

The Unitarian Universalist Church  
Rockford, Illinois



Annual Report  
2020—2021

# The Unitarian Universalist Church

## 2020-21 Annual Report

### INDEX

Officers, Board of Trustees, Committee Chairs, Team Leaders and Staff.....	3
President’s Report .....	4
Mission, Vision, and Ends .....	5
Senior Minister’s Report.....	14
Director of Religious Education’s Report.....	16
Music Director’s Report.....	19
Membership Manager’s Report .....	20
Treasurer’s Report .....	21

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Building & Grounds Committee.....	23
Library Team .....	24
Finance Committee .....	25
Auction Fundraiser.....	26
Investment Panel.....	27
Denominational Affairs Committee.....	27
Caring Team .....	28
Membership Team .....	29
Vital Statistics .....	29
Religious Growth & Learning .....	29
Social Justice Team .....	29
Music Team.....	29
Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting .....	30

# Officers of the Congregation

## 2020-2021

President: Carolyn Arevalo                      Vice President: Amanda Tapfield  
Treasurer: Teresa Wilmot                      Clerk: Peggy Menze

### Board of Trustees

Khanh Oehlke                                      Neita Webster                                      Gary Huckstep

### Committee Chairs & Team Leaders

**BUILDING & GROUNDS** ..... Dave Schubert  
**LIBRARY TEAM** ..... Mike Ullrich  
**FINANCE COMMITTEE** ..... Steve Lewis  
    Investment Panel ..... Steve Blomgren  
    Memorials & Special Gifts ..... Pat Lewis  
    Stewardship Committee ..... Staff, Board, and Finance Team  
**DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** ..... Teresa Wilmot  
**MEMBERSHIP TEAM** ..... Jami Edmonds  
**RELIGIOUS GROWTH & LEARNING** ..... Lindsay Dunn, DRE  
**SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM** ..... Ellyn Ahmer, Jason Peckels  
**WORSHIP TEAM** ..... Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson  
    Music Team ..... Tim Anderson, Music Director  
**CARING TEAM** ..... Kathy Scarpaci  
**NOMINATING PANEL** ..... Ross Ticknor

### Staff

**SENIOR MINISTER** ..... The Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson  
**DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** ..... Lindsay Trank  
**MUSIC DIRECTOR** ..... Tim Anderson  
**MINISTER EMERITUS** ..... The Rev. David R. Weissbard  
**MUSIC DIRECTOR EMERITA** ..... Kay Hotchkiss  
**MEMBERSHIP MANAGER** ..... Chris Ainsworth  
**OFFICE MANAGER AND CUSTODIAN** ..... Autumn Powell  
**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSISTANT** ..... Lauren Smith  
**INTERN MINISTER** ..... Omega Burckhardt

# President's Report 2020 - 2021

Well, I must admit, this was a memorable year. This year of the pandemic. This Board took office when we couldn't physically meet, when we were all to wear masks, when we would know what Zoom was and would have to use it.

Some of the issues addressed during the last fiscal year: As is the policy, the Board conducted an evaluation of our Senior Minister, Mathew, to ensure that the needs of our congregation are being met. The evaluation was positive and confirmed our belief that Mathew serves our congregation with great care and forethought. Displaying the Black Lives Matters banner was challenged by the board of Spectrum School, but this Board felt that it is our moral obligation to continue to display it. The sign was vandalized but was replaced and re-placed in its current location with the Unitarian Universal Church name on it. Our technical equipment was upgraded to better serve our virtual platform. Even Woodsong experienced challenges as a result of the pandemic. To help make a safer environment inside our church, when eventually services would resume, clean air units were authorized and installed. As I learned from many other congregations, ministers were overloaded and stressed as never before. Fortunately, Mathew had scheduled a sabbatical and stayed with his schedule. This, for me, was a scary time. But with the Board's and committees' support and encouragement, nothing fell apart. I will always be so grateful for that. With Mathew's preplanning, we also had a lot of people step up to fill in spots where needed, such as sermons and the weekly services. And, we were lucky to have Omega as one of our constants during Mathew's sabbatical and our wonderful staff who all knew how things normally functioned. And they all made sure to see that everything was as normal as could be.

But two of our most momentous events were: (1) we hired an Assistant Minister, Joyce Palmer, who we know will add so much to our church and who we are looking forward to getting to know and working with, and (2) we didn't leave our beloved community, nor did we stop supporting our church.

What a year. What a year. And we are here. And we resumed gathering in person. And we are so glad to see each other with such an outpouring of affection and joy. And we're smiling and sharing and caring for each other. I was lucky during this year because our congregation is so special, the connections so special, we didn't fall apart on my watch. Thank you all.

Carolyn Arevalo

# Mission, Vision, & Ends

## Vision

A loving congregation that connects.

## Mission

We care for ourselves, each other, and our neighbors and risk acting for justice. Our connections create self-acceptance, empathy, and empowerment in this inclusive and diverse community.

## Ends

- **Each person in the congregation is spiritually alive. We are inspired and equipped to extend radical love through our daily lives and authentic conversations.**

“Each person in the congregation” means all persons, of every age, who are active in the congregation through worship, religious education, and/or small group ministries. They may or may not be members. We will expect that people who are more active, and with a longer tenure, will usually but not always indicate more spiritual aliveness and extension of radical love than those who are less active and newer.

“spiritually alive” means that a person considers spiritual and theological questions with intention, experiences and seeks feelings of wonder, connection and empathy, and acts on these thoughts and feelings through personal and social ethical living.

We measure spiritual aliveness through self-reports. A simple survey may suffice.

“inspired and equipped to extend radical love through our daily lives and authentic conversations” means that people hear, and are provoked and encouraged by, stories, examples, suggestions and guides about how to align their personal and family habits and practices with the call of love, and about how one-to-one and small group engagement and conversations can deepen relationships, change their own and other lives, and connect people to truth and community.

By “radical love” we mean the love preached by Jesus of Nazareth and other prophets, which calls us to expand our care and solidarity to wider and wider circles, and to challenges existing systems of power.

- We measure “daily lives” through self-reports of alignment and activity. Are our suggestions and examples and inspiration effective in helping form habits and practices that align with our values? Do children, adults, and families try those practices and stick with them?
- We measure “authentic conversations” through percentage engagement in “authentic conversation opportunities” in and out of the congregation (small groups, human library, social justice listening campaign, pastoral care, and so forth). Do people report awareness, participation, and ongoing engagement?

**Strategy 1A: Our leaders and staff lead, create, and offer spiritually alive worship and programs.**

— The Minister, Music Director, Intern, DRE, and key volunteers create and lead sensory-rich, meaningful and memorable worship; these worship experiences make people feel connected, alive, and inspired to live lives of purpose and love all week long. We use the best practices from Worship Design Studio, and other resources, to produce quality and engaging experiences.

— The DRE and key volunteers create and lead Religious Education programs that engage people and families in self-discovery, community building, and religious growth. These programs engage the sense of wonder, creativity, compassion, and integrity that makes life good and beautiful.

— Key volunteers, with support from the DRE, lead family ministry programs that connect whole families with each other and others. These programs build community, engage in service, and explore our world together.

— Key volunteers, with staff support as needed, offer expanded opportunities to sing, make and experience art, and engage in a variety of spiritual practices. These “spiritual arts” engage people’s bodies, creativity, and soul in both one-time and ongoing practices.

