

The Unitarian Universalist Church
Rockford, Illinois



Annual Report 2022—2023

The Unitarian Universalist Church

2022-23 Annual Report

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Officers of the Congregation

2022-2023

President: Judy Gustafson Vice President: Spitty Tata
Treasurer: Steve Blomgren Clerk: Bob Spelman

Board of Trustees

Rebecca Beneditz Sarah Greer Jami Edmonds

Committee Chairs & Team Leaders

BUILDING & GROUNDS Dave Schubert
LIBRARY TEAM..... Mike Ullrich
FINANCE COMMITTEE Steve Lewis
Investment Panel Teresa Wilmot
Memorials & Special Gifts..... Pat Lewis
Generosity Committee..... Linda Johnson and company
DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE Teresa Wilmot
MEMBERSHIP TEAM..... Rev. Joyce Palmer
RELIGIOUS GROWTH & LEARNING Lindsay Dunn, DRE
FAITH AND ACTION TEAM Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson
WORSHIP TEAM..... Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson
Music Team..... Tim Anderson, Music Director
CARING TEAM..... Wanda Hoover
NOMINATING PANEL..... Linda Johnson

Staff

SENIOR MINISTER The Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson
ASSISTANT MINISTER..... The Rev. Joyce Palmer
DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Lindsay Trank
MUSIC DIRECTOR Dr. Tim Anderson
MINISTER EMERITUS The Rev. David R. Weissbard
MUSIC DIRECTOR EMERITA Kay Hotchkiss
OFFICE MANAGER Autumn Powell
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSISTANT Lauren Smith

President's Report 2022 - 2023

I have been privileged to serve as President of the Board this year and am proud to have served with the following members of the Board:

Spitty Tata, Vice President; Bob Spelman, Clerk; Steve Blomgren, Treasurer; and Sarah Greer, Jami Edmonds, and Rebecca Beneditz, Trustees.

On September 11, the Board met in retreat to review, revise, and/or create the annual strategic plan. The Board set its Calendar of Responsibilities; reviewed and revised, if needed, the leadership roster, budget, and all policies. The Board's role is to support the work of the staff and lay leaders when requested or required.

On April 1 we kicked off our Stewardship campaign with a very well-attended potluck/ competition. Many attendees pointed out how much they have missed this kind of fellowship.

Following the April 2 worship service, the congregation voted on a Board proposal to engage Spinello's Locksmiths in creating a key card entry, replacing keys. The motion passed unanimously.

Matthew, Judy, and Spitty met on April 6 to craft a Ministerial Agreement for Matthew.

On April 15th, the neighborhood food pantry groundbreaking event was hosted on our Church grounds. Several members attended and helped; we need to invite more members of the church to participate in such events.

Respectfully submitted
Judy Gustafson, President

Mission, Vision, & Ends

Vision

A loving congregation that connects with ourselves, one another, and the larger community.

Mission

We care for ourselves, each other, and our neighbors while taking risks acting for justice. We are continuously building an inclusive, empowered, anti-oppressive, anti-racist, multicultural congregation. Our connections foster radical love for ourselves and others.

Ends

Each person in the congregation is invited into a spiritual life. We are inspired and equipped to share radical love¹ through our daily lives and authentic conversations.²

Strategy 1A: Our leaders and staff develop worship and programs to enrich our spiritual lives.

1A1: Creative, multicultural, loving worship and music. Worship invites spiritual living, (re)connects people, and gives people energy and hope for living their lives. We continue to use multi-platform worship with online and in-person options. High quality and diverse guest preachers and speakers and guest musicians are added to our current offerings. The choir is a source of joy, connection, and is an inclusive and increasingly diverse group. We give more care to make the space beautiful and joyful, in connection with the theme.

Resources: Increase guest preacher budget by \$1000/year and guest musician budgets by \$2000 per year. Ministers and Music Director focus on this area.

Timeline: Begin with 22-23 church year. Recruit musicians and guest preachers who will be regular guests. By 24-25, we will have regular roster of guests and worship will be noticeably more multicultural than it is today. During Rev. Matthew's next sabbatical (probably 24-25), ensure that a large percentage of the guest preachers are Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color.

1A2: Heart-centered, caring small group ministry and adult learning, all of which equip people to share radical love in their daily lives, and to have authentic conversations. Support the Touchstones/Covenant Groups, and other small groups.³ Support the Sauk Valley Group⁴. Offer creative and engaging adult programs, and programs that

¹ See <https://www.betterhelp.com/advice/love/what-is-radical-love/> for a good explanation. There, it says “The term *radical* is used to describe something that is whole, complete, and thorough. A radical change, for instance, is one that completely overhauls existing standards. Radical love, then, is love that is not fractured in its expression or experience. In more common terms, radical love is unconditional love.” “Radical love is the kind of love that can be felt for all of humankind; for everything on earth, alive or not, seeing everyone and everything as interconnected, and vibrant.”

² Authentic conversations are meaningful, honest, and deep conversations characterized by respect, curiosity, and growth. People talk about their fears and hopes, sources of meaning, and learn about themselves and others through these kinds of conversations.

³ Includes ramblers, India House, Pickleball, CUUPS, and similar groups.

⁴ UU's in Dixon, Oregon, Leaf River, and nearby communities. They gather monthly for a theme conversation and meal, and have sponsored an Afghan Refugee family.

grow intercultural competencies⁵ and build relationships. Share opportunities in our community partners and with UU organizations, especially for people with marginalized identities.

Resources: Current support for Assistant Minister, Theme-Based Ministry (Touchstone or Soul Matters) Subscription, should be sufficient. Look at partnerships with Womanspace, art groups, and others.

Timeline: 22-23: Enliven existing groups, start new ones, and begin at least one partnership with arts/spirituality organization. Regular support for Sauk Valley Group.

23-24: Census of members; goal: at least 100 members total in a variety of small groups. Support creation of new groups/programs where there is interest.

24-25: Create second partnership with arts/spirituality organization.

1A3: Religious Education for children and youth, which supports and engages caregivers and families, demonstrates and encourages radical love, and develops UU spiritual life and values. Building on our strengths in nature-based learning, sexuality education, and justice work – especially including antiracism, anti-oppression and multicultural work--, design and execute an effective and volunteer-efficient plan.

Resources: Consider stipends and partnerships to supplement volunteers and staff. Budget for 3-month sabbatical (not necessarily all at once) for Lindsay Trank (\$5000, saving 2500 a year in 22-23 and allocating 2500 in 23-24).

Timeline: 22-23: Design and implement a plan, in consultation with caregivers, children, youth, and other members of the congregation, to offer religious education given current habits, constraints, and opportunities. Matthew, Lindsay, and Lauren to lead; also to recruit through this process a team to support RE.

23-24: Implement this plan. Manage Lindsay's sabbatical.

24-25: Adjust, improve, and implement the plan.

