



First Unitarian Church of Oakland

**Prepared for the Annual Congregation
Meeting
March 26, 2006**

First Unitarian Church of Oakland
Annual Congregational Meeting
March 26, 2006 12:30 – 2:00PM

- 12:30** Welcome – Katrinca Ford, 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 Rules (attached)
- 12:45** **Standing Congregational Business**
- I. Board of Trustees - Moderator
Election for 3 year terms, 2006-2009: Richard Bruehl, Chris Palm and Mark Savage
Election for 2 year term, 2006-2007: Cathy Rion
- II. Ordination of New Minister – Bob Hood
The congregation is asked to ordain member Mary Ganz to Unitarian Universalist ministry
- 1:00** **Welcoming Congregations**
- I. Request for congregational commitment to become a Welcoming Congregation to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Questioning persons, as prescribed by the 16-step UUA program. (Full Resolution attached) -Dick Bailey and Sheri Walden
- II. Support of Marriage Equality. Request for congregation to make this declaration . Impact is that the Church’s name can be used in public statements and actions in support of marriage equality.
- Kristan Montan
- 1:30** **Reports to the Congregation**
- I. Financial Report – Charla Weiss, Church Manager
II. Restoration & Reconstruction Report – Gail Schulz and Glen Dahlbacka, Co-Chairs
- 1:50** **Recognition Of Outgoing Leadership**
- I. Recognition of retiring members: Tom Haw, Katrinca Ford, Michael Rothhammer, Sharon Dolan
II. Recognition of retiring Congregational Member of the Executive Team: Dan Goss
- 1:55** **Adjournment**
Benediction – Revs Kathy and Cinnamon

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, take our concerns to those responsible and 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 to 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.

First Unitarian Church of Oakland

Ends Policies

**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.

ASPIRING BOARD MEMBER BIOS

Candidates for Board of Trustees

Below are brief introductions of those who aspire to be elected to the Board of Trustees.

Richard Bruehl

I live in Oakland with my wife Susan, three daughters Chloe, Aria and Sophia, two cats, one dog and one fish. I have lived in the Bay Area for most of my life and been a member of the church for about seven years. After eight and a half years of graduate school at UCSF and post doctoral research at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory I had hoped to become one of those mad scientist types who could save or destroy the world at will depending on my mood. Instead, I found myself working as a bioorganic chemist doing diagnostic research for infectious and autoimmune disease. I originally came to First Unitarian for spiritual awakening and keep coming for the same. My involvement with the church has included facilitating two adult RE classes, providing “meals on wheels” and playing piano at the annual auction and occasional coffee hour. I hope to bring to the Board of Trustees creativity, resourcefulness and a committed capacity to help the board serve the church community. I am thankful for the nomination and grateful for the opportunity to contribute.

Chris Palm

I've been a member of the congregation for over 20 years. During that time I've had the pleasure of working on many things, including being canvass chair, finance committee member, Sunday school teacher, singing in the choir—under three different directors—and working on the Committee on Ministry (COM). During my tenure on COM, I organized the farewell galas for our former ministers Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs and interim minister Robert Latham. For the past two plus years, I have been doing office work here at church every Thursday morning. I am also a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association President's Council, which offers advice to UUA President Bill Sinkford on fund raising issues. In my personal life, I enjoy being a retired LOL (you can ask me what that is) and spend much time studying drawing, Spanish and physics. I look forward to working on the board and helping finalize a long overdue policy on planned giving.

Mark Savage

For over 30 years I had never known a church. Then, in 1989, I felt the wondrous gravitational pull of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland—its community, its shared ministry, its vitality—and joined in 1990. I have sung in the choir, been a worship associate, served on the board of Dignity Housing West to build housing for the homeless near our church, been a member and chair of the Committee on Ministry, helped with the children's religious education on Sunday mornings, served this extraordinary congregation as a member of the Ministerial Search Committee, and then served as the Search Committee's representative on the Transition Team and the Installation Committee. I reside with my dear wife, Lucia, and two children, David and Ryan, in Oakland. In my other life I am a civil-rights attorney bringing statewide challenges to discrimination and poverty on behalf of low-income, minority, and limited-English-speaking communities throughout California.