— Key volunteers, with support from the Minister and Intern Minister(s), ground social justice in spiritual depth. Social justice efforts come from theological reflection on the world, our hungers and hurts. Those efforts feed back into further reflection and alignment with personal and social life.

Tactic	Authority	Timeline	Resource
SR + M + M Worship	Minister and Music Dir and Intern(s)	ongoing	Minister time 17K/annual for intern
RE program engage	DRE + team	ongoing 2018-2019 more volunteers with leadership 2020-2021 youth programming	DRE time Volunteers to step up
Family Ministry	Team with DRE support	ongoing 2018-2019 volunteers lead	2K annual Volunteers to step up
Embodied art and spirit	Team with staff support	ongoing 2018-2019 encourage projects 2019-2020 create team 2020+ clear offerings	include with intern time
Social Justice that’s spiritually alive	SJ team	ongoing	minister and intern time

**Strategy 1B: We connect more people to worship and programs.**

— The minister, working with key volunteers, arranges to stream worship for both live and later viewing. Homebound, traveling, and not-ready-to-visit persons can engage more fully in worship.

— The DCL creates a monthly postal mailing with the theme packet and a monthly calendar of events and programs, so that more people are aware and engaged with these materials.

— Key volunteers, and the DCL and membership coordinator, support a wide variety of small groups and activities. We improve our sign up and communication efforts, and continuously assess, create, and cease groups to focus on what is working to connect people. This can include ongoing groups for interest, affinity, or theme, one-time programs, and social events (for example, a return of the once-successful UniSupper program).

— The DCL, DRE and minister encourage and facilitate attendance at conferences, summer camps, and other wider UU events where people can connect with our faith at depth.

— Key volunteers, the membership coordinator, and other staff, use technology effectively, including social media, texting, and the website, to extend our message to our people and the public.

— We offer strong support family ministry events, including families and people with and without young children. (See above.)

— Key volunteers, with staff support, offer in-person and electronic programs to reach people at a distance from the church.

Tactic	Authority	Timeline	Resource
Stream Worship	Minister + volunteer	Spring 2018	Equipment Copyright permissions
Mailing content	DCL	Fall 2018	Paper and postage \$500 annual
Small Groups	DCL + Membership Coord.	ongoing 2018-2019 improve signup 2019 + create more groups, cull list	Time for DCL hours for Membership Coord.
Camps and conferences	Minister + DRE + Membership Coordinator	2018-2019 identify opportunities, publish 2019-2020 create scholarship fund, send people	3-5K for scholarships, beginning 2019
Tech/Web/Social	volunteer + mem cord?	2018- recruit volunteer, define scope	500/year for tech
Family ministry —above			
Distance reach	Minister + DCL + team	2019-2020 - identify remote leaders 2020+ begin programs	1000/year supplies and outreach, beginning 2020

**Strategy 1C: Inspire and equip leaders and members to connect and converse with each other.**

— The minister, intern minister(s), and the DCL collaborate to offer regular trainings to the Caring Team to inspire and equip them to do pastoral care work in the congregation.

— The minister and DCL hold a Group Leader Summit and training twice yearly, to equip leaders, share knowledge, and create common programs.

— The social justice team, with staff support, supports the social justice listening campaign. “Listeners” spend time with 2 people per month (1 new to the church) and create a use-able inventory of passions and gifts.

Tactic	Authority	Timeline	Resources
Caring Team Trainings	Minister, Intern, DCL, team	Trainings in spring of 2019, 2021, and 2023	Intern stipend - above. Honorarium/ travel - 500 per
Group Leader Summit	Minister, DCL	Beginning fall 2019, 2x year	time for minister
Listening campaign	Team with support from minister/intern	ongoing. 2 “listens” / month / team member summer 2018 - create inventory database	volunteer time

To accomplish all these tactics, we need the following resources:

We need to have an intern each year, or part-time assistant minister.

We need to expand membership coordinator to 17hrs/week.

We need to allow DCL to focus on pastoral admin and small groups, by shifting other responsibilities to the membership coordinator and using automated systems when possible.

We need to purchase the tech for live stream and have volunteers who can run it.

We need to allow minister and music director to focus on life-changing worship but removing other tasks and distractions.

We need scholarship money for people to attend conferences and camps.

We need to allow the DRE time for family ministry and RE programming by having strong volunteers and using automated systems.



- **Our woven community celebrates differences, inspiring generosity of talent, time, and treasure, sustaining the congregation.**

“our woven community” means the interlocking circles of members, friends, children, family members, and community partners.

“celebrates differences” means that we provide quality ministry to people who identify as people of color and/or indigenous, working class, disabled, and/or LGBTQ, and that we include people, perspectives, and connections with these identities in leadership of worship, education, justice, caring, and governance. This inclusion is accountable, genuine, and avoids tokenization.

- We measure through a survey of members and friends in the church as a whole.
- We can also evaluate how many people from diverse identities are in leadership positions.
- We also measure through the content of worship, curriculum, and justice partnerships — verifying that perspectives from these identities are included in each worship service and other content we produce.

“inspiring generosity of talent, time and treasure, sustaining the congregation” means that members, friends, and partners give more of their gifts — their skills, their time, and their wealth — to the church. This generosity keeps the congregation thriving.

- We measure through the number of volunteers and an increase in median giving.
- The “sustained congregation” is measured through non-deficit budgets which are uniformly “fair compensation” and “fair share.” We can measure the gap between our actual budget and what it would take to be fair compensation and fair share.

### **Strategy 2A: Celebrate Differences**

— The minister, the music director, the DRE, and the DCL, with key volunteers, ensure that all content is diverse in image, creator, and story.

— The minister and the Justice for All Team invest in POCI and LGBTQ members and friends, through providing pastoral care, leadership development, social and support groups, and other resources as requested.

— The social justice council and staff offer support for the Justice for All Team so they can be effective in their work.

— The Board and JFA team uses the Beloved Conversations program to engage each other, learn, and move toward depth.

— The minister and JFA team educates our folks about how to be good allies and accomplices. We regularly offer cultural competency training, “vocabulary lessons,” and so on.

— We all build connections between people within and beyond the congregation, through programs like human library, listening campaign, interfaith choir festivals or other partnerships, and so forth.

Tactic	Authority	Timeline	Resource
Diverse content	Minister, DCL, Music Director w/ justice for all team	ongoing spring 2019 - create sub-team for accountability	Minister, Music time
Invest in POCI/LGBTQ	Minister and JFA team	fall 2018 - ID team leaders, wants fall 2019+ fund it	2-4K annual for conferences, etc.
Support Justice for All Team	SJ Council, JFA Team, minister, intern	ongoing. ID needs, make happen	above
Beloved Conversations	Board, Justice for All Team	Spring 2020	\$2200
Educate our folks	Minister and JFA team	ongoing	time
Build connections	JFA and SJ team	ongoing	time

**Strategy 2B: Inspire Generosity.**

— The DRE and Membership coordinator hold regular volunteer open houses to recruit volunteers for their vital programs.

— The minister, with intern minister(s), offers the Harvest the Power leadership program every three years.

— The finance team, with staff support, ensures that there are strong stewardship efforts each year.

— The finance team, with staff support, promotes alternative giving ideas, including legacy giving and gifts discernment. We make sure to follow through on existing ideas.

