

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

**March 18, 2007  
12:30 – 2:00PM**

**Agenda**

- 12:30** Welcome – Bob Hood, President of Board of Trustees  
Reading of the Mission Statement and Covenant (attached)  
Quorum Count – Karen Eng, Secretary of Board of Trustees  
Approval of Moderator and Parliamentarian  
Review of Agenda and Rules (attached)
- 12:45** **Congregational Business:**
- I. Election of New Trustees (*Moderator*)  
2007-2010: Claire Eustace, David Fry, and Gail Schulz
- 12:50** **Report on Capital Campaign** (*Gail Schulz*)
- 1:02** **Report on Religious Education Discernment** (*Chris Sutherland*)
- 1:14** **Report on Welcoming Congregation Certification** (*Dick Bailey*)
- 1:26** **Financial Report** (*Charla Weiss*)
- 1:40** **Recognition Of Outgoing Leadership** (*Laila Ibrahim*)  
Recognition of retiring trustees: Bob Hood, Renee Harper, Cathy Rion
- 1:50** **Adjournment**  
Benediction (*Rev Kathy Huff*)

## **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**

**Spiritual Growth** We experience transformative spiritual growth that enriches, sustains, and inspires us to live our Unitarian Universalist values.

**Fellowship** Our members, friends and guests experience warmth, hospitality and welcome. Our religious community fosters development of meaningful relationships for people of all ages throughout their lives.

**Stewardship** We embody our Unitarian Universalist values through dedicated stewardship of our church, our faith and our community. We give generously of our time and our money to bring our faith to life.

**Service** Our congregation embodies an ethic of service through our shared ministry. We use our unique gifts to nurture and create a beloved community both within and beyond our walls.

**Evangelism** We share the good news of our faith and promote Unitarian Universalism in our wider community.

**Justice** Our congregation actively works to eliminate oppression and create a sustainable, just and compassionate world.

## **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 must 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**  
(THREE 3-YEAR TERMS)

**Claire Eustace**

I live in Oakland with three housemates and two cats. I have been living in the Bay Area since October, 2005 and have been a member of the church since February, 2006. I work as an attorney. I came to First Unitarian Church of Oakland because I wanted to continue attending a Unitarian Universalist church, I live in Oakland, and I had heard good things about the church. I was pleased to find that the church had an active young adult group, which I have been involved in since attending my first service. I keep coming because I feel connected to and supported by the community. I enjoy the Sunday services, the music is great, and I have made friends.

**David Fry**

Lisa and I moved from Michigan to Oakland almost two years ago to live near our sons and their partners, and now our seven month-old granddaughter. I am retired, but worked in management of communications, training and development for Chrysler Corporation. My most gratifying work there was in the diversity office, where I served as liaison with the Hispanic community and worked for and got Chrysler to be the first automotive company to provide partner benefits for same-sex couples. As long-time Unitarian Universalists, the first thing we did when we moved was scope out churches. Oakland was an easy choice. Many things keep us coming: worship, music, the sense of community, and people we already hold dear. I've worked on the Auction, Stewardship and Partner Church programs and have sung in the choir. I hope to bring to the board my skills in listening, in management, in comprehending the big picture, and my experience on the board of our previous UU church.

**Gail Schulz**

I am a retired corporate lawyer. I have been a Unitarian Universalist for more than 40 years. Bob and I live in Berkeley, having moved here in 2003 to be closer to our son Brian and his partner Jack. We joined First Unitarian in September, 2003. We considered several Unitarian Universalist churches in the area but were attracted to First Unitarian by the mixture of ages in the congregation and the wonderful music program. Diversity and the music program remain important to us. I sang in the choir for three years, have been president of the Center for Urban Family Life for three years, and I am co chair of the Hamilton Hall Renovation committee, actively involved in efforts to move us toward a capital campaign. I am a parent witness on gay and lesbian issues. I have served other Unitarian Universalist congregations in many ways, including the board and capital campaigns. I bring some experience and perspective with a number of non-profit organizations which may be of use to First Unitarian.

## CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT

**Rev. Kathy Huff**

*To live with courage, wisdom and humility, we must accept uncertainty.*

– P. Putnam

It's been quite a year of transition, change and what I might name as "holy uncertainty." My sermon on March 18 serves as my primary reflection on the current "state of the church" and offers a vision for where I think we are going. These are summary observations concerning our past year.