Cathy Rion

I came to Unitarian Universalism in San Jose, where I worked as a community organizer for Californians For Justice working on educational equity issues. I've lived in Oakland and been coming to First Unitarian for two years. Currently I work as an office manager and do political work with the Heads Up Collective (a group of white folks supporting racial justice work in the Bay Area) and Resource Generation (a group to ask young progressives with wealth to move more money). I love the music at church (you may have seen me in the choir or playing cello), and am excited to be joining the Justice Council as Justice Associates Coordinator. I bake lots of chocolate yummys, garden, play cello and swim to maintain my sanity.

The Ordination of Mary Ganz

Mary Ganz has asked that our congregation ordain her into Unitarian Universalist ministry. To move forward with this wonderful request we will need to vote. If you do not know Mary please introduce yourself. Below is a brief statement from her.

I am thrilled at the prospect of being ordained by this congregation. It was in the powerful tradition of shared ministry in this congregation and in the community around it that I first began to think of the work I was doing as “ministry.” This grew inside me until I had to move from thinking, “I can’t possibly do that,” to “maybe I can” to “I have to try.” It was in the listening of this congregation that I found my voice, and in work on your behalf in the greater community that I found my vocation.

I first stepped foot into this church in 1978, but life took me elsewhere and it was not until 1986 that I joined. Over the years I have chaired the religious education committee, served on the Board of Trustees, helped form the Core Team, and served as a Worship Associate. As a member of the Board of the Center for Urban Family Life I helped organize our community’s involvement in the scholarship program at McClymonds High School.

Some members of the congregation may not know me, because I spent last year on internship in San Francisco— halftime at the First UU Society of SF and halftime at the Faithful Fools Street Ministry. I remain committed both to community ministry and to work within our congregations.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution to Become A Welcoming Congregation

“Pursuant with our First Principle -- to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person -- we, the congregation of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, resolve to join 503 congregations in the U.S. and Canada, including virtually every other Unitarian Universalist congregation and fellowship in the Bay Area, in formally becoming a Welcoming Congregation under the 16-step guidelines established by the Unitarian Universalist Association. Our goal is to ensure sensitivity to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Questioning concerns and to confront homophobia however it may be manifest. To do this, we will examine all facets of church life -- worship, religious education, programs and committees, public relations and church governance.

A task force will guide the congregation through this process. The first steps involve assessing the inclusiveness of church by-laws and other official documents, the development of a comprehensive education program, and the planning of a series of events celebrating LGBTIQ life. Any and all members of this beloved church community are invited, indeed encouraged, to participate.

We understand that becoming a Welcoming Congregation is an intentional act, one which affirms the achievements of the past, celebrates the commitment of the present, and seeks to face head on the challenges of the future with hope, compassion, healing and love. Come, let us welcome together!”

Resolution in Support of Marriage Equality

“In recognition that our nation was predicated on the conviction that all people are created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights, including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as enumerated in the Declaration of Independence; consistent with our congregation's covenant with the Unitarian Universalist Association to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person, justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and acceptance of one another; and in accord with our Congregational Covenant to build a religious community sustained by relationships of understanding, mutual trust and respect, valuing diversity and inclusive process; we, the members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, with pride and enthusiasm, support marriage equality and urge all levels of government to acknowledge the right of any two committed adults to marry, and to have their marriage to each other recognized in civil law.”

The above resolutions have been submitted by the Interim Welcoming Congregation Steering Committee:

Sheri Walden, Dick Bailey, Francey Liefert, Richard Stromer, Aaron Schottenfeld, Kristen Montan, Rebecca Ramirez, Linda Wilson, Roxie Kellam, Leslie Brandt, Gil Dacumos, Jay Roller, Priya Kalra, Mary Ann Haw, Natasha Mader, Debra Temple, Ruby Reay, Cindy Nelson and Cathy Cade.

