



**Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Fairfax**

Annual Report 2015-16

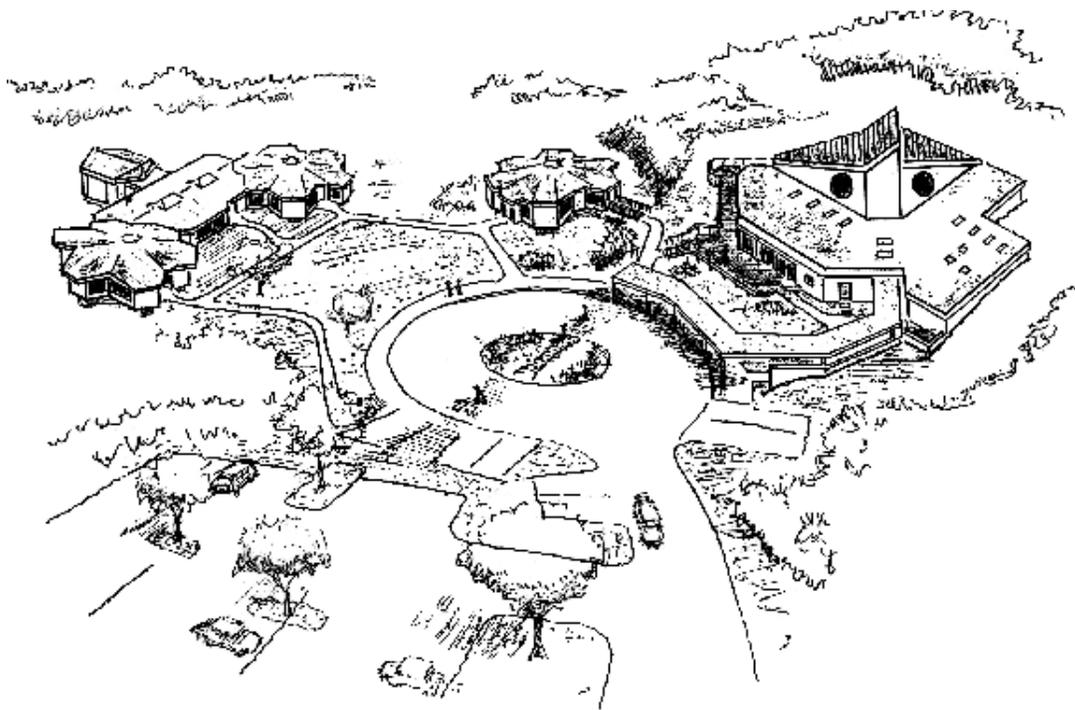
June 5, 2016



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Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax

Annual Report 2015-16

Board of Directors

President	Nigel Astell
Vice President	Jennifer Caires
Treasurer	Steve Myles
Secretary	Judy Gallimore
At Large, 2014-16	Linda Hunt
At Large, 2014-17	Jan Cooper (resigned May 2016)
At Large, 2015-18	Hal Fuller
At Large, 2015-18	Michael Liggett
At Large, 2015-18	Karen Wolf

Lay Ministers

Caring and Wellness	Kelly Schlageter
Education	Lydia Lewis (resigned January 2016)
Membership and Outreach	John Kun
Social Justice	Wini Atlas
Property Stewardship	Suzy Foster
Worship and Arts	Susan Bennett

Staff

Senior Minister	Rev. David A. Miller
Associate Minister	Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig
Interim Music Coordinator	Sarah Jebian
Director of Religious Exploration	Linnea Nelson
Director of Administration	Rich Sider
Member Services Coordinator	Carol Jensen
Administrative Coordinator	Mary Foster
Communications Director	Mary Lareau
Communications Assistant	Sarah Creel
Summer Director of RE	Emily Ordun
RE Program Assistant	Katherine Riddle
Audiovisual Technician	Aaron Levine
Bookkeeper	Gayathri Tillekeratne
Custodian	Flori Diaz
Weekend Sexton	Rony Caballero
Weekend Maintenance	Bill Braband
Nursery/Child Care Coordinator	Candice Johnson

Coordinating Team

Senior Minister	Rev. David A. Miller
Associate Minister	Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig
Director of Administration	Rich Sider
Lay Member, 2012-16	John Cunningham
Lay Member, 2015-17	Kathe Smerke Hochberg

Ministers' Report

Rev. David A. Miller, senior minister, and Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig, associate minister

Every new ministry brings a turning of the page in the life of a congregation. With the addition of every new member, a congregation evolves. This year, traveling through a period filled with joys, sorrows, farewells and welcoming, the congregation moved forward together.

Rev. David Miller arrived as the new senior minister in August and began to participate in the life of the congregation. With Rev. Laura and the lay leadership of UUCF, retreats started the year as an opportunity to get to know each other and have strategic discussions for the year to come. These retreats included the Worship Team, the Social Justice Council, the Board of Directors and the Coordinating Team (CT). We also reinvigorated the efforts around creating the UUCF long-term Strategic Plan based on feedback already received from the congregation and input from current lay leaders and the new ministry team of Rev. Laura and Rev. David. This included a strategic planning retreat led by Pete Krone and attended by staff, board, lay ministers and members of the new Leadership Development Team.

The lay leadership, in this first year of ministry for Rev. David, has been the rock from which to build our future. The leadership - members of the board, the CT, the lay ministers and committee chairs and facilitators - has been a major factor in working with the ministers with love and care to build a wonderful future for UUCF.

The staff, including the incredible interim music team of Sarah Jebian, Rob Redei and Catalin Dima, helped keep the heart of the congregation on track during a year filled with healing. Also this year, we said goodbye to James Forrest, who left to take another position, and welcomed Courtney Firth as our new youth ministry coordinator.

Based on the Program Evaluation Committee's report on the long-term financial systems of the congregation, the new Generosity Team led by Steve Myles, Don Reagan and Deborah Boehm-Davis is leading the way for a new approach to annual and capital giving at UUCF.

- **Denominational Involvement**

Rev. David - Served on a panel as a result of a request from the moderator of the Unitarian Universalist Association to look at the concept of membership evolving into the concept of covenanting. This group is preparing for a presentation and workshop at General Assembly. Rev. David has also been serving this year as a mentor for a minister in preliminary fellowship and traveled to Boise, ID, to deliver the charge to the minister at her installation as well as the pledge sermon the next morning.

Rev. Laura began a two-year term as the vice president of the Chesapeake Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (CUUMA). In this role, she serves on the CUUMA Executive Team and coordinates programming for six CUUMA meetings throughout the year.

Rev. David attended or facilitated the following:

- **Attended Beloved Conversations** - Morristown, NJ, Oct. 21 and 22 – “Beloved Conversations: Meditations on Race and Ethnicity” is a powerful, new faith formation pedagogy in service to understanding how issues of race and ethnicity shape our personal and professional lives. Developed by religious professionals on the Fahs Collaborative staff team, it is being successfully used in over than 40 UU and partner congregations. Each congregation joins this “learning community” as a way to envision and deepen cultural/religious diversity as lifelong work.”

- **Facilitated Shift Happens at UUCF** – one in the fall and one in the early spring.
- **Attended conference - The Leading Edge 2016: Revolutionary Love: Tools, Tactics and Truth-telling to Dismantle Racism.** “At the 10th annual Leading Edge Conference and the 6th annual Transform Network Gathering, we will learn and teach each other the best practical wisdom for movement-making, mingled with theoretical underpinnings and theological reflection. In plenaries, short talks and small group conversations surrounded by music and art, we will create strategies for change.”
- **Facilitated Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church board retreat.**

Rev. Laura led the following programs for adults at UUCF:

- **Introduction to Shamanism** (with Ann and Steve Simon). This two-session course has led to an ongoing monthly practice circle.
- **2,000 Years of UU History** (one-session history survey)
- **Lectio Divina: “Sacred Reading” for Unitarian Universalists** (two-session class)
- **Tending Our Spirit: Creation** (theme-based retreat day)
- **Introduction to Dreamwork** (four-session class)

In April, Rev. Laura graduated from a two-year certificate program in spiritual direction at the Haden Institute. The program included six intensive training weeks over two years, ongoing supervision and a number of papers.

She also participated in the annual Harpers Ferry Ministerial Study Group in November, with guest lecturer Rev. Michael Piazza.

- **Congregational Activities, Programs and/or Initiatives**
 - **Gun Violence Prevention (GVP)** – Initially, Rev. David was planning on organizing with the Gun Violence Prevention (GVP) group an interfaith vigil that took place on Dec. 14 to commemorate the third anniversary of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT. After the shooting last year in Oregon and then the sermon he delivered immediately following, this was expanded to organize new directions in GVP efforts with an expanded group of interested people, including UU gun owners.
 - **30 Days of Love: Racial Justice** – This year, the 30 Days of Love campaign from Standing on the Side of Love focused on racial justice, and we devoted 5 weeks of worship on associated issues. There were associated events and activities planned by various groups in the congregation including lay ministers, the Social Justice Council and others. Part of the planning came from discussions with Linnea Nelson and Sarah Jebian during the Beloved Conversations training. This effort was capped with a “What Next” workshop attended by about 35 people that led to a standing group called the Racial Justice Steering Committee, charged with leading the congregation in efforts to expand awareness, education, reflection, systemic change and actions surrounding the issues of racial justice.
 - **Commissionings** - With the beginning of Rev. David’s ministry, we will begin to include new commissionings in special worship services for specific groups in the congregation. These commissionings recognize and bless those who answer these specific calls to service:
 - RE teachers
 - Pastoral Care Associates
 - Board members
 - Lay ministers
 - **Worship** – This year brought some change in some of our worship services as well. We participated in the Soul Matters Sharing Circle, a collaborative effort of dozens of UU

congregations around the country creating worship and educational materials around common monthly worship theme. We held a separate Yom Kippur service that was deeply meaningful and well attended. It seemed as if a good time was had by all in the Joy Service, which will occur the first Sunday of every December. And some changes were made in the Christmas Eve and Easter services including doing the beautiful flower communion on Easter.

