

# The Unitarian Universalist Church Rockford, Illinois



## Annual Report 2024—2025

# The Unitarian Universalist Church

## 2024-25 Annual Report

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# Officers of the Congregation

## 2024-2025

President: Matt Menze  
Treasurer: Bob Spelman

Vice President: Wendy Bennett  
Clerk: Kim Lowman Vollmer

## Board of Trustees

Rebecca Beneditz

Neita Webster

Clark Logemann

## 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 Trank, 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  
**OFFICE MANAGER** ..... Autumn Powell  
**MINISTER EMERITUS** ..... The Rev. David R. Weissbard  
**MUSIC DIRECTOR EMERITA** ..... Kay Hotchkiss

## **President's Report 2024 - 2025**

Thank you for the honor of serving as President this year. Our bylaws are written such that the responsibility of governance is vested in the Board of Trustees. To that end, this report is submitted on behalf of the Board as a whole. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served with: Wendy Bennett, Vice President; Kim Lowman Vollmer, Clerk; Bob Spelman, Treasurer; and Rebecca Beneditz, Clark Logeman and Neita Webster, Trustees.

For a portion of this church year, our Senior Minister was away on his earned sabbatical. In his absence, Rev. Allison Farnum provided wonderful support through participation in monthly Board meetings and facilitating workshops around our vision, mission, and ends. Thank you, Rev. Allison! Also, thank you to the church staff for your work to keep things running smoothly in Rev. Matthew's absence. Over this year, and in particular during Rev. Matthew's sabbatical, the dedication, talents and efforts of our many lay leaders was on full display. As a congregation, we are fortunate to have so many of our members willing to commit and contribute in a big way.

Last year's President's Report referred to the work toward our Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppressive, Multicultural (ARAOMC) Goals. This year that work continued with the formation of a Change Team charged with assessing the current ARAOMC environment in 16 components of our church. Through questionnaires and interviews the team collected data and reported to the Board in December. Areas identified where we could be doing better are reflected in our updated strategic plan.

Our bylaws call for us to review our vision and mission on a regular basis. It had been a number of years since we did so, and the world has changed a few times since then. We as a church and as individuals have changed too. What is our work now? What is the church for? What difference will we make in the world and in our lives? Through a series of workshops facilitated by Rev. Allison, church members met to consider these questions. A Writing Team was formed to prepare a draft vision and mission statement. The board and staff considered further revisions. The final draft is submitted to the congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting. The vision and mission also informs our strategic plan.

Our wonderful church building was dedicated nearly 60 years ago. Its unique architecture and parklike grounds has been loved by members past and present. However, the passage of time and the building design presents maintenance challenges. This year we addressed the deteriorating redwood siding. Our Building and Grounds and Finance Committees worked diligently to develop a plan to replace the siding with a limited impact on our annual operating budget. At a special meeting in March the congregation approved the expenditure to replace the siding with a durable material consistent with the architectural design. Work will begin soon.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Menze  
President

# Mission Vision Ends (Proposed)

## Vision:

A loving, spiritual congregation that lives our values through belonging, reason, and action.

## Mission:

Like the nature that surrounds us, we evolve as a habitat for spiritual development.

- Our deep roots connect us to a wealth of resources that nourish our growth as a beacon for justice, inclusion, and liberation, especially anti-racism and gender and sexuality justice.
- Our listening cultivates diverse and multicultural relationships that bridge divisions, strengthen our communities, heal hearts, and foster safety for all.
- Our awareness of our interdependence inspires us to protect the shared environment and natural world in which we live.

## Ends and Strategies

1. Our members grow in belonging by embodying our values and connecting with our spiritual lives.

Another way of putting this end is "I AM UU" or "WE ARE UU."

1A: Faith formation for all ages.

We use programs and resources that help people grow in Unitarian Universalist identity, faith, values, and active living.

1A1: Sustainable and Reliable Volunteers for Children's Religious Education. We have regular people who volunteer, forming relationships, nurturing UU identity, and sustaining a strong multi-generational ministry. By October 2025, we will have at least 3 regular people for an RE team and at least 20 1x/month teachers. These numbers are sustained with new folks joining as others rotate off. In addition to recruiting new folks, we thank and support our existing volunteers. In addition, a new nursery caregiver with OWL and admin responsibilities will support this program. Responsible: DRE, with assistance from RE team to recruit. Cost: Zero for volunteers; a stipend of 6K for a nursery/OWL teacher to make this work. Timeline: Oct. 2025 and ongoing.

1A2: UU Identity Development for All Ages. In Religious Education for Children and for Adults, and in worship and music, we focus on providing opportunities, programs, curricula, and resources that grow a sense of UU identity, commitment to the values centered in love, and how to live as a UU in daily life.

For Children's RE, the DRE selects programs, trains teachers, and assess success. Throughout the 25-26 year, she looks for programs that focus on UU identity, pilots them, and implements, with continuous improvement, from *fall of 26* onward. *No additional resources needed.*

For Adult RE, the ministers select and develop programs. The Senior Minister will create and lead a 7-

week “UU values and living” program in the *spring of ‘26*. The Assistant Minister will ensure that Wonderful Wednesday programs connect with UU identity. *No additional cost.*

For Worship and Music, the Senior Minister, Music Director, and Worship Associates will ensure regular focus on UU identity, values, and resources in their selections, themes, and messages. *This will begin with the 25-26 worship year. No additional cost.*

1A3: Soul Matters. We will use Soul Matters materials for small groups, worship, religious education, and outreach consistently and effectively. We will encourage more people to participate in Soul Matters Groups. Each current group will have 8+ people, and at least one new group will be started each year, in the *fall of ‘25, ‘26, and ‘27. Responsible: Assistant Minister and Soul Matters Facilitators. Cost: No additional.*

## 1B. Caring, Membership, and Belonging

We strengthen our ministries of caring and membership in ways that promote inclusive, meaningful, and authentic belonging and community.