Tactic	Authority	Timeline	Resource
Volunteer Open House	Membership Coord, DRE, teams	beginning fall 2018	staff time
leadership development	Minister	Harvest the Power in Fall 2019 and Spring 2022	minister time
Stewardship	Finance Team	ongoing	staff time volunteers
Alt. giving	Finance Team + DCL	ongoing. annual legacy giving event - oct each year.	DCL time to organize

### Strategy 2C: Sustaining the congregation

— The Board aligns our governance with best practice, by using an appropriate version of policy governance to clarify roles and responsibilities, improve transparency, and release leaders (staff and lay) to do their best work. We also make an annual review of this plan, including the measurement of effectiveness. That annual review will include revision of tactics as necessary depending on circumstances, volunteer commitment, and so forth.

— The Building and Grounds team, with Finance and Board support, works to reduce, if not eliminate, deferred maintenance on our building.

— The Board, with the minister, ensure we have the right staff size and structure for our growing ministry. We continuously improve and communicate staff functions. We are fair compensation to all staff.

— The Board, Minister, DRE, and Office Assistant leverage our building for income through rentals and fee-based offerings. We have and execute a plan, whether Spectrum School continues or departs.

Tactic	Authority	Timeline	Resource
Governance	Board	2018-2019 - policy review, board retreat, clarify responsibilities Fall 2020 - Policy Governance Shift	3.5K consulting/ year 2020-2022
Deferred Maint. reduction	B and G team, DCL, Board	Spring, annual: review list Summer/fall, annual: tackle projects	existing cap. maint. reserve fund. funds to employ qualified maint. person.
Staff for size	Board, Minister	spring 2018 - comp. plan beginning fall 2018 - fair comp. increase mem. coord hours. annual - review, align needs have intern — if funds, consider 1/2 time assistant minister.	10K+ added annually to keep pace with fair comp standards and needs.
Leverage for income	Board, Minister, Office Assist	2018-2019 begin 2/3yo preschool keep or create major renter	hope to net 20-30K per year

To accomplish all these tactics, we need the following resources:

We need the fee for beloved conversations (currently \$2200 for our size congregation). We need money for leadership development opportunities for POCI and GLBTQ leaders. We need funds to eliminate deferred maintenance.

We need funds for fair compensation, and growing staff needs.

We need funds for policy governance consulting.

We need funds to employ a qualified maintenance person, especially if our B&G chair steps back from day-to-day repairs.

- **Our networks of connections and focused acts for justice foster a world of understanding, equity, repair, and solidarity.**

“networks of connections” means our personal and institutional associations and connections — organizations, neighborhood groups, collections of friends, co-workers, and more.

“focused acts of justice” means our intentional, supported efforts to serve needs, educate ourselves and others, witness to our values in the world, and organize with others for a more just world — organizing that is effective, with a concrete goal, strategy, and in relationship with others. It means that our justice is not passive but active.

“foster a world of understanding, equity, repair and solidarity” means a world with less hatred, inequality, despair, and disconnection. It means a world where people connect across differences to both serve the present needs and build structures which are more just and liberating. In small and large ways, our personal, collective, and cooperative efforts make a difference in the world.

- We measure our effectiveness in helping to foster this world by assessing the number and strength of the interventions, projects, and partnerships engaged in. Are our connections strong? Do our task forces, partnerships, and the work of the senior minister have diverse ways to engage, a plan to make change, and are making progress on that plan?

**Strategy 3A: Create and sustain strong networks within and without the congregation.**

— The SJ council and others create connections with our local neighborhood and in the greater Rockford region. We prioritize participation in projects that build a sense of place and relationship — such as community gardens, little free library, and so forth.

— The SJ council and the minister nurture key partnerships with interfaith and secular groups, including state, national and international UU groups (including UUPCC). We assess what partnerships are working, what they need, and how we can be good partners.

— We invest in listening campaign, training more folks to do relationship work and creating an inventory of the connections and hopes of members and others. (also in 1C above).

Tactic	Authority	Timeline	Resource
Connections	SJ Council and teams	annual review and plan	In STP for \$

Key Partnerships	SJ Council and Minister	fall 2018 — assess each partnership: who, what, etc?	In STP for \$
------------------	-------------------------	--	---------------

**Strategy 3B: Effective focused acts for justice.**

— The SJ Council, with minister support, strengthens, creates, and sustains justice teams by investing money, training time, and more, so those teams are effective in their work.

— The Board and SJ council empowers the minister and staffs the church so the minister can co-lead a community wide effort to improve early childhood services, referrals, and out- comes, as well as participate in efforts to promote racial justice and dismantle white supremacy.

— The SJ council, with staff support, clearly communicates opportunities to engage in this work to the congregation, and celebrates successes, and witnesses to our values in the world

Tactic	Authority	Timeline	Resource
Justice Teams	SJ Council and Minister	assess and strengthen annual	Minister time, existing budget for training/ support/outreach
Minister project	Minister	ongoing	existing + Alignment Rockford Staff
Communication	SJ Team, DCL, Office Assist	ongoing	above

To accomplish all these tactics, we need the following resources:

We need to ensure that Share the Plate funds are allocated for key partnerships. We need trained and supported volunteers who lead teams and projects.

We need sufficient staff in other areas so the minister is able to do his work in this area.

# Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson Report

Well. What can be said about a year like we have had? My thirteenth year as your minister has been the hardest and strangest. You were resilient and faithful, the staff rallied beautifully, and we did good work despite it all. I took a lovely and much needed sabbatical, and I continue to love being your minister. But this pandemic has been awful. The social isolation, the reliance on technology all the time, the political division and racism which undergirded the crisis and remains with us – it was tough. But we gathered again in-person on June 6<sup>th</sup>, and to see you again was a such a blessing. We have lost much, and we will never be the same. Yet the import of the religious life – both ethically and existentially – has not waned but grown.

When we began the year, we did not know how long our online only experience would continue. But we soon realized it would be a while and made key investments in technology to increase our streaming capacity. As we prepared to return, we worked through a checklist and plan – which became a model for other Unitarian Universalists around the country – so we could come back together. We did good work, not just for us, but for our whole faith.

I had previously scheduled a sabbatical for this fall and took it. That time of renewal was vital for my ministry. I explored the Enneagram, Tarot Cards, Jungian ideas, and took a walking pilgrimage to New England – keeping my distance, but walking and driving from Maine to Gloucester, MA, the home of the first Universalist church in the United States. It was good for my soul – and meant I had the energy for us to reopen this summer.

I could not have done that without our amazing staff. This year, that included Intern Minister Omega Burckhardt. We lucked out to have such a competent and grounded person this year. She managed our liturgy, collaborated with staff, and then developed a prison ministry team this spring. We're excited to ordain her later this year. The sabbatical team also included our sabbatical preachers, Rev. Dr. Marlene Walker and Rev. Mitra Rahnema. To come and preach to folks you don't know well online was quite the challenge, and I'm grateful for their ministry with you.

And our long-term staff really rallied. Even though Autumn Powell (office manager), Chris Ainsworth (membership manager) and Lindsay Trank (Director of Religious Education) all had young children and no childcare during the pandemic, they figured it out. They worked from home, came in on Sunday or supported our online programs, zoomed, and made it happen. Chris Ainsworth did decide to move to Florida, where many of her family members live, and we'll be sad to see her go as our membership manager at the end of this month. We are thrilled, though, to have Rev. Joyce Palmer picking up that portfolio as our new Assistant Minister, beginning August 1<sup>st</sup>.

And what can I say about our Music Director, Tim Anderson? His skill and commitment to provide thematic, beautiful, and powerful music through this online year has been a mercy and a boon. He did not say "we can't", he said "how can we?" – and he made it happen. He's an amazing colleague and we are all lucky to work with him.

