Initiated a 'Highlight Groups' project (start in May with recognition of outgoing Governance service but continue in Fall by highlighting entire groups) to raise awareness (and appreciation) of how many and how varied the purposes and service we gather for.
- Initiated an accessible (drop-in, monthly, ongoing) New Member Gathering/ Spirit of Life Workshop for recently joined members to re-connect with classmates and the reflective learning they begin in JTM, but also with a broader group of members still finding their way around First Church.

Other Accessibility Projects

- Name Tags racks cleared out, alphabetized, rearranged and gloriously spacious! To ease findability and (we hope) usability!
- In progress with Building and Grounds – signage outside to help new people find our entrance.

Usher Revival

Serving as an Usher or Head Usher was *way more accessible this year* thanks to Cheri Briscoe's efforts in designing a much improved system and recruiting for, training and managing it. Eight Head Ushers (four more than previously) and 30 Ushers/Greeters and substitutes ensured a once a month commitment. She also delivered a year-long schedule in September, easy access for ushers to find substitutes when needed, and replacements found and trained when life necessitated a few resignations. Unquestionably a less bumpy year for both participants, and the Membership Coordinator thanks to Cheri.

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Courageous Welcome

As a team we are a little ambivalent about what Courageous Welcome might look like for our community. During coffee hour in May we do plan to survey our members on what it might look like for them as individuals in the context of welcoming being the responsibility of each of us at First Church.

At the MDC's invitation Rev. Jennifer introduced the Cultural Competency framework to the Team in Monday. Used as a tool by the Anti-Racism Group in understanding their work in this congregation, the overview gave us a way of looking at cultural bias as a natural human phenomenon, but also a glimpse of how these biases can create unconscious barriers to our goal of inclusive welcome. Reflecting how our dominant white culture affects even our own well-intentioned selves and community *is unnerving* but worth exploring further.

Innovative Welcome – (Member-Portal)

The team worked closely with Office Coordinator Shari Wright and Photographer and First Church Member Rikki Thompson to generate energy and awareness around our new Member-Portal (details found in the Administration Report as submitted by Shari). Church-wide adoption of anything new is never smooth, and we have a long way to go; but the potential of this on-line tool to facilitate, strengthen, and hold in historical record, the layers of connections that shape this community is already materializing. The Team's early leap into, creative support of, and grunt-work on, has greatly helped this projects healthy start.

Numbers

23 people joined First Church this church year with 3 JTM attendees choosing not to join.

15 in the current New Member class.

69 records were entered into our database for the first time this year because they filled out a Welcome Card or registered for the Journey to Membership Class. (other new records include one-time Memorial Donors, Staff, Family of, and RE Registrants)

23 unique individuals (people attend more than once) were recorded as attending Inquires sessions (my attendance taking might be breaking down a bit – but in general this is not well attended and often has no participants. However, **8** of our new members or currently enrolled attended Inquires this year or last Spring.

The above report reflects the Team's creativity and commitment to finding better ways to welcome and connect. What isn't reflected are the salads made for JTM meals, Member-

ship Table coverage, recruits lined up to share a story with the JTM class, last minute substitute ushering, last minute treats brought to the New Member Reception!, and the scans of the Common Room for new faces, the brochure racks for what is missing, and the hallways for signs that are in the wrong place. Your attentive and committed Membership Team has made First Church a better church this year, your MDC a better Membership Professional, and all while making me laugh often, smile more, and blow out birthday candles. I am very grateful to all of them.

STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

PLEDGE TEAM

Team Members: Fred Gutierrez, Dianna Dentino, Elizabeth Lentini and Sue Thaney

The Pledge Team's **Bold Goal** was to close our operating gap, or a 15% increase above last year's budgeted 700,000 pledge in-come. However, the clean-up of pledges last year did not come in as predicted and pledges on file are \$686,000. We hope to \$730,000 when all pledges are in for the 2019/20 pledge year, which is a 7% increase.

Our community responded to our bold goal and our increases/decreases netted nearly a \$48,000 increase from among those who pledged both years. The concern is not the generosity of this community, but the loss of pledging households. Over the past three years we have had turnover in our membership and pledging households, which is normal for a Senior Minister transition, particularly when coupled with the transition in our Membership Development Coordinator. Because a third of the households who have stopped pledging in the past two years, joined within the past 4, I believe this net loss may have as much to do with the Membership Engagement role of the MDC position getting up to speed, as it does with the Development side.

Evolving Stewardship Culture at First Church beyond Numbers

The Pledge Team (with the help of many others) initiated several processes to improve the Pledge/Stewardship process long-term including:

- An IOT/Pledge working group designed an interactive spreadsheet (to be updated annually) that can easily manipulate 10 years of data to help with analysis and directing our resources.
- Initiated two feedback loops (a survey and a database tag system to allow easy comparison reports) to measure strategy efficiency.