1B1: Develop and sustain “Belonging and Membership” team. As part of the “Caring and Membership Team”, and co-led by the *Assistant Minister* and lay leaders, the Belonging and Membership team will help welcome and integrate new members, promote belonging and engagement, and build community and connection. *The team will be fully operational by fall ‘25 and sustained through the years to come. No additional cost, the professional expenses to consult with AUUMP (Association of UU Membership Professionals) can be used here.*

1B2: Develop and sustain a “Pastoral Care Associates” program. In addition to the existing Caring Team’s work to provide rides, meals, cards, and other caring ministry, we’ll restart a Pastoral Care Associates program where a select group of lay folks will provide lay pastoral ministry, focused on listening and affirming. *Led by the Assistant Minister and Caring Team. Beginning recruitment and training in 25-26, with the team operational by May of ‘26.*

## 1C. Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Oppression, and Belonging

Our community practices inclusion, pluralism, love, justice, and anti-oppression. We widen the circle of belonging and people – especially younger people, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and LGBTQIA+ people –so all feel we/they belong in this community.

1C1: We deepen our cultural work on anti-oppression, anti-racism, and multiculturalism, with a focus on communication, membership, and becoming aware of subtle forms of white supremacy culture. We follow up on the Change Team report and work with coaches and trainers to do this work together. Multiple trainings, conversations, and experiences are offered each year. *The Board, in alignment with the Racial and Economic Justice team, and support from the ministers, holds this responsibility. Cost - up to \$1000/year for trainers/programs, from the REJ or Leadership Development budget lines. Timeline: at least two events/programs in 25-26, and at least three in 26-27 and 27-28. At least 15% of the congregation (60 people) participate in these programs. Redo the matrix in spring 27 to assess progress and next steps.*

1C2: Start and sustain a DRUUMM Chapter. Working with UUANI (Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois) and DRUUMM (Diverse and Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries), we will start and sustain a DRUUMM Chapter for BIPOC members and friends. *The Assistant Minister, with support from the Senior Minister, will recruit a “catalyst”(s) for this. Cost: \$500 a year in stipend (DRUUMM adds funds). Timeline: Summer 2025 recruitment, begin in fall ‘25, and ongoing after that.*

1C3: Sustain and grow the UU 20/30 group. Support the facilitators and recruit more members and friends in their 20s and 30s to participate in this program. Retain existing participants. *Goal is to have 10 regular participants by March '26, and 15 by March of '27. Responsible: Facilitators and Assistant Minister. Cost: No additional.*

1C4: Worship and Music that widens the circle of belonging. We will intentionally include worship resources, including music, ritual, and texts, which resonate with wider circles of people. In particular, we will focus on diversity of race, ethnicity, and age/generation in the materials we select, examples we use, and programs we plan. *Responsible: The ministers, Music Director, and worship team. Timeline: beginning with planning in Spring '25, and really ramping up in fall of '25. Do an assessment, perhaps with an outside consultant, in the 26-27 year. Cost: Up to \$1000 for the consultant, other costs in the existing budget, though we may need to increase the guest musician budget beginning in '26-27' by at least \$1000.*

1C5: Justice and inclusion for LGBTQAI+ people. We grow as a community of many genders and sexualities and we grow in our practice of genuine inclusion and solidarity. Folks expand their understanding and skill at welcoming, we celebrate our diversity, promote community, and act in solidarity. Training Sessions and inclusive language and practices are the norm. *Responsible: The Sex and Gender Justice Team, the Ministers, and the Membership and Belonging Team. Cost: No additional. Timeline: ongoing.*

#### 1D: Generosity

We embody our UU value of generosity.

1D1: We have a strong annual campaign. Over the next three years, a) every member receives at least one one-on-one stewardship visit, and b) our average giving gets within \$15/month of the UUA average (currently \$25 below). *Responsible: The Senior Minister, Office Manager, Finance Committee, Board, and Generosity Team. The finance team holds prime responsibility. Cost: nothing additional unless we decide to work with Stewardship for Us to support this, cost tbd. Timeline: Will recruit at least 15 stewards by Jan '26 for a three-year term. Will divide the congregation in 1/3rds and do one-to-one visits with that 1/3 and selected others. The other 2/3rd will get emails, etc. Repeat in '27 and '28 with the other 1/3rds, while adding new folks.*

1D2: We will regularly volunteer. Create and implement volunteer plan after a thorough audit of current members, volunteers, and volunteer opportunities. Opportunities to volunteer will be made clear, and we'll create easy-on-ramps to participate, and thank volunteers often to encourage more service. *Responsible: Board and Staff. Timeline: A volunteer plan will be created in fall '25 and implemented. Cost: minimal, for a party and/or thank you gifts.*

1D3: Leadership Development. We will spend time on intentional leadership development and onboarding, as well as continuing the Roundtable of team and committee leaders. The ministers will offer leadership development experiences and share opportunities through the MidAmerica region for leadership growth. Ensure annual board retreat to determine intentional leadership development and onboarding plans for the upcoming fiscal year. The Leadership Roundtable will identify leadership needs. A team-leader and committee-leader's orientation will happen yearly. *Responsible: Board, Leadership Roundtable, and Senior Minister. Cost: existing for retreat facilitator.*

2. Our members widen the circle of belonging and advance justice and equity by practicing right relationships with our neighbors.

Another way of putting this is “WE SHOW UP AS UUs.”

2A: We are accountable and effective coalition partners.

2A1: Our Faith in Action (FiA) teams receive increasingly robust support and participation. Members join in the activities of the teams and volunteer for events with partners in larger numbers (at least 60 unique participants). The FiA teams receive staff support and have regular, sustainable, programs. Note we are not asking the FiA teams to do more – but for the congregation to join in what they are doing. *Responsible: The congregation, with support from FiA teams. Timeline: ongoing. Cost: existing.*

2A2: UUANI Partnership and GRACE Training. We nurture our covenant with UUANI (Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois), providing a liaison to their council and supporting their actions of the week. FiA leaders and others participate in their GRACE training for justice leader (at least 2 per cycle). We raise money for UUANI. *Responsible: Faith in Action Core team and Senior Minister. Cost: Existing FiA budgets. Timeline: Ongoing, with at least 1 UUANI focus Sunday per year.*

2A3: We continue to use our building and resources to support our partners. We open our building to partners at low or no cost, we advertise their events, and offer our support, expertise, and connections to our key partners. We are of service and they can count on us. *Responsible: Office Manager, Senior Minister, and Faith in Action Teams. Cost: no additional (some opportunity cost from lower rent). Timeline: ongoing.*

2B: We Show Up as UUs

We live out our values in our lives as a congregation and as Unitarian Universalists, proudly claiming our identity with respect for the pluralist world we share with our neighbors.

