

First Unitarian Church of Oakland

2008 Congregational Meeting

March 16, 2008



**First Unitarian Church of Oakland
Annual Congregational Meeting**

**Sunday, March 16, 2008
12:45 – 2:00PM**

Agenda

12:45 Welcome – Mark Savage, President of Board of Trustees
Reading of the Mission Statement and Covenant (attached)
Quorum Count – Chris Palm, Secretary, Board of Trustees
Installation of Moderator for this Meeting
Review of Agenda and Rules (attached)

1:00 **Congregational Business:**

Election of New Trustees (*Moderator*)
2008-2010 (filling unexpired term): Jon Greer
2008-2011 (3-year terms): Noemi deGuzman, Dan Goss, Charles Williams

1:10 **Proposed Motion to Establish Wendte Endowment** (*Mark Savage*)

We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, share a vision and obligation to sustain the Church for future generations, as past generations have sustained the church and its gifts for us. In this spirit of stewardship we therefore resolve that the Board of Trustees should establish for this purpose an endowment fund as an asset of the Church, to be call initially the Wendte Endowment Fund, in which the principal shall be maintained in perpetuity, and income may be used for the operating budget and capital improvements. We further resolve that the Board of Trustees should establish a structure and criteria for the governance and uses of endowment principal and income, to be presented and discussed at a forum with the congregation before final adoption by the Board.”

1:15 **Proposed Motion to Ordain Laurel Leifert** (*Randall Wright*)

“We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, vote to ordain Laurel Leifert to Unitarian Universalist Ministry in 2008.”

Laurel has been a member of this congregation for 17 years, during which time she has served in just about every leadership position you can think of. She is a member of the California Bar as well as a graduate of Starr King School for the Ministry (2007). She meets with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) at the end of March and has requested ordination this year.

1:20 **Proposed Motion to Ordain Chris Long** (*Internship Committee*)

“We. The members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, vote to ordain Chris Long to Unitarian Universalist Ministry in 2009.”

Chris has been our ministerial intern for two years and has brought many gifts to us during our time together. Chris plans to meet with the MFC a year from now in 2009 and to graduate from Starr King School for the Ministry in May, 2009. As Chris says, “Being deeply connected to this congregation has been a highlight of my life and ministerial development and I look forward to our relationship continuing no matter where our journeys may lead.” He requests ordination in 2009.

1:25 **Financial Report** (*Charla Weiss, Church Manager*)

1:45 **Capital Campaign Report** (*Gail Schulz*)

1:50 **Recognition Of Outgoing Leadership** (*Mark Savage*)

Retiring trustees: Laila Ibrahim, Jack Macy, Karen Eng

Retiring congregational member of the Executive Team (August): Judith Hunt

1:55 **Adjournment**

Benediction (*Rev Michelle Favreault*)

OUR MISSION

We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, unite to build a beloved community within and beyond our walls. Guided by individual conscience and wisdom from many sources, we gather in worship and service to nourish the spirit, work for justice, and celebrate the divine in all.

COVENANT OF THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF OAKLAND

We, the people of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, covenant to build a religious community sustained by relationships of understanding, mutual trust and respect. Guided by our mission and collective inspiration, we will encourage all our members to participate fully in congregational life and to grow and learn together in faith and love. Knowing that what one of us does affects the community, we covenant to act with loving kindness in all our endeavors by speaking directly and positively with one another. We recognize that this calls for honesty in communications, valuing of diversity and inclusive process. We covenant to engage in ethical communications, to take our concerns to those responsible and to refrain from gossip. Recognizing that conflicts have the power to strengthen or diminish our relationships, when they arise we will handle our disagreements with courtesy, fairness and forgiveness. We promise to listen on one another, assume good intentions and identify common goals. In support of our shared ministry we covenant to honor our commitments, keep our decision making processes transparent and give generously of our spiritual gifts and material resources. This we covenant together.

ENDS POLICIES OF THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF OAKLAND

The First Unitarian Church of Oakland is an intentionally multi-generational, multi-racial, multi-cultural, anti-oppressive Unitarian Universalist religious community. We actively promote spiritual growth, fellowship, service, justice, stewardship, and evangelism.

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| Spiritual Growth | We practice spiritual growth that is challenging and enriching, and which inspires us to live Unitarian Universalist values. |
| Fellowship | We continue to expand our circle to include the whole human family in our multicultural congregation. Our religious community fosters development of meaningful relationships among people of all ages and backgrounds. |
| Service | We joyfully answer the call to minister to one another and to the world. We use our unique gifts to nurture and create beloved community within and beyond our walls. |
| Justice | Our congregation actively works to eliminate oppressions, such as racism and heterosexism, to create a sustainable, just, and compassionate world. |
| Stewardship | We care for our congregation and our community by giving generously of our time, money, and talents. |
| Evangelism | We proclaim the good news of our faith and promote Unitarian Universalism in the wider community. |

RULES OF ORDER

1. In accordance with the by-laws, only members of the congregation may vote. A simple majority of members present (based on the initial quorum count) will be sufficient to act on behalf of the entire membership
2. Voting shall be by raising hands. Votes are “up or down,” with allowance for minor, friendly amendments at the discretion of the Moderator. If there is a need for discussion which cannot be completed within the time allocated on the agenda, the matter will be referred back to the Board of Trustees with the charge of arranging for an opportunity for congregational discussion and vote, if needed, within the next 60 days.
3. Discussion must be limited in order to complete the agenda in the time allotted:
 - a. Any person may speak only once to an issue.
 - b. Comments should be brief and to the point.
 - c. The Moderator may limit comment.
4. Any modification of the rules is at the discretion of the Moderator.
5. Robert’s Rules of Order apply, except that the above rules will prevail in the event of conflict.