Staff Reports

- Developed interactive practical tools component for Stewardship training.
- Focused attention on engaging expertise beyond the Team for well-defined limited tasks including: Visiting Steward recruitment, artistic design and implementation, workshop development and training, and photography.
- Created an event that was enjoyable and had a clear focus on a call to action.
- Leaned into a more marketing savvy strategy in creation of messaging and materials with the goal of reinforcing a clear call to action.

While the drive fell short of the 15% increase goal, nearly half of our community increased their pledge commitment at an average of 15%. It is clear from this generous response that our active membership heard the message and, if they could, answered the bold ask. There was energy, engagement and a \$59,000 in increased pledges from 170 of our pledging households.

With much gratitude to our Visiting Stewards Michelle Boehm, Cheri Briscoe, Tina Keppel, Lisa Koneazny, Cheryl Maranto, Beth Monhollen, Sarah Richards and Tom Radoszewski; and for the skilled, talented and/or expert support from Andrew BoddySpargo, Alexis Fielek, Ron Oshima, Dale Skaggs and Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom.

Special appreciation to an incredibly focused but also fun Pledge Team, and an insightful, creative and positive Chair. This team showed so much grace under pressure, thoughtfulness and commitment to the stewardship of First Church that working with them has been truly inspiring, and an honor.

FEAST FOR FUNDS

Team Members: Sue Thaney, Chair, Roger Blau, Laurie Petersen, Jane Peterson and Tom Radoszewski

Once again donated events, activities, services, member-made artwork, vacation homes and contributions from local businesses; created a diverse catalogue of items for our annual community building, fun and fund-raising auction. The creative in-home dinners/party offerings remain the favorite and most successful items as well as an opportunity for community members to gather all year round; but the affordable, set-price events, like 'A Singalong with Jack', also garnered enthusiastic 'bidding'.

A new category offering 'Your Favorite Restaurant' did not quite take off, but three members who took-up the idea all successfully garnered an additional contribution from their

'Favorite Restaurant' on informing management of the intention of the gift certificates they were purchasing. As restaurant G.C. nearly always come in at value, and this is an accessible way for many to both share something they love and contribute, we will be working on marketing this concept in a bigger way next year.

Feast for Funds - by the Numbers:

- 114 Unique Items
- 73 First Church Donors (not individually counting Committee, Affinity, Board and Youth Group members who contributed via group donations).
- 386 Bidders
- 1491 Bids
- 131 Winners
- **\$21,014 Raised!**

Special thanks to our tireless Chair and the entire intrepid team (most of whom keep coming back! Thank goodness). Our on-line catalogue building support Sally Heuer and Linda Presto, the additional hands who decorated, solicited contributions, and all who so creatively contribute!

HERITAGE SOCIETY TEAM

Team Members: Lisa Koneazny, Chair, Jill Erickson, Chris Linder, Mike Newman, Linda Presto and Melinda Vernon.

The Heritage Society consists of church members and friends who have included First Church in their wills and estate planning. The Heritage Team is tasked with providing awareness, education and appreciation for those who would like support our congregation's future to be a part of their legacy.

This year, the Heritage Society workgroup sponsored a very well attended three-part series, "Getting Your House in Order." Topics included end of life medical, legal and celebration of life/burial decisions. The informed speakers included church member, Brett Twente MD, an estate attorney and Rev. Dena McPhetres.

Plans are being made for an appreciation event in September 2019. First Church members who have recently included First Church in their estate planning are encouraged to notify Lynne Jacoby so that they can be notified of upcoming events.

The workgroup also had Dia de Muertos nametag stickers made to identify and celebrate these church members. They are available to Heritage Society members at the membership table.

Information about planned giving is available at the membership table and on the First Church website under Ways to Give - Planned Giving.

"You cannot do a kindness too soon because you never know how soon it will be too late." Ralph Waldo Emerson

INCOME OPPORTUNITY TEAM

Team Members: Holly Patzer, Chair, Don Weimer, Sally Lewis, Mark Bender and Angie Krueger; ad hoc member- Jo Ann Bishop

The Income Opportunity Team (IOT) seeks to focus on the financial sustainability of First Church by strategically analyzing and planning opportunities for multiple income streams. In November 2018, the IOT facilitated a "Think Tank" session to brainstorm ideas for potential additional income streams. Numerous creative ideas were generated which were ultimately prioritized by church leadership. In early 2018, a few initiatives were implemented as a result of this session, and a new subcommittee was set up to further investigate the most promising idea(s) to diversify the church's sources of revenue for long-term income generation.

A primary focus coming from the brainstorming is to strengthen and enhance activities that we currently engage in or have done in the past. Above all else, continued growth in pledge income is essential. In addition, we should continue Feast for Funds, increased participation in the Heritage Society, promotion of Amazon Smiles and resurrecting the Scrip program.