Since our last annual meeting we said goodbye to a beloved minister, and opened our hearts to a new one -- the Rev. Michelle Favreault as our Acting Assistant Minister of Religious Education. We are in the midst of transforming our learning community through her presence with us. Together we would deepen and strengthen our commitment to living our purpose as a place of spiritual growth and learning. We renewed our commitment as a teaching church by welcoming the dynamic Chris Long as our intern minister for a two year period. There have been significant changes in our teaching, administrative, and custodial staff. We started a new chaplain program which extends the ministry of pastoral associates and clergy. We are deep in a discernment process about a possible capital campaign to retrofit our sanctuary Hamilton Hall. Our Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team and our Welcoming Congregation Steering Committee are helping us do the rewarding and challenging work of countering oppression and building an authentically welcoming, antiracist, multiracial, multicultural congregation.

Amidst everything above our worship, program life and membership involvement is growing and thriving. Our adult membership and children's community continues to expand with 48 adults joining since last March, bringing our adult membership to 376 and our children's participation to 150. Our Young Adult (YACOO) ministry is organized and reaches out consistently to new members. Our choirs, musical groups and ensembles add depth and joy to our worship services. Our councils are active in community building and organizing multiple opportunities for justice making. We also completed our largest stewardship campaign ever this year.

Our life together is a rich and wonderful tapestry of shared ministry. We are a caring and complex religious community with a sometimes full-to-the-brim manner of being together that is sometimes hard to sustain. Our future promises to bring even more complexity and growth. We will need to be mindful of the ways we can put self care and community care in balance. I look forward to our next year together and the many ways we will deepen and strengthen our beloved community.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY REPORT**

**Rev. Michelle Favreault**

There's dancing in the Starr King Room as 5th and 6th graders sing Amazing Grace. Upstairs, the 7th and 8th grade Coming of Age Group is preparing for a retreat that will include a challenging ropes course. On the second floor, two classrooms are merging for a check-in and time of sharing before returning to their activities focused on friendship and heroes. The 3rd and 4th graders in the library are working on collages that tell a life story. Later in the day, the Senior High Youth Group meets and shares stories of participating in a Street Retreat and brainstorming ideas for future activism.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated cadre of paid and volunteer teachers in our programs for children and youth. Among the many changes in ministry of teaching and learning across generations has been the welcoming of two new professional teachers this past fall. Laura Khalil and Melissa James joined Nanci Armstrong and Serian Strauss who have built strong classrooms for nearly two years now.

Our volunteers with the 7th and 8th graders are Kevin McGown and Agatha Buell. On Sunday afternoons, a talented cadre of students from Starr King School for the Ministry works with our Youth to empower, inspire and create a vibrant group that cares for one another and explores faith in meaningful ways. We are blessed to have Leah Hart-Landsberg, Andy and Sarah Karlson, Elizabeth Marsh and Betty Jeanne Reuters-Ward serving amongst us. Becky Johnson continues to serve as our Religious Education assistant, providing administrative, logistical and programmatic support for our ministry.

Each week in our younger classes, parents volunteer and offer support, comfort, coordination and supervision alongside our teachers. In the fall/winter we also had the lay-leaders of our Science and Religion Program working each week at the 9:15 service. Jodi Savage, Chris Celata, Pete Olandt, Scott Gamble and Jay Marx put in many hours preparing thoughtful lessons and inspiring children.

In our Adult Education program area, a successful Congregational Learning Day in early February brought more than 80 people together for deep explorations of religious and spiritual themes. An ongoing catalogue of classes for newcomers to our faith and longtime members offers folks at all ages and stages of life a chance to learn and grow.

In the months ahead we will be working to continually transform our learning community and create a sustainable ministry for children, youth and families. With small projects like the creation of "Family Story Circles" and the production of a booklet of "Family Prayers and Graces" we are exploring ways of offering intentional support and spiritual guidance for parents who remain the "primary teachers" of our Unitarian Universalist children. We have unlimited opportunities, and it is a great joy to serve with and amongst you as we reach for our dreams.