Co-sponsors include Rev. Kathy Huff, Rev. Cinnamon Daniels, Andrea Aerts, Caroline Axt, Arlinda Befort, Sherry Beville, Jeanne Brondino, Cynthia Davis, Charlotte Dickson, Sharon Dolan, Scott Elder, Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry, Mary Ganz, Roger Hallsten, Robyn Herr, Bob Hood, Gloria Hovda, Judith Hunt, Laila Ibrahim, Navdeep Jassal, Tracy Ann Jones, Kelly Jonick, Debbie Kaplan, Elizabeth Keir, Laurel Liefert, Tom Luce, Susan Mayer, Therese McCluskey, Anne Moses, Chris Palm, Lauren Poole, Howard Poulter, Joan Poulter, Bonnie Richman, Cathy Rion, Gail Schulz, Beverly Smrha, Steve Thomasberger, Carol Thornton, Ron Weisberg and Charles Williams and several good folks who signed up as co-sponsors but sadly whose signatures we were unable to read.

2006 FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH BUDGET

Expenses	Budget		% of Change *
Ministers, Staff Salaries & Benefits	\$449,800		10% (+)
Payroll taxes, Worker's Comp, Insur	\$46,700		4% (+)
Bldg Maintenance / Repair / Utilities	\$33,000		0%
Administration / Office	\$20,100		18% (-)
UUA / PCD dues**	\$7,350		300% (-)
Unitarian Universalist Association Loan	\$23,000		0%
Programming ***	\$17,490		16% (+)
Reserves	\$2400		48% (-)
Miscellaneous	\$4,160		0
Total	\$604,000		4% (+)
Income			
Pledges****	\$493,440		10% (+)
Rentals	\$70,000		74% (+)
Default / cc card fees	(-\$29,140)		32% (-)
Fundraisers	\$21,600		10% (-)
Investments	\$25,580		57% (+)
Sunday cash collection	\$12,000		0 (-)
Religious Education fees	\$8,000		13% (+)
Misc. Income	\$2520		34% (-)
Total	\$604,000		4%

*Percentage of change versus 2005 actual; **UUA, Unitarian Universalist Association; PCD, Pacific Central District; Programming includes Councils, Committees, Board, and Journey Toward Wholeness; ****annual pledges and one-time gifts

**Reconstruction and Restoration Committee
Annual Report, 2005**

This year marked a revival in the activity of the committee. Creating a seismically safe and functional Hamilton Hall is still the prime goal of the committee. Updated estimates by Jim Goring put the costs of the task at \$3.5 - \$4 million. This amount exceeds the foreseeable capacity of the Church and friends, so renewed efforts have been made to secure funds from the California Cultural and Historic Endowment. The Church had applied in September 2004 under uncertainty regarding our eligibility and had not received a grant. The second round of funding was released for competition early this year and the rules for applicants and the proposal format changed substantially. As a consequence, the Center for Urban Family Life applied for a grant of nearly \$3 million to assist in the restoration of the building. Making this grant application happen was made possible by Gail Schulz.

Gail is now the co-chair of R&R and is also the President of CUFL. She expeditiously made all the legal adjustments necessary to apply under the rules of the CCHE. The prime job of fund raising for the reconstruction is the charge of the Capital Campaign Subcommittee of R&R. Roger Hallsten has convened several meetings of an exploratory CCC that include Gail Schulz, Dick Bailey, Mary Foran, Chris Sutherland, Glen Dahlbacka, and Carol Thornton with input from Tom Haw as well. In part, this group found that:

“We support the Board of Directors' prioritization of restoration of Hamilton Hall. In order to preserve the historic structure and protect human life, we believe that funds should be secured as soon as feasible for seismic strengthening. We also believe that because a capital campaign has not occurred since 1999 - 2002, there are numerous church members who have either never contributed or who may be able to do so again. The 99-02 campaign raised \$417,000 in pledges. Approximately \$1.7 million has been raised within the church between 1988 and 2002 (not including grants of \$3.6 million). Approximately \$2.5 to \$3 million additional is needed (does not include organ restoration), and it will likely take some years to collect.

Because of the amount to be raised and the reality that there are few outside sources of funding available to us (based on extensive analysis of foundation possibilities conducted in 00-02) we believe it is important to reapply for a CCHE grant.

A successful Capital Campaign requires thoughtful and strategic planning. Using existing R & R funds, we propose hiring a UUA consultant to work with us to design an effective campaign strategy and time line. Once a consultant is brought on board we will work, with a consultant's guidance, to engage the leadership and congregation in understanding both the need for and the cost of restoration. This will be done prior to initiating the capital campaign in order to generate enthusiasm for this essential project.”