2B1: We identify ourselves. We make it easy for folks who choose to do so to identify themselves as Unitarian Universalists out in the world. We run programs so folks can order clothing, stickers, and other materials that can be displayed at and beyond events. We use local and ethical businesses and sources for these materials. In addition to witnessing to our values, the materials can be shared with others to invite them to explore the church. Branding and messaging is relatable to the wider public. *Responsible: Office Manager, with support from staff and Membership and Belonging Team. Cost: existing (minister's discretionary fund to pay for items for those who cannot afford to buy their own). Timeline: starting with Homecoming '25 and ongoing.*

2B2: We communicate opportunities to show up, and show up together. We curate the many opportunities from our partners and others, and find ways folks can gather and/or travel together to events and have formal or informal UU presence. *The Office Manager, Senior Minister, and Faith in Action leaders develop a plan to do this in the fall of '25 and implement in Jan. '26, with improvements going forward. Cost: existing.*

2B3: We do our work in faith, grounded in our values, and with respect. We train, teach, practice, and preach about how to do our justice work in ways that are faithful and inclusive. We use materials from the UUA's Side with Love campaign to improve our skills. See also 1C1. *Responsible: Ministers, Faith in Action Teams. Timeline: Ongoing. Cost: Existing.*

2B4: We celebrate how we show up - in many ways. We “shine our light” and provide exemplars and examples by naming the ways we show up. We celebrate folks who live our values. This includes diverse ways – activism, parenting, professional, service, witness, kindness, and much more. We recognize that many ways are needed and valued and name these. *Responsible: Ministers, Board of Trustees. Cost: existing. Timeline: ongoing.*



3. Our members are transformed by our interdependent relationship with our planet, the universe, the web of life – the sacred as we understand it.

Another way of putting this is “WE ARE INTERWOVEN” or “WE ARE CHANGED BY CONNECTING”

3A. As a congregation, we care for the earth. We take collective action to repair, nurture, and be responsible citizens of planet earth.

3A1. We care for the land upon which we sit. We nurture, heal, restore, and help our 10 acres of land thrive. The Eco-Justice Team and the Building and Grounds team remove invasive species, nurture the prairie, work to reduce our carbon footprint, and make connections with our neighbors who share these woods. Timeline: ongoing. *Cost: Add \$1000 each year to the grounds budget beginning in '26 for professional support in Buckthorn removal and other measures. Add'l: Building and Grounds continues to assess opportunities to reduce energy use, and schedules needed projects. Cost: from capital maintenance reserves. Timeline: yearly by May of each year, a plan for the coming year.*

3A2: We use our funds in ecologically responsible ways. We continue to invest our legacy funds in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) funds, and seek to improve the sustainability of our regular spending. *Responsible: Finance Team and Endowment Panel, and office manager. Timeline: Ongoing. Cost: no additional.*

3A3: The congregation engages in eco-justice work. At least 4 dozen people in the congregation regularly participate in the programs, events, and meetings of the eco-justice team and its partners. *Responsible: Congregation and Eco-Justice team. Cost: no additional. Ongoing.*

3B: Our members are good stewards and citizens of planet Earth in their individual lives.

3B1: Members are inspired and equipped to live eco-just lives. With respect for the context of different lives, folks make choices that are more sustainable and just and promote relationships. The ministers and eco-justice team provide useful tools and connections for folks to do this, and there is a spirit of engagement on these issues. *Timeline: ongoing. Measured with an annual survey. Cost: no additional.*

3B2: We are a hub of action for eco-justice and relationships. Community organizations and projects share their events with us, we host events, and folks know they can connect here with their longing to be in healthy relationships with the web of life. *Responsible: Eco-Justice Team, Office Manager for communications and building events. Cost: none. Timeline: ongoing.*

3C: We cultivate awe, wonder, and an ethic of care for the interdependent web of life.

3C1: In worship, music, and faith formation we encourage, invite, and inspire connection and healthy relationships with the earth and all life. We provoke, heal, and inform folks in ways that lead to more hope, action, and sustainability. *Responsible: ministers, music director, DRE, and eco-justice team. Cost: no additional. Timeline: ongoing.*

3C2: We support the Woodsong School. The Woodsong Nature Preschool has as its core mission to nurture this connection with nature in healthy ways. *The Board and Minister continue to support this program as core to our mission, and the Building and Grounds team provides needed support as well. Cost: included in tuition. Ongoing.*

# Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson Report

It is the end of my seventeenth year as your minister. In our time together, we have accomplished so much – to strengthen the institution, to grow in spirit and power, to be good allies and witnesses to our values, and to honor memory and hope. I am grateful.

This year was shaped by the election of a fascist to the office of President of the United States, as well as by my split sabbatical. In order to present at the election, I took six weeks in the fall, during which I walked the Camino de Santiago, and I took 10 weeks in the spring, during which I worked on my book, and read a texts on coaching, burnout, clergy well-being, and other topics. I'm grateful to the staff, lay leadership, and to Revs. Bowie and Allison for providing leadership during time. This was a time when you remembered and reclaimed your leadership of your church, which is an important goal.

While I was here, we focused on worship that fed our souls through this challenging time, as well as supporting leadership in our faith in action work and other ministries. It is marathon work, not a sprint. In addition, we dealt with a transition in our Woodsong and RE staffing – I'm very glad that we agreed to increase the compensation for Lindsay Trank, our remarkable DRE and Woodsong Director. The Woodsong program continues to thrive. Autumn Powell, office manager, has increased her authority and skill in ways that serve you all so well. And Tim Anderson, music director, and Rev. Joyce Palmer, assistant minister, manage their portfolios with skill, as well as contributing so much to the overall well-being of the church.

I will preach a total of 26 sermons this year – in a non-sabbatical year, it's usually about 34. I went to many many meetings – I have been doing more work with the Unitarian Universalist Minister's Association, as well as teaching a class for Meadville Lombard Theological School. I have loved this wider denominational work. I also have been working with Alignment Rockford and with the 17<sup>th</sup> District Court's Family Violence Coordinating Committee, two causes close to my heart.

I performed five memorial services this year: for Randy Locke, Skip Abare, Andrea Schultz, Steve Benedict, and Barb Oehlke. I performed one wedding: for Sarah Greer and Joey Stoyas. In my 17 years with you, I have performed 108 memorial services. Love and grief intertwined.

A year ago, I made the following goals for this year, with progress noted:

1. Manage and complete a restoring and successful sabbatical. I will be on sabbatical for a total of 16 weeks in the coming year. In addition to treating that time with intention and making it useful for ministry, I will work with staff, leaders, and guest preachers to ensure that quality and stable ministry happens while I am away. I hope that the congregation will take the time to grow its strength and lay ministry as well.