Blessings,  
Rev. Michelle Favreault

## REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

It's been quite a year. The Board of Trustees is continuing to grow into and through the maturation of policy governance. Many congregations around the country are embracing this innovative form of organizational management, and we continue to set a positive example for its implementation. We are emerging as young adults (I used to say we were adolescents). Some other churches have thrown up their hands and abandoned the strengths that this Carver model offers.

I served on a Board in our Church some years when we were a pastoral sized church and we have come a long-way baby. We are a multi-celled organization and the Board spends its energy attempting to vision, lead, and articulate the best directions for our "tapestry of love we call community".

The Board is not a part of the programmatic life of our Church, but there are three committees that are accountable to our Board. The long-standing member of the trio is the Committee on Ministry, while the more recent additions are the Journey towards Wholeness Transformation Team and the Stewardship Committee.

A recent innovation has been the advent of what we refer to as "linkage" meetings where the Board invites a group (or cell) to join in a Board meeting for deep conversation about what they need from the Board, what their priorities are, concerns, struggles, dreams, etc. We are alternating this monthly, with a linkage meeting followed by a regular Board meeting the next month. Thus far we have met with the Executive Team, the Council of Convenors, and the general leadership at the annual Leadership Retreat.

Another innovation is to delegate some the policy work and issue articulation to small groups within the Board. Groups of three board members purposely constituted to cross the election year cohorts meet or work outside of the monthly meetings. They are affectionately known as the *Passiflora*, the *Penguins*, and the *Asparagus*. We are working smarter and with a sense of humor.

In a policy governance board we write policy that must of necessity be written at the highest level. To that end some examples of policies that we have visited and revised or created this year are: a fair compensation policy for ministers and staff; a policy to reshape our old annual plan approach into a more realistic and timely set of annual priorities; and a policy to guide in the selection of delegates to represent our congregation at the Unitarian Universalism Association (UUA) General Assembly, and the UUA's Pacific Central District Assembly. Updated policies are posted on the church website: [www.uuoakland.org](http://www.uuoakland.org).

Respectfully submitted,  
Bob Hood, Board President



## COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The Committee on Ministry is a committee of the Board responsible for minding the health and vitality of our congregational life as a whole. The Committee is currently composed of Tom Bretthauer, Peggy Macy, Rick Hecht and Chris Sutherland (chair), with Randall Wright on leave until May 2007.

This church year we have dealt significantly with supporting and advising Rev. Kathy Huff through multiple transitions, including Rev. Cinnamon Daniel's departure, Rev. Michelle Favreault's arrival and role as Acting Assistant Minister for Religious Education, and not insignificantly the difficult transitions in the wake of Kathy's father-in-law's sudden death. Additionally the committee on ministry attends to matters such as resolving conflicts that may arise between members of the congregation, reviewing member ministers' requests for formal endorsement by the church and a range of other issues pertaining to ministry. We are heartened in particular by the great success of the church's Chaplains program this church year.

A major issue that has demanded the Committee on Ministry's attention this year is creating the space for a deliberate congregational process to determine what path we shall take in our Religious Education Ministry, with the opportunity posed by Cinnamon's departure. In that vein, we have formed a working group called *Transforming Our Learning Congregation* (formerly and briefly referred to as the Religious Education Discernment Committee). The *Transforming Our Learning Congregation* working group is comprised of Sima Misra, Robert Mittman, Karin Werner, Randall Wright, Rick Hecht and Chris Sutherland (chair). We launched the first of many discussions about looking inward and outward to re-envision our shared Religious Education Ministry at the Leadership Retreat in January 2007. And we will be hosting a series of guided conversations through January 2008 to widely solicit members' visions and hopes for the new ways we may approach Religious Education moving into the future.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christina Sutherland, Chair

## **JOURNEY TOWARDS WHOLENESS TRANSFORMATION TEAM**

The Journey Toward Wholeness (JTW) Transformation Team of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland works with the congregation to help the church progress toward its goal of becoming a fully anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural institution. The 13 member JTW Transformation Team organize, train, and educate the congregation and leaders through multiple levels of activities.

During the past year JTW members

- led race specific identity groups (semi-monthly for people of color, and monthly for white allies)
- hosted a weekly JTW table after Sunday services to outreach/educate
- led a JTW session at the leadership retreat
- helped plan and lead three JTW-themed services, one led by guest speaker Paul Kivel, another by JTW members, and the third by Intern Minister Chris Long
- organized a discussion on Paul Kivel's book **Uprooting Racism**
- organized church participation in the Get on the Bus project (helping children visit their incarcerated mothers)
- collaborated with the Welcoming Congregation committee to organize an 8 session film series and a workshop at the Men's retreat
- produced a monthly column in the Sower newsletter
- organized a Jubilee Two workshop to be presented March 23-25, 2007.