1A4: Create a family camp/conference weekend for regional Unitarian Universalists. We have attempted to promote existing camps, but they are too far away/too long. We will create a weekend camp at a retreat center in Southern Wisconsin or Northern Illinois and invite Unitarian Universalist families from around the region to attend. In the design and program we will be sure to center multicultural families.

Resources: Staff time, and a planning team from the congregation to get started. Though the camp should be self-sufficient, we will want a scholarship fund (which could be the Minister's Discretionary Fund).

Timeline: 22-23. Recruit team, choose location and days, advertise.

23-24: Hold first gathering. Learn from and build on experience.

24-25: Hold second gathering.

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

1B1: We use key tools to spread the word about activities, events, and our mission within the church and in the wider world. We use social platforms, email, texts, and postal mailings to inform our folks and others about what we are up to and how to get involved, with a focus on our anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multicultural (ARAOMC) programs and outreach to diverse populations.

Resources: Staff time, and a small team of volunteers to make suggestions. Small ad budget for social (already in the budget).

Timeline: Ongoing, with regular review.

1B2: Members enthusiastically invite others to participate in the church. Members are trained and encouraged to invite others to participate – both existing participants to get more involved, and potential newcomers to come for the first time. These invitations will be culturally competent/humble.

Resources: Existing staff time.

Timeline: Ongoing. Hold at least 3 "Bring a Friend" Sundays/year. Write and preach about having a culture

⁵ Intercultural Competency and Cultural Humility. Competency here means knowledge about your own cultural patterns and that of others, and the skills to navigate cross-cultural situations well. Humility means knowing that we do not fully understand another person's culture(s) and being curious, non-judgmental, and open. Key to both concepts is recognizing that the white, middle-class, Midwest culture is one among many, and not the "default normal."

of invitation and outreach.

1B3: Engage more people to participate in small group ministry. Start new groups at least 2x/year. Advertise openings and the opportunity to start interest-based groups. Include/support/center participation of Black, Indigenous, and other members and friends of Color.

Resources: Existing staff time. New facilitators.

Timeline: Ongoing, with big push in fall 2022.

1B4: Hold 2x/annual "Engagement Fair" to encourage joining teams/committees. Teams should use resources from 1C2 to ensure what their work is aligned with our ARAOMC goals.

Resources: Some staff time, leaders to staff tables.

Timeline: Start spring 2022, and continue with October / March? each year.

Strategy 1C: Lay leaders and members are inspired and equipped to lead these programs.

1C1: Training and support for small groups leaders. Assistant minister offers regular support and training to leaders of Touchstones/Covenant groups and other small group ministry programs, and interest-based groups. Intercultural competency/humility and anti-racist leadership is included in this support.

Resources: Existing staff time.

Timeline: Ongoing. Some gatherings, and often one-to-one coaching.

1C2: Share best practices for team and committee leaders, especially about how to welcome and include and to bring anti-racist, multicultural practices into their work. Staff and Board liaisons work with their teams and committees to share these practices and monitor progress, with more direct coaching as needed.

Resources: Existing staff time. Commitment from team and committee leaders.

Timeline: Spring 22: Share best practices with leaders.

Fall 22: Make assessment of each team and committee, with a plan to improve the team's operations.

Follow through on plan.

Reassess each November.

1C3: Substantial focus on recruiting and supporting volunteers for religious education for children and youth. The RE staff and the Ministers will encourage, support, recruit, and assist in this work. We'll consider stipends as needed. Volunteers will be equipped to put our ARAOMC goals into practice.

Resources: Existing staff time. Potential stipends.

Timeline: Beginning spring '22 and ongoing. We want to see a highly robust roster of reliable volunteers by fall '22.

1C4: Encourage participation in UUA programs for leadership development. UUA programs now always include an ARAOMC lens. The Denominational Affairs Coordinator and the Senior Minister will share leadership development opportunities with leaders in the church. Scholarships provided from Minister's Discretionary Fund as needed.

Resources: Existing, including continuing to be Fair Share to the UUA.

Timeline: Ongoing.

End #2: In our interdependent covenantal congregation, our church is nurtured by our members and our members are nurtured by our church.

Strategy 2A: Our Members are Nurtured by our church

2A1: The caring team provides supportive, loving, culturally-competent, and appropriate lay pastoral care to members and friends of the church. They are well-trained and equipped for this ministry.

Resources: Assistant Minister time.

Timeline: Ongoing. Annual trainings offered by Assistant Minister.

2A2: We care for, connect, and enrich the lives of our families with children (including parents, grandparents, and more). We have social gatherings, resources to support caregivers in their role as religious educators, and offer pastoral and spiritual support to families, especially those with very young children who have experienced so much disruption due to COVID-19. This ministry embodies our ARAOMC commitments.

Resources: Time for RE Staff and ministers, connection with UUA resources, volunteer time to lead social gatherings.
Timeline: Ongoing, and included in RE plan noted above. Restart social gatherings as soon as it is safe to do so.

2A3: We have strong and theologically-grounded safety and well-being policies, and enforce them. This includes policies to support public health, child safety, anti-harassment, right relations, ecological sustainability and anti-racism, disability justice and accessibility, and fair compensation.

Resources: UUA examples, Board time, staff time.

Timeline: Board task force created in '22 to examine, revise, and create policies related to safety and well-being.

2A4: We grow and strengthen our practices and culture of belonging and inclusion as part of our work of becoming a more multicultural, multiracial, and beloved community. This includes genuine accessibility for disabled people, intercultural competency and cultural humility, being a vital Welcoming Congregation, and working for justice, equity, and inclusion in the congregation as well as in the world.

Resources: Ministers, lay-leaders

Timeline: Spring '22: Transform Membership Team into Inclusion Team, which includes AIM (accessibility in ministry), Welcoming (GLBTQ), and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) focus. Review progress and next steps. At least 2x/year, ministers provide or bring in others to grow cultural competency/humility. Create and conduct annual assessment.

2A5: We provide a beautiful and well-cared for physical place which nurtures the diverse people who come to the church and use its indoor and outdoor space. We use our property in ways that move us toward being net-zero for carbon and methane emissions, which are accessible, which support economic and racial justice, and which support the rental income of the church.

Resources: Minister, Office Manager, Members. Income from permanent funds, including some of expected Evelyn and Stuart Johnson Bequest.

Timeline: Spring '22: Research on net-zero gap. Planning begins.

Agreement with Spectrum on long-term land/property use.

Fall 22: Begin implementation. If campaign needed, plan for raising funds. Consider need for staff to support volunteers.

2A6: Staff and lay leaders work to rebuild and build anew vital community and participation in a pandemic/post-pandemic world. We reach out to those who have not yet returned, connect with those seeking community, rebuild social connections, and address the trauma, fear, and longings that people are experiencing.

Resources: Staff and lay leadership focus on time, mailings, outreach, etc. Consulting with leadership from UUA or UU resources.