The prime focus of R&R is fundraising, but stakeholder input will be very important as the detailed plans for the interior arrangements and appointments are developed in more detail. Let us all commit ourselves to this important task for future generations.

Submitted by: Glen Dahlbacka, Gail Schulz, Joan Poulter, Stefan Schneider – Staff liaison, Dan Goss – Executive Team liaison, Dick Bailey, Carol Thornton.

Congregational Minister's Annual Report March 2006 – Rev. Kathy Huff

Be ours a religion which, like sunshine, goes everywhere; its temple all space; its shrine the good heart; its creed all truth; its ritual works of love; its profession of faith, divine living.

---Theodore Parker

This year most of my “annual report” was in the form of a sermon on March 19. Below summarizes some of the areas covered along with a few additional comments.

Our congregational life remains vibrant. Nearly 500 adults and children make up our congregation, which places us in the top end of the midsize church range. We continue to experience the many wonderful opportunities and the challenges of being a church this size. Sixty-eight people were welcomed into membership since our last Annual Meeting. The Pacific Central District office reports that our “Halloween Class” of 2005 with 35 new members was the most ever ingathered at one time in any of the area UU congregations. Church attendance has gone up dramatically at our 10:30 and 11:15 services. So much so, that on many Sundays we are over 90% full. If you come late it is sometimes hard to find a seat.

We’ve strengthened our expectations of membership and regularly articulate what these are to newcomers. We’ve worked at cultivating a culture of abundance, in large part through our giving away of offerings on average twice monthly and in our movement toward understanding our gifts to the church as acts of responsible stewardship and spiritual practice.

We’ve settled into policy governance as our primary way of making decisions and we face the ongoing challenge of keeping communications transparent and open.

Over 90 of us serve on leadership councils, committees and groups. This number does not include the more than 100 people in covenant groups, or the many teaching Sunday school, or who sing in the choir, or those in men’s groups or ongoing mediation other faith development groups. Our programs and activities are many, they are diverse, and they are thriving.

We’ve started to get more serious about the need to do the seismic retrofitting and renovation of our beautiful sanctuary. Many of us are eager to start a capital campaign and make this a reality in the near future.

We remain strongly committed to ending racism and living out our values as a church dedicated to the transformation of self and society. This dedication is reflected in many areas of congregational life and in particular in the ongoing work of our Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team and our Justice Council. (See related reports.) The congregation also worked with compassion and love after the Gulf Coast disaster to bring both relief and an anti-racist perspective to this tragedy.

We have begun to explore what it would mean for us to be recognized as a Welcoming Congregation by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). I am proud to report that I had the honor of providing testimony that appeared in the amicus brief submitted by California Faith for Equality to the California Court of Appeals in support of marriage equality.

An exciting new development was our venture into advertising. Thanks to the imagination and work of a handful of volunteers we joined with Bay area UU’s to spread our good news through radio advertising. Some of us are also connecting with UUA President Bill Sinkford’s Bay Area Roundtable and are considering undertaking a 3 month marketing campaign some time in the future. This effort would require us to become much more intentional and strategic about how we could best make room for even more people to join us in religious community.

We are in so many marvelous ways living out our vision for building the beloved community. As we look to the future, which is sure to offer us many unique challenges and opportunities, let us pause to celebrate the present giving thanks for the many blessings that make this the “tapestry of love we call community.”

Education Minister's Annual Report March 2006 – Rev. Cinnamon Daniel

Our congregation is committed to nourishing spiritual growth and development for people of all ages. Hundreds of our children, youth and adults participate in our religious education programming, and I am heartened by the stability and depth of our programs. In the past year there have been many changes and additions to our ongoing religious education programming. In June we said goodbye to Education Assistant Jessica Meyer and welcomed Becky Johnson as a new employee. In addition our childcare worker Eva Lee graduated from college and moved on to other work, and we welcomed Lora Worden and then Nanci Armstrong to work with our youngest children.