I preached 30 sermons this year – only 8-10 less than usual, though I was gone for three months (I did return to preach the sermon after the election). I spend more time on zoom meetings – with colleagues, figuring out what to do; with congregants, connecting; with community groups I'm part of,

doing the work as best we could – then I care to remember. It's easy, but one forgets where one is. I was glad to get my vaccination and start doing some visits in person in late February.

I performed 5 memorial or committal services: for Les Greer, Carol Foster, Frank Dajka, Gretchen Ericson, and David Mayhall. Others are pending this summer, as folks who delayed their services are feeling ready.

A year ago, I made goals for this year. They, and my progress towards them, were:

- 1) Do ministry in a pandemic world. Figure out how to offer worship, learning, connection, and justice ministry in a way that is sustainable, effective, and faithful. Experiment and innovate. Work with local and national partners for justice.

I think we did this very well – indeed, our work became a model for other UU's. One choice we made was to keep it simple. We felt folks were overwhelmed and focusing on essentials was more important than throwing a hundred things at folks. I think that was the right choice. We explored technology, liturgy, and programs to find what was doable and useful. I also want to give a lot of praise here to Kathy Scarpaci, who stepped into the role of Caring Team lead after the tragic death of Carol Foster, and the whole caring team. Their ministry was invaluable.

- 2) Support Chris and Autumn, in particular, and our ½ time intern for next year, Omega, as they grow into their new roles.

Both Chris and Autumn did a great job of stepping into their new role. Autumn has taken on more and more management responsibility and shown herself an eager learner who likes to check things off her list – a great quality in an office manager. Supervision Omega was more joyful and less work than an intern can sometimes be – she did great; we couldn't have done the year without her.

- 3) Take a meaningful and rejuvenating sabbatical. Use the time to grow in spiritual practice and depth, and offer those insights in worship, pastoral care, and education to the congregation.

Yes, done. Thank you. I hope you see the fruits of this work in my ministry with you – and will continue to do so.

- 4) With lay leaders, create plans for long term stability for the congregation's finances, in light of the pandemic and the attendant economic disaster.

We did our best here. I can't say enough kind things about Steve Lewis and the rest of the finance committee for their leadership. And you – you kept up your pledges. Lindsay and Lauren worked very hard to keep Woodsong up and running – and grew enrollment by the end of the year. We lost fundraiser income, but our PPP loan made up for that. We are putting things on the right path going forward – asking for stronger giving from our members, renewing our contract with Spectrum School, and taking good care of our permanent funds – including putting those funds more and more towards socially responsible investing. I continue to worry about the way that income inequality in general and the way that Gen X and Millennials have been hammered by the 2001, 2008, and 2020 economic crisis' poses medium-term threats to the viability of congregational life. But we will find a way – as we have before.

What about 2021-2022? What are my goals for this year?

- 1) Fully welcome and support Rev. Joyce Palmer as our new Assistant Minister. I want to make sure that the staff, leadership, and congregation as a whole works well and faithfully with Joyce as she establishes her ministry with us. Work with her on our pastoral care and caring ministry.
- 2) Assess, with the board, our progress towards our ends, and review the strategic plan to make adjustments so we can achieve those ends.
- 3) With the Social Justice Council and other leaders in the church and the community, faithfully implement our vision for more relational and theological depth in our justice work.
- 4) Recruit, train, and support a generosity team to work on year-round generosity and stewardship work with new and current members, and complete next year's stewardship campaign.

May the spirit of joy we feel in coming back together sustain and inspire us as we come the year ahead.

In faith,  
Matthew

## Director of Religious Education Annual Report

### Religious Education

What can be said about the 2020-21 church year that has not already been said? It was an unprecedented year of challenges unlike anything we have experienced before. We reimagined what church could look like (more than once) and did our very best to maintain the connections that folks had found at church through what was an isolating and difficult time in most people's lives.

When the stay-at-home order went into effect in Illinois. An attempt at meeting with the Religious Education groups through Zoom on Sundays after worship was moderately successful. In particular, the grades K & under group and the youth group seemed interested in using that platform. The children in grades 1-6 showed little interest in connecting through technology. We suspect this is due to the fact that they were inundated with screen-based obligations for school throughout the week and Zoom fatigue had set in by the time Sunday arrived. We wanted to encourage them to unplug, be outside, and connect with their loved ones anyway so we did not stress showing up for Zoom meetings for the grades 1-6 group. As a substitute for virtual meetings, I created activity packets that contained instructions and simple supplies that were mailed to each of the children in that age group as a way to maintain connection.

Eventually, participation in all the age groups dwindled to such small numbers that we decided to forego meeting through Zoom. Regular mailings continued to be sent to the families that had attended regularly before the shutdown (approximately 60 children total). I produced the mailings for the grades 1 & over group, and Lauren Smith produced the mailings for the grade K & under group.

One of the most successful endeavors was partnering with the Caring Team to deliver things in-person to the homes of the families that attended regularly before the shutdown. Kathy Scarpaci approached me with the idea to deliver small pumpkins to the families around the end of October. I was thrilled to be able to coordinate with members of another team and to have the extra help. The first delivery was



a success and so fun for the families and the Caring Team members that made the deliveries (even as far as Franklin Grove!) that we collectively decided to continue the trend. Seasonal pre-packaged cookies were delivered to the families by the Caring Team around the winter holidays, and the final delivery that we coordinated on was an R.E. kit that was delivered to each family.

I curated items relevant to each grade level such as books about the faith, mindfulness activities, materials to make a chalice, flip books with the chalice lighting that we use in our classrooms, art materials, a principles matching activity, bookmarks, stickers, journals, and so on. Each kit was assembled in a cardboard box and contained the age-appropriate activities for the children in each household. The boxes were then lovingly delivered to each household by the Caring Team. This helped keep the church connection alive and enabled me to send bulkier items since the Caring Team members eliminated the cost of mailing the boxes. Children tend to connect to more concrete items and touchstones, and I am so grateful that the Caring Team made this particular delivery possible because it provided a way for church to come alive in a three-dimensional way for the children. This collaboration has been absolutely terrific from start to finish, and I would welcome chances to coordinate with the Caring Team in the future.

I am happy to report that some new families found us during the time that in-person worship was suspended. I was able to connect with them through Zoom and email and am excited to welcome them to the church when they join us in person.

Once spring arrived, our attention turned to returning to in-person worship and what that could look like for the children - a majority of whom would be unvaccinated. The decision was made to offer Religious Education classes outside (except in inclement weather). Children under two years old and children aged 12 and over that are fully vaccinated are welcome to join the congregation in the sanctuary. Children aged 2 through grade 12 are welcome to join us outside for R.E. classes. Lauren Smith will oversee the grade K & under group, and I will oversee the grade 1 & over group. The grade K & under group will remain on the Woodsong playground and have access to classroom 25 for the bathroom and handwashing. The grade 1 & over group will primarily gather at the fire pit and have access to classroom 26 for the bathroom and handwashing. This group will also incorporate hikes through the woods and prairie during R.E. time. Our focus will be on some of the rituals that grounded us before the shutdown such as chalice lighting, checking in with each other, and a story, as well as new opportunities to discover and appreciate the natural world around us. We could always use loving, upbeat, committed adults to volunteer in the R.E. program. Volunteering just one Sunday a month makes it possible to offer R.E. to our families and takes the burden off a small handful of people.