Another concept that rose to the top of ideas was to create opportunities to generate revenue from outside of the church membership. Two new exciting initiatives within that concept were implemented. First Church now participates in "Adopt-a-Site" for the City of Milwaukee Election Commission. Under the leadership of Jo Ann Bishop, 13 members were trained and worked together to staff a polling site on the April 2nd election day. The combined stipends of approximately \$700 paid on behalf of the workers were donated directly to the church. Volunteers plan to work four elections in 2020, and can expand to multiple sites and significantly increase the potential revenue, if we can provide our own Election Chiefs. This wonderful activity is an example of a "double bottom line" benefit as it not only generates income, but it also creates a strong sense of community bonding and fits well with our UU values of supporting democracy.

The second initiative is to bring awareness to our community of "UU're Home," a national UU Airbnb type website where members list their home or rooms for rent and donate the fee collected to the local church. With Milwaukee hosting the UUA General Assembly in 2021 and the Democratic National Convention in 2020, there will be many UUs seeking places to stay in our lovely city, in addition to regu-

lar travelers visiting throughout the year. A meeting was held in early May to explain the program to members and encourage participation and listing of their homes.

The IOT will continue to explore and promote generating multiple income streams in order to sustain church operations and to accomplish the church mission and Ends.

Lynne Jacoby, Membership Development Coordinator

SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERN

This year, I served as your inaugural Social Justice Intern, working quarter-time from September through May. My job consists of two primary roles--the Social Justice Council Coordinator and Community Engagement Facilitator. As the Social Justice Council Coordinator, I serve as chair of the council, supporting the leaders of our ten social justice groups. As the Community Engagement Facilitator, I work to assess the current state of First Church's partnerships with the community and explore ways in which those can be strengthened.

Since this was an internship, I set numerous goals for myself throughout the year. My first was to "Be an effective leader of the Social Justice Council, achieving goals set as a group. Being an effective leader involves getting to know each council member on an individual basis and each social justice group and their work." The second was to "Enhance anti-racist work and multi-cultural competencies within myself as an individual and within the congregation as a whole. Focus on taking action as an individual working for social justice, rather than simply talking about issues." My last goal was to "Improve my writing and communication skills within a professional setting, specifically when working with individuals older and more experienced than myself. Learn to write professionally and concisely."

I began my internship by conducting one-to-one relational meetings with almost all of our social justice leaders. I attended church and community events supported by our council. I also practiced the action-reflection model with our council leaders, which helped us deepen our sense of social justice as spiritual development. I introduced asset mapping to the council, which can be an effective community organizing tactic.

Other areas of work within my internship included serving on our Anti-Racism Team and visiting with the youth group to help them learn more about social justice. I became further involved in Religious Education through facilitating two sessions of Black People Matter, with the first and second graders. I was able to learn about the new member process at First Church through presenting information about our social justice program at Inquirers sessions.

Listing these parts of my job does not even begin to summarize the things I have learned and gifts I have been given through my internship here at First Church. I have learned

Staff Reports

so much about justice and its role within the community, and also about spirituality.

As I reflect on this past year, I realize how many ways in which this internship has changed me. One way this internship has changed me is through instilling a sense of patience and humility within me. Prior to First Church, I thought social justice work was a race and competition. I have realized that while passion is important, patience and humility allow for long-lasting change to be created. This internship allowed me to focus on the relationships and personal development that are so crucial to justice work. I had the privilege of meeting so many individuals working for justice in a wide variety of ways. These experiences humbled me. They reminded me that there's no right way to create change, but that we must do it together, collaboratively. Going forward, I will know that change is urgent, but also remember the unique, long path we each follow on the quest for justice.

This internship has allowed me to learn about the community that Unitarian Universalism creates and the gifts that each member of First Church brings. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of that community and teaching me so much about myself and working for justice. I will miss being an intern here very much, but I will carry the lessons I have learned and memories I have made with me for years to come.

In Solidarity,

Claire Keyes

Member-Led Ministries Reports

BLACK LIVES MATTER

The Black Lives Matter Team continued to evolve from the so-called cabal to a regular full-fledged member led ministry. In particular, the committee took the following steps:

1. Submitting a formal proposal to the Social Justice, a step which we discovered had previously been overlooked.
 2. Focusing much of our attention on the Mothers For Justice United to help it evolve and achieve status as a tax exempt non-profit organization.
 3. Submitting a successful proposal to the Lu Krug Bequest to begin a pilot project offering peer support for mothers of children who were killed by the police.
 4. Developing a subcommittee which will seek funds from foundations and other sources to determine whether Mothers For Justice can be a viable organization or seek an alliance with an existing non-profit organization.
 5. Organizing a showing of *The Blood is at the Doorstep* at the First Unitarian Society. This event was co-sponsored by 3 community organizations.
 6. Participating in the Social Justice Council and using up our entire budget.
 7. Facilitating a service with pulpit guest Christopher D. Sims.
 8. Encouraging participation in the Dontre Day event.
 9. Maintaining an active presence on Realm, the church social engagement platform, with 19 members.
- Presenting a series of three follow-up “Deeper Dive” workshops with members of our five congregations, held during the afternoons following Reggie Jackson’s public workshops. In partnership with Nurturing Diversity Partners, and St. Joseph’s Hospital, and funded by the Wisconsin Humanities Council.
 - Planning and presenting a follow-up workshop for Deeper Dive participants from each of the five churches, featuring a panel presentation by UUs of color.
 - Encouraging participation in the fifth annual Dontre Day, and supporting the work of the Coalition of Justice and Mothers for Justice United in planning and fundraising for the event, and outreach.
 - Encouraging First Church participation in UUCW’s Anti-Racism Training, May 4, at UUCW.
 - Continuing participation in and partnership with UBLAC (Uplifting Black Liberation and Community), the Coalition to Close MSDF, Program the Parks, Mothers for Justice United, and the Police Accountability Working Group.
 - Continuing a relationship with Wisconsin UU State Action Network (WUUSAN).
 - Continuing work toward a more permanent structure of the collaborative, addressing mission, composition, roles, and funding.

Kenyatta Yamel

BLACK LIVES MATTER TO WISCONSIN UUS COLLABORATIVE (BLM2WUU)

BLM2WUU continued to organize and educate ourselves and community members around racial justice in 2018. In particular, we focused on:

- Supporting the efforts of each of our five individual UU congregations to understand white supremacy and to advocate for racial justice in their churches and in their communities. At First Church, our BLM2WUU Liaison functioned as a member of the First Church Anti-Racism Team, the Black Lives Matter Team, and the BLM Working Group supporting the work of Maria Hamilton and Mothers for Justice United.
- Presenting a series of three public lectures by Reggie Jackson on “Do Black Lives Matter?”, in partnership with Nurturing Diversity Partners, Inc. and Parklawn Assembly of God Church, and funded in part by the Wisconsin Humanities Council.

Mary Devitt, First Church Liaison and Organizer, Black Lives Matter to Wisconsin UUs

BOOK SALES COMMITTEE

The Book Tower provides books about the beliefs and development of Unitarian Universalism at both introductory and deeper levels as a service to members and visitors. We also carry meditations, poetry, and books about current social justice issues such as immigration and the environment. Almost all of the books come from InSpirit, the UUA bookstore. The Book Tower operates on a break even, self-service basis. This year we also began selling UUA merchandise such as jewelry, mugs, and reusable tote bags.

The Used Book Sale made a successful return the weekend of March 29-31, 2019. Nearly 3,000 books were donated for the sale. A dedicated group of 30 volunteers managed the sale, which earned nearly \$2,500 for the church.

Book Sales Committee members include: Barbra Lancelot and Nancy Pajewski – chairs, Jo Ann Bachar, Kay Eller, Crysta Jarczyński, Jennifer Kaufman, Amy Monahan, and Kathy Smith.

Member-Led Ministries Reports

COMMON GROUND

Last April was the Ten Year Anniversary Celebration of Common Ground. Coincidentally, Common Ground is currently working on ten issue campaigns: Washington High School (Outdoor Athletic Space Improvements), Do Not Stand Idly By, United Parents, Workforce Development, Watershed, Mental Health & Ascension, St. Joseph, Milwaukee Rising LLC, Heroin and Opioid Abuse, Common Ground Healthcare Coop., and Racial Justice.

Some of these have been ongoing and some are newer. There isn't space here to provide the details about all these campaigns, so please stop by the Social Justice Table to pick up a CG TENacity flier. Common Ground chooses its campaigns by listening to people in the member organizations and in the participating neighborhoods.

We are pleased to announce that our part-time organizer, Jennifer O'Hear, has been promoted to lead organizer, replacing our outstanding lead organizer, Keisha Krumm, as she transfers to Cleveland to continue her organizing work. And, Patricia Obluck has recently been appointed our new South Side organizer. The plan is to hire three full-time organizers to continue the work on the existing campaigns and to gear up for future campaigns, so we are two-thirds of the way there.

Should you have questions about the campaigns or wish to become involved, please talk to any of our First Church Core Team members: George Bledsoe, Lynn Conolloy, Rod De Pue, Mary Ann Fisher, Jerry Fredrickson, Larry Krolikowski, Russ Langford, Cathy Startt, and Mary Ann Steger.

We wish to extend a big thank you to all of our First Church friends who have supported Common Ground throughout the years. We hope for your continued support as we enter our second decade of social justice work in Metro Milwaukee.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

The Environmental Justice Ministry (EJM) was led by Co-Chairs Tree Moore and Bruce Wiggins.