- **Pastoral Care** – This year the pastoral care team developed a series of response protocols for common pastoral care situations, increasing our ability to respond effectively and consistently to congregational needs.
 - **Adult Programs** – This spring, we began work on a new core curriculum for adults at UUCF, including a suggested path of deepening engagement for newcomers.
 - **In his new role, Rev. David reached out to his new community and held meetings and began to develop relationships with:**
 - Minister of the Unity Church
 - NOVA UU Ministers – The “Stanley Group”
 - Attended CUUMA meetings at River Road UU
 - Minister of the United Christian Parish of Reston
 - Leadership of the Northern Virginia Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence
 - Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions – attended interfaith rally on the National Mall for the Pope Francis’s visit
 - Attended UUSJ awards gala
 - Attended minister’s installation at the UU Church of Arlington
 - Attended cluster meetings at UUCF and Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church
 - Met with Shepherd’s Center representative and attended their open house
 - Went to Lobby Day in Richmond with a group from UUCF to witness about gun safety
 - Included Mosaic Harmony choir in our installation service
-

Board of Directors

Nigel Astell, president

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

The board operates under a policy-based form of governance. The board’s primary purpose is vision, strategy and decision-making on major matters that affect the long-term well-being of the congregation. Day-to-day management of operations is handled by the Coordinating Team (CT) within limits established by the board. The board’s primary activities are to communicate with the congregation, articulate UUCF’s goals and priorities, envision ways to enlarge or strengthen congregational programs and systematically evaluate the performance of the senior minister, the CT and the board itself. The board has adopted the following mission statement: **The purpose of the UUCF Board of Directors, as the stewards of the congregational mission, is to create an evolving vision and strategy that challenges the congregation to live its mission by nurturing relationships of love, respect and trust.**

Committees

The Board Executive Committee is made up of the president, vice president, treasurer and secretary. Three other board-chartered committees comprise the Financial Oversight Committee, Ministerial Assessment Committee and Generosity Team, the last of which was created in late 2015.

2015-18 Strategic Goals

Continuing work from previous years, the board collaborated with the CT and other UUCF leaders to adopt four new strategic goals for 2015-18. In a time in the world that calls for boldness, these UUCF

goals will create opportunities and initiatives to expand the reach and impact of Unitarian Universalism both within and beyond the congregation:

- Work with local UU congregations to identify innovative ways to share and leverage resources for the purpose of growing Unitarian Universalism in depth, size and impact.
- Develop a project or projects that demonstrate and practice UU values in new ways beyond our campus.
- Intentionally grow our cultural competency in ways that challenge our comfort, expand our awareness and promote social and spiritual healing.
- Evaluate congregational programming to intentionally discern what activities, groups and learning opportunities are helping the congregation fulfill its mission; what no longer serves the congregation; and what will serve the congregation in the future, and modify our programs accordingly.
 - Make it easier for congregants to engage opportunities to Grow, Connect and Serve at UUCF.
 - Build opportunities for reflection and spiritual deepening into all our programming.

Policy and Fiduciary Tasks

The board completed five foundational policy and fiduciary tasks during 2015-16:

1. The board implemented the recommendations from the Program Evaluation Committee evaluation of financial stewardship, which were intended to increase the overall emphasis on strategic financial planning and stewardship. To that end, the board created the Generosity Team for fundraising, expanded the membership of the Financial Oversight Committee and added an assistant treasurer position on the board to provide more capacity for financial oversight and a successor for the treasurer.
2. Continuing work started in previous years, the board completed a comprehensive update of the Governance Manual to reflect current policy and practice.
3. The board reviewed the bylaws and proposed changes where necessary to reflect current policy and practice. These recommended changes will be reviewed by the congregation at the June 2016 Annual Meeting.
4. The board developed a plan for regular evaluation of the CT's work.
5. As in prior years, the Financial Oversight Committee oversaw and approved a financial compilation review by an outside accounting firm. The compilation is used by outside stakeholders such as our bank to ensure our financial statements are presented in the appropriate format and are free of obvious material error.

Ministerial Transition

At the start of 2015-16, we wished farewell to our interim minister, Rev. Jennifer Brooks. Rev. Julie Price served as our summer minister until late August when we were delighted to welcome our new senior minister, Rev. David Miller. The board supported several events later in the year to mark Rev. David's arrival, including a ministerial startup weekend in November 2015 and a joyous and memorable installation ceremony in May 2016.

Leadership Development and Member Engagement

The board worked with the senior minister and members of the Leadership Development Task Force to repurpose the group and tweak the membership to become the new Leadership Development Team. The

team's charter is to identify and facilitate the development of future lay leaders from within the congregation.

Members of the board framed the end objectives, brainstormed options and helped the CT launch a pilot project to evaluate new approaches for increasing member engagement.

Innovation Fund

Thanks to an extraordinarily generous bequest from the late Stan Richards, UUCF has established an Innovation Fund. An Innovation Fund Committee has been formed to set the selection criteria and review proposals from the congregation for initiatives to be considered for funding.

Board Communications

To increase visibility of the board's work to the congregation, the board initiated a monthly blog that is disseminated as part of UUCF's regular electronic communications.

UUA Engagements

Board members attended the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly in June 2015 and the final Joseph Priestley District Assembly in March 2016. UUCF hosted a Central East Region workshop on exploring congregational partnership and multisite strategies in March 2016.

Volunteers and Staff

Nigel Astell, president; Jennifer Caires, vice president; Judy Gallimore, secretary; Steve Myles, treasurer; Hal Fuller, assistant treasurer; Janice Cooper (resigned May 2016, Linda Hunt, Michael Liggett, Karen Wolf (at-large); Rev. David Miller (ex-officio); Rich Sider, director of administration (staff support)

Coordinating Team

Rich Sider, director of administration

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

The mission of the Coordinating Team (CT) is to implement the policies and achieve the ends developed by the UUCF Board of Directors on behalf of the congregation and to manage the day-to-day operations of the organization. Senior Minister Rev. David Miller, Associate Minister Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig and Director of Administration Rich Sider are the staff members on the CT. Two lay members selected by the board also serve. John Cunningham completes his second term this year and Kathy Smerke Hochberg will be completing the first year of her first term. A special thank you to John for his excellent service. We'll miss his humor and wisdom. Joanne Schneider, our volunteer member comptroller, also provides valuable help to the CT.

In addition to being accountable for day-to-day operations at UUCF, the CT develops specific annual goals. Our progress in meeting each goal is summarized below:

- **Working with the Innovation Fund Committee, create and implement a process to determine what new initiative(s) to expand the reach of UU values beyond our campus, funded by the Innovation Fund, might be undertaken in the years ahead.**

The Innovation Fund Committee (Rev. David Miller, Michael Liggett, Janet Cushing) has drafted a procedure by which members or groups within the congregation can present innovative projects for funding and the committee hopes to publicize selected initiatives by the fall. Through the strategic planning process (see below), the CT has also discussed with lay leaders creative ways to

expand UUCF's impact beyond our current campus and may also seek funding from the Innovation Fund for this purpose.

- **Working with the Reach Campaign Social Justice Task Force, create and implement a process to determine what new social justice projects might be initiated and funded by the Reach Campaign (ongoing capital campaign initiated in 2013) social justice set-aside.**

The Social Justice Council has established a task force to develop a process through which congregants may apply for funding for bold and creative social justice projects that will significantly increase the scope of UUCF's social justice impact. We anticipate this process will receive considerably more attention in 2017 when funding from the Reach Campaign will become available.

- **Prepare a plan to maximize Reach Campaign funds available for debt reduction in December 2016.**

UUCF's current mortgage comes due in December 2016. The Coordinating Team, working with the Generosity Team, is recruiting a committee to carry out a plan to raise additional funds for debt reduction this fall. The focus of this campaign will be on those congregants who have not made a Reach pledge, including members who have joined since the 2013 campaign. Our goal is to raise at least \$125,000 to supplement existing Reach pledges so we can pay off 50% of the debt or \$650,000. In addition, we will ask current Reach pledging households to consider paying off their pledges by December if possible.

- **Fill open staff positions – youth coordinator, social justice coordinator and music director.**

Courtney Firth was hired as youth ministry coordinator in the fall and has already had a positive impact. At Rev. David's suggestion, the CT decided not to attempt to hire a part-time Social Justice Coordinator this year. Rather, Rev. David has been working closely with the Social Justice Council to implement recommendations made by the Program Evaluation Committee to review and align social justice initiatives with UUCF's mission, vision and strategic goals. The Director of Music & Arts Search Committee has narrowed its search to three candidates and will likely have a candidate to announce by June 2016.