We have 130 regular participants in our children's and youth religious education programs, guided by excellent volunteer teachers and parent helpers. Some notable happening this year include offering Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education programs for both our 7th & 8th graders and, for the first time, our 5th & 6th graders. We plan on offering a K-1st grade OWL class in the fall. The 11:15 5th & 6th grade class had a professional teacher this year, Serian Strauss, a talented and inspiring young woman who has guided the kids through a year of exploring mind, body and spirit through the Seven Principles, with focus both on internal development and action in the world. Families paid special tuition for this class and committed to regular attendance of at least three Sundays a month. We will be evaluating this system at the end of the year and consider extending it to additional age groups. Our Sunday morning middle school programming has been wonderful and well-attended, and in the high school youth group our teenagers are developing a meaningful sense of religious identity and nurturing one another as they deal with the ups and downs in their lives.

As in past years, the 10:30 Intergenerational Worship service is a joy. I hope that we will find ways to make the services as meaningful for older children as it is from the 3rd grade and under crowd. It may be time to develop a youth worship associate group. Learning through worshipping together is incredibly powerful and grounds and strengthens our other programming.

While our children's and youth programs are flourishing in many ways, it continues to be a struggle to recruit and train sufficient numbers of volunteer teachers for this ministry. We are in need of new approaches to the ways in which we offer quality religious education or we will be unable to deepen their learning to include more emphasis on anti-racism, social justice work and meaningful engagement with world religions.

Our adult education program continues to emphasize classes that deal directly with spiritual practice, personal development and Unitarian Universalism. In November the Adult Religious Education Committee organized our second Community Learning Day (CLD) that offered sixteen workshops, worship, lunch and fellowship on a Saturday. Our next CLD will focus on spiritual practices only, at the request of many participants.

The Library/Archives Committee had a very full and active year. In the spring we collaborated with the First Presbyterian Church of Oakland to purchase and dedicate a headstone in Mountain View Cemetery for Rev. Laurentine Hamilton, the founder of our congregation (and former minister at First Presbyterian). The Committee furthered organized our Archives and re-opened the Arnold Crompton Library so that all but the most valuable and rare books are available to be borrowed by members of our community.

Kim Rankin and I are still enjoying leading the Children's Choir. They are just about able to sing rounds well, and their energy and enthusiasm for singing is wonderful to see and hear.

We have much to be proud of and much to aspire to in our religious education programming. I am grateful for my ministry with you.

Executive Team Annual Report

March, 2006

The Board of Trustees creates the Executive Team (ET) for the purpose of meeting the mission of the church as it is detailed in the Board's Ends policies. The Board also creates Limitations policies that detail what actions the ET cannot take in meeting these ends. The ET consists of four members: the two called ministers (Cinnamon Daniel and Kathy Huff), the church manager (Charla Weiss), and the lay representative (Dan Goss).

The ET manages the day-to-day operations of the church, is responsible for hiring, firing, and directing non-ET staff, and creates and gives direction to the church's councils and committees. Most of the programs of the church are created directly by staff and lay leaders, and you can read about the results of their wonderful work in their Annual Reports.

Giving direction usually involves creating a job description for staff and a charge for each council and committee. The ET delegates most decisions to staff and committees, which are guided by these charges and also by policies that the ET creates which work to build on the policies of the Board. In the last year the ET either wrote or revised policies related to use of the church name, security procedures at meetings, and facilities management. The complete set of ET policies can be found on the church's web site at www.uuoakland.org.

Managing the operations of the church includes revising and shepherding the budget process, scheduling (and in some cases organizing) general operations fund raisers, managing designated funds and designated fund raisers, and generally overseeing the income and expense of the church. This last year was no different in this regard. The ET created the 2006 budget after revising the budget process to one that works better for us and the councils, scheduled non-operations fundraisers for many purposes, and oversaw the financial aspect of all operations fundraisers and programs.

We would like to thank the committees and councils who have made the programs of the church so rich this last year, the people who worked so hard on such fundraisers as the auction and the music concerts, the folks who served in so many special capacities such as the bookstore and Sunday lunches.

We would especially like to recommend to your attention the report by the Reconstruction and Restoration (R&R) committee, which has been energized by the efforts of a large number of new and old members, and which is doing tremendous work to make the building safe in the event of an earthquake. You will be hearing a lot about this effort, and it will affect us all in many ways in the years to come.