C'mon Home to Eat: Tree Moore spearheaded a Fall campaign encouraging people to eat locally. We enjoyed dressing up as vegetables in coffee hour to publicize the effort. Almost 100 members pledged to eat locally and support local farmers. We had a terrific potluck at the end.

Bee in Community: Barbara Leigh brought to First Church Beevangelist Charlie Koenen who provided Beesentations and "hive activities" during children's RE; then, following lunch, to families. All learned how bees make life possible on earth, and threats to their existence. Individuals signed up to participate in follow-up community activities.

Sustainable Businesses in Milwaukee: Amy Monahan compiled a **directory** of sustainable businesses in Milwaukee so consumers can "vote for the environment" with dollars. It includes a variety of businesses and agencies that work to reduce the footprint of their businesses, goods, and services. The publication with more than 55 businesses is available online at uumilwaukee.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/EJM-SustainBusListFinal-web-links.pdf.

Vermicomposting: EJM members worked with RE classes to create a worm bin. With a "worm bin culture," our children are involved in an ongoing process and the worms are happy.

Drawdown Forum: Bruce Wiggins presented a Forum on the book and organization: Drawdown, The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming.

Book Discussion on Drawdown: Led by Pat Parcell, a group discussed details of the Drawdown book.

Justice on Earth book discussion: Bruce Wiggins and Janet Nortrom organized this program with Nancy Pajewski of the UU Plus Group. In two sessions, we discussed the book, Justice on Earth, People of Faith Living at the Intersections of Race, Class, and the Environment. Co-edited by our Senior Minister, Rev. Jenifer Nordstrom, the book was chosen as the UUA national Common Read. Rev. Jennifer joined us for the second session.

Exploration of Additional Solar Panels: Mark Mueller and Bruce Wiggins explored installation of 95 solar panels on the church and apartment building for a 47% offset of our electric bill and similar reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Following a Krug Bequest turn-down, the request may become part of a future capital campaign.

Interfaith Earth Network Representation: Terry Wiggins represents us at the Interfaith Earth Network, and represents UUs on the IEN steering committee. She represents IEN on COLE (Coalition on Lead Emergency) and Milwaukee Water Commons Drinking Water Safety Initiative.

Earth Day: We are planning to plant trees in the spring.

Regular communications: Terry Wiggins took the lead for communications, assuring at least one article in every issue of the Chanticleer.

IMMIGRATION ISSUES ACTION GROUP

The Immigration Issues Action Group worked to increase awareness, understanding and support of Milwaukee area immigrants who may live in fear of arrest and deportation. Our dissemination of information about issues and opportunities for demonstrating support enables members of an interest and action list to live our faith by "supporting immigrants regardless of their immigration status." (UU College of Social Justice)

Member-Led Ministries Reports

2018-19 Group Actions:

- Jericho Walks outside ICE office against deportation actions. (Monday, June 4th for Francisco Jusso Santoyo).
- Participated in “Families Belong Together” rally in front of the Federal Building (June 30).
- Supported Voces de la Frontera endorsed candidacy of Earnell Lucas for Milwaukee County Sheriff.
- First Thursday monthly vigils outside ICE office- against deportation actions.
- First Tuesday monthly Vigils at Ascension Lutheran Church service supporting immigrants facing discrimination, deportation or separation from family members.
- Set up a Google Group (N=70) for disseminating ongoing information about ICE practices, support activities for immigrants, and witness opportunities to lobby for just laws in SE Wisconsin local governments.
- Represented First Church at Voces de la Frontera Gala on Sept 28.
- Co-Chairs met with Martin Juache, New Sanctuary Coordinator, and Claire Keyes, First Church Social Justice Intern, to set goals for 2019.
- Co-leaders of group trained on Realm, but Google Group continues to be preferred platform for reaching both First Church members and nonmembers.
- Promoted and watched webinar “Love Resists,” presented by the Service Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association (November 27). www.uua.org/lovesresists/leading-congregations/webinars.
- First Church planned and led the January 8 Vigil at Ascension.
- Attended League of Women Voters’ forum on Immigration Policies and made video available to First Church Immigration Issues Action Group members.
- Promoted participation in two informational and petition-signing sessions during Sunday coffee hours about supporting “Driver’s Licenses for All” legislation proposed in Wisconsin (March 10 and 17). Sessions were promoted via *Chanticleer* and announcements and were well attended, yielding 3-4 pages of petition signatures.

Patricia Geenen and Birger Pahl, Co-Chairs

INTERCHANGE FOOD PANTRY

Interchange Food Pantry served 9,169 guests in 2018, 23% of whom were children and 27% seniors.