Timeline: Beginning spring 2022 and continuing for years to come. Begin mailings to congregation. Make invitational phone calls in Summer/Fall. Advertise safety measures.

Strategy 2B: Our Church is Nurtured by our members

2B1: We cultivate a robust, multicultural culture of lay ministry, volunteering and leadership. We continue to train and support leaders, though the Harvest the Power UU leadership development curriculum, and one-on-one coaching, and encouraging volunteerism (see Engagement Fair and RE recruitment, above). We celebrate volunteers and leaders.

Resources: Staff time to lead programs and support. The time and energy of members who volunteer and lead.

Timeline: Ongoing. Plan for Harvest the Power in 23-24.

2B2: Members offer their generous financial support to the church, through annual giving, legacy giving, and fundraisers. An ongoing Generosity Team helps plan the annual campaign, connects with newcomers about giving, and follows up with non-giving members. We talk about giving in culturally competent ways. We regularly promote legacy giving and thank our legacy givers. We run a fun and successful Auction.

Resources: Volunteers on Generosity Team. Minister and Office Manager time to support campaigns. Volunteers to run Auction, Office Manager time to support.

Timeline: Ongoing.

2B3: Financial, Building, and Governance leaders take steps to increase, secure, and support non-pledge income which also advances our values, including the Woodsong Nature School, rental income, and the ethical management of our permanent funds. Ethical management includes ARAOMC goals. We seize opportunities to advance our values while funding our mission. Connects with 2A5 above.

Resources: Budget for Woodsong staff and supplies, building utilities and upkeep, time of finance, investment, board, building and grounds, and staff.

Timeline: Ongoing. For 22-23 year and ongoing, increase support for Woodsong staff (including vacation/sick coverage). See if we can come to a long-term agreement with Spectrum School (they have renewed through June 2023).

End 3: Accountable to our faith, we act to foster a world of understanding, equity, repair, and solidarity.

Strategy 3A: We inspire and equip each other to act in faithful ways for justice in their personal, volunteer, and/or professional lives.

3A1: We offer strong training for cultural competency/humility, anti-racism/anti-oppression, and faith-based justice making as well as resources to our members and friends to resource putting their faith in action (see also, 2A4). We create ways to hold ourselves accountable to our values and expectations for covenantal behavior while doing this work.

Resources: Staff time, guest presenters (some funds).

Timeline: At least 2x/year, if not more.

3A2: We share clearly, often, and effectively about opportunities to get involved in justice ministries, especially ministries that further our ARAOMC work. This sharing includes testimonials, revamp of website section on this, event invitations, one-to-one outreach, pulpit announcements, and social media sharing.

Resources: Attention from staff and Faith in Action leaders.

Timeline: Ongoing.

3A3: We hold a "Nourish + Sustain Circle" to support those who are doing front-line justice and mercy work. This circle provides pastoral supporting, faith grounding, ARAOMC coaching and networking for those doing this work in our wider community.

Resources: Senior Minister time.

Timeline: Begin in late spring 2022.

Strategy 3B: In collaboration with community partners, organized teams in the congregation and the ministers of the church expand and nurture the beloved community.

3B1: We successfully implement the new Faith in Action plan, creating effective "cluster teams" for ecojustice, sexuality and gender justice and racial and economic justice. These cluster teams have strong, inclusive leaders grounded in faith, and organize effective action efforts in which engage many church members and our partner organizations.

Resources: Staff and volunteer time.

Timeline: Recruit in spring 2022 and begin meetings. Ongoing support and training. Have at least one major action per year in 22-23, per cluster, and two in 23-24.

3B2: As part of our new Faith in Action plan, we create an Organizing Crew which will work with our cluster teams and with both Rockford Urban Ministries and the Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois to advance campaigns for faith-based justice.

Resources: Support for Rockford Urban Ministries and the Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois, partially with Philon bequest.

Timeline: Recruit in spring 2022, offering yearly trainings, support at least 5 campaigns in 22-23 and 8 in 23-24.

3B3: The Senior Minister engages strategic efforts to advance our values. Currently, and for the foreseeable future, this is as co-leader of the Ready to Learn Team⁶, working to ensure that every young child has a real opportunity to flourish and be loved in our wider community.

Resources: Senior Minister time.

Timeline: Ongoing.

⁶ See <https://alignmentrockford.com/ready-to-learn/>. Ready to Learn is a community collaboration to improve outcomes for young children in Rockford.

Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson Report

It is the end of my fifteenth year with you as your Senior Minister. One of the best memories of this year was our celebration of that shared ministry, held near the end of April. I particularly loved that our guests -- including Mayor McNamara, interfaith colleagues, and those of you who spoke, -- all highlighted the shared nature of this work. We do this together. My activism is with not just your blessing but with your engagement. We grow, learn, become, and change together. I was also very aware of all we have done together over these 15 years – to strengthen the operation of the church, yes, but much more importantly, to embrace the spiritual life and spiritual language, to be more accountable to front-line communities, to be more generationally and theologically diverse, to handle conflict with maturity, and to be willing to take risks and try new things. We've come a long way!

This year might be called our “post-isolation but still covid” year. We were able to gather in person and slowly reduce restrictions and limitations. We restarted more activities and programs. But we are still dealing with the reticence of volunteers, the burnout of parents and caregivers, and the financial consequences of disengagement and slowdown. I am proud of how we handled these difficult realities. We operated with a lot of grace and understanding. We took it slow and focused on what was possible. In January, we really started to see new folks in strong numbers for the first time since the pandemic began. We have good momentum heading into the next year.

I'm grateful to work with an amazing staff at the church. The Rev. Joyce Palmer, just finishing her second year with us as our half-time Assistant Minister, is a wonderful colleague. She brings new ideas, steady caring energy, and a focus on inclusion, welcome, and spiritual growth that is serving us all well. Autumn Powell, our office manager, handles many “invisible” things with skill and thoughtfulness and makes all our work easier. Lauren Smith and Lindsay Trank, our assistant DRE and DRE, respectively – as well as Woodsong Co-Directors – have had some of the hardest work this year. For the Religious Education program, engaging burned-out families and offering a program with limited volunteers is not easy. But they've made it work and done good ministry under those limits. Meanwhile, the Woodsong Nature School is thriving, with long waitlists and an immense impact for families. And Tim Anderson, who will begin his 20th year as your Music Director this fall, is a highly skilled and insightful colleague in not just worship but leadership. These fine people are a pleasure to work with, and I hope you know how lucky you are to have them all on the team.

I preached 34 sermons this year – about my usual, and a small decrease from last year when I pushed to do more post-Covid. I went to many meetings, both in person and on Zoom. I made some pastoral visits – though Rev. Joyce and our great caring team do much of this work. I serve on one national UUA committee and continue to mentor two newish ministers. I've begun to serve as a Good Officer for Call and Contract for the UU Minister's Association – advising colleagues who are beginning or ending ministries on their letters of agreement or difficult leavings. I served on the Alignment Rockford Ready-to-Learn team as co-chair until January, when I turned that over and made space for other projects and new leadership.