**First Unitarian Church of Oakland
Council of Convenors Summary of Activities for
Annual Meeting, March 2006**

During calendar year 2005 the Council of Convenors as a whole concentrated largely in two areas: creating greater structure and definition around the roles of the respective councils, and focusing on the topic of leadership.

The following reports summarize the work of individual councils during this same period.

Worship Council

Both Worship and Music had a very successful year. Worship continues to grow and evolve with feedback from the Congregation in the form of the Spring Worship Survey, and from the thoughts/ideas of our diverse Worship Associates. The Summer Services were especially successful, and much positive feedback was given by the Congregation.

Accomplishments of the Music Committee in 2005 include the purchase of our very own hand-bells; the formation of Band without Borders; and the doubling of the size of the children's choir.

The Music Committee's concert series has been a resounding success on all fronts, both providing great music to members and friends, and raising a considerable amount of money for First Unitarian's general fund. The spring was devoted to the music of Mary Lou Williams. Coming into the fall, the Opera in Your Face concert provided Opera lovers and Opera novices with great performances by our very own church members. Light These Lights, the Holiday Concert was a resounding success and ushered in the Christmas Season in a joyous way.

L.E.A.P.

LEAP Council is flourishing. There are 106 children now (Feb. 2006) enrolled in Children's Religious Education; on any given Sunday as many as 120 may attend. A paid teacher is now teaching 5th and 6th 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 sixteen 7th & 8th 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.

Community Life Council

The Community Life Council had a successful year. The Secret Buddy Program continues to be popular and a good way for the children in our congregation to interact with adults in a fun and informative setting. In March the men had a meaningful week-end retreat. In April, the Passover Seder was well attended and was a good way for all of us to enjoy and experience an important Jewish tradition. In May we re-invigorated the All Church Retreat, which is now the Annual Community Retreat. We have a new location and also a new focus on building community. We ended the church year with a fun potluck breakfast. In September we started off the church year with a wonderful picnic and b-b-q at Lake Temescal. October saw the women's retreat week-end, and the Halloween Carnival. The Halloween carnival was very successful with many new

members getting involved. Many of these new members were very complimentary on the carnival and the Community Life Council. For the Christmas holiday we were happy to provide hot cider and cookies after the early Christmas Eve service.

Membership Council

The Membership Council promotes the growth of the church by encouraging newcomers to join and become active members, by nurturing members and leaders, and by promoting the church within the Oakland community at large.

During her term as convener, Diane Schweitzer built up, documented, and organized the Council. Diane's two-year term has ended, and the new co-conveners, Emily Stoper and Rebecca Reynolds, are currently focusing on filling critical positions within the Council.

Becoming a Member At the three Ingatherings last year, 68 new members joined. Monthly orientations continue for potential new members. The Council is seeking a "Becoming a Member" Chair to head this area.

Ministry of Greeting Janet McFarland has developed a solid base of ushers, who offer a warm welcome to all who pass through our doors. Ruth Levitan and her team continue to provide great hospitality and stability at the Welcoming Table after every service.

Bookstore The bookstore is back! Thanks to Amy Cooper, Hellen Duffy, Andrea Fullington, and Molly Huber who are picking up the torch that Ron Weisberg carried so well for so long.

Membership Engagement Bret Andrews, the chair of this area, is working to engage members in the work of the church. Bret is building an "in-reach" team who will meet one-on-one with members to explore their skills and interests in building our community. As part of the effort to nurture our leadership base, 35 members participated in the January Leadership Retreat coordinated by Andrea Aerts.

Community Outreach Lisa Fry has taken on the task of Outreach Coordinator and is a member of the Regional Marketing Group (RMG). The RMG produced uuba.org promotional sunshades for us to sell, and was responsible for the radio spots that aired in February. Visits to uuba.org definitely increased after the radio spots!

Justice Council

In June, more than 40 church members attended a facilitated gathering to discuss "Building Beloved Community through Our Justice Ministry." Following this gathering, and with additional input through one-on-one conversations, several church members reflected on organizational structure. During the summer and fall the Justice Convener job description was revised and organizational structure reconsidered. Recently the Justice Council charter has been reviewed. A charter update is underway. Standing ministries continued as before and new ministries emerged.