I would say that the fall was restoring, and overall it was sabbatical. I did not returned as restored in the spring as I wished, which was an important and vital signal for me. But the congregation did very well – Rev. Allison's leadership was well-received, and your staff managed things with much skill and ability. I think the congregation stepped into leadership in a variety of ways as well.

2. Support the mission, vision, and ends work that the board will lead. It is time to revisit and reaffirm our claims about who we are and who we wish to be. Rev. Allison Farnum, who will be our main sabbatical preacher, will work closely with the board to lead this work. I will provide some support -including onboarding a Change Team this summer, helping the Board get ready, and following through with strategies and tactics in the Spring – to this work.

My role has been recent, to pull together the brainstorming you did, check in with staff and team leaders, and create a draft, which is accomplished.

3. Strengthen our teams and committees. Working with staff and lay leaders, I'll work to firm up, integrate, and empower our teams and committees so that they effectively do their ministry.

Interestingly, this was mostly done by being absent. My making space, more team leaders took on authority. I've also supported the staff in supporting their teams. And we cannot make folks volunteer – in the end, it is up to you.

4. New member integration. I'll work with Rev. Joyce to continue to move folks along toward engaged and active membership, reach out to the wider region about who we are, and celebrate and connect those who join our community.

My role here was partly is data management, and working with Rev. Joyce to keep track of visitors and move them along in the process, such that they are connected and engaged with the life of the church. I think our processes here have improved, though it will always be a slightly organic thing.

What's next? Stay tuned.

In faith,  
Matthew

# Director of Religious Education Annual Report

## Religious Education\_\_\_\_\_

Our Religious Education program continues to thrive! We structure our Religious Education programming around the Soul Matters themes that are also used for worship and small groups. Whenever possible, Religious Education classes are held outside to take advantage of the beauty of the church grounds, to establish a sense of place, and foster a connection to the natural world.

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 or two volunteers per group. Religious Educators provide developmentally appropriate, theme based activities for the children and youth in attendance. The Grade K & Under group focuses on UU values. The Grade 1-3 group focuses on notable Unitarian Universalists. The Grade 4-6 group is beginning to learn about world religions. The youth group explored the Crossing Paths curriculum through which they learned about the major world faiths and visited the various places of worship. Rev. Joyce also worked with the members of the youth group to plan the second annual youth-led service.

The Religious Education program has gained many new volunteers this church year, which has done a great deal to ease the strain of recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers. The children and youth have also had a chance to develop relationships with other trusted adults in the congregation which will ultimately contribute to the longevity of the church.

Billie Callahan, Amy Brandon, and I facilitated the Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education curriculum for Grade K-1 in the fall and Grade 4-6 in the spring.

Finally, I coordinated with our senior minister, Matthew Johnson and the various folks that filled in for him during his sabbatical to select and read the story for all ages throughout the year, offer a backpack blessing and child dedication, put on the Christmas pageant, welcome new members to the congregation, and engage in 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 are fully enrolled for the summer 2025 session and the 2025-26 school year with a robust wait list. Word of mouth continues to be the most effective means of marketing.

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 School, 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 underwent our third annual renewal of our DCFS license. We have recruited more substitute teachers to ensure that we have a roster of qualified subs to fill in during sick days and vacation time.

The most notable change was the departure of my Co-Director while on maternity leave. This resulted in hiring Aly Vavra and Jess Teske to be permanent assistants, and I became sole director of the school. We continue to provide the quality experience that the community has come to know Woodsong for and the children and parents had a great school year.

We look forward to the opportunity to continue offering this program and hopefully expand the ages that we are able to serve.

In Gratitude\_\_\_\_\_

We would like to thank the following people for their time and commitment to volunteering: Rebecca Beneditz, Peggy Menze, Kim Lowman Vollmer, Lisa Volkman, Katy Conrad, Sandi Campbell, Kendra Asbury, Eli Logemann, Verónica Soria Martinez, Rose Kruchten, Spitty Tata, Mario Caputo, Katie Linderman, Art Beneditz, Katy Haun, Bill Schuyler, and Rev. Joyce Palmer.

Respectfully Submitted by Lindsay Trank

# Music Director's Report

Music continues to be a vital component of the worship life of this congregation. In line with our commitment to employ a thematic approach in worship, the music presented in worship continues to complement other worship components and enrich the worship experience of the congregation. Additionally, in line with our commitment to program music that represents the diversity within our community, the music presented in worship continues to reflect a wide variety of styles and genres. Also, in line with our commitment to maintain a focus on service and ministry, we continue to strive to minimize a performance mindset, instead choosing to emphasize the importance of the texts we sing and the affective response we create in presenting music in worship.

As is our custom, we presented two extended works in worship during the program year. For our December Music Sunday, the **Unicantors** and guest musicians presented *A Winter Day* by Canadian composer Sarah Quartel. Incorporating texts by Sara Teasdale, Lucy Maud Montgomery, and Melville Cane, Quartel's work offers a musical impression of five different moments during a winter day from dawn to dusk. The impressionistic nature of the music reminds us of the importance of being present in every moment and, in that way, provided a musical invitation to the spiritual practice of presence, which was our December worship theme. We were blessed that soloist **Stephanie Souza Rasmann**, cellist **Martha Dunegan**, and pianist **Mary Shore** joined us that morning in creating a poignant worship experience for all.

For our May Music Sunday, the **Unicantors** and guest musicians presented *A Vision Unfolding* by Kyle Pederson. With its focus on envisioning and creating a socially just world, this work fit particularly well with our May worship theme, an invitation to the spiritual practice of imagination. The work includes five musical settings of texts by Robert Bode, Walt Whitman, Kyle Pederson, Shanelle Gabriel, and Langston Hughes, all with a clear social justice focus. Along with the music, there are readings interspersed throughout by Shanelle Gabriel, an African American singer, songwriter, spoken word artist, and poet from New York City. **Bill Scarpaci** and **Andy Larson** joined **Revs. Matthew and Joyce** as our readers for the service. Also joining us were our guest musicians for the morning: soloist **Stephanie Souza Rasmann**, pianist **Kristen Nelson**, violinist **Rachel Handlin**, trumpeter **Mark Baldin**, and percussionist **Scott Stich**. The congregation's response to the work manifested the powerful way in which music and text can come together to create profound and meaningful experiences in the context of worship. We are most grateful to **Robin Gausebeck** for her financial support, which made the presentation of this work possible.