CANDIDATES FOR TRUSTEE

Jon Greer

I have been a member of First Unitarian since 1997. I reside in the Grand Lake neighborhood of Oakland with my wife Chris Sutherland and our daughters Molly and Rose Greer, all of whom are active members of the congregation. During my time at First Unitarian I have been an extremely active congregant, serving as chair of the Annual Stewardship Campaign for three years and working on the Stewardship campaign as a volunteer for most of my time at the church. I have also been active in the church's communications efforts, working on the web site and newsletter and managing the unofficial listserv. I was in the choir for 2 ½ years and have been involved with Band Without Borders since its inception.

In my professional life I am a marketing consultant specializing in public relations and media interview training. Earlier in my career I was a non-profit executive and I have training in fundraising, board development and non-profit management. I look forward to sharing those gifts and others at the Board level to help the church pursue its goals and mission.

Dan Goss

I live in Berkeley with my wife Kathy and daughter Grace, in a semi-shared housing situation that we affectionately refer to as the "Woolsey Compound", with the Ibrahim-Bartley and Hodder-Prud'homme families. Each adult brings dinner to everyone else's house once a week, and we own a van in common, which allowed us all to get rid of our 2nd cars. At work I manage a group of database developers, most of whom are in St. Petersburg, Russia. I'm looking forward to the A's season starting, and to my next poker game, whenever that may be.

I've been a member of First Unitarian since 1988 after moving here from Southern California and Santa Barbara. In First Unitarian I found a spiritual home that was, and is, lively, growing, and dedicated to continually improving itself for the sake of its members and the larger world. I have served as the co-chair of the (then-named) RE committee, convener of the Worship Council, member of the Board, member of the Executive Team and most recently as chair of the Capital Campaign. I have been continually challenged and transformed by singing in the choir for the last 15 years. I expect to contribute to every possible church task at least once over the next 40 - 50 years that I hope to be blessed with here at First Unitarian. I'm a big fan and student of Policy Governance, and have recently done some consulting for the San Mateo UU church in that area, and I'm looking forward to being a member of a Policy Governance Board."

Noemi de Guzman

I visited First Unitarian Church of Oakland four years ago with my husband Scott Gamble in search of religious education for our sons Zachary and Charlie, and I have stayed because I realized I actually was searching also for my own spirituality to be nurtured. My family quickly felt connected with the ministers and members of the congregation, and Scott and I became members ourselves early in 2005. I have taken opportunities to join and lead a covenant group, participate in the Journey Toward Wholeness Jubilee II workshop, and serve as a visiting steward for the capital campaign.

Beyond these walls, since becoming a member of the church I made a transition from a long career in emergency management to managing health equity and language access projects for a healthcare organization. I would attribute the courage to make the job change to a call to greater service and justice heard right here, and to the inspiration, love, faith, and support received from friends I've made here. I have a deep commitment and feel a strong calling to help realize Vision 2012 and the goals of our congregation, and I would apply my methodical and whole view approach to problem solving and performance improvement in service to and together with this community.

I am an immigrant from the Philippines. After arriving in the United States in 1968, my parents, five siblings, and I made our home on 36th Street in Oakland. I have lived continuously in the Bay Area since. Last August Scott, Zachary, Charlie, and I moved with Abbott the Wonderhound from San Leandro to Piedmont, where we enjoy gathering our large extended family frequently.

Charles Williams

I did not know I had been at First Unitarian Church of Oakland this long until I came across a letter written to my dad dated August 10, 1997. I was a Southern Baptist Fundamentalist before being invited to this church by a few friends. My wife and I have enjoyed the lay-led ministries a lot. I have two teen-age children, Nathaniel and EmmaRose. My wife works in Child and Maternal Health, and I am a Registered Addiction Specialist working with adolescents.

I first started to get involved in the church through the Men's group, of which 90% of us are still together today. Then the "Kids Camp Out." We (many fathers and non-fathers) would get together in Tilden Park for camping, games, hiking, and cook-outs. The most rewarding of my involvements was when some of our white allies in our church asked if I would join them on this "Journey Toward Wholeness", which later became Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team (JTWTT).

Now I wear a few other hats. I am the co-facilitator of JTWTT, a co-facilitator of the Keeping It Real, a Conversation for People of Color. I am the liaison to the Justice Committee, a member of the Music Advisory Group, on the Intern Committee, and a Visitor for the Capital Campaign. My hopes are that more people of color would feel the call to get more involved.

OUR TEACHING AND LEARNING MINISTRIES REPORT

Rev. Michelle Favreault

What you are the world is. And without your transformation there can be no transformation of the world. J. Krishnamurti (1895-1986)

In January 2007 the Transforming our Learning Community (TLC) conversation further opened the congregation to the challenges, complexities and opportunities of creating a sustainable ministry for children, youth and families, while engaging hearts and minds with the depth and breadth of Unitarian Universalist faith formation at all ages and stages of life. Now, we have a Dreaming Team working to take the recommendations of TLC and the intentions of our Vision 2012 into proposals for programming, staffing and a fully transformed ministry and learning community that changes lives in a spirit of love.

Still, in this year of change, we have grown. In our traditional Sunday morning programs, the preschool “Friendship Finders” class has had more than 40 different children attend at some point this year. Our creative k-4 “Spirit Play” has had more than 60 different kids attend, with as many as 40 in attendance on any given Sunday. We are constantly trying to engage volunteers in the classes, but have yet to find the balance of flexibility and boundaries that allows for lay leadership to emerge from a place of enthusiasm rather than guilt!