I performed 8 memorial services or committals this year: for Rod Bennett, Shirley Spilmon, Dale Dunnigan, Dan Fischer, Cara Dunoway, Gloria Cederstrom, Amy Hyzer, and Doris Heibner. I performed one wedding, for Dan Fellars and Jenni Lavasseur.

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

1. Working with others, create lively, spirit-filled, heart-centered worship. We will be using Soul Matters this coming year, and I want to use their themes and materials to their maximum use, as well as return to some of the “Worship Design Studio” methods we were using before the pandemic. I’ll also be working closely with Tim to support diverse and heart-centered music.

We made modest progress towards this goal, though I think there is room to go further. Most months we did have a common invocation and go deeper into the theme. But the rhythm of planning for week after week sometimes becomes routine, and we do what we know. There is more in the Soul Matters materials for us to use in worship, social media, and learning. This goal will carry over into this year.

2. Work with the Board and key leaders to re-write and implement safety and well-being policies. We need to look at our policies around public health, children and youth, conflict, harassment, inclusion, security, and inclusion to make sure they reflect the best wisdom of the moment, and that we are faithfully implementing the new policies.

We accomplished this goal. We worked diligently through the policies this year, spending time at each meeting discussing our goals and values. I wrote drafts or found examples and the board adapted them as necessary.

3. Work with our Faith in Action teams to support their goals and ends, including cultural competency/humility and anti-oppression training and resources within the congregation, pastoral support for front-line activists, and implementing our new model.

We made significant progress here. Dale Dunnigan’s tragic death delayed the real start of the Sex and Gender Justice team, but all three teams are now hitting their stride. Rev. Joyce and I have both offered a variety of programs to deepen cultural humility and learning – and identified the next steps in this work. Strengthening leadership in this area so the teams don’t depend too much on me is a goal for the coming year.

4. Supporting giving, both through pledging and the work of the generosity team, and through other sources, including rentals and programs. Ensure that new legacy gifts and major rental income is handled well and in a way that supports our mission and institution.

Success. I worked with Spectrum School to renew their long-term rental agreement, supported our Woodsong Team, worked with the executor for the Johnson Bequest, and supported the generosity team’s work. We had a wonderful stewardship dinner, and we should all feel good about how we are doing compared with other congregations in this post-covid time.

I am aware, in evaluating these goals, that the more “technical” goals – policies and funding – were more completed than the more “cultural” goals around worship and faith-in-action. One reason for that is that we continue to face volunteer burnout and limitations. I could go further – but unless we go together, we will not shift culture. As we rebuild our lay leadership capacity and engagement, we will keep working on these cultural shifts.

Looking at what we've done, considering what feels important and timely, and looking at our strategic plan, I've identified four goals for the coming year. In all these goals, I need your help and participation. None of these can be accomplished by me alone.

1. Heartfelt, engaging worship. I want to continue our movement toward worship that engages the whole person, celebrates our diversity, and changes lives. Working with Rev. Joyce, Tim, Lindsay, our worship associates, and our guest preachers and musicians, we will push ourselves to bring more heart-centered and body-inclusive elements to worship.
2. Faith in Action. We will go deeper with our issue/action teams, leverage our power and connections to do more organizing, collaborate more with key partners including the LIAM Foundation, Sustain Rockford, Eliminate Racism 815, and Rockford Urban Ministries, offer more opportunities for service and connection, support mutual aid, grow cultural humility and anti-racism skills, and empower and support our leaders in this area. This includes working with our UUANI Congregational Catalyst (Allyson Rosemore) and with RUM to do a strong listening campaign and focus on engagement.
3. Lay Leadership Development. I will lead the Harvest the Power leadership program, and The Shared Pulpit, a worship leadership program, to train and support more leaders. We'll do more to encourage, train, and connect leaders and to help teams and committees actualize and be accountable to our goals around belonging, inclusion, and anti-oppression.
4. Outreach, Evangelism, and Growth. People are hungry for liberal and liberating spiritual community. We need to reach them, connect them, and engage them. I will work with our staff and volunteers to do more outreach to potential visitors, to grow our capacity to make invitations, authentically welcome people, and turn visitors into engaged and active members whose lives are better for being part of the church.

I am looking forward to the coming year. I believe we are moving from the "survive Covid and its effects" time into a time of rebuilding and building-the-new in the new age. Now is a time to be creative, open-hearted, and loud and proud about our faith. I need your help. Together, let's do it.

In faith,
Matthew

Director of Religious Education Annual Report

Our Religious Education program continues to be a source of joy and community. We still hold classes outside whenever possible - leaning into the philosophy that there's no bad weather, just bad clothing. Outdoor Religious Education examines our monthly themes from Soul Matters through nature and allows us to enjoy the beautiful church grounds. When we do hold classes inside, we utilize the classrooms downstairs and follow the masking guidelines for the congregation.

Children and youth are divided into four age ranges: K & Under, Grade 1-3, Grade 4-6, and Grade 7-12 (youth group) with one staff person per group. Religious Educators provide developmentally appropriate, theme based activities for the children and youth in attendance. Youth group is currently delving into the Neighboring Faiths curriculum through which they learn about various world religions.

We have continued to employ Religious Education staff members in addition to Lindsay and Lauren to work each Sunday throughout the year with one Sunday off each month. Again, this has somewhat relieved the demand on volunteers, but, as always, we would benefit from more volunteers in the R.E. program.

This year saw the return of the Easter Egg Hunt! It was a lovely event enjoyed by current congregants, former congregants, and some folks that were just getting to know the church community. The weather was gorgeous, the eggs were collected, treats were enjoyed, and people had an opportunity to enjoy a time of fellowship. We are looking forward to keeping this tradition going.

Finally, Lindsay coordinated with our senior minister, Matthew Johnson, to select and read the story for all ages throughout the year, offer a backpack blessing, child dedication, and bridging ceremony, put on the Christmas pageant, welcome new members to the congregation, and do long range planning for the Religious Education program to align with our updated mission, vision, and strategic plan.

Woodsong Nature School

This year we have continued to offer programming 5 mornings per week, which allows parents to choose from 2, 3, or 5 days per week. We continued to have strong enrollment each month with complete enrollment of 16 children all year. Our Summer 2023 session is full, as is the 2023-24 school year. We also have a lengthy waitlist. We've done very little advertising this year since it seems as though word of mouth has been the most effective means of marketing.

This year we celebrated our five year anniversary and we've served over 100 children to date. We are seeing a number of Woodsong families visit church on Sundays, as well as existing church members sending their children to Woodsong. We have a great relationship with Spectrum and many families with more than one child take advantage of the opportunity to have all their children go to school in the same building. It's also been great to see our program become more accessible to more families, as our 2-day schedule option is very affordable.