We were fortunate again this year to welcome several guest musicians who lent their talents to enrich worship for our congregation. When I was absent, music for worship was provided by **Jesse Parker**, **Timm Adams**, **Jack Armstrong**, and **Trinadora (Ron Holm and Janel Nelson)**. Also, joining the **Unicantors** as guest soloists for worship were **Tracey Armstrong** and two students from the Performing Arts department at Rockford University: **Robbie Strader** and **Aubry Musfelt**.

This was the first year since the COVID-19 pandemic that everything seems to have returned to normal. It has been a blessing to be able to return to singing without masks. However, the **Unicantors** continue to rehearse in the sanctuary rather than in the choir room on Thursday nights because it affords the opportunity to sing in a space that is less confined and has better air circulation. We continue to monitor relevant information from reporting agencies and will do whatever is necessary to be able to continue singing while taking into consideration the health needs of the most vulnerable among us.

Finally, this year marks my retirement from academia as I leave my faculty position at Kishwaukee College at the end of June 2025. I am pleased to bring that phase of my professional life to a close, but I intend to remain serving as Music Director for at least a few more years. In fact, my continued employment at the church is no

small part of what makes my retirement from teaching possible. I am planning to teach the occasional Spanish class at Rockford University for as long as I find it enjoyable, and I hope to be able to offer and facilitate opportunities for people to gather to discuss philosophy and language, two of my greatest passions besides music. Perhaps if there is interest here at church, we could program a gathering or two in the coming year. As I complete my twenty-first year as your Music Director, I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to make music with you all. Your continued support of the music program here at church makes my work a joy. I look forward to the music yet to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Anderson  
Music Director

# Assistant Minister Rev. Joyce Palmer Report

*“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”*

— Helen Keller

This year has been one of collaboration, connection, and continued care within our congregation. During Rev. Matthew’s sabbatical, I had the privilege of working with several guest ministers to help ensure our worship life remained vibrant and inspiring. In addition to supporting guest preachers, I also created and led several worship services myself, offering reflections and experiences that invited our community into deeper spiritual engagement during this period.

Beyond the pulpit, I supported the ongoing work of our Justice Teams, especially through supporting **Wonderful Wednesday** programs. These midweek gatherings continue to bring members together for learning, conversation, and community-building around the values we share.

Our **Caring Team** was a steady presence this year, showing up in meaningful ways for those in need. The team provided meals, offered rides to appointments and services, and visited members to help maintain connection and offer support. Their quiet acts of kindness embody the heart of our congregation’s ministry.

Our **Getting to Know UU** program has gone through a few format adjustments. Our current format is meeting on Sundays after service for an hour and a half. This seems to work for newcomers, staff, and volunteers. The topics for the sessions are our history, religious education and how to get connected. Newcomers are able to learn about the congregation and share some of their stories and hopes for a new spiritual home.

One of the year’s highlights for me was working with our youth as they explored different religious traditions through the **Crossing Paths** curriculum. I accompanied them on visits to various houses of worship, helping them reflect on their experiences and ask thoughtful questions. Together, we created a youth-led worship service where they shared personal insights on the theme of *truth*. Witnessing their curiosity, courage, and creativity was deeply moving and a testament to the strength of our religious education program.

In looking back, Helen Keller’s words ring true: this year’s ministry has been a shared effort—shaped by many hands, open hearts, and a common purpose. I’m profoundly grateful to be part of this community, where we continue to grow, serve, and care for one another. I feel thankful for the ways we have come together—through worship, learning, justice work, and care—to live out our Unitarian Universalist values. Thank you for the trust and partnership that makes this work possible.

In faith and service,

Rev Joyce Palmer  
Assistant Minister



## **Combined Treasurer's and Finance Committee Annual Report 2024-25**

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.

The Treasurer is the financial officer of the church and sits on the Board of Trustees as well as the Finance Committee and the Investment Committee.

Summary of 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 April, the church finances for the year are pretty much in control. Income is projected to be close to budget at year end in June. A few expense categories seem to be running over budget. Insurance, which has been requested for next year. Computer expenses and subscriptions is running over, and, has been corrected for next year. Electricity costs are running high to budget. Alarm service is running over budget, and our contract and prices have been improved for the next year.
- The Balance Sheet is healthy, with balances exceeding \$69,000 in the Operating Fund checking account, and smaller balances in both the Deficit Reserve, and the Building Maintenance Reserve. The Legacy Funds have a balance of \$1,845,000, nearly unchanged, following a year of market fluctuations. Kudos to Teresa Wilmot and the Investment Panel.
- The major building project, starting shortly, is the replacement of the wood siding. This is a \$300,000 project. The Congregation voted to tap into our Building Legacy Fund to pay for this project. Thanks to the generous estate bequests of several past members, and thanks to a healthy stock market, our Building Fund was healthy enough to responsibly afford to fund this major project.
- It is a tribute to the generosity of church members that pledge income is meeting the budget and maintaining a robust church program.
- Alexis Simmons, Rebecca Beneditz, Teresa Palmeno, and Steve Lewis chaired an church auction that raised a much needed \$12,458.
- Resumed paying for an annual Rockford Promise scholarship.
- With the minister, built a balanced annual budget for fiscal year 2025-2026.

Committee Members: Steve Lewis (Chair), Sue Molyneaux, Teresa Wilmot (Investment Panel Chair), Steve Blomgren, Bob Spelman (Treasurer), Pat Lewis (Chair Memorials & Special Gifts), Keith Kruchten, Dave Zinn.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Lewis, Finance Chair and Bob Spelman, Treasurer

## Balance Sheet

		Jun-24	Apr-25	
<b>Assets</b>				
	Operating Fund	69,817	43,680	
	Memorials Fund	9,766	8,025	
	Maintenance Reserve	13,963	205,261	
	Deficit Reserve	5,743	9,743	
	In / Out Special accounts	32,946	31,787	
	Legacy Fund - Justice Outreach	176,919	176,675	
	Legacy Fund - Building	1,225,706	1,024,018	
	Legacy Fund - Church Program	444,963	444,346	
	<b>Total Assets (less Land &amp; Bldg)</b>	<b>1,979,823</b>	<b>1,943,535</b>	