- **Conduct a comprehensive staffing review and prepare a 5-year staffing plan to ensure staff resources are leveraged appropriately to carry out the mission and vision of the congregation.**

The review, which included a job analysis questionnaire completed by each staff member, individual interviews with each staff member, data from other comparable UU congregations across the country and input from lay leaders, was completed in February. It identifies what we believe will be needed to achieve UUCF's goal to expand the impact of UU values in Northern Virginia. The timing of implementation will necessarily depend on the availability of resources so finalizing the plan will need to wait until the 2016-17 budget is approved.

- **Create specific strategies and action plans for each 2016-20 strategic goal.**

The CT convened lay leaders in February to update UUCF's strategic goals for the next 4 years. The small-group leaders from the workshop, together with the CT, have now formulated strategies to support each goal. Specific and measurable action plans to support the strategies will then be developed in the summer.

- **Support the board as it establishes the Generosity Team and help it recruit a Generosity Team leader and Annual Giving Campaign chair.**

We were delighted when Debbie Boehm-Davis and Don Reagan agreed to serve as co-chairs of the newly formed Generosity Team, which is charged with promoting generosity in the congregation and with developing and coordinating a long-term fundraising strategy. Members of that team also include the current board treasurer and Annual Giving Campaign chair as well as Dave Wiemer, Rev. David and Director of Administration Rich Sider. The Annual Giving Campaign was ably led this year by Pete Krone, supported by Terry Goplerud, Barbara Kenny, David Saunders and Darryl Branting.

- **Select a program to be evaluated, complete the evaluation and implement recommendations.**

The Program Evaluation Committee (PEC), with members John Cunningham (chair), Torie Gorges, Nancy Smith and Meghan Crowley, conducted an evaluation of property stewardship at UUCF. The PEC found that the congregation lacks sufficient reserves to meet all the deferred maintenance needs to be addressed in the next few years and also lacks adequate maintenance and custodial staff to meet the growing needs of this active congregation with high facility rental use. The CT and board affirmed the PEC's findings and will work to address these concerns over the next few years. The financial resource issues highlighted in the report will likely take multiple years to address.

In addition to work on the goals, the following are also notable in this review of the year:

- The above work was completed in the context of the first year of Rev. David's ministry during which he spent a great deal of time and energy getting acquainted with people, UUCF programs, processes and policies. This justifiably delayed some work on the above goals but as we end this year, the CT believes we are well positioned for the year ahead.
- While the number of pledging households fell about 5% during the transition in ministerial leadership, per pledge payments have been strong with a lower-than-usual default rate. This factor, along with strong rental income and carefully managed expenses, allowed us to end last year with positive net income and we anticipate doing the same this year. A generous bequest from Stan Richards provided the means to increase operating and capital reserves, bolster the operating budget and to create an Innovation Fund to provide seed funding for bold initiatives to expand the reach of Unitarian Universalism. In spite of lower membership and pledging household numbers, UUCF's finances are strong and stable.
- Membership declined slightly from 727 as of Jun. 30, 2015, to 720 as of the end of April 2016. However, nine new members joined in April and 30 new households made pledges in the 2016 Annual Giving Campaign, positive indicators for the year ahead.
- The CPA firm of Jones & McIntyre again prepared a compilation of the UUCF financial reports. The process confirmed that UUCF's financial reports have been prepared correctly.
- Staffing levels have remained constant this year with no new positions or hours added. The delay in the hiring of the Director of Music & Arts and the Social Justice Coordinator resulted in an overall reduction in staffing for the year. Special thanks and appreciation is extended to Interim Music Coordinator Sarah Jebian for her excellent work over the past year leading the music program during the transition in leadership.

Conclusion

The 2015-16 congregational year has been a stable and productive time for UUCF to get to know Rev. David and to continue the tradition of excellent worship, Religious Exploration, Adult Programs and social justice work. The congregation has financial and facility challenges but also a strong desire to

expand the impact on people's lives and a growing vision to reach people beyond the confines of the present campus. The focus of the next year will be to begin bringing that next phase of growth for UUCF to fruition.

Staff Reports

Music and Arts

Sarah Jebian, interim music coordinator

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

Enrich worship with high-quality music and arts and provide arts opportunities for congregation members and the wider community.

Committees

Music ensembles:

- Chorale
- Chamber Choir
- Handbells
- Jazz Band
- Houseband
- Youth Houseband
- Children's Choir
- Youth Choir

Goals

1. To maintain the high level of musical excellence that our community has come to expect from our music program.
2. To reach beyond the internal music program and make connections with the outside surrounding community at large.
3. To organize the music library.

Actions

1. Musical Excellence

We enjoyed a variety of in-house and outside talent to provide featured music during our worship services. In house musicians included Anthony Garces-Foley, Saori Nystrom, Davin Hutchins, Katherine Riddle, Lizzie Audritsh (youth), Vanessa Bliss (youth), Sarah Hover and Liz Graham as well as a variety of Houseband, Jazz Band, Youth musicians, the Chorale, the Chamber Choir and soloists of all ages. The Children's and Youth choirs performed often as well. Outside artists included Glenn Fink, Chelle Fulk, Jonathan Smith, Wendel Werner, Herb Tyson, Marlissa Hudson, Emma's Revolution, The Sanctuaries DC and a Native American drum circle. There were a variety of concerts offered throughout the year beginning with the second annual Banding Together event, the holiday music service, Triptych, a spirituals concert, Catalin Dima, the Oberlin series, the New Dominions and the annual spring Chorale concert.

2. Community Outreach

We tried some new community events this year: a series of vocal workshops, sing-along movie nights and new collaborations with our Latter-day Saints (LDS) neighbors. I offered three vocal workshops throughout the year, focusing on vocal health in aging singers (led by Donald Milton III), singing spirituals authentically (led by Wendel Werner) and the fundamentals of healthy singing (led by Jennifer Rodgers). Each workshop drew approximately 50 participants from the tristate area. The spirituals workshop culminated in a public concert featuring Wendel Werner and a choir of singers from nine area UU congregations and a few singers from other faith traditions.

We hosted three movie sing-along nights that were free and open to the public – “White Christmas,” “Beauty and the Beast” and “The Sound of Music.” Each movie drew 30-50 people and those who attended seemed to enjoy these events.

For the first time ever, the Chorale was invited to participate in an annual holiday concert hosted by the LDS church next door. The event was a great success and there are plans to continue this collaboration in future years. In January, the Chorale again performed a half-hour program at the Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute as part of our outreach for Martin Luther King, Jr., Weekend of Service. This event will continue as part of Pawel Jura’s legacy. In the spring, the Chorale again collaborated with the LDS church to perform Faure’s Requiem. Singers from the church joined our choir and the majority of the orchestra was made from youth and adult players from the LDS community and a handful of UUCF musicians.

3. Music Library

Upon reviewing the choral music library, I discovered that although we have a lot of music, our organization system was lacking and there were stacks and stacks of unfiled music cluttering every corner of the music room. Working with Deborah Kennedy, I came up with a file system and database that will make it much easier for UUCF music staff to navigate our library, which will save both money and time going forward. I also implemented a tracking system so that when music is loaned out, it can be more easily traced. This will also save money as we will not have to replace lost music as often.

Volunteers and Staff

Staff: Rob Redei (interim choir director), Catalin Dima (accompanist), Aaron Levine (audiovisual technician)

Volunteers: Deborah Kennedy, Judy Penniman, David Bliss, Karen Wolf, Mary Gaskins, Nancy Dalzell, Marsha Giusti, Dave Anderson, Bob Carr, Pete Rafle, Brian Cole, John Graham and all the audiovisual volunteers

Member Services Coordinator

Carol Jensen

Member Count as of May 1, 2016 - 720

New members May 2015-May 2016 - 44

Stefanie Auld, Tim and Stacy Casey, Laurie Cunningham, Molly Dias, Alison Wilbricht, Martha Malone, James and Renée Kendley, Natalie and Milver Valenzuela, Richard Shields, Robbie Katson, Erika and Tony Foxen, Norma McOmber, Rebecca Churchill and Larry Gomez, Justin and Wendy Littman, Kurt and Jackie

Seibert, Loretta and Michael Rowe, Kathy Wilson, Paul and Margaret Anne Lara, Tom Hillman, Janice Shafer, Adrian Hendricks, Terrie Tucker and Steve Still, Ashley and Charley Rothermel, Brenna and Jacob Shebel, Gabrielle Davidsen, Roberta Greenspan, Laurie McCathern, Jean Wright, Becky LoveKing

Returning members: 7

Births and Adoptions

Jocelyn Wiemer, August Auld, River Curzio, Sai Thakral, Ethan Robinson, Eve Higgins, Anja Damm, Justin Resnick, Rhea Ginley, Aenea Gaskins

Deaths

Sue Berman, John Pence, Stan Newman, Jean Wilkins, Tom Richardson, Riley Bostrom

Other Membership Statistics

- Members removed: (moved or resigned or status change) – 40
 - Have not signed the membership book, yet made a pledge for the current year (Friends) – 126
 - Families with children in the RE program, paying a fee but not making a pledge – 42
 - The Membership Committee volunteers at the Welcome Table have greeted 251 visitors.
 - We have had 64 attendees at five Newcomers Orientation classes.
-

Lay Ministry Reports

Lay Ministry for Membership and Outreach

John Kun

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

This ministry serves to attract and nurture guests to UUCF and to support their assimilation into our congregational community.