Guided by representatives of seven area churches, Interchange approved a new policy in May 2018 to serve all guests who enter its doors in need of food. This new policy

came at a cost—Hunger Task Force ended its relationship with us in October 2018, as they wanted the pantry only to serve specific zip codes designated by them.

The pantry is open four times each week. We added a Saturday morning shift for guests who have difficulty getting to the pantry during the week. We also increased the amount of fresh and frozen produce to 40% of food given to guests, and we are committed to serving only nutritious food. Additionally, we have partnered with the Milwaukee County Housing Division to provide a “welcome home” supply of food to homeless individuals moving into subsidized apartments throughout the county.

All of this work is possible in part due to financial support from the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee through the Christmas Eve offering, church pledge, and ongoing food and monetary donations from members. Most importantly, the pantry benefits from and is very grateful for an increase in volunteers able to support our mission.

Susan Mitten has joined the pantry’s board of directors as a representative from First Church, replacing Bryna Goeckner. We thank Bryna for her many years of service.

Beth Bruch and Susan Mitten

INTERFAITH CONFERENCE OF GREATER MILWAUKEE

The mission of the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee is to uphold the dignity of every person and the solidarity of the human community. The Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee initiates and sponsors several programs, committees, activities, and events throughout the year. The list below is far from exhaustive, but will provide a sample of some of Interfaith’s initiatives offered this past year.

The highlights include Interfaith Earth Network, a subgroup of ICGM that meets monthly to foster conversations on relevant topics in our local community. IEN is grateful for the \$5,000 grant from First Unitarian Society for lead water filters ICGM’s Amazing Faiths Dinner Dialogues that gives people of all faiths (and no faith) the opportunity to have a facilitated dialogue and dinner in private homes, One Community Program, to address structural causes of our local areas severe racial and economic segregation. Patricia McFarland represents ICGM in our work with Fair Housing Council’s Community Response Network for hate crimes & hate-related incidents – Patricia McFarland volunteered to represent us ICGM. In April, a delegation of ICGM participated in the People of Faith United for Justice, a biennial advocacy day in Madison to protect the social safety net and other relevant issues. This year we focused on clean water, quality child care, and extending Badger Care—issues of importance in the current budget discussions.

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ICGM Interfaith's' 48 Annual Luncheon in December 2018 featuring guest speaker on Dreaming Crazy Big.

Interfaith's annual luncheon series held each of the 4 Tuesday in March. The theme for this Spring was Immigrants and Refugees Matter. More than 500 people attended these lunch and learn series.

- March 5, 2019 – 'Milwaukee's Changing Immigration Landscape' by Barbara Miner
- March 12, 2019 – 'Human Rights & the Environment: Key Issues,' Sumudu Atapattu, Director, UW Law School Research Center
- March 19, 2019 – 'Where is the Welcome Mat for Refugees? Refugee Resettlement Efforts' Mary Flynn, Program Mgr. Refugee Resettlement, Lutheran Social Services
- March 26, 2019 – 'Tidal Wave of Changes in Law & Policies Affecting Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Other Immigrants,' Barbara Graham, Managing Atty., Catholic Charities Legal Services for Immigrants.

Regarding opportunities and ideas for taking personal action in response to the issues: speakers and table displays were very helpful in showing friends how to make a difference how I can make a difference.

One new activity supported by ICGM is WIN: Wisconsin Immigration Network. Contact Patricia McFarland at mcfarlap@gmail.com for more information.

IRMA MORTER LECTURE TEAM

Historical perspective: The Irma Morter Lecture Fund, established in 2000, was a gift from this longtime, active member of First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee. Interests in learning and philosophy drew her to First Church, choosing to make it her spiritual home. The Morter bequest includes "the purpose of formulating a series of lectures on individual responsibility."

Subsequent Morter Lecture Planning Groups, have embedded a masterful lecture within a weekend of events, which embrace the spirit of the lecture. These events may include workshops, art exhibits, Sunday morning services, music, community involvement, book sharing, and social gatherings. A varied schedule reaches a broad range of interests, talents, ages, and backgrounds. Invitations are extended to all members and friends as well as the broader community, thus expanding marketing reach and fundraising capacity for First Church.

2018-2019 Activity: The Irma Morter Annual Lecture Group members sought a presenter who's genre and content would support the goals and themes of First Church. Challenges, such as accommodating candidate's schedules, conflicts within our own church calendar, speaker fees beyond budgetary limits and a thorough, time-consuming vetting process,

deterred us from finalizing a lecture within this church year. Having offered a successful Morter Lecture in April 2018, we felt that scheduling the next annual lecture in fall 2019 could then establish a consistent "Morter Lecture" month of October, building expectation and anticipation.

Irma Morter Annual Lecture Group members: Lynda Lambert, Cheryl Maranto, Lorraine Jacobs, Jane Cliff, and Nick DaVia.