The Core Team continued to meet and have one-on-one conversations during this transition time with Ben Thompson serving as Core Team Captain. New team members are welcome to help with this important in-reach to identify justice priorities, encourage new leaders and match justice makers to projects serving our mission.

Our Lafayette School Mentoring Project is in its ninth year, currently tutoring 92 children/week. About 20 current and former church members are tutoring. Thirty kids who need tutors are without them.

The Center for Urban and Family Life's (CUFL) McClymonds Merit Award program gave two-year scholarships to 28 graduating seniors in 2005. Each year, more students are working hard to graduate, knowing they have the opportunity to apply for a college scholarship! Diane Olson is the McClymonds liaison.

The CUFL computer mentoring program, GOTcom, is managing a transition with the planned closure of Lowell Middle School. Meanwhile, training continues at Lowell (with students also from adjoining KIPP academy) as the program seeks a new location. Aaron Schottenfeld is serving as the Justice Associate for this program.

Carol Thornton has kept our congregation connected to our UU Legislative Ministry of California (UULMCA) in Sacramento. UULMCA is working on marriage equality, water rights, health access, and is considering taking up public campaign financing. In '05 - '06 church members also lobbied for affordable housing at Oak to Ninth, campaign finance reform, and the Preschool for all Children ballot initiative. New church member Tom Luce stepped up as liaison to the UUA Social Witness program and quickly organized a church response to the UUA Statement of Conscience on Global Warming.

Cathy Rion now co-ordinates the Justice Associates who lead specific topical groups. First Unitarian ended its membership in Oakland Coalition of Congregations at the end of '05 and is considering whether we should join or help start an alternative regional faith-based policy group.

Our Journey toward Wholeness ministry continues to be represented on the Council by Ingrid Mittermaier, as we seek to apply an antiracist lens to our justice work. In spring '05 (and coming again soon) Mickey Duxbury and Navdeep Jassal led a church delegation to support 'Get on the Bus' with children of incarcerated mothers.

We end the year offering thanks to Bob Adams for leading the Council from '03 – '05 and welcome aboard Sherry Larsen Beville as the new Justice Council Convener.

Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry nurtures the mission and ministry of this congregation. Noble words; maybe not completely clear. The committee does and discusses a variety of things concerning our shared ministry. There have been experiments with various means of evaluation and last spring two facilitated discussion groups on our shared ministry were held. We reviewed the credentials of Laurel Liefert and recommended that the church sponsor her as a candidate for ministry. Two policies were developed, one on endorsed ministry at First Unitarian and we recommended that the church endorse the ministry of the Rev. JD Benson; the second policy is to recommend that the church support no more than one ordination a year and Mary Ganz will be ordained this spring. We established the selection committee for our first ministerial intern in several years and will establish the intern support committee. Last spring the committee looked into a request for conflict mediation and made a recommendation. And last fall we recommended ministerial compensation to the Board following discussion with the Board on the appropriate process.

Annual Report of the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team March 2006

The Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland works with the congregation, including the leadership, through organizing and training, to help the church become a fully anti-racist/anti-oppressive institution.

In the past year, we worked in the congregation in the following ways:

- a. Leading people of color and white allies identity groups at church (every other month)
- b. Hosting JTW table after most Sundays
- c. Organized racial profiling panel discussion April 2005
- d. Organized second 2.5 day anti-racism Jubilee II training April/May 2005 for members of the congregation
- e. Presented two workshops for the church-wide Learning Day in November 2005 (on Hurricane Katrina and one-on-ones about our experiences around race), a session at the January 2006 leadership retreat, and a workshop at the March 2006 men's retreat
- f. Helped facilitate Hurricane Katrina follow up at church to apply an anti-racist lens to what occurred after the hurricane
- g. Participated in JTW services in April 2005 and February 2006 (with featured guest speaker Paul Kivel) and organized book discussion on Paul Kivel's book Uprooting Racism in March 2006
- h. Organized church participation in Get on the Bus project (helping children visit their incarcerated mothers for Mothers Day)
- i. Prepared JTW brochure

We also spent time on internal committee work, including participating in team skills training with UUA staff (June 18/19, 2005, October 8/9, 2005), finalizing our mission statement and vision statement, working on our strategic plan for the next several years, having regular (every other month) business meetings, and attending Crossroads Ministries trainings in Chicago in July 2005 (advanced organizers) and January 2006 (anti-bias education).