Committees

Two separate but connected ministries are coordinated under this lay ministry: Membership and Outreach. The Membership Committee serves the membership lay ministry. The Outreach Committee attempts to increase the public awareness of UUCF through print and online communications and presence at community events.

Goals and Actions

- **Increase adult membership.**

44 members joined UUCF this year.

Total adult membership of 720 shows a net gain of three, as of May 1, 2016, over last year.

Other support activities: Welcome Table, monthly visitor receptions, Newcomers Orientation classes, members' anniversary dinner. These are the main, ongoing activities performed by the Membership Committee in welcoming visitors to UUCF, aiding their interest in Unitarian Universalism and celebrating their spiritual journey to UUCF.

Membership Committee members are to be congratulated for the significant volunteer effort required to support all the above-mentioned activities.

- **Increase outreach efforts.**

The Outreach Committee attempts to increase the public awareness of UUCF through presence at community events and print and online communications - press releases, promotion of events, etc. - conducted on a weekly basis to attract more visitors to UUCF.

Such publications as The Washington Post, Fairfax County Times, local online Patch newspapers, as well as social media networks such as Facebook are utilized for submissions and postings. Since these placements are without cost to UUCF, they are essentially free advertising.

Promotion of UUCF activities and events - including Religious Exploration, worship services, musical concerts, lectures and social justice projects - informs the outside community of UUCF's spiritual diversity, practices and commitments.

Festivals - UUCF's participation in ViVa Vienna on Memorial Day weekend has become an annual outreach activity to make our presence known to the community. UUCF also participated in the 2nd Annual Northern Virginia Pride Festival, which took place on Sat., Oct. 3, 2015, in Centreville, VA. Members of the Membership Committee primarily support these efforts, but other UUCF members participate as well.

UUCF's "blue card system" tallied 251 visitors during the past year. While this indicates a small reduction in overall visitors from the prior year, the amount still reflects a sizable number of people searching for an alternative religious home.

The best outreach promoting UUCF comes from our members themselves who communicate the advantages of our faith and our community to their friends, neighbors and work associates.

Thank you for all you do in encouraging others to investigate UUCF as a possible new spiritual home and welcoming those who enter our doors. These practices will serve UUCF well into the future.

Volunteers and Staff

Membership Committee: Mary Jo Smrekar (chair), Hank Crooks, Roland Cyr, Barb Dutchak, Judy Gallimore, Gladys Henrikson, Linda Hunt, Barbara Kenny, John Kun, Mary Paxton, Natasha Petinaux, Bill Repsher, Nancy Smith, Rich Williams, Arlene Wilder, Sophie Zager

Welcomers: Margaret Barardelli, Alice Byrd, Barbara Harding, Ian Hochberg, John Karickhoff, Jo Klein, Carmela Knepler, Kathy Matay, Patricia Morgan, Jan Shubert, Nancy Smith, Tino Thakral, Kristin Vogt

Outreach Committee: Donna Audritsh, John Kun, Paula Kun

Staff: Carol Jensen

Minister: Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig

Lay Ministry for Worship and Arts

Susan Bennett

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

The Lay Ministry for Worship and Arts strives to create and maintain programs and activities that fulfill the UUCF ends statement: "We gather in worship to nourish our spirits, open ourselves to the holy and challenge each other to become our better selves." The central purpose of the lay ministry is to help create meaningful and spiritually nurturing worship and arts experiences for all members of the congregation. The worship and arts lay ministry is responsible for assisting the ministers, the music

director, the director of religious exploration and lay worship leaders in all worship experiences at UUCF, Sanctuary aesthetics and arts programs.

Committees

- The Worship Committee works under the leadership of the senior minister to develop, present and support consistently high-quality worship services while being flexible and responsive to the needs of our congregation. The Worship Committee is made up of worship associates, who provide lay leadership in the pulpit and present elements of the worship service such as chalice lightings and other readings. In addition, they assist the ministers in the selection of readings, maintaining the worship environment and in other ways as requested. The goal of the Worship Committee is to make worship at UUCF welcoming, accessible, multigenerational, multicultural, uplifting, relevant and, ultimately, transformative to the lives of everyone seeking a spiritual home with us.
- The Worship Environment Committee coordinates with and advises the Coordinating Team on aesthetic matters concerning the Sanctuary, Commons and related areas. Members of the committee represent various stakeholder groups in the congregation and as well as interior design experts.
- The Vespers Team is a sub-group of the Worship Committee. Vespers is a monthly lay-led evening service, usually held on the first Friday of the month October through June. The Vespers team coordinates and supports various groups in the congregation that present Vespers.
- The Art Wall: Monthly Guest Artist Series provides periodic opportunities for professional and talented amateur artists to exhibit their works in the Sanctuary. This serves both to recognize the abilities of local and congregational artists and to enhance the aesthetics of our worship space.
- The Flower Team provides a visual and focal complement for weekly worship services in the Sanctuary. The Flower Team meets three or four times a year, usually between services, to plan and schedule arrangers for the coming year.
- The Worship Volunteer Services Team supports worship with volunteers who serve as ushers, sound personnel, coffee team members, and grocery coupon and fair trade sales.

Goals

1. To support the senior minister, associate minister and the rest of the worship staff team in providing excellence in worship.
2. To support and assist the new senior minister in his first year of ministry.
3. Strengthen and support the Vespers program by intentionally integrating Vespers into the overall worship program.
4. Assist the senior minister in the creation and hosting of the Service of Installation and Covenant.
5. Recruit and train worship associates, with an intention to create as broadly diverse a Worship Associates Team as possible.
6. Improve skills of lay leaders (lay ministers and board members) who provide the greeting from the pulpit at the beginning of worship services.

Actions

1. Held a worship planning retreat at the start of the church year. Held monthly Worship Committee meetings to provide feedback and assistance to the ministers. Provided training for worship associates. Worship Committee helped senior minister plan and lead Joy service in December. Worship Committee provided a lay-lead service in April.
2. Worship Environment Committee continued to assess and coordinate aesthetic elements of the

worship space, including new signage and working with the Partner Church Council on a proposed Partner Church room where photographs and gifts for our partner churches can be displayed.

3. Created an Installation Service Planning Team to help plan the service, coordinate logistics and host a reception.
4. Held a pulpit greeter training in the fall for lay leaders.
5. Assisted the senior minister in creation of an evening Yom Kippur service and potluck dinner event.

Volunteers and Staff

- David Addis serves as the Worship Committee chair.
 - g Ordun leads the Vespers Team.
 - Peggy Hillman leads the Flower Team.
 - Mary Foster (staff) provides organization and direction to the Volunteer Services team.
 - Debra Eastham and Rich Williams co-chair the Worship Environment Committee.
 - Jim Tetro coordinates the Art Wall in the Sanctuary.
-

Lay Ministry for Social Justice

Wini Atlas

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

The Social Justice Council (SJC) spent the past year working to implement the recommendations of the 2014 Program Evaluation Report by continuing the effort to become a strategic council that supports all social justice activities at UUCF and looks strategically at how the social justice program can support the mission, visions and strategic goals of UUCF. The SJC meets monthly and reports once a year on the progress of major initiatives.

The Social Justice Council also is responsible for reporting, within the Annual Report, on the progress the congregation has made related to the congregational resolutions UUCF has passed. See the Resolution Reports section below.

- **Share the Plate**

In fall 2015, the SJC again chose Share the Plate (STP) recipients through a new process that was instituted in 2014 to select all STP recipients for the full year at one time. This process works well but it is now clear that the process needs to be reviewed with the goal of creating a more strategic way of choosing STP recipients. The SJC will begin that effort now and it will be announced when the call for STP nominations occurs in fall 2016.

- **Reorganization of the Social Justice Council**

The reorganization of Social Justice is now complete. All documents, charter, purpose and job descriptions were reviewed and revised to include our new strategic perspective. We continue to refer to the Program Evaluation Committee report and implement its recommendations. A retreat was held in August 2015 at which the SJC reviewed the yearly calendar and considered events by the following criteria:

- Obligations (events we must do)
- Cultural (events we do out of custom or habit)

- Wish to have (events we'd like to have). We discussed demands vs. resources and continued to consider ways to improve our strategic thinking. A job description discussion was held and the charter was finalized and sent to the Coordinating Team (CT) for approval, which was received. Recently, the SJC also sought and received CT approval for a small change to the SJC charter that increases the number of members of the council from five to seven. Applications for those new slots will be solicited shortly. The next SJC retreat will be in August 2016.

Social Justice Action Groups

Beacon House support includes donating backpacks at the start of the school year and holiday gifts in December.

Equality UUCF functions within the Welcoming Congregation program at UUCF and works to establish and maintain awareness and support of social justice/equal rights issues within the LGBTQ community, and the entire congregation at UUCF, within the larger community and the world.

ESOL volunteers teach English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to adults in Reston, VA, to facilitate community integration and reduce the feeling of isolation among immigrants by affirming their worth and dignity and supporting their English language development.

Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions is an interfaith advocacy group founded at UUCF that works to encourage faith-based communities to identify and advocate for solutions to climate change.

Families for Social Justice provides opportunities for RE families to participate in social justice activities as a family.

Green Sanctuary Group is now part of the lay ministry for property stewardship.

Gun Violence Prevention works with Northern Virginia Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence to learn more about gun violence and support potential solutions.

Hot Meals breakfasts, working with Fairfax non-profit FACETS to deliver nutritious breakfasts six times a year to those experiencing homelessness.

Hypothermia Shelter is a partnership with FACETS to provide food and shelter for one week during the winter for those in our community experiencing homelessness.

Our Daily Bread Committee's mission is to see that the commitment UUCF has made to Our Daily Bread (ODB) to provide food for 30 families three times a year is fulfilled. Donated funds are sent to ODB so its staff can purchase grocery gift cards for families they serve.

Partner Church Circle works to develop long-term mutually supportive relations with our fellow Unitarians in Transylvania, Romania, and in the Khasi Hills of India. The continued association of the Partner Church Circle and the social justice program at UUCF is being evaluated at this time.

Rebuilding Together is a coordinated one-day volunteer home fix-up activity sponsored by Rebuilding Together, Inc., to repair the homes of needy families in Fairfax County.

Muslim Liaison Group seeks to build personal relationships with local Muslim communities and deepen our understanding of Islam and Muslims in America.

Weekend of Service provides service projects for the entire congregation to participate in over the Martin Luther King, Jr., birthday weekend.

Social Justice Yard Sale is an annual opportunity, traditionally on the first Saturday in May, for UUCF members to contribute gently used merchandise to be sold to the local community at extremely reasonable prices. Proceeds from the yard sale go to the National Alliance on Mental Illness-Northern Virginia, the UUCF Partner Church, UUCF Social Justice and the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna.

Action Groups in More Detail

- **ESOL**
 - More than 20 volunteers spent more than 1,000 hours working for our program (teaching, lesson planning, recruiting teachers, recruiting and registering students, fundraising and performing administrative tasks).
 - Enrolled adult students with at least 11 different native languages and maintained a core of 40-50 adult students among this transient population. ESOL will hold its annual end-of-year celebration of the students' participation in mid-June, with a potluck of dishes from the students' home countries.

- **Equality UUCF**
 - Voted to celebrate 20 years as a welcoming congregation by devoting the year to the transgender community. One of the first actions taken was new signs for restrooms accompanied by a blog explaining them.
 - Over the weekend of DC Capital Pride 2015, coordinated participation by UUCF youth and adults in the Pride Parade and as volunteers staffing the Maryland, Washington and Northern Virginia region UU's booth at the Pride Festival.
 - Participated in the Northern Virginia Pride Festival by sharing a booth with the Sterling UU congregation.
 - Hosted the annual Northern Virginia Transgender Day of Remembrance service on Nov. 20, 2015. At Equality UUCF's recommendation, the Social Justice Council accepted the Transgender Education Association (TGEA) as the Share the Plate recipient for October 2016.
 - Equality UUCF will present the vesper service in June to coincide with Pride 2016.
 - Encouraging UUCF congregants to participate in DC Capital Pride
 - Continuing support for partner organizations including POFEV, Equality Virginia, Northern Virginia Transgender Allies Group, No. VA Pride and other area UU congregations.

- **Families for Social Justice**
 - Supported delivering breakfasts to homeless families.
 - Provided mitten tree and Christmas gift donations for clients of Beacon House and Our Daily Bread.
 - Made pies for Thanksgiving meals at the Community for Creative Non-Violence.
 - Participated in Our Daily Bread's Complete the Circle project.
 - Weekend of Service activities (lunch making, animal toy making, blanket making, greeting card making, toiletry kit making, etc.)

- **Hypothermia**
 - For one week in February, we supported FACETS' Hypothermia Prevention program by providing three meals a day and a safe and warm place to sleep for about 30 or so individuals living in Fairfax County who are currently homeless. Approximately, 150+ volunteers from UUCF, and other local churches provided meals and personal care items.
 - The planning committee, comprised of a dozen individuals from each of the faith communities, spent several months planning for our week of sheltering.

- **Muslim Liaison Group**
 - On MLK Weekend of Service, sponsored a blanket-making project with the Institute for Islamic and Turkish Studies and several other Muslim communities that was followed by a shared dinner at UUCF that included adults and children from the Muslim communities and members of UUCF.
 - In November 2015, MLG collected 88 blankets, 134 coats, 130 sweaters, and other warm clothing donated by UUCF members, including RE classes. The materials were shipped to Turkey for distribution to Syrian refugees who are living in Turkey.
 - In December 2015, a dozen UUCFers joined in a walk from the First Christian Church to the Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Center in Falls Church supporting our Muslim community and a blanket and coat drive for Syrian refugees.
 - Rod Paolini has established a committee investigating UUCF's sponsorship of a refugee family. A proposal to the Social Justice Council will be submitted in June 2016.
- **Our Daily Bread**
 - Raised sufficient funds to fulfill the three commitments to ODB for 30 families.
 - Staffed a table in the Commons for nine weeks during which we raised the needed funds.
- **Partner Church Circle**
 - Supported scholarship fundraising for students in Szentgerice, at the Kollegium and classrooms in Puriang.
 - The annual fundraising event was an evening of Hungarian dance by the Tisza Ensemble in celebration the Partner Church Circles 25th anniversary.
 - Participate as one of four recipients of the annual Social Justice Yard Sale.
- **Racial Justice Steering Committee**
 - Committee grew out of the Standing on the Side of Love 30 Days of Love campaign that took place from Jan. 17, 2016-Feb. 14, 2016. The group is creating a charter and a strategic plan.
- **Rebuilding Together**
 - About 40 UUCF volunteers gathered for a work day in April 2016 to repair and refurbish a group home in Alexandria for disabled adults.
- **Weekend of Service**
 - The 2016 Weekend of Service took place on Jan. 16-18. That Sunday was also the kickoff of the 30 Days of Love campaign focused on racial justice. This year's weekend of service saw 317 volunteer participate in 15 projects that resulted in 911 volunteer hours spent.
 - The following is a list of all the projects UUCF members participated in:
 - 22 Chorale members + 20 in attendance; 64 combine practice hours sang at the Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute
 - 14 or so people from UUCF went to GVP lobby day in Richmond
 - Grounds team (indoor and an outdoor team in 20 degree weather)
 - 60 hygiene kits made for OAR clients
 - 28 tied blankets made
 - 19 woven-edge blankets made
 - Packed for Arlington Food Assistance Center were:
 - 40 boxes of oranges
 - 35 bags (1,750 pounds total) of potatoes
 - 35 bags (1,750 pounds total) of onions
 - 50 bags (2,500 pounds total) of oatmeal

- 162 Pastoral Care cards made
 - 43 bookmarks decorated
 - 73 Color a Smile cards decorated
 - 21 letters written to Partner Church scholarship students
 - 60 hygiene kits made for Opportunities, Alternatives and Resources (OAR) clients
 - 60 lunches packed for the Embry Rucker Shelter in Reston, VA
- **Yard Sale**
 - The annual Social Justice Yard Sale of previously used clothing, housewares, books, art, luggage, children's toys, tools, electronics, furniture and other merchandise took place on May 7, 2016. The items are offered for sale to the community at very low prices and buyers line up well before the 7 a.m. opening. People come back year after year. More than 120 volunteers from UUCF and the four beneficiary groups participate. Net proceeds from the Yard Sale were \$12,728.

Congregational Resolution Reports

Gun Violence Prevention (GVP)

UUCF formed a steering committee in late 2015 to reenergize UUCF's commitment to and activities toward ending gun violence. The committee includes representatives from the Fairfax County Citizens Against Gun Violence (FCCAGV) (based at UUCF) and the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Brady Campaign.:

- UUCF held a vigil and memorial service on Dec. 14, 2016, the first anniversary of the Newtown tragedy, to honor victims of gun violence and encourage more participation in efforts to end gun violence.
- The group continued to participate in regular vigils (on the 14th of each month) to commemorate the Newtown tragedy in front of the National Rifle Association headquarters in Fairfax, VA.
- The FCCAGV advised and counseled other local UU congregations on how to get their properties designated and posted as gun-free zones.
- FCCAGV collaborated with other Northern Virginia GVP groups (Moms Demand Action, Project to End Gun Violence) and the Catholic parishes' SALT group.
- Interfaith Outreach - A task force has developed a core presentation and a group of issue papers presented in various faith communities.
- Participated in MLK Day of Advocacy 2016 at the VA General Assembly in Richmond, visiting many legislative offices.
- Wrote letters to the editor on various GVP issues.
- Presented a screening at UUCF of the film, "Under the Gun," narrated and produced by Katie Couric, on May 7, 2016.
- UUCF will hold a reverse town hall event on Sep. 17, 2016. Politicians and gun owners will be invited to come to a potluck dinner where members of UUCF and members of the community will do the talking. Politicians will be invited to listen. The goal is for the dialogue to be non-confrontational.

Climate Action

Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (FACS) emerged 3 years ago from UUCF members' alarm that climate change challenged UUs to urgently act from our Seven Principles. FACS now is led by a community council of 27 congregations in Northern Virginia - Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Quaker and Unitarian Universalist (seven UU congregations are members of the FACS Community Council).