The Lifespan Education and Programming subcommittee organized and facilitated several parents' group meetings; presented at a middle school Religious Education class; attended a Crossroads Ministries anti-bias education workshop; and discussed on the subject at Community Learning Day.

All Team members participated in a weekend team skills training with UUA staff working on our strategic plan for the next several years and learning to facilitate anti-racism education workshops. We began conducting quarterly half-day team meetings to further develop skills, refine plans and develop the team in April 2006. The Team also began developing a process for orienting new team members, welcomed three new members to the team, and two members rotated off the team after completing their term.

Charles Williams, Co-Chair

## **PLEDGE DRIVE COMMITTEE**

### Report on annual Canvass 2006

I'll start with the numbers: our annual canvass this year raised \$, from xxx pledging members. We are extremely pleased with our financial results, and I'd like to thank all of you who generously contributed this year when asked to "Reach for the Stars" in support of our church.

One of the major goals of our canvass team for this year was to make the experience more fun for everyone, and we believe we succeeded with that goal. We used three means to reach out to individuals this year:

- 1) Small group sessions in people's homes
- 2) Visits from Visiting Stewards for some members of the congregation
- 3) Mail/phone for those we were unable to reach with either of the methods above.

The small group sessions are something we have not tried for a while, and we did not have quite as many people sign up for these sessions as we would have liked. However, the feedback from those who participated was quite positive – the sessions provided a way to get to know some new people and to have fun, as well as to complete your pledge card. We plan to do something similar next year, and hope more of you will choose that option.

I don't have space to personally thank everyone involved in this effort, but special thanks go to David Fry, my co-chair, Lisa Fry, our publicity whiz, and Dan Wright, who headed up our Visiting Stewards effort.

Jane Voytek Annual Canvass Co-Chair 2006

## **EXECUTIVE TEAM ANNUAL REPORT**

The Executive Team is responsible for the day to day operations of the church. The members are the settled minister, the Rev. Kathy Huff, the Church Manager, Charla Weiss, and a lay member appointed by the Board, Judith Hunt. We work in awareness of and to serve all of the ends of the church, perhaps with particular emphasis on stewardship and service.

During the past year we have addressed staffing and personnel issues such as redefining the tasks of the office staff, developing a policy for health care coverage in the light of rising insurance costs, started on updating church personnel policies and handled staff transitions. The development and implementation of the annual budget is a major task starting with new budget development in the fall, and there are on-going adjustments to expenditures, funding and fund raising through out the year. In February the ET began a consideration of how to effect long-term financial planning. Improving the clarity of our reporting to the Board and to the congregation is a current issue resulting in more extensive reporting of budgets and expenditures to the congregation.

The ET interpreted policies for interested members such as whether to place a banner on the church and developed or formalized polices to meet new needs such as a policy for special collections for gifts outside the church, briefly, the recipient must be a 501.3c organization, consistent with the church's mission and ends; priority given to organizations that are UU, and/or primarily serve those with limited resources, and/or serve historically marginalized and oppressed groups. Other new policies include the policy for health coverage, for fair trade coffee and a communication policy for the Chalice Chatter.

Other tasks include the review and approval of projects such a leveling the floor in front of the chancel in Hamilton Hall, participating in the UU Bay Area Media Campaign, and initiating a feasibility study for a capital campaign. We have an on-going review of security issues. The ET also meets with church members interested in starting new programs and you may read about some next year.

Judith Hunt for the Executive Team.

## **COUNCIL OF CONVENORS SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES, 2006**

### **Council of Convenors – Molly Huber, Michael Allison**

In the area of Fellowship, the Council works through Community Life to build fellowship at large for the church community by way of the Halloween Party, the Christmas Eve Wassail/Cookie Party, the Passover Dinner, and the All Church Retreat.

In the area of Stewardship, the Council of Convenors tracks the program budget bestowed by the ET to the Councils. We have discussed as a group and have found the right level of money needed to have adequate programs, while also keeping in mind the financial constraints and other needs of the church. We have been good stewards of the money that has been put forward by maintaining quality programs.