Because we were not able to provide our regularly scheduled Our Whole Lives classes due to the constraints of the COVID-19 situation, it will be necessary to offer all four grade levels of O.W.L. in the 2021-22 church year. This will require a great deal from our trained facilitators. Moving forward, it would be helpful to have more people in the congregation trained to be O.W.L. facilitators so the lion's share of the time commitment does not fall to a small handful of people.

We have switched to using the Breeze database to help with record keeping and communication. There were a few hiccups transferring from the previous database, but overall, it seems as though the new system will be just as useful for the purposes of Religious Education.

Finally, I coordinated with our senior minister Matthew Johnson to select and read the story for all ages throughout the year.

### **Community Fellowship Team**

I am sure it goes without saying that we weren't able to have Community Fellowship Team events during the church year. The one thing that we were able to do was offer a virtual donation drive for MELD as is our annual tradition. Our contact at MELD made an Amazon wish list with items that the mothers and children would appreciate, and that list was shared with the congregation. All items were able to be sent directly to the shelter, and I know that they were very appreciative of the adaptation and the gifts that they received.

We look forward to being able to plan some events outdoors as we begin to get back to in-person church.

### **Woodsong Nature School**

I am happy to report that Woodsong Nature School had another successful academic year despite the obstacles. We reopened the school in July 2020 after the statewide stay-at-home order was issued in May 2020. Class was in session on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8:30 am - 11:30 am. We followed the academic calendar of the Rockford Public School District and Spectrum School with a winter and spring break and days off for the Thanksgiving holiday. We began with 6 students enrolled in July and ended the year with 13 students enrolled. We are about to begin our summer session that runs from June through August with enrollment at full capacity and two people on a waitlist for August. Our enrollment for the fall is strong, and we have another open house scheduled for June to fill the potentially 2-3 spots that we have remaining.

Lauren Smith and I serve as co-directors and co-teachers for the program and additionally handle administrative tasks, marketing, tours, admissions, playground and trail maintenance, and cleaning. This helps keep our operating costs significantly low.

Our program is primarily geared towards children that are 2 years old. A child needs to be 2 years old to enroll but can remain enrolled when they turn 3. Our mornings are mainly spent outside with each day beginning with free play time on the small playground designated for Woodsong. We then take a nature walk through the wooded area of the grounds. When we finish the walk, we spend time inside taking care of toileting needs, eating a snack, and having work time in the classroom.

Our goals for starting Woodsong Nature School were to offer a quality early childhood program for 2-year-olds, capitalize on the beautiful grounds of the church, build interest in the church, and strengthen the relationship with Spectrum School. Based on the feedback from parents, we have been able to do just that. Parent satisfaction is high and recommendations from current families is one of our best marketing tools. Members of the church have enrolled their children in the program, and Woodsong families have become interested in and even new members of the church. Spectrum School staff generously recommended Woodsong to their current families that had children the right age for our school and passed along our marketing materials to families that toured Spectrum that had younger children eligible for our school. We could not be happier with our accomplishments especially because reopening under the DCFS COVID-19 guidelines added an additional logistical layer to what we already make happen in a day at Woodsong.

## **In Gratitude**

I would like to heartily thank the following people for their time and commitment to volunteer: Allyson Rosemore, Billie Callahan, Kim Lowman Vollmer, Steve Hall, Kathy, Scarpaci, Bill Scarpaci, Susan Carvello, Jessica Hodierna, and Shiraz Tata.

I would like to extend an extra special thank you to Kathy Scarpaci and the Caring Team for their collaboration and thoughtfulness during this challenging year.

And, for her steadfast dedication and continued commitment to excellence, I would like to send my eternal gratitude to Lauren Smith.

*Respectfully Submitted by Lindsay Trank*

## **Music Director's Report**

When the program year began in August 2020, nothing had changed since the end of the previous program year. When I returned after the summer, our worship services were not yet being held in person. Instead, each week only the worship team met on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. to do worship in our space and livestream it for our congregation and beyond. My role in worship throughout this entire program year has been to select and present music programmed in accordance with our monthly worship themes and the specific focus of each weekly service. That part of my job is the same as it has always been. What continues to be different, however, is that I have been responsible for both singing and playing hymns, musical responses, and anthems, as well as providing both a prelude and an offertory each week. Counting the time required for choosing, procuring, and preparing all of these musical selections weekly, my time commitment is the same now as it was pre-pandemic.

In accordance with the scientific research concerning singing in groups, the **Unicantors** have not met in person at all this program year. Instead, we met virtually at our regular rehearsal time each Thursday evening to stay connected with one another, albeit virtually. Like many other choristers who find themselves in the same situation, the **Unicantors** miss singing and making music together. Fortunately, there were three opportunities this past year for them to participate in virtual choir projects. Two of these projects involved other UU congregations: one headed up last summer by my music colleague at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln (NE) in conjunction with a consortium of UU congregations nationwide in which our congregation participated, and the other as part of the UU Justice Revival service last April involving numerous UU congregations in Illinois besides our own. The third project was one that we did completely on our own, which we used as the anthem on Easter Sunday. Those members who participated said they found the experience rewarding, even though the virtual format didn't match the experience of being together in person to make music.

We did manage to hold two Music Sunday services this year, which has been our custom for many years. Our December Music Sunday featured our musical friends **Rachel Handlin**, **Michael Beert**, and **Aria Beert**, who presented a program of music for strings and voice on the theme of winter. The service also featured poetry read by **Mary Caskey**, and a surprise appearance by the **Unicantors** circa 2000 singing "Great Day," one of the many pieces they recorded back in the day for use on Fusion, the weekly

television program hosted for many years by **Minister Emeritus Dave Weissbard**. Many thanks to **DeLon** and **Carol Fox**, curators of the Fusion archives, for locating and formatting the recording for use in the service that Sunday.

Our May Music Sunday service was a celebration of the gift of music and the spirit of camaraderie it engenders among both those who make the music and those who hear it. The service included a number of solo and ensemble pieces presented by several of the talented musicians from our own congregation, including cellist **Martha Dunegan**, organist **Kay Hotchkiss**, pianists **Dave Lantz** and **Jesse Parker**, violist **Teresa Wilmot**, and flutist **Kathy Young**. The service also featured poetry read by **Libby Parker**. As always, I am grateful for the wealth of musical talent that we have in our congregation and the willingness of members to share their talents with us for the benefit of all.

As of June, we have returned to in-person worship, while still continuing to livestream our services weekly. When I return from my summer hiatus, the rest of the staff and I will carefully consider the latest scientific information regarding how music should be incorporated in worship for the safety of all persons, whether vaccinated or not. As was pointed out in a recent webinar regarding music in the context of a return to in-person worship, guidelines like those published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are intended to provide guidance to individuals, not institutions. The current guidelines indicate that the **Unicantors** will be able to meet for rehearsals this fall, but it remains unclear whether or not it is advisable for them to present music in worship. In August, we will review the state of the relevant research and make sound decisions based in science in accordance with the principles of Unitarian Universalism, just as it should be.

As always, I remain eternally grateful for your support of our music program. My seventeenth year as Music Director has been the most challenging by far, but I look forward to a gradual return to making music together as we have for so many years now. May it be so.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Anderson  
Music Director

## **Membership Manager Report 2020/21**

After 5 years with UU Rockford, I'm sad to say that this will be my final annual report as Membership Manager, as I've relocated out of state. As such, I have continued to welcome and connect newcomers, encourage active participation in church life for both members and potential members, track membership, manage Touchstone mailings and adult programming, and assist Caring team meetings.