Climate change can seem so overwhelming that people feel hopeless. Over the last 3 years, FACS has begun creating hope in community. We are forming a supportive climate activist network. We are helping UUs and people of other faiths become more mindful and appreciative in their relations with the Earth and other people. We are using social media, music, movies, rallies and community festivals to get outside UUCF. We especially reach out to faith communities with diverse ethnic and racial congregations and youth, communities not often engaged in climate advocacy.

In the last year, FACS has:

- Led by example: passage of UUCF's 2013 Resolution on Climate Change has been the model for climate resolutions passed by Mount Vernon Unitarian Church and UU Church of Loudoun, and resolutions are moving in several Maryland UU congregations;
- Worked within UUCF to deepen our commitment and actions as families, children, adults and as a congregation to reduce our carbon pollution. FACS-UUCF works with the Green Sanctuary Group, the Social Justice Council, Property Stewardship and the Coordinating Team to make the Paris Pledge commitment of a 50% reduction in the congregation's carbon pollution by 2030 a reality. A detailed energy audit provides options for reducing energy use and cutting unnecessary energy costs.
- Raised funds for energy-efficiency retrofitting low-income housing, organic community gardens for immigrant children, and earth healing activities for religious education programs. Through our self-imposed voluntary carbon tax, we purchased LED lights for low-income housing and purchased CO2 offsets.
- Founded the National Capital Area UUs for Environmental Justice and Climate, now part of Unitarian Universalist for Social Justice in the National Capital Region (UUSJ), which meets quarterly and involves more than 20 UU congregations. We wrote and led the overwhelming passage at the 2015 UUA General Assembly of the Action for Immediate Witness "Act for a Livable Climate" endorsing a strong, compassionate global climate agreement in Paris. Helped secure spots for six UUA delegates to the Paris COP21. Wrote the letter signed by UUA President Morales to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry stating UU support for an ambitious, accountable Paris Agreement. With the UUSJ, delivered the UUA letter to Secretary Kerry and met multiple times with the U.S. lead negotiator. Wrote the letter for the UUA endorsing the Paris Pledge www.parispledgeforaction.org/. Co-lead with UUSJ a working group of 13 UU organizations that endorsed the 2015 AIW to carry out the commitments made at GA.
- Organized an Apr. 2, 2016, interfaith dialog between the faith communities and local and state officials. At the event, Fairfax County School Board Chair Pat Hynes announced the schools are reviewing proposals for solar installation on the schools, an energy dashboard showing electric, gas and water use in each of the county schools and major energy efficiency renovations. Fairfax County Supervisor John W. Foust announced the county is unveiling Phase 1 of an energy display of all county electricity and natural gas use by the county. Although there is still far to go, these are significant steps toward FACS's primary advocacy goals of ending energy waste and carbon pollution by the county and schools. Advocated effectively with Fairfax County to invest more than \$500,000 in new energy conservation projects each year since 2014.
- Helped organize and participated in the Moral Action on Climate in association with Pope Francis' address to Congress.
- Wrote a letter to Fairfax supervisors on energy conservation signed on by more than 40 Fairfax faith leaders, published numerous letters to the editor in local papers and distributed a biweekly blog on climate change and faith.
- Testified as UUs and people of faith on climate and energy with Fairfax County, DC metro region, state and federal officials. FACS actively supports full implementation of the Clean Power Plan in Virginia, and through the Citizens' Climate Lobby, actively promotes national carbon policy.
- Facilitated four adult education programs (Spiritual Ecology (2x) and Hungry for Change: Food,

Ethics and Sustainability), vespers, a monthly climate movie series, multiple lectures and discussion groups on climate change at Science, Reason & Religion.

- Hired a half-time consulting director, Reba Elliott; in process of incorporating FACS as an independent not-for-profit. Redesigned our website, faithforclimate.org, and actively support Facebook, LinkedIn and MeetUp social media.

We bring together faith communities in Northern Virginia to act on this deeply religious challenge to creation, our world and who we are to one another. As Pope Francis' encyclical on climate concludes: May our struggles and our concern for planet never take away the joy of our hope.

Volunteers and Staff

- **Beacon House:** Kerry Fraser, Ann Wood
- **Climate Action:** Eric Goplerud
- **Equality UUCF:** Barb Brehm, Sandy Myles, Susan Bennett, Steve Gold, Wini Atlas, Alex Dixon, Karen Wolf, Bill Ades, Paula Prettyman
- **ESOL coordinators:** Lily Reider, co-coordinator; Nancy Landis, co-coordinator
- **Families for Social Justice:** Mia French
- **Green Sanctuary:** Lois Phemister
- **Gun Violence Prevention:** Bob Hatfield
- **Hot Meals Breakfasts:** Meetu Kaul
- **Hypothermia Shelter Coordinating Team:** Ron Giusti, Jeff Snyder, Jerry Poje, Ken Foley
- **Muslim Liaison Group:** Rod Paolini
- **Our Daily Bread:** Nancy Meidenbauer, Sandy Myles, Becky Perez, Karin Udler
- **Partner Church Circle:** Betsy Bicknell
- **Rebuilding Together coordinating team:** Bill Haight
- **Weekend of Service coordinators:** Martha Ades, Wini Atlas, Mia French, Mary Frances Kordick
- **Yard Sale coordinator:** Joanna Walker

Education

Linnea Nelson, director of religious exploration, and Craig Clark, adult programs committee chair

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

Education encompasses large and active programs that encourage spiritual learning across the life span:

- The year-round Religious Exploration (RE) program for nursery through seniors in high school
- The workshops and courses sponsored by the Adult Programs (AP) Committee

The Lay Minister for Education position was held by Lydia Lewis until winter 2016. Lydia stepped down for health reasons and a new lay minister has not yet been appointed. Therefore, Craig Clark, chair of the Adult Programs Committee, prepared the report on adult religious exploration this year in her stead.

Committees

- **Religious Exploration Committee (REC)**
The REC was invigorated this year with the leadership of Suzanne Leonard and the enthusiasm and dedication of many new members. The REC plays an integral role in delivering meaningful religious exploration opportunities for UUCF's children and youth. In doing so, they work in tandem with the Director of Religious Exploration and the Youth Ministry Coordinator to consult

on programming, provide resources and recruit volunteers. (**Note:** Family FUUn and Families for Social Justice provide the social and social justice arms of the program but they work with Linnea Nelson and do not report to the committee.)

- **Fairfax Unitarian Universalist Summer Experience (FUUSE)**

FUUSE enables UU youth to live out their values in the larger community. Twelve interns were placed in internships with educational, social justice and social service organizations in Fairfax County in summer 2015. In summer 2016, nine UUCF youth will be doing internships. FUUSE is working to increase opportunities for youth to serve in groups, such as the rising freshman working at UUCF together as a team who painted the high school meeting room.

- **Youth-Adult Committee (YAC)**

The Youth-Adult Committee is a committed and dedicated group of youth Grades 9-12, co-led by Nathan Graham and Lauren Magee, with guidance from adult youth advisor David Bliss and Youth Ministry Coordinator Courtney Firth. Courtney began in mid-October, so Linnea Nelson guided this group August-October. They have become adept at planning all youth exploration RE classes, social events, social justice events and creating policy to ensure a safe and responsible youth group. YAC meets at least monthly to plan activities, worship and classes. This year they focused on 11:15 a.m. classes and next year they will plan both 9:15 and 11:15 a.m. classes. Their major events this year included planning a Vespers youth worship and several overnights with youth worship.

Goals and Actions: Religious Exploration program

1. Help UUCF bring a family perspective to everything we do.

The Family FUUn team added a multigenerational perspective to the Gift-Giving Fair and Families for Social Justice made the Hot Meals opportunities multigenerational with families working together to donate, package and deliver food every two months. We were able to include children, youth and families in worship services including ingathering, child dedications, Christmas, Jazz service, Easter and RE Sunday. We have added a class for families, taught twice this year, called Parents as Spiritual Guides, to help parents and guardians explore the language they use with their children.

2. Align the RE program with the strategic plan and UUCF mission.

Our activities that align with the new strategic plan include:

- Working closely with the NOVA cluster of UU congregations to provide shared teacher training. We are expanding the teacher training in the coming year to include two locations and additional online shared resources.
- Making the Hot Meals program through FACETS primarily an RE family opportunity to reach out to the community. We also took a group of youth to the United Nations spring seminar to explore global economic justice.
- Including many opportunities for racial justice learning in RE. Linnea led five chapel sessions, a Coming of Age class and supported a community forum on Talking to Kids About Race.
- Surveying all RE families to determine which RE activities were helpful and where we might improve. The results identified many areas of strength with some specific curriculum improvements requested that we will be working on over the summer.
- Providing one-time and long-term opportunities to engage in service throughout the year.
- Our Parents as Spiritual Guide class offered 17 parents the opportunity to explore their own spiritual language and beliefs in order to share these concepts and experiences with their children and those in our RE program.

3. Support youth programming and Youth Ministry Coordinator.

Youth Ministry Coordinator Courtney Firth began in late October. She has been an incredible asset to the RE team. We have met weekly to provide background to each event and to share ideas on the program. She has taken the lead role in the Youth Adult Committee and has provided wise guidance for our youth and enthusiastic leadership in our youth classes, FUUSE and an inaugural Middle School UU heritage trip to Boston.