We said goodbye to Serian Strauss and Laura Khalil. We continued to learn and grow with paid teachers, Ms. Nanci Armstrong and Ms. Melissa James who were joined by KT Michael and Jr. Teacher Hannah Eller-Isaacs. We’ve also supported our classes with paid assistance from Daniel Richman, Emma Styles-Swain and Sarah Gassner-Wollwage. We experimented in the fall with a model of a Children’s Creative Collaborative Community that required parent participation, but allowed for more gross-motor learning and active play. A new education and membership assistant Leah Hart-Landsberg joined us in September in a new position that has allowed for some staff support for our membership ministries through the fall and maintain a modest level of administrative support for the education programs during this period of experimentation and change.

We began offering a complement of Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality curriculum for k-1, and 7-9 this winter and look forward to a 4-6 grade class in the spring. This program remains volunteer driven, with David Fry, Kate Lenhardt, Intern Minister Chris Long, Darlene Pagano, Laurel Liefert, Marcus Liefert and Brian Jeffries taking on a major ministry that has become such a valuable part of our faith community,

Youth Group Advisors this year are members Dara Kaufman-LeDonne, Joel Gilbertson-White, and on-going volunteers Andy Karlson and Betty-Jeanne Reuters-Ward. Particular work this year on worship and identity development has woven with justice, the arts and fellowship.

Our budgetary constraints mean summer programs in 2008 need to be fully lay-led, which will be a change from recent years. In the past 12 months we had Family Story Circles, a Family Gratitude Journal to help us explore models of family ministry. There is more to do. In Summer 2007 we experimented with an adult education “term” and held a multi-generational evening of “HUUgwarts Academy” to celebrate a love of learning, books, magic and community. We had a fall 2007 Community Learning Day and have continued to offer an array of classes for adults of all ages. This program year has included field testing two new UUA curriculum including “Building the World We Dream About” and “Spirit in Practice.”

In a major transformation not yet mentioned, The First Unitarian Church of Oakland became a Welcoming Congregation in 2007 and we have adapted our traditional leadership development retreat for this year by sending teams of leaders to the Pacific Central District Growth Conference and the UUA Now is the Time Conference and have made plans for a “Leadership Learning Day” in 2008 to bring those lessons “home.”

This extended report comes in the year of learning, reflection and renewal for all of us that includes Rev. Kathy Huff’s sabbatical. Our priorities to transform our learning community and the congregational ends for spiritual growth have been in the midst of a certain and uncertain programmatic and staffing flux. We have been sharing monthly themes to guide our shared learning and build a common theological vocabulary. From Spirit Play to Covenant Groups, Worship and monthly written resource guides we are embodying new ways of being a community of learners in alignment with our religious heritage and our aspirations of Vision 2012. What a joy to be involved in this becoming!

With gratitude,

Rev. Michelle Favreault

REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Much of the Board's work over the past year has revolved around Stewardship. For the past six months, the Board and Executive Team have agonized first with trying to ensure that our pledges and fundraising for 2007 covered our planned expenses for 2007, and then with cutting our expenses even further for the 2008 budget because the collective pledges to date for 2008 are approximately \$50,000 lower than the pledges received in 2007.

It is not for want of generosity, of deep generosity, on the part of those who pledged much for the benefit of all. As of February 26, 2008, when the Board passed the final 2008 budget, 203 pledges on hand totalled \$472,353. With these pledges, plus projected pledges from new members throughout 2008, projected building rental income, and projected fundraising, the 2008 budget estimates \$649,888 in revenues. At the same time, 53 pledgers in 2007 had not yet pledged for 2008; and 152 members had not pledged in both 2007 and 2008. And so the 2008 budget the Board approved on February 26 included no raises for staff, not even for cost of living increases to keep wages the same. Staff lost all dental and vision coverage. The ten-week summer budget for the music program and religious-education program was cut completely. The Church will close for two weeks. The annual program budgets of most councils and committees were eliminated. And we remain significantly understaffed, unable to pay for all of the hours we ask of our beloved staff, who nonetheless devote many unpaid hours to try to meet our collective needs and vision. So the approved 2008 budget is balanced, with budgeted expenses limited to budgeted revenues, but only after drastic, heart-breaking cuts.

The average cost per adult member is \$1,700 under an austere budget, and more for a budget more consistent with the range of programs and staffing we say we want to nourish us. Had the 53 pledgers in 2007 pledged the same amount in 2008, there would have been \$69,943 more in projected revenues. Had the 152 additional members given something as they were able in 2007 and pledged as they were able toward 2008, projected revenues would increase even more. The severe budget cuts above would have been unnecessary.

The Board of Trustees views this situation from the perspective of stewardship and generosity. We, the beloved members and friends of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, are the ones who open the doors on Sunday to the congregation and the community around us, to practice a long-needed faith that celebrates the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We are the ones who fund the rich worship, the music, the learning programs, the pastoral care, the building, the heat, that nourish the spirit, work for justice, and celebrate the divine in all. We do it generously and selflessly, for the benefit of all, irrespective of how much any one of us can give as a steward of this church community. From the perspective of stewardship and generosity, what matters is that we each give, as we are able, so that all may receive.

Accordingly, your Trustees have set stewardship as one of three priorities for 2008. We will develop and implement within the year a strong congregation-wide stewardship program which covers the true cost (approximately \$2,000 per adult member) of our ministry and enables us to generously support our dedicated staff, our operations, our program, our building, and fair-share contributions to the Unitarian Universalist Association and Pacific Central District. Each of us will take an active role. May we all be Stewards of this beloved community.