We also returned to normal operations of our program with very few COVID safety precautions necessary. We underwent our first annual renewal of our DCFS license, which went smoothly. We are working to recruit more substitute teachers to ensure that we have a robust roster of qualified subs.

We look forward to the opportunity to continue offering this program to a diverse population of families, especially for this age-group which is typically underserved. It brings us such joy to spend our days out in nature with little ones and providing much-needed support to parents of young children in our community!

In Gratitude

We would like to thank the following people for their time and commitment to volunteer: Aida Rosemore, Kim Lowman Vollmer, Laura Patterson, Lisa Volkman, Dorota Smith, and Matthew Huckstep-Fields.

We would like to extend a special thank you to the people who helped with the Easter Egg Hunt preparations and events: Kathy Scarpaci, Sue Garwick, Judy Johnson, Gloria Perez, Spitty Tata, Keith Kruchten, and Grace Kruchten.

Respectfully Submitted by Lindsay Trank & Lauren Smit

Music Director's Report

The past program year represented a complete return to what might be called our new normal. The **Unicantors** resumed our normal schedule of rehearsing weekly and providing live music for Sunday morning worship services. Guided by the relevant scientific research and recommendations from professional music organizations, we continued to use the specially designed singers' masks that we purchased last year for both rehearsals and singing for worship. Furthermore, we continued to use Deale Hall and the sanctuary for rehearsals, both of which provided more space for distancing and better ventilation than the choir room. In the fall, we will review these safety protocols to determine when it might be safe for us to sing without masking and return to rehearsing in the choir room.

We began the program year requiring masking for worship, continuing to allow congregational singing as we did for the latter part of the previous program year. When the Board made an informed decision to end the requirement for masking during worship, the requirement for masking during congregational singing remained in place. As with every COVID-related policy decision implemented during the pandemic, this change took into account the relevant scientific research and guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other professional organizations, along with consideration of the COVID indicators for our county. For whatever reason, a number of congregants chose not to comply with the policy and regularly sang during worship without masking. As a staff member whose COVID fatigue and frustration level are as high as anyone else's, I found this disregard for the considered policy and a reluctance to enforce it more than just unfortunate.

The return to our new normal meant that we held two choir-led Music Sundays this year, as has been our custom for most of my tenure as Music Director. In December, the **Unicantors** and guest musicians and singers presented the *Magnificat* attributed to Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, but most likely composed by his teacher Francesco Durante. The piece was accompanied by a string quartet including violinists **Rachel Handlin** and **Brandon Lamm**, violist **Hannah Lamm**, and cellist **Martha Dunegan**. **Will Robinson** played continuo, and our soloists for the day were soprano **Sarah McCollum**, alto **Cassandra Sturtevant**, tenor **Joe Sweeney**, and bass **Timm Adams**. It was a glorious day of music making made possible through the generosity of **Robin Gausebeck**, whose steadfast support of our music program is greatly appreciated, most of all by me.

Our May Music Sunday featured a recent work by composer Michael John Trotta called *For a Breath of Ecstasy*, a musical setting of several poems by Sara Teasdale. The **Unicantors** were joined by violinists **Rachel Handlin** and **Brandon Lamm**, violist **Hannah Lamm**, cellist **Michael Beert**, and oboist **Erin Mashinter**, along with soprano **Sarah McCollum** and alto **Mary Shore**. The choir sang terrifically well, and the instrumental accompaniment was the perfect complement to the beautifully poignant poetry. Many people, including several choir members, indicated that this may well have been their favorite Music Sunday piece ever. I am very grateful for donations made anonymously that helped offset the costs incurred.

Our return to normal, such as it is, eliminated many of the challenges of providing music for worship during the height of the pandemic. It was a relief to be able to focus more on actually making music rather than constantly worrying about how to make music safely. With the return of the choir to leading music in worship came a significant number of new singers in all sections, which has been a blessing. I also continue to count my work as Music Director as a blessing, and I look forward to my upcoming twentieth year with you. Time certainly does fly – especially when you enjoy your work as much as I do.

As always, I am thankful for the support of the congregation and the value you place on music. I am equally grateful for your committed embrace of music from a variety of different styles and genres. I look forward to continuing to work on diversifying music offerings in worship as a part of the church's goal to diversify in all aspects of church life.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Anderson
Music Director

Assistant Minister Rev. Joyce Palmer Report

This year is my second year as your Assistant Minister, working part-time. My focus this year was on Community Building, Caring, Welcome, and Adult Spiritual Development.

Community Building

This year we planned several all-church invited community events. The goal was to offer activities we could do together to have and build connections. We offered outings to the apple orchard, walks around the property and at the mall at Christmas time and a luminary walk in Rev. Matthew's neighborhood. Other offerings by members of the church were Chili-cookoff. The events were well attended and enjoyable. We also offered two Activity Fairs this year for teams to share the work they do and invite others to join them. Both Activity Fairs generated a lot of positive energy and some new volunteers.

Caring

Our Caring Team continues to provide services to meet the needs of congregants for meals, rides, calls and visits. We review the Care List at each meeting to ensure that we are communicating with members of the community. Our outreach initiatives are pumpkins for children at Halloween, poinsettias for our elder members and members on the Care List who are experiencing current needs, and Valentine cards to send our love and well-wishes. Recipients of these outreach efforts share how much it means to them for the church to remember and demonstrate care. Our Blue Christmas service grew in attendance this year and we enjoyed the beautiful harp music offered by Nanette Felix. The Caring Team includes the Memorial Subcommittee which provides support and coordinates the reception following Memorial Services. The Caring Team is a strong team with committed members ready to respond to the needs of our community.

Welcome

We have a growing number of guests on Sunday mornings. We strive to provide a warm welcome with Greeters and Guest Table Hosts. Guests often share their appreciation of the welcome they receive here. Guests are invited to complete a Guest Form so that we can be in touch with them. We follow up with guests by sending an email and adding them to our Kairos distribution list both in email and text. We welcomed 13 people into membership this year. Guests and members are able to view slides on the screen prior to worship featuring upcoming events and programs of the church and community. Our goal next year is to strengthen our follow-up with guests and to support member engagement and retention.

Adult Spiritual Development

We offered the following programs to adults this year:

- Wonderful Wednesdays offered the first and third Wednesdays of the month. The intent is to offer a mid-week opportunity for connection and learning together. We had guests from outside the congregation and congregation members lead discussions, provide information, and engage in activities. Our most well-attended sessions were often member and staff-led programs.
- Starting Point is a new program from the Soul Matters team. Starting Point is for newcomers to learn and experience the small group practices of deep listening and reflection as they learn about Unitarian Universalism. We had two Starting Point groups this year. Participants in the group are able to stay together to form a Soul Matters group.
- Soul Matters is a small group ministry based on deep listening and reflection. Soul Matters group members engage with the theme of the month by experiencing spiritual exercises and reflecting on a question then sharing their experience with their group. The goal is both greater self-knowledge, developing trust, and building community. There are currently 7 Soul Matters groups with approximately 45 people participating. We hope to start 2 groups next year.