## Income Statement

		2024-25 Budget	Budget thru April	Actuals thru April
<b>Income</b>				
	Stewardship Pledges	389,000	324,167	331,321
	Woodsong Tuitions	105,750	88,125	91,235
	Spectrum & Rentals	48,000	40,000	36,000
	Share the Plate	30,000	25,000	26,847
	Allocations from Legacy Funds	92,000	92,000	92,000
	Other	22,250	20,541	24,978
	<b>Total Incomes</b>	<b>687,000</b>	<b>589,833</b>	<b>602,381</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
	Salaries & Fringe Benefits	383,513	320,314	319,566
	Insurance	13,400	11,167	13,686
	Office Expense	19,500	16,250	21,927
	Building & Grounds	84,100	75,833	86,060
	UUA Dues	21,000	-	-
	Woodsong	109,158	94,003	87,238
	Activities, R.E., and Outreach	55,355	46,362	43,723
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>686,026</b>	<b>563,929</b>	<b>572,200</b>

# Committee Reports

## U.U. Church Building & Grounds Committee COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

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. June. 2024. The entrance canopy was completed. Atrium sidewalk edging and fresh air intake grates were replaced, Library and Narthex window exterior window frames and sills were repaired and repainted, Atrium benches were replaced.
2. July. Landscaping plans for the small playground for Woodsong was completed. Repair of the sidewalk adjacent to the South ADA ramp was completed. Assessment of the Sanctuary textiles: Obis and the 3 panel "Linda Weissbard" wall hangings was scheduled and completed.
3. August. The proposal for the parking lots(s) was approved by the Finance Committee. The continually malfunctioning automatic entry door actuator for the Office lobby was replaced with standard low energy manual door closers.
4. September. Annual building equipment inspections and test were conducted with no major issues identified. Consultations with Saavedra Group Architects, DPI Construction, Finance Committee, and Wausau Products representative, resulted in a decision to have church leadership investigate possible methods of financing the project.
5. October / November. Continued research into the cost for the material from Wausau Products. Sanctuary textile repairs have been arranged with Donna Langford for the two Obis and the three "Linda W." panels. Holiday decorations were obtained and installed prior to Thanksgiving. No significant building issues to report.
6. December. Continuing estimate work on the siding replacement project. Minor building (heating) mechanical issues (furnace fan motors) were addressed and corrected. The passing of committee member Skip Abare was a shock and a major loss to the congregation and the B&G Committee.
7. January. Issues of the church's present trash / recycling activities were discussed and the agreement that there is no simple solution. Hopefully additional "educational information" can be used to reduce the confusion. Winter / holiday decorations were removed. The concerns from Spectrum School and Woodsong Day Care regarding the homeless / houseless encampment on the adjacent 7th Day Adventist property have been resolved by the 7th Day Adventist Church. Review of the monthly natural gas bills was conducted by the Finance Committee Chair and B&G Chair. The decision to monitor the monthly consumption was made v/s going to a monthly budget plan.
8. February. Due to recent events the concerns regarding building and parking lot security became a priority. Discussions with the church staff resulted in the 8a. Locking of the main entry doors after the start of the

Sunday service. Late comers will be greeted and let in after the service starts. 8b. Additional parking lot lighting was installed to illuminate the staff parking areas. 8c. Modification of the Narthex entry door lighting.

9. March. Quarterly alarm system testing completed, revitalization of the raised bed planted gardens, prairie mowing / burning discussion, and the costs for the repair work being amazingly inexpensive. The proposal from DPI Construction for \$305,000.00 (nte) was received. Discussions with Finance and Church senior leadership and DPI resulted in an agreement to move forward with the project pending review and approval by the Finance Committee, the Board, and final Congregational approval vote on 03.23.25.

10. April. Kitchen equipment (coffee grinder) failure. The decision by B&G and the Kitchen group was to not replace the coffee grinder and purchase ground coffee v/s whole bean since the cost was equal. Grounds: The planted beds are and prairie items are continuing to be managed. Sanctuary textiles: repairs are ongoing.

11, May. Siding project will begin the 1st week of June. Video cameras, electrical outlets, A/C lines and electrical disconnect have been removed / relocated away from the existing siding. Discussions regarding the excessive cost for the building alarm service have resulted in request from PerMar Security and up dated bids from Johnson Controls Inc. Further review is in progress. No major building issues to report.

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

1. 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.

Committee members (names):

Jim Dehler, Clark Logemann, Allen Penticoff, Fred Stellema, Kim Vollmer, Ken Ring,

Committee chair: D.J Schubert

# Library Committee

2024 – 2025 Annual Report

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

The committee met nine times during this fiscal year. We meet the 4th Sunday of most months.

We sorted donated books to determine which ones were appropriate to keep in our library. We processed  
and shelved the books we decided to keep. We processed and shelved over 30 books as of May 2025.

We also started announcing in the Kairos the books we've added to the library.

Kathy Young, Secretary

## **Finance Committee Annual Report 2024– 2025**

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:*

Our year has been a quiet one.

Committee activities this year included the following expenditure of memorial funds:

- Engraving of additional bricks with names to be added to the patio. We are awaiting our installer to get them placed.

Maintenance of the new patio remains an ongoing activity.

*Committee members 2024-25:* Francie Barnes, Mary Caskey, Jackie Dehler, Alice Enichen,  
Kay Hotchkiss, Pat Lewis

Patricia Lewis, Chair

# Investment Panel

## Fund Allocations to 2025-2026 Operating Budget

Approval of the 2025-2026 Permanent Fund Income Allocations	Teresa Wilmot
Building Fund	\$46,100
Program and Futures Fund	22,100
Justice Fund	8,800
Total Allocations	\$ 77,000

This fiscal year, July 2024 to April 2025, has been a rollercoaster, but not as severe as the future may bring. The church's fund actually gained \$18,423, but that's only 0.99% of our total investment. Both of our investments, those with the UUCEF fund through the UUA and mutual funds through Charles Schwab made slight gains. About 1/3 of our total long-term investment is with UUCEF and 2/3 with Charles Schwab. All funds reflect ESG, or. socially responsible funds.

During the Special Congregational Meeting on March 23, 2025, the decision was made to fund the siding replacement using funds reserved for Building Maintenance from the long-term investments. Part of those funds have been transferred to the church's checking account, ready to pay invoices from the work beginning in June. The balance of the estimated costs has been converted to a money fund, ready to transfer when needed.

The remaining funds have been balanced to reflect the investment objectives of the Investment Panel.