### **Welcome & Hospitality**

The most beloved component of my position had been hosting the guest table on Sunday mornings, which was unfortunately halted in March of 2020, due to the Covid pandemic. I have been remotely assisting the live-stream comment thread to stay connected to new and existing folx and also hosting a virtual coffee hour every Sunday after service. Normally, I would help manage the scheduling of hospitality volunteers, which we are beginning to resume with our new database, Breeze. Using our

online visitor intake form, I have continued to connect with new visitors and provide them with the appropriate information.

Our team of Sunday Welcome Volunteers consists of 138 people which help with hospitality duties (including but not limited to) guest table hosts, greeters, ushers, and coffee and snack hosts. We have wonderful folks who help with hospitality –Many thanks to all who all who have served in this way! It has been expressed by many new visitors and new members alike how genuinely welcoming our church has been to walk into on Sunday mornings.

### **Membership Development and Team Leadership**

Using Simple Church (recently replaced by Breeze) I have been able to keep an accurate list of Church members, teams, friends, and visitors.

We had hosted one, online, Path to Membership class in the summer of 2020. We would normally have offered a 4.5 hour class, 3x/year- Fall, Winter, and Spring, and then facilitate a book-signing ceremony for new members to join our congregation. We had 2 new visitors in attendance, of which both joined.

The new members included Eric and Gretchen Ericson. Unfortunately Gretchen passed away just a few months after joining the church. We currently have 319 members. We've had 10 of our members pass on this year.

The Membership Team includes, Neita Webster, Gaen McClendon, Geri Carter (absent for covid), Jennifer Riley, Matt Menze, Rhonda McAllister, and Teresa Palmeno. The team normally assists with: Path to Membership classes, conduct new member interviews, connect new members within our community, train new volunteers, and implement new strategies for making ours a welcoming community.

I am also connected with the UU Association of Membership Professionals (UUAMP), a community in which I am able to share and draw ideas as well as connect with others in the same role. They have offered many online ways to connect, especially during the pandemic.

I'm normally the staff liaison to the AIM (Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry) team, the Welcoming Congregation team (both halted during Covid), and have been actively assisting the Caring team, which has been consistently meeting monthly and has done great work this past year.

Respectfully,  
Chris Ainsworth

## **Treasurer's Report**

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>. As of April, pledge income is 90% of the annual budget, on target to end well. Over all, members kept up with their pledges during the pandemic. However, the church lost 9 members while not adding any new ones. I invite all members to complete their pledges by the end of June.

Our on-line auction earned \$5275 after buying software to allow an on-line auction. The software is now ours to use in the future.

Woodsong, our nature school for 2- and 3-year-olds, experienced financial loss due to closing during the pandemic. The low point was December 2019 when income was under budget by over \$4,000. However, their enrollment has increased; in April their income was \$1,300 over the monthly budget. Future enrollment is increasing. By June, income may even approach the annual budget.

One of the actions to protect members' health in response to the pandemic was adding ion purification units to both furnaces and air conditioners. By circulating the air continuously, ions clump viruses to other particles, allowing them to be captured by filters. The cost, \$12,800, was offset by \$12,400 raised by targeted contributions from members.

Belay virtual bookkeeping is working well. I emailed our human bookkeeper in Wisconsin when I had questions, and her response was always prompt and complete. We experienced some problems with slow mail service and, with staff working from home, late invoice entry. We all learned to cope with these problems.

In July, the building was inspected for asbestos. We now know where the problems are and how to cope with them when remodeling. The bill was split with Spectrum School.

Long-term water damage prompted repairs to the entrance area, both inside and outside. Periodically during the year, we invested in live-streaming equipment to improve the quality of our worship services. Since we will continue to live-stream, as we were doing even before COVID-19, these improvements will be useful in the future. In total, we paid \$1,178 for this purpose. Some of this cost was offset by memorial gifts.

Landscaping of both the island and the atrium by the front doors was partially funded by \$2,455 from memorials and \$2,000 from special donations. The work is on-going; more plants will be added. Be sure to check these areas when you return to the church for in-person services. August's derecho caused a lot of damage; all but \$500 of it was covered by insurance.

Steve Lewis completed the 47-page form to apply for a PPP loan for the church. We received the loan, \$61,924, and the entire amount was eventually "forgiven." This was a god-send for our budget.

Pete Giolitto resigned from the Investment Panel soon after he retired from Wells Fargo Advisors. After many years of his managing our investments accounts, this change prompted a deep consideration of the interaction of UU values with financial investment. I presented to both the Panel and the Board, ideas learned during General Assembly 2020 about changes in the endowment universe and about the UUCEF, Common Endowment Fund. I spent 2 months closely analyzing historical performance of our investments for the past 7 years—as far as computer records were available. I asked a lot of questions of our Wells Fargo Advisors representative and of UUA staff, and I learned a lot in the process. The result was a comparison analysis of our UUCEF and Wells Fargo investments, of both performance results and socially responsible values. After the Wonderful Wednesday presentation by the Rev. Dr. Sidney Morris in May, the panel decided unanimously to move funds to SRI/ESG investments, including a large increase in the UUCEF fund. Our investment funds grew by 16% during this fiscal year, partly due to investment growth and partly due to added funds.

The move to Florida of Chris Ainsworth prompted a change to staff. An assistant minister replaced the membership coordinator position, assuming similar responsibilities plus some ministerial ones. The Rev. Joyce Palmer, a member of our congregation and an affiliated minister, accepted this position. The draft budget for FY 2020-2021 was adjusted to allow for additional expenses.

This year we paid our "Fair Share" to the UUA's Annual Program Fund. May we make this an annual goal.

Submitted by Teresa Wilmot

## Committee Reports

### **UU Church Building & Grounds Committee COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021**

*Name of committee:* Building & Grounds Committee

*Committee's purpose:* The Building and Ground Committee plans, budgets for and executes maintenance and improvements to the Church property, building, furnishings, and equipment. It prepares recommendations for the Church Board and / or the Congregation, as appropriate, for major maintenance, significant, or Capital level improvements.

*Summary of committee's activities during the current year.*

1. Numerous repairs to the HVA/C systems, elevator, and plumbing systems were a major portion of the B&G expenses. A significant addition to the HVA/C system was the installation of air purifying ion generators on all 16 furnace's main fan assemblies, as well as the duct cleaning for Rm's 8,9,10,& 11.
2. Landscaping plans for the Atrium and Parking lot island were completed by Carole Hunter and group of willing volunteers. The Atrium planting area will be maintained as is for the present time. A significant addition to the Parking Lot island was the installation of a Peace Pole designed and created by Roger Benedict. The Memorials Committee has expressed a keen interest in, and will oversee, the rework / redesign of the landscaping in the Memorial Patio area. The committee is working on designs, and with volunteers to finalize their plans. Greater details and information will be available from the Memorials Committee.

There was some substantial damage to a number of the trees on the church grounds due to a severe thunderstorm and winds. The trees were trimmed or removed, and the cost was covered by the church insurance. Considerable grounds keeping activities have been ongoing, lead by Allen Penticoff with help from Clark and Eli Logeman.

3. The Church Office siding replacement, as well as substantial repairs and repainting of the windowsills along the main entry and library were completed.