- UUA Common Read *Defund Fear* and *Mistakes and Miracles* We had small groups read and discuss two of the UUA Common Read selections. The first one related to our work to reform Criminal Justice and the second one related to our work to develop our anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural community. We will continue to find ways to apply and deepen our learning in these areas.
- Explorers Spiritual Direction is a new group led by Gloria Perez. The group meets online to support one another in spiritual growth.
- SAVVY Women, Money, Freedom a documentary was shown as a community offering. The documentary examined the historical and social causes of women lacking financial literacy and the importance of women taking control of their finances. The event was promoted on local television, radio, and in person presentations to college students and community members. The event included viewing the film and a resource fair with bankers, investors, and financial educators on site. Seyller Financial Group provided funds to rent RPL Nordlof Center. Attendance was low, approximately 35 people. The promotion and outreach were energizing for me and the small team of promoters. We are hopeful that we can take the lessons learned from this experience and build on them for our outreach efforts next year.

Rockford Community Involvement

These are the community groups I have met with this year:

Interfaith Women's Potluck

Alignment Rockford

Winnebago County Health Department Violence Reduction Team

Thank you for another fulfilling and dynamic year. We were able to experience community, learn together, and stretch ourselves in new ways. May our future endeavors continue to connect us with ourselves, one another, and our community.

Submitted by:

Rev. Joyce Palmer

Combined Treasure's Report & Finance Committee Annual Report 2022-2023

Since there is redundancy between the two reports, we have combined them into one.

Purpose Statement: The Finance Committee monitors the financial status of the church and helps to maintain its sound condition by its activities and recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer represents the Finance Committee as a member of the Board of Trustees.

- With the minister, build a balanced budget for 2022-2023. As of April, we are 1.2% favorable on expenses to budget and pledge income is .8% unfavorable to budget. We will need members to complete their pledges to finish with a balanced budget.
- The Stewardship drive for the 2023-2024 operating budget had generous results.
- Stu and Evie Johnson gave the church a very generous bequest over \$800,000, which gets added to our Legacy Funds investments. This will give us a significant increase in our annual allocations of interest. They requested that their funds go to the Building Fund which will allow us to engage in more capital projects.
- Major projects completed this year with building fund allocation are installing an alarm system in the lower level to thwart break-ins to the building that we experienced this year; repair of the window in the narthex behind the Rehnberg window that was showing wear and tear; and the key card system replacing keys for better security and efficiency.
- We restructured the Legacy Funds from ten categories to three to make them more understandable and to eliminate duplication of the uses of the funds. The three are The Building Fund, Church Program and Future Funds, and Justice Ministry and Outreach Fund.
- We did not have a major fundraiser this year but will have an on-site Auction on September 23rd. (2023-2024 fiscal year).

Committee members: Steve Lewis (Chair), Steve Blomgren (Treasurer), Teresa Wilmot (Investment Panel Chair), Pat Lewis (Chair Memorials & Special Gifts), Dave Zinn, Matt Menze, Keith Kruchten

Respectfully submitted, Steve Lewis, Chair & Steve Blomgren, Treasurer

Committee Reports

UU Church Building & Grounds Committee COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Name of committee: Building & Grounds

Committee's purpose: The Building and Grounds 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. The usual repairs to the HVA/C systems occurred throughout the year, consisting of blower and induced draft motor replacements, and the addition of dampers on the return air ducting for the Sanctuary.
2. Landscaping and redesign of the Memorial Patio Area are substantially complete, with just the surrounding "planted areas" to be finalized. More detailed information will be reported by the Memorials Committee.
3. The Church grounds "clean up issues:" Spectrum has re-planted their vegetable gardens. The Eco-justice Team conducted a number of "Grounds" clean-up activities as well as work to begin the installation of a "Neighborhood Little Free Pantry" at the South edge of the Southwest Parking lot. Additionally, the clearing, landscaping contouring, and seeding along the Southeast Parking lot and Turner St. was completed as well as the large elm trees along the Church property and the North-South driveway to the 7th Day Adventist Church were removed to eliminate any potential safety hazards.
4. Annual building equipment (Fire Alarm system and Rockford Fire Department) inspections and tests were conducted resulting a number of alarm system issues that took some weeks to finally get corrected,
5. Spectrum School: And the Church began the Summer in Classroom 9 with a rock thrown through the window, and unfortunately a follow-up incident on May 28/29 2022, when a similar act resulted in windows broken in Room 9 and Room 10, with substantial damage, vandalism, and burglary. This resulted in the following actions.
 - 5a. Additional video surveillance cameras and equipment were installed by M.Spinello's.
 - 5b. Johnson Controls was contracted to provide glass break detection for all of the lower level rooms in the original building. The project has unfortunately not been completed due to issues of equipment availability, and now incompatibility of the existing wireless equipment and the newer wireless equipment. An additional rider for the change out of the noncompatible equipment has been approved, and signed and the equipment will be ordered with the work to begin in late June.
6. The Building & Grounds Committee updates for 2023 will continue to be via email and with meetings in the Church office following the service on the 2nd Sunday of the month

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

Continue with the identification and resolution of major building capital funding upgrades, maintenance repair items, and Church facilities improvements as identified by the B&G Committee and others. (e.g. The finalization of the design, and construction of the main entrance canopy. Sealing and re-striping of the parking lots, Repairs to the concrete sidewalk areas, Painting/restaining / repairs of the original building siding, Review and reevaluation of the Church alarm company services and costs).

Committee members (names): Skip Abare, Jim Dehler, Clark Logeman, Ken Ring, Allen Penticoff, Fred Stellema, Kim Vollmer, Ken Ring, Carole Hunter.

Board Liaison: Spitty Tata

Committee chair: D.J Schubert

Library Committee

Committee members are Mike Ullrich, chair, Jan Dunham, Rhea Overley, and Kathy Young, secretary.

The committee met six times during this fiscal year. We decided to set a permanent meeting day as the 4th Sunday of each month.

During these meetings, we sorted donated books to determine which ones were appropriate to keep in our library. We also processed and shelved the books we decided to keep.

We processed and shelved over 20 books and some AV materials.

Kathy Young
Secretary

Finance Committee Annual Report – 2022 – 2023

Please see the combined Treasure & Finance Report on page 19

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:

Committee activities this year were totally focused on the rebuilding of the Memorial Patio. We meet numerous times via Zoom and in person during this process. Thus far we have overseen:

- Removal of all the old bricks and plantings from the existing patio;
- Regrading for newer, larger patio including laying of substrate for new bricks;
- Planning layout for new patio;
- Replacement of all existing bricks with new, more durable and readable bricks;
- And addition of new bricks for recently deceased members

This summer we plan to:

- Install new garden plants and mulch;
- Add another order of new bricks requested by members;
- Hold a dedication for the new patio.