### Members:

Teresa Wilmot, chair  
Steve Blomgren  
Steve Hall  
Ed Kuehl  
Steve Lewis  
Sue Molyneaux  
Bob Spelman

Submitted by Teresa Wilmot

# 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 2024-2025:

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 On-line General Assembly in June, 2024, "Love Unites; Stories Ignite"

Supported the proposed revision to Article II, including the Shared Unitarian Universalist Values, a visual with Love at the center surrounded by 6 other values, Justice, Interdependence, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism and Generosity. The revision passed 80.2% to 19.8%.

Passed a Responsive Resolution supporting October 7th hostages.

All three proposed AIW's (Action of Immediate Witness) passed:

"Centering Love Amidst the Ongoing Impact of COVID-19"

"World on Fire: Humanitarian Work and Climate Change"

"Solidarity with Palestinians"

Attending General Assembly 2025 in Baltimore, MD, June 18 - 22

Submitted by Teresa Wilmot

# **Caring Team Annual Report**

Caring Team and Membership and Belonging Subcommittee see the Assistant Minister's Report.

## **Membership Team**

Caring Team and Membership and Belonging Subcommittee see the Assistant Minister's Report.

### **Membership Information and Rites of Passage**

#### **Weddings**

Sarah Greer and Joey Stoyas, Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson, July 21, 2024

#### **Memorials and Committals**

Randy Lock, August 17, 2024

Tom Hunter, October 26, 2024

Skip Abare, November 23rd, 2024

Andrea Schultz, January 4th, 2025

Jack Berti, April 5th, 2025

Steve Benedict, May 24th, 2025

Ed Miller, May 31st, 2025

Barb Oehlke, June 7th, 2025

#### **New or Reactivated Members since June 2024**

Ashley Baert

Carrie Meyer

Ernie Carlson

Jade Rose Depauw

Noah Hansen

Phil Curtin

Ray Baert

Rosalie Johnson-Doyle

Terry Curtin

Joe Bruce

Veronia Soria-Martinez

Wendy Singery

Hailey Powell

Anthony Tzemopoulos

Ginger Tzemopoulos

Eleni Mussared Varga

Kitty Roth

Maddy Dorr

Shelby Leick

Susan Williams

Thom Miles

## **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 and are adding a “UU The Vote” team. 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**

2024-2025 was Jennifer Riley and Lia Gima’s first year leading the Sex and Gender Justice Team. In October we celebrated the theme of Deep Listening with a Wonderful Wednesday featuring coming-out stories. In November, with the help of Share the Plate donations, we sponsored the annual LIAM Foundation Gayla fundraiser.

The 2024 presidential election ushered in an era of fear, distrust and uncertainty for gender equality, reproductive justice and LGBTQIA+ rights. Our team understands the need to double down in these areas. In addition to the LIAM Foundation, our chosen Share the Plate recipients included Scotti’s Fund, Midwest Reproductive Health Center, Family Peace Center, Remedies Renewing Lives, and Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling.

In January our Wonderful Wednesday was a Drag Queen Story Hour, which was well attended by kids and adults from the church and the wider community. We spent December through February publicizing the UU Common Read for 2025: *Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and their Families*. Kay Ostberg organized the book orders, and Li-M Blacker facilitated the book discussion in February. In March several church members, including members of our team, attended the Transgender Day of Visibility rally, and on June 7 we will participate in Rockford’s second annual Pride Parade.

Submitted by Lia Gima

## **The Racial and Economic Justice Team**

Our first Wonderful Wednesday was in September when we promoted the Climate Change Revival. Our second Wonderful Wednesday was in February when we invited Welcome With Dignity to share with the congregation the stories of a panel of immigrants living in the Rockford area. We are now planning our third Wonderful Wednesday for June.

We began and are continuing to clarify relationships with our partners, becoming aware of partners with whom we interact and those to whom we donate via the Share the Plate.

One big project we did in September was donating lunches to Habitat For Humanity. We could not deliver the lunches because the location had closed due to a gas leak, so we filled our Neighborhood Free Pantry with them.

We have continued looking at the issue of unhoused people in Rockford.

Kathie and Gloria finished the G.R.A.C.E Training offered by Scott Aaseng of UUANI. This training focused on organizing within the congregation for Social Justice issues.

## **Eco Justice Team**

In September, 2024, the Eco Justice Team, with a generous grant from the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, completed the Mural Painting Event at our pantry with local artist Jenny Mathews and help from the church and community members. The pantry continues to be used by the community and stocked by volunteers led by Dawn Nimmo, as well as supported by food drives during the year. At the end of September, the Eco Justice Team joined with the UU congregation in Rockton to put on a day-long Climate Justice Revival event that was done at UU congregations all over the country.

Eco Justice Team planned three Wonderful Wednesdays this past year. November 2024 was a panel about repair in our local environment, with participation by Severson Dells (regarding the work being done at the former Elliot Golf Course site) and the Region 1 Planning Council/Olson Ecological Solutions (repairing the local watershed). March was a celebration of the Spring Equinox, and May will be a Barter/Swap event.

In December 2024, the team decided to use part of its budget to subscribe to a composting service with Nettle Curbside Compost. The team has had volunteers in Deale Hall every week to guide people on what can be composted and also had Nettle Compost do a Q&A at the January 2025 Eco Justice meeting.

In the coming year, we plan to sustain our composting and pantry work and hope to engage more members - including restoration work on our grounds and participation in partner events.

Submitted by Rebecca Beneditz

## **Music Team**

See Music Director Report.

# **Minutes of Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Church, Rockford Sunday, June 9, 2024**

Start: 11:15am

Spitty Tata called the meeting to order. He thanked everyone for attending. Kim Lowman Vollmer is the clerk and will be taking the minutes. Matt Menze, current Vice Preseident, will be the parliamentarian.

A quorum was announced and people were reminded of the Rules of Procedure.

## **Review of 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.

## **Approval of Minutes of June 11, 2023, Annual Meeting (posted online in the Annual Report)**

A motion to accept the minutes of the 2023 Annual meeting was made by the Board and seconded by Dave Black. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Annual Report for 2023-2024 is available online and in the church office upon request.

## **Election**

Gary Lawrence came forward on behalf of the Nominating Panel. He shared that it is the Nominating Panel's responsibility for recruiting qualified leaders for the Board of

Trustees, the Covenant and Safety Team, and for the Nominating Panel. It is an important way that the congregation governs itself. People were asked to stand when their name was called.