In the area of Justice, the Council of Convenors most significant attention to this end during the past year had to do with the re-formation of the justice council.

### **Lifespan Education and Programs (LEAP) – Sima Misra**

The LEAP Council is flourishing. There are 106 children now enrolled in Children's Religious Education; on any given Sunday as many as 120 may attend. A paid teacher is now teaching 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade; she is well-liked by the children and attendance and participation in the class are strong. We will be evaluating this experiment of having a professional teacher at the end of the church year. We had a very good Coming of Age ceremony in the spring that recognized 16 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders who participated in this Rite of Passage program. Adult Religious Education held two highly successful Community Learning Days and enrollments in its classes are up. The Library and Archives Committee is working hard at reorganizing the archives and is about to give the congregation access to the library. The former Partner Church Committee has broadened its scope and changed its name to reflect that; it is now the Transylvania Partnership Committee, recognizing its role in hosting Balazs Scholars at the Starr King School as well as in building relationship with our sister church in Okland, Transylvania.

### **Membership Council – Emily Stoper, Rebecca Reynolds, Bret Andrews, Ruth Levitan**

The Membership Council contributed to the Spiritual Growth and Fellowship ends by working to build the beloved community within the church. We welcomed newcomers (by ushering them, calling them, inviting them to orientations and in-gatherings), getting to know them one on one, helping them get to know more about the church, and showing them we care. By growing the church (through outreach and work with newcomers), we contributed to ALL aspects of the mission. By engaging more people in shared ministry (through new member engagement) and increasing people's effectiveness (through leadership development) we promoted the end of Service and the work of all the councils. Through our outreach work (ads and banners), we promoted the end of Evangelism.

## **Worship Council – Rinda Bartley**

**Spiritual Growth** The Worship Council coordinates weekly worship services which inspire members and friends to reflect upon and live out our UU values.

**Fellowship** Additional music ensembles have enhanced church fellowship and spiritual growth. The musical groups now offered include Band without Borders, Chancel Choir, Handbell Choir, and ad hoc individual and group work through the Music Ministry. These ensembles have the dual purpose and result of bringing more people into music making and heightening the spiritual and fellowship experiences of the congregation in many different settings. The Worship Associates program does something very similar, when people have an opportunity to tell their spiritual stories (and hear those of others). Congregational response has been strong and positive to both programs.

**Stewardship** The Worship Council has assisted in this church priority by producing fund raising concerts over the past year. The Council also assisted by providing music for the Stewardship House Parties, and a context during worship services for the stewardship testimonies.

**Service** Approximately 80 individuals are involved in providing some aspect of worship.

**Evangelism** Varied, high quality music and worship services bring in people from the community and help to spread our good news.

**Justice** Within the context of weekly worship, we ask the congregation to reflect regularly on the justice mission of the church, and how we live this mission as an institution and in our individual daily lives.

Our wishes, so that we may better serve the Ends...

- i. Would like to have an ongoing concert series at lunchtimes during the week, to bring more people in.
- ii. Restore the organ – many purposes
- iii. Sanctuary – look forward to a fully restored, flexible performance and worship space.
- iv. A central publicity committee that would serve all Councils and Committees in producing graphic arts, layout, text, etc.
- v. Continue to build infrastructure to support children and youth music opportunities – staff and volunteers to run ensembles.
- VI. Poster or bulletin board to show church governance structure – who does what, who is in charge of what, etc.

## **CENTER FOR URBAN FAMILY LIFE REPORT**

2006 was a busy year for CUFL. In January, we filed a grant application as a non-profit in an attempt to obtain bond money for the restoration of Hamilton Hall. The State of California ruled that such funds could not be used to repair a church building.

The McClymonds Merit Awards program continued to operate. Each year two year college scholarships are given to about 25 graduating seniors from the 2 high schools that are part of the McClymonds complex. The program is starting to see more of these students successfully complete their first year or college and return for their second year under the program.

Later in the year, the GotCOM program committee decided to move the program to the Kizmet middle school, a part of the McClymonds complex. We ran two training sessions, and hope to run at least one more. Unfortunately, Kizmet has been targeted for closing. GotCOM is attempting to identify another school that would benefit from the program.

Gail Schulz - President