In 2007 the Board of Trustees also worked extensively towards Vision 2012, to build a radically inclusive community within and beyond these walls, by expanding our welcome table, practicing active hospitality, and deepening our commitments and actions to counter oppression as an intentionally multiracial, multicultural, multigenerational, and inclusive congregation. Trustees attended Jubilee II at Starr King School. Trustees attended Now Is The Time in San Jose. Each board meeting we worked with Rev. Kathy Huff to deepen our understanding of what it takes to successfully build multicultural, multiracial congregations. During Kathy's sabbatical, Board members are now leading this work with the Board.

We also revised the structure of the Executive Team during the sabbatical. Ordinarily the Executive Team includes all called ministers, the Church Manager, and one senior lay leader. During the sabbatical, the Executive Team comprises the Church Manager; the current senior lay leader, Judith Hunt, who will continue service through the sabbatical; the newly appointed senior lay leader, Charles Masten, who began service in January, 2008; and the Acting Assistant Minister for Religious Education.

Lastly, in January 2007 the Board charged the Committee on Ministry with visioning the future of our religious education in light of Rev. Cinnamon Daniel's departure and the congregation's desires for religious learning. The Committee on Ministry formed a separate working group, Transforming Our Learning Community, and presented its findings and recommendations to the Board in October. The Board voted to accept them and approved the recommendation to form a Dreaming Team of people from the Worship Council, Justice Council, the Lifespan Education and Programs (LEAP) Council, the Committee on Ministry, and the ministers, to design concrete steps to implement the recommendations for transforming our learning community.

A closing word about the Board's role and responsibilities within the life of the Church. The Congregation elects Trustees to the Board of Trustees, and the Board in turn manages the Church and all its affairs. The Board delegates the day-to-day operation of the Church to the Executive Team (under the Trustees' ultimate discretion and responsibility), and works principally to ensure that the Church and Congregation achieve the goals of our Mission Statement with appropriate use of our resources. The Board's work emphasizes vision and strategic leadership more than administrative or programmatic detail, while including oversight and evaluation of the Executive Team. We welcome any thoughts or visions you care to share.

Yours in service and faith,

Mark Savage
President, Board of Trustees

ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2008-2009

Each year the Board of Trustees consults broadly and establishes annual priorities for the coming church year to inform the efforts of the Board, ministers, Executive Team, lay leadership, and the congregation. These are the extraordinary priorities for a particular year, in addition to the regular imperatives every year, such as Sunday worship services and religious education classes.

For the church year beginning September 2008, the Board establishes three priorities to accomplish the congregation's stated ends, which are spiritual growth, fellowship, service, justice, stewardship, and evangelism.

- **VISION 2012.** We will advance the development and implementation of our Vision 2012, a five-year vision and intentional plan to grow and expand as a multicultural, multiracial, multigenerational beloved community within and beyond the congregation. Through the current work of our Transforming our Learning Community Dreaming Team, Music Advisory Group, Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Team and Welcoming Congregation, among other initiatives, we will continue moving our worship, music program, justice work and learning community toward better reflecting and understanding our identity as a multicultural, multiracial, multigenerational and inclusive community.
- **STEWARDSHIP.** We will develop and implement within one year a multi-year strategy to create a strong stewardship program which includes an effective congregation-wide, year-round stewardship effort where consistently each year all members of the congregation are giving at stewardship levels so that collectively we cover the actual cost (approximately \$2,000 per adult member) of our ministry which includes our dedicated staff, our operations, our program, our building, and full fair-share contributions to the Unitarian Universalist Association and Pacific Central District.
- **HAMILTON HALL.** We will continue to advance the effort to restore and retrofit Hamilton Hall, including: successful completion of our capital campaign; completion of architectural design based on congregational priorities and the amount of money raised during the campaign; making preparations for construction; and fully preparing for a stable congregational life while our sanctuary is under construction.

Approved by the Board of Trustees, February 29, 2008.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The Committee on Ministry (COM) is appointed by the Board of Trustees to nurture the mission and ministry of this congregation. It embodies shared ministry, in concert with our settled ministers, and represents the congregation in matters of ministry and congregational polity. It is a primary structure within the church for demonstrating the power of mutual trust and for modeling redemption, reconciliation and healing. In short, we say that the Committee on Ministry is responsible for tending to the health and well-being of our congregation as a whole.

The (COM) Charter charges us, among other things, to “make recommendations whenever and wherever it deems necessary for the benefit of the ministry and the mission of the church...; serve as a forum to discuss the quality, directions and long-term vision of our ministry...; provide a conduit through which ministers and congregants may privately make known any ideas or concerns about the ministry of the church and work with the ministers and other committees to facilitate solutions to identified problems...; solicit ideas and listen for concerns as its members participate in the life of the congregation; (and) works to assure continuity of ministry during periods of sabbatical leaves, illness and transition of ministers.”

In this year we have done all of this, and more. We have principally been absorbed with:

Sabbatical

The commencement two weeks ago of Kathy’s sabbatical began more than a year ago with a recommendation from the COM to the Board of Trustees to approve such a sabbatical. Months of intense planning followed, with Tom Bretthauer representing the COM on the Sabbatical Leave Committee.