4. Annual building equipment: Routine testing of fire alarm, H2O supply, elevator repairs, and other operational equipment was completed. Office entry door operating mechanism was readjusted following the replacement of the door threshold. Electrical wiring for Rm-18 and the hallway connecting to the Commons Area was repaired. The Sanctuary sound and A/V system has been enhanced to be compatible with the rearrangement of the worship space. Greater information has been, and will be, provided by Matthew.

5. Spectrum School: Spectrum School was notified in April 2020, by the Illinois State Board of Education that they needed to have an asbestos inspection done in order to obtain state certification. received. The inspection was completed, the final report and recommendations were received with no requirements for substantial actions other than labeling identified areas.

6. The Building & Grounds Committee meetings for 2021 will continue to be via e-mail, or possibly Zoom if required, until further guidance is received.

*Hopes for the coming church year (Please limit to one paragraph):*

1. Continue with the identification and resolution of major building maintenance repair items, and Church facilities improvements as identified by the B&G Committee and others. (e.g. Sealing and re-stripping of the parking lots, Repairs to the concrete sidewalk areas).

*Committee members (names):*

Skip Abare, Carolyn Arevalo, Shoko Chien Jim Dehler, Anita Johnson, Allen Penticoff, Fred Stellema, Kim Vollmer

*Committee chair:* D.J Schubert

## **Library Committee**

UU Rockford

2020 – 2021 Annual Report

Committee Members are Mike Ullrich, Jan Dunham, Rhea Overley, and Kathy Young.

Chairperson is Mike Ullrich.

The library has been closed since the pandemic shutdown began.

On May 12, 2021, the committee tidied up the library in preparation for the church reopening.

The committee also processed and shelved several books.

The committee will begin regular meetings and continue processing books sometime in the summer or fall.

Kathy Young  
Secretary



## **Finance Committee Annual Report – 2019-2020**

Purpose Statement: The Finance Committee monitors the financial status of the church and helps to maintain its sound condition by its activities and recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

Summary of committee activities during the current year:

-Reviewed the church's income and expenses monthly, as well as the status of the fundraising activities, service contracts, memorials and other financial matters.

-As of May, the committee reports the church financial year to be running surprisingly well. The biggest impact and concern were the effects of the Coronavirus, its economic shock, and the resulting four month church physical shutdown. There has been some falloff in donation income, but less than feared. With the shutdown, fee income from the Woodsong program stopped as did much of the rental income. Spectrum School continued their rental of the lower level. Expenses for building and programs were reduced due to the shutdown. By fiscal year end, June 30, there will be a deficit of up to \$10,000. Thankfully, the Deficit Reserve Fund has a large enough balance to cover it.

-Through the CARES Act, we were able to apply for and receive a PPP Loan intended to assist small organizations bridge disruptions of the pandemic shutdowns. This will enable us to continue staffing levels without furloughs for 10 weeks.

-With the minister, built a balanced annual budget for fiscal year 2020-2021. This budget anticipates shutdowns and slow reopening for significant part of the fiscal year. It anticipates reduction in incomes. However, anticipated relief from the PPP Loan will make up for the income losses.

-The Internal Audit Committee consisting of Steve Blomgren, Dave Zinn, and Eric VanEst. They performed certain tests of our financial systems. Additionally, funds were allocated that will allow an outside independent professional Financial Review every 5 years.

-Reviewed and updated 10 and 20 year old church purchasing policies.

Committee Members: Steve Lewis (Chair), Sue Molyneaux (Treasurer), Steve Blomgren (Investment Panel Chair), Pete Giolitto, Ruth Little, Dave Zinn, Matt Menze, Mark Schultz.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Lewis, Chair

## **Memorials and Special Gifts**

*Committee's purpose:* To act as a sensitive liaison with families and/or donors in the selection of memorials that reflect the life and interests of the memorialized person(s) and are appropriate to the needs, priorities and décor of the church; and to review proposed donations to the church.

*Summary of committee's activities during the year:*

Received memorial funds for: Carol Foster, Shirley Henley, Dave Mayhall, Verna Hays and Gretchen Ericson.

Consulted with appropriate persons re: use of loved ones' memorial funds.

Maintained Memorials and Special Gifts Record Book

*Expenditures this year:* The committee approved the following expenditures for this year:

- Payment for the Peace Pole which was dedicated last summer, (Roger Benedict donated the carving but there were expenditures for the wood and some materials.)
- Landscaping expenses,
  - The new Japanese maple in the Atrium Garden
  - Island garden in the parking lots
- And, equipment to enhance capacity for our Sunday morning church broadcasts

*Hopes for the coming year:* We are currently working on plans to rehab the Memorial Patio which needs repairs and for redoing the landscaping around the patio. We hope to be able to make good progress on the work this summer.

*Committee members 2020-2021:* Francie Barnes, Mary Caskey, Jackie Dehler, Alice Enichen, Kay Hotchkiss, Pat Lewis, Ruth Little

Patricia Lewis, Chair

## **Pandemic Shutdown Auction**

The year 2020 was a lot about adapting to the situation. Our Pandemic Shutdown Auction was a case in point. There could not be a party, and an auction gathering. Instead, the Auction moved on-line. Over 100 members learned how to navigate a new on-line system, found offerings, and learned to bid (sometimes ferociously).

Members and other Rockford artists offered their shutdown artworks. Food items were popular. Some Zoom dinners, and Zoom parties managed to warm our isolated January. Jon McGinty gave (6) history lectures on Zoom. Using our newfound streaming expertise, there were four live music streaming cocktail concerts.

All told, the Pandemic Shutdown Auction exceeded our plans, and earned \$5,247 for the church.

# Investment Panel

## Permanent Fund Allocations to 2021-22 Operating Budget

<b>Intern Minister</b>	<b>\$3,700 (this year, for Assistant Minister position)</b>
<b>Building &amp; Grounds budget</b>	<b>\$8,500 (used for ongoing repairs)</b>
<b>Capital Reserve</b>	<b>\$8,400 (placed into reserve for larger projects)</b>
<b>Growth Programs</b>	<b>\$11,600 (used to subsidize Assistant Minister)</b>
<b>Outreach (Justice)</b>	<b>\$4,900 (includes Shaheen Lecture)</b>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>\$1,600 (used for curriculum, supplies, etc).</b>
<b>Other Designated Funds</b>	<b>\$800 (flowers, leadership)</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$39,000</b>

## Denominational Affairs Committee

Committee's Purpose: The Denominational Affairs Committee informs the congregation about the larger denomination--the MidAmerica Region and the UUA--and provides feedback from the congregation to the UUA.

Summary of Committee's Activities During 2020-2021: Attended 2020 Virtual General Assembly. The theme was "Rooted, Inspired, and Ready." Anti-racism and "decolonizing" were major themes. The report from the UUA Commission on Institutional Change was introduced, Widening the Circle of Concern. This document will guide our association in anti-racism, both in denominational realms and in individual congregations.

Rev. Joan Javier-Duval, the daughter of immigrants from the Philippines, challenged us to learn of our ancestors, including our indigenous peoples, in her sermon, "Beyond the Water's Edge." We need to build bridges and center our interconnectedness rather than our independence.

Naomi Klein, delivered the Ware Lecture on Climate Justice.

Hopes for the coming church year:

Support the UUA's report, *Widening the Circle of Concern*, in dismantling white supremacy in the culture of our congregations, in our denomination, and in our country.

Committee Members: Teresa Wilmot

Other Church Members and Friends Who Have Assisted the Committee:

Duane Wilke (Partner Church)

Signature of Committee Chair: Teresa Wilmot

# Caring Team Annual Report

“How beautiful it is to care for each other.”