SAVE THE DATE: We have confirmed Sara Thomsen, songwriter and social activist, as the Irma Morter Lecture presenter on the weekend of October 5/6, 2019. Ms. Thomsen will present a lecture describing her guiding inspiration for singing and song writing, as well as her motivation and experience establishing the "Echos of Peace Choir." A reception and song-writing workshop and/or sing-a-long is included. Our music and liturgical teams will work with Sara in planning the Sunday liturgy. We wish to blend the activism and "creating change" themes of Ms. Thomsen's music with our church social justice teams. Learn more about our speaker at her website: www.sarathomsen.com.

MILWAUKEE INNER-CITY CONGREGATIONS ALLIED FOR HOPE (MICA)

First Church members had another busy year engaged with MICA to create a more just Milwaukee. Below are highlights from some of MICA's criminal justice, education, jobs, transportation, and racial justice successes this past year.

- Organized "Take it to the Streets" event on June 4, 2018 to meet people in the neighborhood around the MICA office at 2821 North Vel R. Phillips Avenue. Listened to our neighbor's concerns and informed them about current key focal areas for MICA social justice work:

- ◇ Mass transit Job Lines (endangered bus routes that take people to suburban jobs from the north side).
- ◇ Closing the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility (MSDF).

Petitions on both issues were available for our neighbors to sign.

- Participated in Gubernatorial Candidates' Forum on June 11, 2018, where WISDOM leaders from around the state asked the candidates very specific questions about their intentions in the areas of Criminal Justice reform, Public Transportation, Childhood Poverty, and Health Care.
- Participated in Sheriff and State Assembly District 16 Candidate Forum on July 16, 2018.
- Participated in "Leadership for Community Transformation" training series (10 hours) over five Thursday

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evenings, October 4 - November 1, 2018 and again January 31- February 28, 2019.

- Participated at the 30th Anniversary MICAHA Public Meeting on October 25, where individual MICAHA Task Force teams asked gubernatorial candidates and other public officials to commit to specific actions on a variety of issues.
- Participated in the October 2018 Equity Summit in MPS, as well as the Beyond Diversity seminar in February 2019, focused on achieving racial equity.
- In partnership with Leaders Igniting Transformation (LIT), Milwaukee City Council of PTAs, African American Civic Roundtable, Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), Uplifting Black Lives and Community (UBLAC), the Milwaukee Community Schools Partnership, and ACLU Wisconsin hosted a well-attended MPS School Board Candidate Forum on March 25, 2019 with a focus on racial justice and leadership philosophy.
- Gathered in Madison on March 26, 2019 with nearly 1,000 WISDOM leaders and friends from across the state to educate our elected representatives and advocate for adequate funding in the proposed state budget to address criminal justice reform, increase public transit, provide drivers cards for those without legal documentation, and other MICAHA concerns.
- Successfully advocated before Milwaukee County Board to allocate \$990,000 to continue a Job Line, designated as Route 57, from downtown Milwaukee to sites in Menomonee Falls and Germantown through August 2019. The challenge now is to persuade Waukesha County and its employers to assist in providing additional funding to cover the last four months of 2019.

We look forward to seeing a large First Church contingent at MICAHA's May 23, 2019 Annual Celebration event.

SHARE THE PLATE

Each month First Church shares 50% of all non-pledge cash in the offering plate with a worthy non-profit organization whose work in the wider community embodies our Unitarian Universalist values. Church members submit nominations for potential recipients. The Share the Plate Committee meets several times during the church year to review nominations and assign chosen recipients to specific calendar months. A representative from the organization attends coffee hours the first Sunday of their month to provide information for the congregation.

In just over eight years, January 2011 through February 2019, First Church members and friends gave a yearly average of \$23,180, distributing a total of \$185,439 to support organizations and causes. Of the total, \$135,725 came from "normal" monthly/summer collections and went to 92 recipients, with an average contribution of \$1,475. An additional \$49,714 was distributed from Christmas Eve services, special one-time events, and disaster relief efforts. A complete list of past recipients can be found on the website at uumilwaukee.org.

Our youth and children actively participate in the Share the Plate program by selecting organizations twice each year. The Youth Steering Committee chose Pathfinders as our March recipient. The K5-12th grades selected Kyle's Korner for the month of May.

A heartfelt thank you from the Share the Plate team on behalf of all those served by your generous donations.