TLC (Transforming Our Learning Community)

In early 2007, the COM was charged by the Board with visioning the future of our religious education programs. The COM formed a separate working group, Transforming Our Learning Community (TLC), to develop a process for that dialogue, which took place between January and September. We designed a visioning process, and engaged in numerous visioning sessions to hear from the congregation what it is you want from religious education, and what it would mean to you if we transformed our learning community. Ultimately we released a report in November 2007 summarizing the congregation’s many views and aspirations. (If you’d like to see the report, go to the church’s and find the TLC link there.) In brief, we all foresee more invigorating, challenging and deeply engaging ways to worship and learn that would be truly reflective of the multi-generational, multi-cultural and anti-racist community we long to become. The concrete planning in response to the initial TLC report is now the work of the Dreaming Team, led by Rev. Michelle Faverault and COM member Rick Hecht. Its final recommendations for ways we might reimagine our worship and learning will be completed by the end of the church year, for consideration by all of us and Rev. Kathy Huff upon her return from sabbatical in August.

Ministerial Education and Training

It is also the COM’s duty to review credentials and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees for the congregational sponsorship of students for ministerial education and advancement to ministry, and to similarly review credentials and make recommendations to the Board for ordination to ministry. The volume of requests has been significant and constant this year, with endorsement requested by, and recommended for, congregation members Rev. Susan Conrad and Rev. JD Benson; and ordination requested by, and recommended for (at this Annual Meeting), congregation member Laurel Leifert and Intern Minister Chris Long.

It is additionally the COM's role to fulfill the congregational responsibilities required by the Unitarian Universalist Association of a teaching church and foster the development of ministerial interns. In this capacity, led by COM member Peggy Macy also serving as Chair of the Intern Committee, the COM has been ultimately responsible for the support provided to Chris Long in his time with First Unitarian as Intern Minister.

The Committee on Ministry continues to look across all dimensions of the church and church life to attend and support our relationships with one another, and with our ministers, so that we can fulfill our shared ministry. Matters of fair clergy and staff compensation, adequate staffing to support our mission and our staff and the alignment of worship and learning with our core values and visions will continue to occupy our time and concern as we move into 2008.

Chris Sutherland
Chair, Committee on Ministry

SABBATICAL LEAVE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Sabbatical Leave Steering Committee (SLSC) was formed in March of 2007 as an administrative subcommittee of the Committee on Ministry charged with: overseeing sabbatical preparation, communicating with the congregation regarding the sabbatical plan and providing coordination, support and resources to the Trustees, committees and staff prior to, and during, the sabbatical leave. The following people are on the SLSC which met at least monthly between April of 2007 and February of 2008: B Avalon, Tom Bretthauer, Molly Huber, Judith Hunt, Lauren Poole and Mark Savage.

We began our work of communicating with the congregation by publishing an article about our committee and its purpose in the May Sower. Subsequent monthly submissions to the Sower detailed the specifics of our work.

Our first major task was to send a letter to all active committees, councils and working groups in the church requesting that they each send us a report about any significant impact that Rev Huff's sabbatical might have on their work as well as how each committee viewed it's own potential for spiritual growth and development during this period. These reports were received, reviewed and summarized in October and all the specific concerns that were raised were addressed. Some groups detailed the plans their ministries had for spiritual deepening and renewal. Some had specific requests and suggestions for guest ministers which were forwarded to the Worship Council.

During the summer we embarked on a small fund-raising campaign that raised \$3500. These funds will be used primarily to pay guests ministers who will be preaching during the sabbatical.

In November we produced a brochure that described: the history and purpose of ministerial sabbaticals within our religious tradition; the worship calendar for the sabbatical months; Rev Huff's plans for her sabbatical; opportunities for congregational renewal during the sabbatical and whom to contact for various needs during the sabbatical. This brochure was mailed to the homes of members and friends in mid-December and will be available at the membership table, the bookstore and in the narthex during the leave.

Most recently the SLSC helped to plan and participated in Rev Huff's final worship service before her leave. This service provided the opportunity for blessings to be exchanged between Rev Kathy and the congregation, for our mutual covenant to be affirmed and for our commitment to shared ministry to be held up. Following the service the SLSC hosted a "Hasta Luego Fiesta" for Rev Kathy and her family. The party included a bountiful Mexican potluck feast, musical tributes and gifts for Rev. Kathy and words of gratitude and from Chris Long who bedecked Rev. Kathy with a new stole. Peggy Macy and Susan Killebrew unveiled their delightful "Where's Reverend Kathy" bulletin board which uses the theme of "Where's Waldo" to depict some of Kathy's anticipated sabbatical adventures. The bulletin board will be up in Wendte Hall during the sabbatical.

During the period of April 2007 and February 2008, the SLSC helped to meet the Board's goal of "planning and preparing for Rev. Huff's sabbatical leave".

Lauren Poole, Chair
Sabbatical Leave Steering Committee

JOURNEY TOWARDS WHOLENESS TRANSFORMATION TEAM

The team has been participating in congregational life, in the wider anti-racist community and in continuing to work on its own process.

Some of the ways we have been active in congregational life are conducting workshops for the congregation, supporting the Building the World We Dream About class, participating in the Vision 2012 work being done, and working with the Board of Trustees on policy and on ends.

We have also continued building relationships with the wider anti-racism movement, conducting two trainings at a nearby UU church, starting conversations with leaders at several nearby UU churches and participating in national anti-racism trainings and workshops.

The team is at a critical point in its development because many of the long-time members that went through our original set of UUA-led team trainings have rotated off the team, and recruitment is lagging. Rotation of most of the members in such a short time presents the team with recruitment challenges, and also requires that we plan several extra team trainings next year in order to ensure the team continues to have a unified vision and that it continues to learn to model anti-racist team behavior, because we strive to be what we wish to see in our community.