Senior Minister Matthew Johnson, Sunday sermon, May 30, 2021

## **Caring Team’s Purpose**

At the Unitarian Universalist Church, Rockford, the purpose of the Caring Team is to assist the congregation in its ministry to members, especially during times of major life changes; isolation because of age, mobility issues, or other factors; health problems, illness, and hospitalization; and death of a family member or friend.

## **Team Membership**

Caring Team participants during 2020-21 include Carolyn and Bob Arevalo, Wanda Hoover, Gaen McClendon, Teresa Palmeno, Sue Wilke. Gloria Perez, Tom Walsh, Bob Babcock, Shari Smallwood, Reggie Brenmark-French, Marti Zinn, Khanh Oehlke (board liaison), Diane Kuehl (scribe), and Kathy Scarpaci (chair). Neita Webster and Jackie Dehler helped the team stay in touch with church members who live at Wesley Willows.

The committee works closely with the church staff to provide timely assistance, support and contact. Special thanks to Chris Ainsworth, our staff liaison, and to Rev. Matthew Johnson, Autumn Powell, Lindsay Dunn and Tim Anderson.

## **A Year Like No Other**

During the past year, the Covid 19 pandemic affected every aspect of the Caring Team’s outreach. While church staff continued conducting Sunday services remotely until June 6, 2021, everyone missed the familiar weekly contact with friends at church. The team switched from bi-monthly Sunday meetings after church to monthly Tuesday evening remote gatherings on Zoom. Due to quarantines, we were unable to call on members in need in their homes for many months. Meanwhile, hospitals and care facilities banned all visitors, including family members and clergy. When church members died, their memorial services often were postponed or streamed to people’s home computers.

Team members tried to ease loneliness and isolation by making phone calls and writing notes to those in need of companionship. Sometimes we donned masks and talked from a distance through screen doors or conversed via mobile phones while standing outside someone’s window. Throughout the year, Caring Team members and many other church folk provided meals for several individuals and families experiencing grief, illness, injury or isolation.

During this year of separation from each other, team members also reached out to our church family in other ways:

- Connected with children and youth enrolled in our Religious Education program (and their parents) by delivering a small pumpkin and note of greeting to each child’s doorstep during the week before Halloween
- Surprised the kids again at Christmastime with holiday treats
- Delivered poinsettias and chatted (at a distance) with adult church members in need of holiday cheer in December
- Contributed a Caring Team Auction basket for the church’s online winter auction

- Visited children and families in March to deliver activity boxes created by R.E. Director Lindsay Dunn
- Sent Valentine greetings to a number of adult church members living in isolation

### **Memorial Receptions Subcommittee**

Because of pandemic restrictions, the subcommittee assisted with only one in-person memorial service this year, a large summer outdoor gathering on the church grounds in memory of Carol Foster.

Planning ahead, leaders Sue Wilke, Teresa Palmeno and Linda Spelman spent time formalizing the division of memorial service and reception duties shared by the minister, staff, and the subcommittee, while putting procedures in place for future indoor and outdoor memorial service receptions.

This subcommittee and the entire Caring Team wish to thank Senior Minister Matthew Johnson for honoring church members and friends who died this past year with Memorial Moments reflections presented during our live-streamed Sunday worship services.

### **In Conclusion**

Finally, my personal thank you to each member of the Caring Team for your care, creativity and concern in stepping up to the special challenges of reaching out to our community in the era of Covid 19.

Kathy Scarpaci, Chair

## **Membership Team**

Please see Membership Coordinator report.

## **Religious Growth & Learning**

Please see the Director of Religious Education Report

## **Social Justice Team**

This will be updated soon.

## **Music Team**

See Music Director Report.

# UU ROCKFORD ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Sunday, June 7, 2020

Meeting, via Zoom, begins at 11:25 am with Call to Order by Linda Johnson

Rules and Procedures for Congregational Meeting were reviewed, and it was established that a quorum was present.

Dan Fellars is parliamentarian. Because this meeting is via Zoom, members were instructed to use "chat" to ask questions or make comments.

The minutes of the 2019 meeting were reviewed. The minutes of the 2018 meeting were not approved, will need to find for the 2021 meeting.

The 2019 minutes were approved, with the additional need to amend the 2019 minutes. Kim Vollmer made a motion to amend the 2019 minutes to include the names of the 25 yr. and 50 yr. members. Bob Babcock 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion passed.

Rebecca Quirk of the nomination committee, introduced the nominees for new board members.

## 1. Election of Officers:

President: Carolyn Arevalo (1 year term)

Vice President: Amanda Tapfield (1 year term)

Clerk: Peggy Menze (1 year term)

Treasurer: Teresa Wilmot (2 year term)

Trustee: Gary Huckstep (2 year term)

Note: Khanh Oehlke and Neita Webster will continue to serve as Trustees.

## 2. Election of Nominating Panel members:

Linda Johnson (2 year term)

Gaen McClendon (2 year term)

a. Rebecca Quirk moved that the selection of officers be accepted for 2020-21.

b. Teresa seconds and the motion carries.

Linda acknowledged the current board members and those who ended their term.

## 3. Approval of the 2020-2021 Permanent Fund Income Allocations

a. Steve Lewis moves to approve the noted allocations

b. Ruth Little seconds and the motion carries

Steve Lewis provided an explanation of these investments. Accepted and approved.

## 4. Approval of the Social Outreach Task Force Recommendations

Actions for Children and other Social Outreach Projects, total of \$2,300

a. Jesse Parker moves to approve the recommendations

b. Amanda Tapfield seconds and the motion carries

## 5. Approval of the 2020-2021 Annual Operating Budget

a. Steve Lewis moves to approve the recommendation

b. Neita Webster seconds and the motion carries

Steve Lewis gave a “best guess” explanation of the budget given the current circumstances (shut down due to Covid-19 virus). There were no objections to accepting the recommended budget.

Recognitions:

Those Completing Terms of office

Charles Parker Connolly Award: Nikki Tichnor

2020 Community Service Award: Bob Babcock

Youth Connolly Award: Ari Almonaci

Community Group Award: Cornucopia Volunteers

Unitarian Universalist of the Year: Carol Foster

Recognition of 25 year members:

Mary Anderson

Saundra Berglund

Mike Davis

Barb Giolitto

Pete Giolitto

Erich Lantz

Mary Newport

Pat Schubert

50 year members:

Randy Locke

Sandra Locke

Memorial honoring of those members who have passed in the past year:

Alan Bloomfield

Frank Dajka

Laura Davis

Verna Hays

Marlowe Holstrum

Jack Houghtby

Scotti Lichtenheld

Mark McDonald

Jim Overley

Derick Parker

Kanwar Singh

Barb Smith

Maggie Thienemann

Pat Tollefsrud

There was a question from Ellyn Ahmed regarding when members would be coming back to church. Matthew indicated that Rockford UU is following the guidelines of the UU Church, to recognize vulnerability and inclusion.

Linda Johnson Moves for Adjournment

There was a second and the motions carries. Meeting adjourned at 12:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted  
Peggy Menze  
Board Clerk

\*\*Amendment: There was a correction in the 25 and 50 year members mentioned in this meeting.

The 25 year members for 2020:

Mary Anderson  
Saundra Berglund  
Judith Boone  
Mike Davis  
Barb Giolitto  
Pete Giolitto  
Mary Newport  
Pat Schubert

There were no 50 year members.