In this coming year, our initial organizing focus under our strategic plan will be on working with the Board of Trustees and LEAP, and to continue working with the people of color and white allies identity groups.

Other ideas that we are working on include: continuing to provide/coordinate team and congregational anti-racism training opportunities; serving as coordinator for other anti-racism work in the congregation (e.g., work on physical appearance of church; compilation of church/city history about race and racism); and making connections to partners outside of the congregation (other churches, other anti-racism organizations, Starr King School, other UUA efforts)

Center for Urban Family Life

January 17, 2006

First Unitarian Church Board Steering Committee
RE: CCHE Grant Requirements for Control of Hamilton Hall

Issue

In order for CUFL to apply for a grant from CCHE for the restoration of Hamilton Hall, CUFL must have “exclusive control” of the building through a lease (preferred) or a similar arrangement for a period of 20 years. There are several issues related to how this would work.

Background

Although CCHE indicated that the Attorney General was expected to issue an opinion on whether a church is an eligible non-profit able to receive a CCHE grant, no such opinion has been issued, and CCHE indicated in early January that it is not going to get such an opinion. (See Attachment 1.) Given the California Constitutional limitations on the use of bond money and the language in the operative laws, Prop 40 and AB 716, stating that an eligible applicant must be “non-profit public benefit corporation”, such an opinion is not likely to be favorable. First Unitarian is not such a corporation. CUFL is one. Therefore, we would like to apply for the CCHE grant using CUFL as the eligible applicant.

On a positive note, using CUFL also gives us the opportunity to request a substantial reduction in the matching funds requirement.

The application form requires that the applicant either own the property or have a lease or similar arrangement (see attachment 2). In response to a question at the applicant meeting, Diane Matsuda, the Executive Director, said that a lease is preferred. The definition of Long Term Control (see attachment 3) discussed “exclusive control”. I have attempted to obtain clarification on that issue through an exchange of e-mail, (Attachment 4). And the recently released CCHE Frequently Asked Questions also address this issue. (Attachment 5). The bottom line is that CUFL is going to have to lease Hamilton Hall to have a credible application.

Structure of Lease

There are several points that I see that must be covered, and I will list them below.

1. Term of lease – must be 20 years. As to the beginning of the lease, I don’t think that the term would have to start until we were approved for the grant.
2. Rentals – I believe that CUFL could lease Hamilton Hall and in turn sub lease or rent through rental licenses the facilities for all the normal activities. This could include the church, other services, weddings, meetings, etc. Based on the comments in the e-mail exchange, I believe that we need to emphasize non-church use availability for rentals of Hamilton Hall, and in the application highlight all such uses.
3. Payments – I think there could be a Service Agreement so that the church could continue to collect the rentals on behalf of CUFL and arrange to pay the bills associated with Hamilton Hall.

(I do believe that for bookkeeping purposes there will have to be an attempt to estimate the separate utilities for Hamilton Hall.) The rental paid by CUFL to the church could be some form of Net lease. I also believe that repairs and improvements should be paid by CUFL, and the funds raised for Phase 2 and any other capital and maintenance projects will have to flow through CUFL.

I have attached a draft lease, based on one that was developed for Phase 1. (Attachment 6.)

CUFL has recently amended its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws to include preservation of the church among its purposes. The CUFL Board is being expanded to include more church leadership.

Unresolved matters

I am not an expert in real property matters, and I am not a lawyer admitted to practice in California. The draft lease must be reviewed and signed off on by a lawyer admitted to practice in California.

The ET and the Board of First Unitarian Church of Oakland will need to consider and decide whether it is willing to enter into such arrangements with CUFL. The grant application must be submitted by January 31, with appropriate documentation in place. I have also attached a copy of the resolution that the Board will have to approve authorizing the lease. Attachment 7. Please note that there is room for some modification of the lease before it is finalized and approved by CCHE.

Please advise as to whether the Board is willing to move in this direction, and of any questions that you might have.

Gail F. Schulz
President, Center for Urban Family Life