Here is a more specific list of some of the activities that Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team (Team) members have been doing:

- Presented two workshops at the most recent Community Learning Day.
- Actively supported the testing of, and are attending, the Building the World We Dream About curriculum.
- Worked with the Board of Trustees (BOT) in re-examining the church ends statements using an anti-racist lens
- Worked with BOT members to develop Board policy that articulates the accountability relationship between the Team and the BOT.
- Conducted two anti-racism trainings for members of the Mission Peak UU Congregation's nascent anti-racism committee.
- Staffed a table at coffee hour to help inform the congregation of the Team's mission and activities.
- Attended meetings and joined committees supporting the Vision 2012 process.
- Conducted several skills trainings for team members, and sent members to a Crossroads Ministries advanced anti-racism organizers training.
- Deepened relationships with the wider anti-racism movement. Members attended the training mentioned above and the Now Is The Time Conference; and met with anti-racism organizers at the Unitarian Church of Berkeley and the Mission Peak UU Congregation.
- Welcomed and oriented three new team members.
- Said good-bye to four members who rotated off.

Current active membership includes Charles Williams and Dan Wright (co-convenors), Katherine Stearns, Heather Macleod, Natasha Mader, Jill Miller, Ingrid Mittermaier and Sharon Dolan.

PLEDGE DRIVE COMMITTEE

This has been an outstanding year for Stewardship. Both stewardship of time and commitment, and stewardship of money. This year, as last, the focus of the events were on having fun and building community. This is after all, a congregational church, we fund it, we give our time and our labor to it, and it is ours.

This year the stewardship committee wanted to make making a pledge as simple as possible. A facsimile of the pledge card was made available on the church web site, and an interactive pledge card was programmed and also available on the web site. Pledge cards were mailed to every household and were available at church between services. Personal phone calls were made to each of the homes of members who had not pledged.

As many of you know, this church needs a lot of money to fund its dreams, 90% of this money comes from member and friend pledges. Please take your responsibility toward this congregation seriously. Pledge when asked. Next year when pledge time comes around, please step up and make your pledge in a timely matter. Thanks.

As I said at the beginning, it was a great year for stewardship. Everyone was asked to increase their pledge by 10%, and those who could – did. Nearly everyone who pledged, stretched themselves to the max. Many of us are giving at the Stewardship level of 5% of our income. Many can, some can't; and we honor everyone who gives what they can. This coming year, the Stewardship chair is Jon Greer. Please give him your full cooperation, and even join the stewardship committee if you can. Let's make this next pledge drive both easy and fun...

Thanks again to Bob Hood, my co-chair, Susan Meyer, Lisa Fry, and all others who gave their time and money toward a successful campaign.

Regards,
David Fry, Co-Chair

EXECUTIVE TEAM ANNUAL REPORT

The Executive Team is responsible for the day to day operations of the church. Church policy calls for members who include the settled minister, the Rev. Kathy Huff, the Church manager, Charla Weiss, and a lay member appointed for a two year term by the Board, Judith Hunt. This year the Board and the ET agreed on a revised ET membership during Rev. Kathy's sabbatical leave. The Rev. Michelle Favreault joins the ET through the summer; Judith's term, normally over in May, will continue through August and Charles Masten, the new lay member, started his term early, at the end of January 2008. We work in awareness of and in service to all of the ends of the church, with emphasis on stewardship and service.

During the past year we have addressed staffing issues in the face of considerable staff turnover and rising costs. All job descriptions are being revised to include language that expresses clear support of the church mission and ends and Vision 2012 goals; we have begun with the administrative assistant and the Director of Music Ministry and will complete the other staff positions by the end of the calendar year.

ET worked with the Capital Campaign leaders to approve new structural engineering proposals and to determine the financial goals and justifications for the campaign. We worked with the campaign co-treasurers to make sure a system is in place to track donations and expenses, to acknowledge gifts and in a manner consistent with current bookkeeping categories. Considerable time was also occupied in clarifying previous capital fundraising records and providing overdue letters of thanks.

The development and implementation of the annual budget is a major task starting with new budget assumptions in October and continuing into the new year as stewardship totals become clear. There are on-going adjustments to prospective expenditures, funding and fundraising throughout the year. ET continues to work to improve the clarity of our reporting of budgets and expenditures to the Board and the congregation.

Other ET activities included, but were not limited to, extensive hospitality preparation for the Bay Area media marketing campaign in Fall 2007, the promotion of e-Scrip as a fundraising source in October, approval of transgender bathroom signs and bulletin board information, and approval of the schedule of special collections. In January ET established the Music Advisory Group to serve to channel congregational feedback about the music program to the ET and the music program.

Judith Hunt
for the Executive Team

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

The Capital Campaign Committee has spent the last year preparing the congregation for the possibility of a capital campaign, encouraging people to “step up” their financial commitment prior to the campaign, and then launching that campaign. We have tried to do this in a way that also builds community, involves as many people as possible, and does its work in an anti-racist way.

After receiving the Feasibility Study report from our UUA consultant, Martha Easter-Wells, which indicated that we could expect to raise between \$1.1 and \$1.2 million, we recognized that we could not yet encourage the congregation to authorize a capital campaign. We spent much of the summer in small meetings with potentially large donors, talking more about the project, about our mutual willingness to step up from what we initially told Martha we could do, and about the work the Hamilton Hall Renovation Committee had done to reduce the costs from \$4 to \$2.3 million.

As a result of the progress we saw in the summer, we recommended to the Board of Trustees that they call a congregational meeting with the purpose of authorizing a capital campaign. On September 30th the congregation did authorize the campaign to take place early in 2008.