4. Support teachers in creating a supportive, loving environment.

Liaisons, primarily staff or members of the current and past REC were assigned to each class to provide support for teachers to more easily implement the curriculum and to create a loving classroom. We have piloted various ways to support teachers and we will customize this support for each class in the fall.

5. Provide a credentialed liberal religious educator for UUCF.

As the DRE, Linnea completed 3.5 years of study and became a credential religious educator on Apr. 22, 2016.

Volunteers and Staff

RE program: RE was blessed with incredible volunteers! Our teachers and class helpers were consistent and creative. The Bill Welch Award recipient for 2014-15 was Suzanne Leonard.

RE Committee: Suzanne Leonard (chair), Bob Carr, Maria Cox-Leow, Tom Crowley, Laurie Cunningham, Rachel Enser, Chris French, Tessa Grubb, Paula Prettyman

FUUSE Committee: Sohini Baliga, Deborah Kennedy (co-chairs); Aaron Cox-Leow, Justin Hunsaker, Paul Bernstein, staff member Courtney Firth, with support from Linnea Nelson

YAC: Nathan Graham and Lauren Magee (co-chairs), Kat Bindbeutel, Spencer Hagen, Jeremy Klein, Cora Lundgren, Sidney Roth, Charlotte Tubbs, and David Bliss, Courtney Firth (advisors). Support from Linnea Nelson. Special thanks to David Bliss for continued regular participation in class, social activities and YAC.

Staff: Linnea Nelson, Courtney Firth and Katherine Riddle collaborated on both RE and AP programs. Candice Johnson handled the Nursery as part of her child care coordinator position with professionalism and creative, loving care.

Adult Programs Committee: Barb Brehm, Diane Fink, Joy Hatfield, Linda Hunt, Zim Putney, Susan Smith, Nancy Turaj, Bonnie Wald. Special note should be given to the dedicated and excellent work that Barb Brehm did shepherding Adult Programs for three years. She is stepping away from this position and Craig Clark as agreed to come on as acting chair.

Adult RE volunteers: The many volunteers are too numerous to list. With 25 courses and three continuing groups, this is a vital active part of our congregational life that is dependent on people stepping forward to share their many gifts.

Goals and Actions: Adult Programs

During the 2015-16 year, the Adult Programs Committee offered 29 courses and six continuing groups. More than 285 people registered for one or more AP course.

The six continuous groups included Science, Reason & Religion, the Global Affairs Discussion Group, the Humanists of UUCF, the Meditation Practice Group, the Memoirs Writing Group and the Christian Connection Group. The first three of these six were the busiest, and Susan Smith was the liaison between them and the AP Committee.

Two full-year classes were offered: Wellspring, for the fourth consecutive year, and World Religions, for a third year. Both classes were full, which demonstrates a need to continue offering them in the future.

Six classes that had been offered previously were offered once again because of requests from members. These classes were: Tending Our Spirit, How to Retire Wild, Happy and Free, Living Consciously From Our Deepest Inner Resources, Trans 101, Flowers and Fabric: How to Enhance Our Worship Experience and Shift Happens: Journey to Sustainable Behavior.

The 16 new classes offered were Introduction to Shamanism; 2,000 Years of UU History; Writing for Change; Hungry for Change: Food, Ethics and Sustainability; Addressing Wicked Problems; Parents as Spiritual Guides; Introduction to the Enneagram; Estate Planning and Planned Giving; How to Become a Steel Magnolia; *Lectio Divina*: Sacred Readings for UUs; How to Create a Ritual; Dreamwork Group; Identity Quest; Active Hope; Living With Chronic Illness; and a number of UU leadership classes offered online.

Items that we have discussed and plan to work on and hopefully implement in the coming year include:

- Learn more about and work to integrate the core curriculum in our offerings.
- Leadership development - improved offerings and coordination with other groups.
- Feedback forms - the purposes and protocol have been updated and will be implemented in fall 2016.
- Improve access to and use of online registration for AP classes via ACS.
- Encouraging continued participation by UU members as teachers and participants in AP classes and offerings

Adult Programs committee members: Craig Clark, Cheryl Sadowski, Jud Cairns, Joy Hatfield, Linda Hunt, Zim Putney, Susan Smith, Pauline McCarthy, Laura Horton-Ludwig, Christine Stencel, Katherine Riddle

Lay Ministry for Caring and Wellness

Kelly Schlageter

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

The Lay Minister for Caring and Wellness works with the ordained ministers to provide pastoral care and support to congregants during times of transition. Pastoral Care Associates (PCAs) are trained to provide reflective listening whereas the Caring Coordinators arrange for more practical things such as meals, rides and child care.

Committees

- Pastoral Care Associates
- Caring Coordinators

Goals and Actions

- Meet congregants where they are and provide opportunities for healing and connection.
 - a. Review available support groups and add where meaningful.**
 - b. Test the idea of a quarterly healing service.**

Both the Pastoral Care Team and the Caring Coordinators began the year with new members and leaders, so the first part of the year was spent training while still providing care. The pastoral care needs were significant in the first half of the year, particularly memorial services.

By the second half of the year, the PCAs were fully trained and ready to offer a healing service. It was well attended. We also added a time for fellowship to the end and had light refreshments. People enjoyed having the time to get to know one another. The group plans to offer at least one if not two healing services next year.

- **Integrate Caring and Wellness into the entire congregation so we all see ourselves as providers of care to each other.**

Visit other groups to talk about Caring and Wellness and its importance in the congregation.

Integrate other groups in trainings and activities.

The PCAs were busy this year providing pastoral care and were happy to be fully staffed. The group participated again this year in the Martin Luther King, Jr., Weekend of Service by providing an opportunity for the kids to make cards that the PCAs would send as a part of our pastoral care work. This time the group participated for the entire weekend.

While we didn't visit other groups, Rev. David Miller acknowledged the group during Sunday services to help raise awareness about the team members and the work we do.

- **Increase awareness of the Caring and Wellness resources available.**

Write a blog about caring and wellness and its role in the congregation.

Host table at annual service where opportunities to get connected are highlighted.

The PCAs and Caring Coordinators did three things to actively raise awareness:

The Lay Minister for Caring and Wellness wrote a blog about what it means to be a community of people providing pastoral care to one another and the resources that are available.

Staffed a table at the Get Connected Fair to encourage people to volunteer to help with meals and rides.

Put out a call in the weekly announcements asking for more people to volunteer for the caring team.

- **Improve online functionality for requesting services.**
 - Create online request for PCA contact/support.
 - Create online request for meals, rides, etc.

The team has fully integrated the digital tool for assigning pastoral care tasks and the team members are all comfortable with it. We also updated the Caring and Wellness brochure with the most current contact information. We did not create an online tool for requesting meals and rides; that will be a goal for next year.

Volunteers and Staff

Lay Minister for Caring and Wellness: Kelly Schlageter

Caring Coordinator: Autumn Yates; Bobbi Jo Snyder (backup); Ann Marie Cunningham (backup)

Pastoral Care Associates: Bill Ades, co-chair; Linda Zack, co-chair; Travis Johnson, Ann Wood, Jennifer Yi, Linda Clark, Elizabeth Jenkins

Lay Ministry for Property Stewardship

Suzy Foster

Summary of Mission and Responsibility

Thanks to Lois Phemister for writing the following mission:

The Property Stewardship Council finds its special mission in the Seventh Principle of Unitarian Universalism. This principle calls us to “affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

As we deepen our understanding of the restorative value of nature, we are educating ourselves and the congregation about the ways that the web of life can be respected on our campus, taking seriously the needs of the plants, animals and also the soil life which supports all higher forms.

As we grow in respect for our planet we will consider the human-derived parts of the campus with attention to global warming, health, justice for all and how our decisions are a healing effort on behalf of planetary stabilization.

Given this purpose, it is the responsibility of the Property Stewardship Council (PSC) is to assist the executive director, the Coordinating Team and the congregation in the effort to maintain and improve the buildings and grounds of the UUCF campus in a manner that supports the approved congregational Vision of 2011, “Grow, Connect, Serve.”

Committees

- Property Stewardship Council: Ken Foley, Alan Tubbs, Jim Allen, Lois Phemister, Zeena Zeidberg, Karen Grycewicz, Rich Sider (director of administration), Suzy Foster
- Memorial Grove Committee: Zeena Zeidberg
- Green Sanctuary: Lois Phemister
- Grounds Task Force for expenditure of Reach funds: Rebecca Lieser, Kristin Moyer
- Grounds Revegetation Team: Karen Grycewicz
- Invasive Plant Removal Team: Bob Root through Green Sanctuary Group
- Paris Pledge: Jim Allen, liaison to Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Sanitary Sewer Connection: Ken Foley
- Archive Project: Judy Penniman

Goals

1. Increase outreach to congregants on the topic of environmental stewardship as an expression of our Seventh Principle through conversations in the Commons; weekend work days and RE service opportunities.
2. Provide overall master plan for a network of paths and seating areas to promote use of the campus for a range of gatherings including ministerial chats, small-group ministry, PlaygroUUp gatherings, lay groups, congregational celebrations, memorial services, etc. Provide hierarchy of paths for accessibility through campus.
3. Provide an overall master plan for the enhancement of the natural areas of the campus to stabilize grounds, reduce maintenance and to better support the native flora and fauna.
4. Address unstable slope and erosion in Program Building lawn.
5. Provide support to Ken Foley as Scout troop leader for his guidance of multiple Eagle Scout projects to address specific site problems and to improve the campus.
6. Provide support to Rich Sider in the overall improvement of the buildings through various building maintenance.