Committee members 2022-2023: Francie Barnes, Mary Caskey, Jackie Dehler, Alice Enichen, Kay Hotchkiss, Pat Lewis, Ruth Little

Patricia Lewis, Chair

Investment Panel

Permanent Fund Allocations to 2022-23 Operating Budget

Approval of the 2022-2023 Permanent Fund Income Allocations	Teresa Wilmot
Building Fund	\$ 61,500
Program and Futures Fund	22,500
Justice Fund	8,900
Total Allocations	\$ 92,200

This year's "Legacy Fund" was increased 35% by the first installment of the bequest of Evelyn and Stuart Johnson. (The second installment is expected by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2023.). Their bequest was to benefit the Building Fund, and this year's building fund allocation is already increased.

Overall our investments earned about 2.3% between July 1, 2022 and April 30, 2023. This was a down year for the market, especially compared with the prior year, but our strategy is long-term growth. The market will always move up and down, but, eventually it has always recovered.

The Investment Panel has moved all of its investments to SRI (Socially Responsible Investments) or ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governmental) investments. As much as possible, we want to earn our investment returns while doing good in society, living our UU values.

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: Worked with the UUCEF, Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund, as the Chair of our Investment Panel. Forwarded opportunities for training and cooperation between members and the MidAmerica Regional Staff. Served as a delegate to General Assembly in Portland, registering virtually, while joining the Zion Lutheran Church's Civil Rights Tour of Alabama.

The theme of General Assembly 2022 was "Meet the Moment: Reimagining Radical Faith Community,"

General Assembly 2022 was a "liminal" assembly—between what has been and what will become—proclaimed "Not Business as Usual." Our society is torn between the love of others and the fear of others. We are on the side of Love and Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray urged us to persist through partnerships and interdependence.

The rules of debate were modified from Robert's Rules to something more amenable to a multi-platform with physical delegates and virtual delegates resulting in more efficient discussion.

Two Business Resolutions passed. One approved a comprehensive rewrite of the UUA's Bylaws in easy-to-understand language. The other started a re-envisioning process for the GA Planning Committee.

Two Trustee positions were challenged in the election, due to conflict against the association's intentional anti-racism and increasing diversity in staff and leadership positions. The challengers were both defeated by overwhelming percentages but are expected to continue their opposition.

GA passed 3 AIW's or Actions of Immediate Witness: "We Do Not Consent: Rejecting Legal Challenges to Abortion," Antiracism and Reparations Via Restorative Justice," and "Stop the Privatization of Medicare."

Hopes for the coming church year:

Continue to encourage anti-racism both within the congregation and in the larger community. Make our message of love concrete through our actions.

Committee Members: Teresa Wilmot

Other Church Members and Friends Who Have Assisted the Committee:

Gloria Perez (Delegate to GA 2022 in Pittsburgh, PA this June)

Li.M Blacker (Delegate to GA 2023 in Pittsburgh, PA this June)

Duane Wilke (Partner Church in Transylvania, Romania)

Signature of Committee Chair: Teresa Wilmot

Caring Team Annual Report

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 hospitalizations; and death of a family member or friend.

Please see the Assistant Minister's report for information about Caring Team activities.

Membership Team

The Member Team transitioned to the Accessibility and Inclusion Team.

Accessibility and Inclusion Team's Purpose The AIM Team strives to welcome individuals with disabilities and their families into the congregation. The main purpose of the team is to keep track of the big picture of the congregation's welcome and accessibility, address issues of concern and possibly develop strategies to address these concerns.

Please see the Assistant Minister's report for information about AIM Team activities.

Membership Information and Rites of Passage

Weddings

Dan Fellers and Jenni Lavasseur, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, Nov. 19, 2022
Gary and Robin Anderson Rev. Joyce Palmer May 19, 2023.

Memorials and Committals

Rod Bennett, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, August 24, 2022
Shirley Spilmon, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, Sept. 28 2022
Dale Dunnigan, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, Nov. 5, 2022
Dan Fischer, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, Jan 19, 2023
Cara Dunoway, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, Jan. 28, 2023
Gloria Cederstrom, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, Feb. 4, 2023
Amy Hyzer, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, March 11, 2023
Doris Heibner, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, April 1, 2023

New or Reactivated Members since June 2022

Barb Basaj	Billy Christensen	Alexis Simmons
Li M Blacker	Lia Gima	Wendy Vaughn
Steve Booth	Michael Griffith	Derek Volk
Trevor Booth	Katie Kerr	Dusahn Vol
Faelan Brabec	Dawn Nimmo	
Robyn Brabec	Paige Richards	

Religious Growth & Learning

Please see the Director of Religious Education Report

Faith in Action Ministry

We reorganized our Faith in Action (aka Social Justice) ministry last year and have been working on living into this new model and vision. We are focused on three issue/action teams, as well as an “organizing crew” who is thinking about how to partner with organizing efforts and push on legislative matters. In all this new work, the emphasis is on spiritually grounded partnerships and learning, acting, and organizing that brings people together and builds community. There is a Core Team that coordinates this work and does administrative work of this ministry.

Sex and Gender Justice team

The Sex and Gender Justice team encouraged a “Seeing Ourselves in Film” series, nurtured partnerships with LIAM Foundation, hosted a social for LGBTQ+ members and friends that was very well attended, promoted the SAAVY film showing, and made plans for more training, support, learning, and growth for both LGBTQ members and friends and allies. The team is currently lead by Matthew Huckstep Fields and Li.M. Blacker.

Racial and Economic Justice team

The mission of the Racial and Economic Justice team is: To address racial and economic justice and promote a church, city and nation characterized by racial and economic justice, belonging, and repair. Issues can include housing, education, food, security, criminal justice jobs, immigration, relationship, building, and more. We will combat white supremacy, classism, and other forms of oppression through faithful, prophetic and honest conversation and action. We will work with partners centering those who experienced systems of oppression most directly. We will engage team members and the church as a whole.

In September of 2022 this team was created as part of the ministry of Faith In Action. Kathie Mattison and Gloria Pérez co- lead this team. We meet on the second Sunday of each month at 11:30 in the Church library.

Some of our partners in the community are RUM, Eliminate Racism 815, Human Library, UUPMI, NAACP, RAMP, CASA, Family to family, Rockford promise, RPS 205 fit office, Alignment Rockford and Get Connected 815.

We help support the work of our partners in sharing part of our Sunday offering plate and by becoming involved in some of their activities.