Bob Monahan and Nancy Spransy, chairs

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION GROUPS

This is the fifth year that Candice Haight and Diane Horne have facilitated Group Spiritual Direction at First Church. Candice and Diane are both trained spiritual directors. For the 2018 – 2019 church year, we have had two groups. Groups are limited to six participants, and one group started with six, the other with five. The groups meet monthly and the topic that is provided aligns with the monthly theme from the Soul Matters material. Each year, Candice and Diane offer an information meeting in the late spring, sharing what being in Group Spiritual Direction is about. People interested go through a discernment process, and then meet with one of the facilitators to converse about the group and the following covenants:

- Commitment to daily prayer
- Commitment to spiritual practice
- Sharing and listening in the group
- Commitment to attend group meetings
- Commitment to hold group members in prayer in between meetings
- Confidentiality

The groups meet from September through May. Each meeting is two hours. The group meetings incorporate silence and deep listening. The majority of group time is spent in sharing and listening. We explore different types of prayer in each session to expand everyone's experience of what prayer can entail, and the group session is closed with a chant.

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SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS

It has been an enjoyable honor to work with the Sunday Morning Forum Group members as we continue the 40+ year tradition of providing thoughtful, inspiring Forums on Sunday mornings, September through June, 10:10 – 11:00 am. Forum Group members include: Christian Becker, Mark Mueller, Juliet Hills, Janet Nortrom, Ann Batiza, Ben Campell, Jo Ann Bachar, Lorraine Jacobs, Thallis Drake, Jerry Fredrickson, Joan Christopherson-Schmidt, Jean Groshek. I am deeply grateful to the marketing team and office staff who take our Forum Presenter vita and attractively expand this content through printed copy, the web, and social media.

Our goal is always to provide professional, knowledgeable speakers who offer varied topics of local, state or national interest. Content may include: politics, the arts, social action, science, environmental justice, health, and just plain interesting people who have something to share. We are grateful for the generosity of time and expertise that is offered by our speakers. We enjoy consistent attendance of 25-35 each Sunday, and receive positive feedback. Forums are free and open to the public. Consider inviting a friend to build familiarity here at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee. Anecdotal evidence indicates that many First Church members joined after some time of consistent Sunday Forum and Service attendance.

Our group meets twice a year, usually in mid-summer and then in early-fall. We plan three series of Forums through the church year: Fall Series, September-December. (18 Sundays), January Interim (3-4 Sundays), Spring Series, February-May (19 Sundays). Each Forum Group member is responsible for at least one presenter per series, sometimes two or three. Members from church with ideas for presenters are welcome to offer them for consideration and if chosen will be responsible, with support from a Group mentor, for vetting, scheduling, and ultimately hosting the presenter. Contact one of the listed Forum Group members, above, if you wish to propose a speaker.

CHRONOLOGICALLY GIFTED

Fostering activities and relationships that allow church members and friends age 60 and older to live and age well are what The Chronologically Gifted is all about! Each month, on the last Sunday from September through May, we meet for a potluck luncheon and stimulating short program. There are also opportunities to share our lives' journeys and show our care for one another.

In the summer on pre-determined dates we take our potlucks to the outdoors and Lake Park for picnicking, music, and appreciation of the season.

And TCGers provide service to this church by hosting memorial service receptions with love and sensitivity.

Either Cecile Langford (414-935-8542) or Sharon DePue (414-390-0454) would be happy to tell you more about TCG and what you may be missing.

UU BOOK CLUB

The UU Book club meets one time per month during the church year to discuss a mix of fiction and non-fiction books. Some books may deal with serious topics while others are lighter and for entertainment. We try to find books that will inspire good discussions. For example, this year we discussed *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel, a post-apocalyptic story set in the American Midwest and *Darktown* by Thomas Mullen set in Atlanta in 1948 about the city's first black police officers.

We meet on the second Sunday of the month at 1:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome. You do not have to sign up to be a member, and you are welcome to come to any or all discussions.

We meet one time in the summer to choose books for the coming church year. Copies of our reading list are at the Book Table in the Common Room and are published on the church website.

We have a contact list for sending out monthly reminders. You are welcome to add your name to the list.

Contact Chris Linder at celinder@att.net.

UU+ STUDY GROUP

For the third year the UU+ Study Group engaged members in deepening our understanding of Unitarian Universalism and enriching our spiritual journeys through reading and discussion. We continued our study of the historical roots of Christianity by reading *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* by Bart Ehrman.

For the first time we branched out from books to use videos for our spiritual development. We used the video series *On Faith and Reason*, in which Bill Moyers interviewed several authors of various religious beliefs. We viewed the segments with Margaret Atwood, an agnostic; Mary Gordon, a Catholic; Pema Chodron, a Buddhist; and Salman Rushdie, whose *Satanic Verses* inflamed many Muslims. The variety of spiritual and personal viewpoints piqued some exciting conversations.

Nineteen members participated in one or more of our discussions in 2018-19.

Chris Linder and Nancy Pajewski, Chairs

**The congregation of The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
affirms and promotes the full participation of persons in our activities without regard to race, color, gender,
physical or mental challenge, sexual identity or orientation, age, class, national origin, or ancestry.**

**Indeed, we are interested in actively promoting
more diversity within our congregation.**