In January we launched an early phase of the campaign, visiting with and getting pledges from a small group of givers who had the potential to give a large amount. With considerable success from this phase under our belt, we threw a party to kick off the main phase of the campaign on February 2nd. On February 3rd visits to the majority of potential givers began. As of this writing, in late February, we have received gifts and pledges in excess of \$1.5 million!

None of this could have happened without the tireless efforts of so many people. Our consultant Martha Easter-Wells, the Capital Campaign Committee members, Jane Voytek, Renee Harper, Dick Bailey, Bob Hood, Gail Schulz, Roxie Kellam, Lisa Fry, Linda Propert-Sanford and myself, along with many people who took on special tasks, such as Susan Mayer, Jay Roller, Suzanne Van Houten, Kelly Jonick, and the members of the Capital Campaign Advisory Group, demonstrated incredible devotion to our beloved community, and to the sacred, physical vessel in which it lives.

Thanks also go to the 70+ congregation members who have taken the time to be trained as visitors, and have gone on to visit congregation members and ask them to support the campaign. These connections are the strands that make up the web we call community.

Finally, thanks to everyone who said “Yes!” when a visitor called you to ask to come to your home to talk about the project, and said “Yes!” when asked to give. We are an amazingly generous congregation, and have given abundantly to this spiritual home we love.

Dan Goss
Capital Campaign Committee Chair

REPORT OF THE HAMILTON HALL RENOVATION COMMITTEE

Your committee worked very hard over the last year to develop a new design for the seismic retrofit and modifications of Hamilton Hall that is something that the church can afford. When the Feasibility Study for a Capital Campaign showed that we were unlikely to raise the money needed to do the first \$2.3 Million phase of a 2 phase, \$4 Million total, project, we began to seriously consider how we could develop a project that would be much less costly, and still give us needed structural improvements. Working with our architect, Jim Goring, and the structural engineering firm of Murphy Burr Curry throughout the period April through September, we developed plans that cost a total of \$2.3 Million for the entire project, assuming work being done in 2009. The project used a different approach to our earthquake retrofit, one that relies on strengthening our marvelous redwood beams to carry more of the load in an earthquake. We will also strengthen our brick and mortar with steel beams inside several of the walls, and carbon fiber applied to other walls. We also plan to replace the roof and do extensive repair of the brick, stone and other external materials. For costing purposes, we also included several improvements to the interior of Hamilton Hall, which were reviewed with the Executive Team and the Worship Committee.

At this time, with the Capital Campaign not yet complete, we do not know exactly how much money we will have to work with. If we do not reach the \$2 Million level, the work will have to be prioritized to best use the money we raise. We expect to be working closely with our architect during the spring and summer to refine our design plans. Our priorities will focus on achieving the seismic standard we require, repairing the roof and doing as much to repair the exterior brick and stone as we can. Plans will continue to be presented to the congregation as they are being developed.

Gail Schulz and Glen Dahlbacka, Co-Chairs

COUNCIL OF CONVENORS

Community Life

The Community Life Council puts on the following events and did so with much success in 2007. Secret Buddy (Feb), Sedar (Apr), All Church Retreat (May), Labor Day Picnic (Aug), Halloween Party (Oct), Christmas Wassail (Dec). Kristen Montan served as our Community Life Convenor for most of 2007. Her two year term ended in the Spring but she generously stayed on through the Halloween Party in the fall.

Many volunteers helped make these events possible, and continue to do so. However, a Convenor is sorely needed! For those interested in coordinating fun, social events for our church, please contact, Molly Hermes (molly@mollyhermes.com or 415-533-4375)

Justice Council Report

Members of the Council held a series of retreat-style meetings to discuss how we could focus and deepen our work and integrate it better with the church and the broader community. Meanwhile, we were very busy with both advocacy and service.

- The Declaration of Peace Action Project held a large press conference last spring to mark the hanging of a giant peace banner on the church. Now it's participating in monthly actions at the West Oakland BART Station.
- The Earth Justice Associates are working to make the church a Green Sanctuary. Recent projects include setting up the church's recycling program and facilitating carpooling.
- The Lafayette School Mentoring Project provides one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to children in our neighboring K-5 school.
- The McClymonds Merit Award Program awards college scholarships to Oakland's McClymonds High School graduates.
- GotCOM trains Oakland middle school students in using computers and provides them with free computers.
- The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) chapter raised over \$1,000 during the annual Guest at Your Table campaign.
- Interfaith Work: In December, we participated in the East Bay Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice's Holiday Procession for Immigrant Justice by marching with members of other churches to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office in downtown Oakland and then to a reception at our church.

Emily Stoper, Convenor

Worship Council

2007 has been an active year for the Worship Council. The Worship Council is made up of the music committee (Leslie Brandt chair), the worship associates (B Avalon and Linda Probert co-coordinators), Rev. Kathy, and Director of Music, Kim Rankin, and Worship Council Convenor, Rinda Bartley.

As usual, the Worship Council fielded new worship associates for both the church year, and the summer services. The summer services were well received, and our lay ministry during the year is going strong!

The Worship side of the house called a bold new vision for our congregation to become a truly multi-cultural, multi-generational congregation by the year 2012. Vision 2012 is informing the work of most aspects of our institution.

The music committee put out the CD "Wake Now My Senses" which was very exciting. Now there are three CDs of our very fabulous chancel choir.

The committee also put on the opera *Patience & Sarah* in conjunction with the Welcoming Congregation. Based on Isabel Miller's 1969 novel, which in turn was inspired by the true story of two 19th-century women, "*Patience and Sarah*" tells the powerful story of two young women who meet, fall in love, and resolve to devote their lives to each other. Victoria Jensen and Andrea Fullington starred under the direction of Kim Rankin.