We have:

- Attended trainings about becoming aware of trauma within the community, about organizing the church for doing justice work
- Attended a summit presented by Eliminate Racism 815
- Become a depot for the Human Library, some of our books have attended a training offered by the Copenhagen, Denmark headquarters of Human Library
- in association with RUM we supported the work on the Pre-trial Fairness Act and invited David Black to speak to the congregation about this piece of legislation

- We reconvened the Sermon Discussion on the third Sunday of the month
- We had a table at the congregation's Activity Fair

Respectfully submitted – Kathie Mattison and Gloria Perez

Eco Justice Team

In the past year since the Eco Justice Team was formed, we've hosted sessions about the impacts that climate change will have on our region, done extensive preparation to host a community free pantry on church grounds, and made some progress on tending our church woodland to be a healthier ecosystem. One of our proudest accomplishments, though, is that we've gotten to know our our community- on our team, in the church, and in our neighborhood- better than we did before. In the coming year, our intention is to deepen the work that we've started while paying attention to how the spiritual lessons that we're learning as a congregation can inform that work. We'd love to have you join us! – Allyson Rosemore and Doug Rix, co-chairs.

Music Team

See Music Director Report.

UU ROCKFORD ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Sunday, June 12, 2022

Meeting, both in-person and on-line began at 11:03 with Call to Order by Amanda Tapfield.

Amanda reviewed the Rules of Procedure for Congregational Meeting”

1. The Chair will verify that a quorum has been reached, validating any actions taking at the meeting.
2. Only members may vote; friends may speak but not vote.
3. The Parliamentarian will advise the chair as necessary to enforce compliance with the church bylaws, the rules adopting to govern the meeting, and Robert’s Rules of Order.
4. Rulings on procedure will be made by the chair, may be appealed by seconded motion, and may be overturned by simple majority.
5. Speakers will speak only to the motion under consideration.
6. The first speaker will speak in favor of the motion, with subsequent speakers alternating between against and in favor of the motion. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes.
7. At any time, any member may call the question. At that time, the chair will inquire if there is any further discussion. If there is further discussion, it will precede.
8. At any time, any member may move the previous question, which is a motion to close debate. If two thirds of those present support the moving of the previous question, the motion under consideration will immediately be voted upon without further debate.
9. Voting will be done by voice vote. For some meetings, the Board may determine that the voting may be done by secret ballot. If a verification is requested, voting will be by showing of hands holding membership verification cards. If a member leaves the meeting before adjournment, the member must return the membership verification card to the membership committee table.
10. The meeting will be conducted in a civil manner.

Amanda thanked the congregation for allowing her to serve as President for the last year.

Approval of Minutes of June 6, 2021 Annual Meeting (posted online in the Annual Report).

Motion to approve: Kim Loman Vollmer

2nd: Amy Brandon

Motion approved.

Annual Report for 2020-2021 is available online and in the church office upon request.

Election of Officers:

Linda Johnson

President	Judy Gustafson (1 year term)
Vice President	Spitty Tata (1 year term)
Clerk	Bob Spelman (1 year term)
Treasurer	Steve Blomgren (1 year term)
Trustee	Shoko Chien (3 year term)
Trustee	Jami Edmonds (1 year unexpired term)

Note: Sara Greer will continue to serve as Trustee.

Motion to approve: Mary Caskey

2nd Jon McGinty

Motion approved.

Election of Nominating Panel members:

Linda Johnson

Judy Johnson (2 year term)
Dan Fellers (2 year term)
Amanda Tapfield (2 year term)

Note: Leslie Mahan will continue to serve for a second year on the Nominating Panel.

Motion to approve: Ruth Little
2nd Ed Foster

Motion approved.

Election of Conflict Management Panel Member

Linda Johnson

Jessica Hodierne (3 year term)

Note: Matt Menze and Amy Brandon will continue to serve as members of the Conflict Management Panel.

Motion to approve: Steve Blomgren
2nd Bob Spelman

Motion approved.

Approval of the 2021-2022 Permanent Fund Income Allocations

Steve Blomgren

Intern Ministry	\$3,650 (this year, for Asst Minister position)
Building & Grounds budget	\$21,263 (used for ongoing repairs)
Capital Reserve	\$8,450 (placed into reserve for larger projects)
Growth Programs	\$11,700 (used to subsidize Assistant Minister)
Outreach (Justice)	\$7,100 (includes Shaheen Lecture)
Religious Education	\$1,400 (used for curriculum, supplies, etc).
Other Designated Funds	\$650 (flowers, leadership)
Totals	\$54,213

Motion to approve: Ed Foster
2nd Bob Spelman

Motion approved.

Approval of 2021-2022 Annual Operating Budget

Teresa Wilmot

Motion to approve: Jesse Parker
2nd Dan Webster

Motion approved.

Approval of Memorial and Special Gifts proposal to repair Memorial Patio Pat Lewis.

To spend up to \$26,000, from already donated funds, to replace the memorial patio and create landscaping around the patio.

Motion to approve: Ruth Little
2nd Ed Foster

Motion approved.

Approval of Mission and Vision

Amanda Tapfield

Vision: A loving congregation that connects with ourselves, one another, and the larger community.

Mission: We care for ourselves, each other, and our neighbors while taking risks acting for justice. We are continuously building an inclusive, empowered, anti-oppressive, antiracist, multicultural congregation. Our connections foster radical love for ourselves and others.

Motion to approve: Amy Brandon

2nd Duane Wilke

Motion approved

Recognitions:

Those completing terms of office Bob Spelman

- Members of the worship associate crew who are finishing their two-year term: Amy Brandon, Linda Lawrence, Gary Lawrence, Shiraz Tata.
- Team leaders who have completed their terms of service: Ellyn Ahmer and Jason Peckels for the Social Justice Council.
- Steve Blomgren for the Investment Panel.
- Wendy Bennett on the Conflict Resolution Panel.
- Gaen McClendon, Linda Johnson, and Geri Carter who are completing the term on the Nominating Panel.
- Jackie Dehler for many years leading our Action for Children team. The Rockford Public Schools have changed how it handles those needs. Our efforts will shift, but Jackie has raised funds for, and managed, this vital effort for a long time, and we are very grateful.
- Outgoing board members:
 - Khanh Oehlke, outgoing at-large member, whose good questions, encouragement, and technical skills have been a boon to the board.
 - Teresa Wilmot, outgoing Treasurer, whose diligence, faithfulness, and commitment to the values of Unitarian Universalist have strengthened not just our finances but our whole church.
 - Amanda Tapfield, completing her term as President, whose kindness, vision, good humor, and practice of liberation has made the board more humane and effective.

Charles Parker Connolly Award

Matthew Johnson

- To Allyson Rosemore

Memorial Moment

Matthew Johnson

- Recognized members who have passed over the past year.

Twenty-Five & Fifty Year Members

Matthew Johnson

- 25 year – Joyce (Baker) Palmer
- 50 year – None still living

Unitarian Universalist of the Year

Matthew Johnson

- Sue and Duane Wilke

Adjournment

Amanda Tapfield

Motion to adjourn: Bob Spelman

2nd Ed Foster

Meeting adjourned.