7. Provide support to Ken Foley and Rich Sider in the development of the construction plans for the sanitary sewer project. Currently on hold.
8. Update PSC charter and coordinate with report by the Program Evaluation Committee.
9. Support Partner Church Circle by consideration of small partner project on grounds for construction in 2017.
10. Support LGBTQ program by consideration of signage on Hunter Mill Road.
11. Better align goals of and improve communication between the PSC and the Green Sanctuary Group.
12. Improve communication between the PSC and Memorial Grove Committee.

Actions

1. Bob Root and Karen Grycewicz scheduled 11 monthly grounds beautification days to engage congregants in stewardship of the campus through continued removal of invasive plant species and revegetation with native plant species.
2. Karen Grycewicz provided stewardship activities for RE classes to promote native flora and fauna by planting native seeds and seedlings; and the removal of invasive plants.
3. Mary Petersen and Lois Phemister of the Green Sanctuary Group raised awareness of the plight of monarchs and other pollinators by giving away appropriate native plants in the Commons during September and distributing materials teaching people how to maintain them.
4. Mary Frances Kordick and Lois Phemister of the Green Sanctuary Group promoted composting through conversations and demonstrations in the Commons during October.
5. Adopted master plan for seating layout for new benches as proposed by Rebecca Lieser and Kristin Moyer to promote greater access and usable spaces to congregants young and old.
6. Ken Foley and Zeena Zeidberg assisted with the installation of benches and memorial plaques.
7. Support for Liam Foley's Scout project to protect the white oak with fencing in fall 2015.
8. Support Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions' Paris Pledge and the greening of the UUCF buildings. Jim Allen acting as liaison.
9. Support Green Summit at UUCF. Lois Phemister acting as liaison.
10. Support for Bryce Nystrom's library patio project in summer 2016.
11. Updated the charter in November 2014; however this will be coordinated with the evaluation of the PSC by the Program Evaluation Committee.
12. Provided limited support to Rich Sider and Ken Foley in developing the plans for the sanitary sewer connection including review of progress on negotiations with neighbors and review of alignment of proposed sewer line.
13. Karen Grycewicz, master gardener: A master plan for the maintenance of the grounds is underway, which will prioritize the areas to be improved, outline the improvements needed and how they will be accomplished.

Volunteers and Staff

- Eagle Scout projects: Liam Foley (Fall 2015) and Bryce Nystrom (Summer 2016)
- Maintenance of grounds: Karen Monroe
- Green Sanctuary Group: Mary Petersen, Mary Frances Kordick, Barbara Harding
- RE teachers: Linnea Nelson, Leah Stanton, Maria Cox-Leow, Chris French
- PlaygroUUup: Meghan Crowley

Congregational Committee Reports

Endowment Fund Committee

Barb Brehm, chair

Summary of Purpose and Responsibility

The Endowment Fund Committee is responsible for all aspects of the Endowment Fund including: strategic planning, congregational outreach and fundraising, Endowment Fund management and the accounting for the funds and the processing of gifts, monitoring the investment of funds, processing of grant requests, recognition for donors of the funds and records management and reporting. The fund is controlled by a set of bylaws and standard operating procedures that define the committee's responsibilities.

Committees

Due to the committee's small size, all members serve on all three sub-function groups: outreach, recognitions and records/policy.

Goals and Actions

1. Re-energize and re-educate the congregation on what the Endowment Fund is and what it does
 - Prepare a mission statement for the Endowment Fund Committee.
 - Update marketing materials for the committee.
 - Establish a communications plan.
2. Continue to hold the Legacy Society gala and other forms of recognition.
3. Run a trial of the new calendar.
4. Formalize the grant process.
 - Run a trial of the new grant procedures and form.
5. Prepare a process to increase the fund.
 - Establish fundraising standards and limitations.
 - Establish a policy on gifts.
6. Create metrics to measure our work such as number of grants given, percent of participation among congregation members, increase the diversity of grant requests.

Actions:

1. A mission statement was created and the Endowment Fund Committee section of the UUCF website was updated to reflect this statement and our new procedures. The work to update the marketing materials is ongoing.
2. The fourth Legacy Society gala was held on Fri., Jan. 29, 2016. The event included presentations from Martha Ades on the first Martin Luther King, Jr., Weekend of Service which was funded by an endowment grant. Director of Religious Exploration Linnea Nelson shared with attendees the impact of endowment grants used to purchase a sensory table and new database. All Legacy Society members were invited.
3. The Endowment Fund Committee prepared a new calendar of events that moved the grant process to the fall and included a request for contributions at the announcement of the grants. The Legacy Society gala was moved to the winter.
4. A formal grant process was prepared and followed for this year. It resulted in eight grant requests, seven of which were funded at least in part. The grants made were:
 - Upgrading UUCF servers - This ongoing work has started with the purchase of a Mac computer supporting our streaming of worship services and will support work next year on the implementation of the servers.

- Funding Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions website upgrade - The new website assists in community outreach.
- Funding the UUCF Middle School trip - The MS Youth are in the final planning stages of their trip to Boston, thanks to the congregation's generosity through the Endowment Fund Committee. They have 16 youth and eight adults who will be traveling to Boston over Memorial Day Weekend. This inaugural grant supported a wish for a long-hoped-for trip to Boston to expose our youth to both important history and the current work of our denomination.
- Supporting gun violence prevention - Transportation was provided for members to visit with state legislators on gun violence prevention issues and to advertise our Sandy Hook memorial service.
- Videotaping Science, Reason & Religion events - This grant will cover the cost of technical support to tape presentations and will carry into the next year.
- Supporting the Holocaust memorial service – This event did not occur this year and the funds will be retained by the Endowment Fund Committee.
- Providing Rebuilding Together with training for Rebuilding Together Express - The checklist was modified and used to assess a home's repair needs. Ten energy-efficiency upgrades were completed. A tracking system was developed to estimate the annual energy savings from the upgrades.

Rev. David Miller and Board President Nigel Astell attended an Endowment Fund Committee meeting to discuss the potential future uses of endowment funds. It was decided that the Generosity Team would work on this issue (once they have completed their work on the Annual Giving Campaign and the Reach Campaign). The Endowment Fund Committee will provide a member to support the Generosity Team in its work. While several bequests were received, no substantial work was done to increase the fund until it is decided on how the fund will be used in the future.

Volunteers and Staff

Active members of the committee this year are: Mark Magee, John Leonard (treasurer), Barb Brehm (chair), Bob Bohall, Lynn Howell (assistant treasurer), Matt Reider (secretary) and Steve Myles (board treasurer).

As always, Rich Sider has been invaluable in processing bequests, pledges and gifts to the Endowment Fund, and helping to keep our record keeping straight. We could not have managed this past year without his assistance and patience.

Organizations Sponsored by UUCF

Mindfulness Practice Center

Thu Nguyen, director

The center has offered mindfulness practice sessions in a non-sectarian manner under UUCF's sponsorship for the last 16 years. The practice of mindfulness enhances our capacity to be aware of what is happening in our mind, our body and around us. It helps reduce stress and bring about transformation and healing. Joy and happiness can then be experienced in any daily activity. All meditation sessions, workshops and classes are offered to UUCF members as well as the general public.

For the 2015-16 congregational year, we focused on:

- Maintaining a regular schedule of meditation sessions.
- Providing guidance to longtime members of the Mindfulness Practice Center (MPC) about mindfulness meditation facilitation.
- Continuing outreach to other communities through presentations, workshops, retreats and guidance.

The regular program includes guided meditation sessions Monday through Friday mornings, a weekly Thursday evening meditation session, Saturday mindfulness workshops and four weekend retreats in West Virginia during the past year. The deep relaxation and healing movement class continues to benefit many people. The quarterly newsletter “Along the Path” offers community members a place for sharing their mindfulness practice and insights. Other events include:

- A celebration on New Year’s Eve at UUCF.
- A ceremony to transmit the Five Mindfulness Trainings, which are guidelines for mindful living, to mindfulness practitioners in different states in the Mid-Atlantic region.
- An all-day mindfulness workshop at Emmanuel Methodist Church in Laurel, MD.
- Mindfulness classes for children in the UUCF Religious Exploration program.

The MPC website has been generating many requests for information and attracting newcomers. The center continues to provide a positive and healing atmosphere within UUCF by offering many opportunities to people from the greater Washington, DC, area to come and practice mindfulness within a supportive and loving community.

Volunteers and Staff

Principal teachers are Anh-Huong and Thu Nguyen who have been practicing mindfulness in the tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh for more than 30 years. They were among the first students ordained as meditation teachers by Thich Nhat Hanh in 1992.

The center has an Advisory Council that meets regularly with Anh-Huong and Thu to assist with the management and development of programs and activities. The members are: Kathy Jones, Kitty Kavanaugh, Tom Livingston, Robert Moore and Mary Tripp. Many community members volunteer to help the center.