For the Board of Trustees:

President Matt Menze (1-year term)

Vice President Wendy Bennett (1-year term)

Clerk Kim Lowman Vollmer (1-year term)

Treasurer Bob Spelman (1-year term)

Trustee Neita Webster (3-year term)

Note: Clark Logemann and Rebecca Beneditz will continue to serve as Trustees.

For the Nominating Panel members:

Spitty Tata (2-year term)

Katy Conrad (2-year term)

Renee Mealey (2-year term)

Larry Hughes (1-year unexpired term)

Note: Gary Lawrence will continue to serve on the Nominating Panel.

For the Covenant and Safety Team

Amy Brandon (2-year unexpired term)

Alexis Simmons (3-year term)

Note: Matt Menze will continue to serve on the Covenant and Safety Team

Spitty stated that the Nominating Panel has moved this slate of leaders.

A motion to accept was made by Bob Spelman and seconded by Art Beneditz.

There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

### The 2024-2026 Permanent Fund Income Allocation

Steve Blomgren, Treasurer, spoke next. The investment panel, which is chaired by Teresa Wilmot, has recommended a total draw from our legacy funds of \$92,000. This is in line with our policies. Of those funds, \$22,200 will be used to support Programs and Growth in the operating budget – it subsidizes the salary of our Assistant Minister. \$24,400 will be used for Facility and Equipment, to help pay building costs. \$36,600 will be used for Capital Reserve, to take on small and medium building projects. And \$8,800 will be used for Justice work, to support our faith in action team.

Approval of the 2024-2026 Permanent Fund Income Allocations

Programs and Growth \$22,200

Facility and Equipment \$24,400

Capital Reserve*	\$36,600
Outreach (Justice)	\$8,800
Totals	\$92,000

*\*In approving the allocation of these funds, the congregation authorizes the Board to approve expenditures of the Capital Maintenance Reserve Fund, upon the recommendation of the Building and Grounds and Finance Committees, without additional approval from the congregation.*

Spitty stated that the Board moves these allocations as detailed in the agenda and it was seconded by Ed Kuehl.

Some discussion followed regarding several topics and questions answered.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

### The 2024-2025 Annual Operating Budget

Steve Blomgren Treasurer, then presented the budget for 2024-2025. The top-level annual budget is printed in the agenda, along with key highlights about our budget. It is a result of your generosity in the annual campaign, so thank you for your gifts to the church. It is a balanced budget. I hope you took time to look it over. If you have detailed questions, please don't hesitate to ask myself, Steve Lewis, or Reverend Matthew.

Spitty stated that the board moves the budget as presented in the agenda and it was seconded by John McGinty.

Some discussions followed and praise.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Recognitions: People were asked to stand when their name was called.

Those completing terms of office announced by Matt Menze

Those completing terms of office:

Art Beneditz-Worship Associate

Libby Parker-Worship Associate

Teresa Wilmont-Worship Associate

Allyson Rosemore-EcoJustice and Sex and Gender Justice Team Leader:

Katie Kerr-Auction Co-Chair

Alexis Simons-Auction Co-Chair

Allen Penticoff-Grounds Chair

Wendy Bennett-Covenant and Safety Team

Sarah Greer-Board at Large

Spitty Tata-Board President

Charles Parker Connolly Award:

Gloria Perez

Kathie Mattison

Memorial Moment honoring those members who had passed in the past year:

Lola Gustafson

Eugene Gustafson  
Sally Walker  
Louis Mayhall  
Jan Scot  
Marge Ellio  
25 Year Member recognition:  
Ann Pellman  
Randy Pellman  
Rhonda Best  
50 Year Member recognition:  
Brenda Ray  
Miranda Best  
Nancy Holstrom  
Judy Johnson  
David Lantz  
UU of the Year:  
Teresa Palmeno

Spitty stated that all business on the agenda is concluded and meeting is adjourned.

Meeting Adjourned 11:50am      Spitty Tata

## **2024-2025 Budget Key Points**

Total pledge income is projected at 390,000. This is a remarkable and generous increase from last year's 364,000. It represents your commitment to this congregation and it's ministry, and the generosity of both current and new members. It is you saying "yes" to this church post-covid. Thank you.

Woodsong income is projected at \$105,750. We increased tuition slightly. The program is fully enrolled for summer and fall, with 2-day, 3-day, and 5-day options for programs. Lindsay Trank and Lauren Smith deserve much credit and thanks for making this happen.

Spectrum will pay \$48,000 in annual rent. An increase is built in each year. This continues to be a good relationship for both parties.

There is an auction in this budget. We are need of leaders and volunteers. Please let Steve Lewis know if you are game!

This budget keeps our employees on the UUA Fair Compensation schedule. All employees are getting raises, with the amount depending on what it takes to keep them on track. Our staff has worked so hard to rebuild after COVID, and their flexibility and dedication is worthy of just and generous compensation.

We will pay \$21,000 for our UUA Fair Share. This is up from \$19,400 last year.

Most of the rest of the budget is flat, with minor changes here and there.

## 2024-2025 Budget Summary

<b>Income</b>		
	Pledges	389,000
	Misc. Income & Rentals	182,750
	Fundraisers	12,000
	Church Organization Income	1,250
	Allocations of Permanent Funds Income	92,000
	<b>Total Income</b>	687,000
<b>Expenses</b>		
	<b>Staff Salary &amp; Benefits</b>	
		Proposed
	Minister Salary (and Housing)	108,000
	Minister Benefits and Other Expenses	49,023
	Dir. of Religious Education Salary	65,000
	Dir. of Religious Education Benefits/etc.	27,143
	Music Director Salary	42,000
	Music Director Benefits/Other	10,353
	Assistant Minister Salary	36,500

Assistant Minister Benefits/etc.	12,514
Office Manager Salary	43,000
Office Manager Benefits	9,028
RE Assist/Woodsong Co-Director Salary	36,800
RE Assist/Woodsong Co-Director Benefits	16,621
Bookkeeper (contracted)	8,400
Custodial Salary and Taxes	8,061
Subtotal	473,446
<b>Administration Expense</b>	
Insurance, Office, Finance	70,500
Building and Grounds	51,100
Denominational Contribution – should be 31,143	21,000
	Subtotal 142,600
<b>Programs and Committees</b>	
Worship & Music	8,400
Religious Growth & Learning and Woodsong	24,600
Outreach & Social Justice	29,500
Other Committees	7,454
	Subtotal 70,954
<b>Total Expenses</b>	687,000
<b>Total Net Income</b>	<b>0</b>