The Council also focused on the transition of Music Director Kim Rankin as she went on maternity leave in Fall 2007 as she was to welcome William into the world. The Council also prepared itself for Rev. Kathy's sabbatical in February 2008.

Trente Moran served as the interim choir director, and the music committee had the usual fabulous holiday concert – Light These Lights which ended our program year in December.

Thank you to all those who make the work of this council a success!

Rinda Bartley, Convenor

Membership Council

It's been an exciting year for the membership council. After a highly successful regional fundraising effort last fall, 17 Bay Area Unitarian Universalist congregations launched an extensive marketing campaign to share the good news of our liberal faith. Since the campaign began in mid-September 2007, over 180 new adult visitors attended our church for the 1st time. Our current membership at 415 and growing, the highest level in over 20 years.

In anticipation of the marketing campaign, we now have two new large & colorful banners that welcome visitors on the plaza and in Wendte Hall. The membership council also expanded our welcoming ministries to include the Hospitality Table group. Led, by coordinator Gerre McKenna, this team of volunteers provides a warm welcome to new and returning visitors each Sunday. Thanks to their efforts, visitors are promptly greeted and find a welcoming group of members ready to answer

questions and provide assistance each week. New typed guest nametags are now made for each visitor and available by their second visit. Comments from visitors indicate the Hospitality Table has been a very welcome and appreciated addition to our shared ministry.

The bookstore also continues to be a welcoming place for visitors and members alike. In addition to books, the bookstore also offers audio CDs of weekly services. Proceeds from bookstore sales contributed over \$2,000 to stewardship of the church last year.

Although not officially under the membership council, I'd also like to recognize and note our new church website, which was completely redone last summer in anticipation of the marketing campaign. Thanks to the efforts of Lisa & David Fry, Liam Aleguire, & Giselle Ampuero, we have an attractive, well-organized website where visitors and members can find extensive, up-to-date information on our church and our faith.

Each week, a minimum of 16 – 20 volunteers serve our church as part of the membership council. They volunteer as ushers, staff the welcome table, hospitality table, and bookstore, enter new visitor data, contact and welcome newcomers, plan and serve at new member ingatherings, assist with newcomer orientations, and help new members in finding their ministry within the church. Please recognize and thank each of them for their efforts, and consider joining in the shared ministry of the membership council.

Renee Harper, Membership Convenor

CENTER FOR URBAN FAMILY LIFE REPORT

Throughout 2007, CUFL consisted of two programs, The McClymonds Merit Awards Scholarship and GOTcom, each with its own board and volunteers.

The McClymonds Merit Awards Scholarship provides 2-year college scholarships graduating seniors from McClymond's Educational Complex consisting of EXCEL and BEST high schools, the only high schools in West Oakland. The students are selected by a Board comprised of a representative of our church community, McClymonds faculty, and community representatives. The awards are funded principally by anonymous donors, who had previously donated a fixed sum, but have recently agreed to make funds available for all selected student. Others donors contribute a well. The awards have been given for the past 5 years, during which time the graduation rate at McClymonds has improved substantially. In 2007, 44 students received scholarships, the largest group ever and a two-fold increase over the previous year.

GOTcom works to improve digital literacy of students at West Oakland Middle School and KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) College Preparatory School, both of which are in West Oakland. This year has been a major transition for GOTcom through its targeted, ongoing relationships with schools, students and parents beyond its original mission of providing PCs and introductory training. GOTcom has partnered with the schools to improve their computer labs and provide PC and online, training, mentoring and free computers with software to students and their parents. GOTcom is funded by grants and other fund raising. GOTcom is actively seeking volunteers to teach, mentor, manage and fund-raise.

Jeffrey W. Asher
President, Center for Urban Family Life

2007 Comparison with 2008 Budget

Expenses	2007 Budget	2007 Actuals	2008 Budget
Ministers, Staff Salaries & Benefits	\$480,874	\$479,306	\$469,973
Payroll taxes, Worker's Comp, Insurance	\$45,050	\$53,490	\$51,629
Bldg Maintenance / Repair / Utilities / Security	\$44,200	\$51,658	\$41,600
Administration / Office	\$30,700	\$42,500	\$35,800
UUA / PCD dues ¹	\$10,296	\$10,296	\$10,400
Unitarian Universalist Association Loan	\$23,000	\$23,800	\$23,000
Programming ²	\$22,290	\$11,590	\$9,975
Reserves	\$2,700	\$0	\$3,973
Miscellaneous	\$3290	\$6,512	\$3,538
Total	\$662,400	\$679,152	\$649,888
Income			
Pledges ³	\$538,166	\$505,039	\$480,000
Rentals	\$60,000	\$68,260	\$60,000
Default / cc card fees	(-\$23,666)	(-\$2,840)	(-\$7200)
Fundraisers	\$27,520	\$34,890	\$52,700
Investments ⁴	\$24,880	\$34,400	\$32,000
Sunday cash collection ⁵	\$14,000	\$17,980	\$17,500
Religious Education fees	\$18,500	\$11,560	\$11,000
Misc. Income ⁶	\$3000	\$5,890	\$3,888
Total	\$662,400	\$675,179	\$649,888

1/ UUA, Unitarian Universalist Association & PCD, Pacific Central District; 2 / includes Councils, Committees, Board, Stewardship, Committee on Ministry, etc; 3 / includes annual pledges; 4 / Brumf, UU Endowment & Clara Bell Hamilton trust funds; 5/ Sunday collection, one-time donations and bookstore; 6/ UUA intern loan, sabbatical fundraiser, special collections for JTW/Welcoming Cong., etc