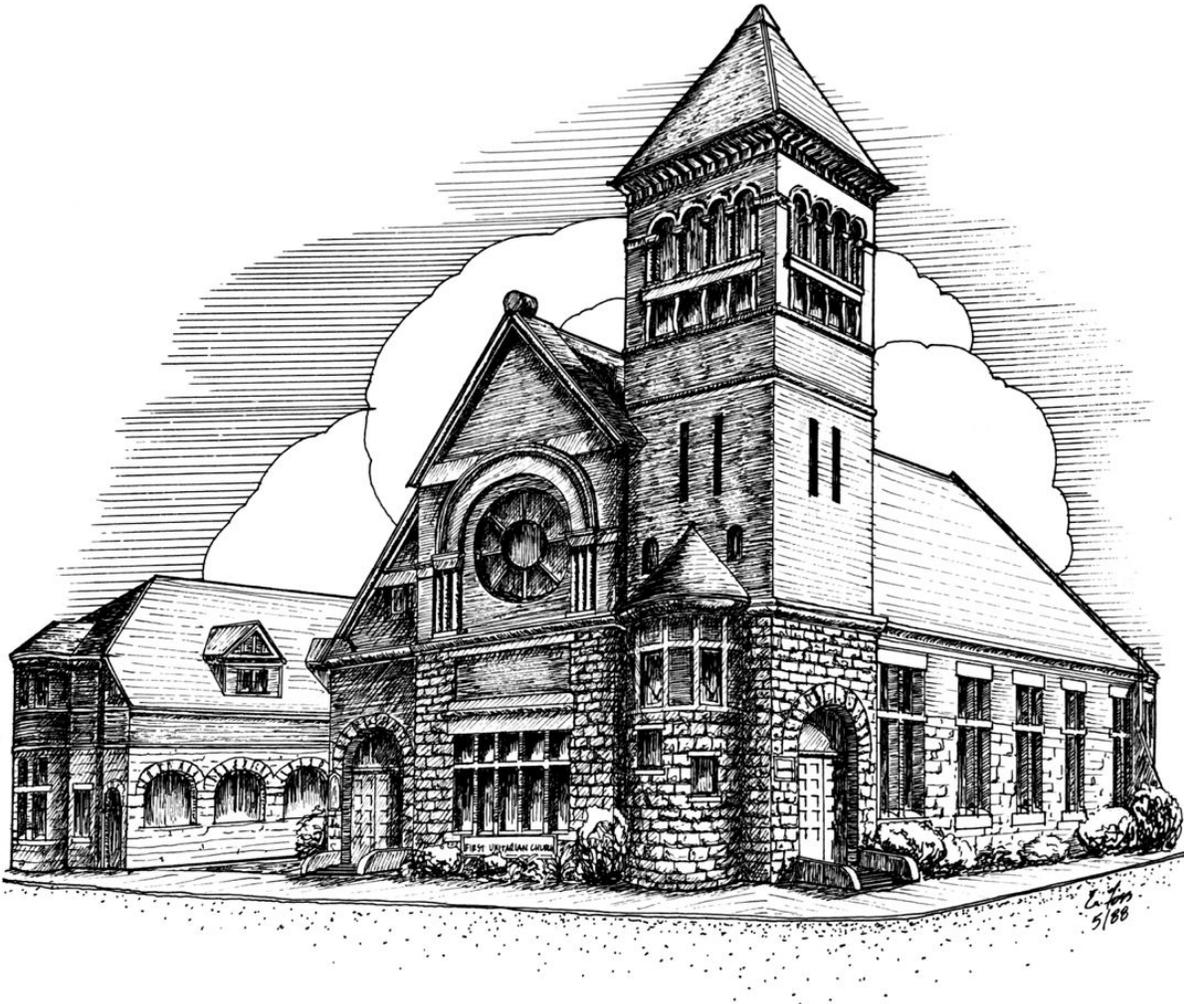


First Unitarian Church of Oakland



Annual Congregational Meeting

March 11, 2018

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Agenda

9:30 a.m.	Early check-in - Board of Trustees
11:30 a.m.	Check-in and Lunch - hosted by the Board of Trustees
12:00 p.m.	Gathering Prayer and Chalice Lighting - Rev. Sheri Prud'homme
12:05 p.m.	Welcome - Laurel Egenberger, President, Board of Trustees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading of Congregational Covenant - Congregation ● Quorum Count - Secretary of Annual Meeting: Michelle Ma ● Installation of Moderator - Laurel Egenberger ● Motion to Elect Kris Wedding Crowell as Moderator ● Review Agenda, Rules of Order, and Voter Eligibility - Moderator
12:25 p.m.	Congregational Business - Moderator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explanation of Ballot and Voting ● Election of Trustees (<i>private balloting</i>) ● Election of Nominating Committee Members (<i>private balloting</i>) ● Election of Search Committee Members (<i>private balloting</i>)
1:00 p.m.	Staying Safe - Stefan Schneider, Facilities Manager
1:10 p.m.	Discussion and Vote on New Congregational Vision (<i>2/3 vote required for passage</i>) - Rinda Bartley
1:25 p.m.	Discussion and Vote on Conferring Emeritus Status on Rev. Jacqueline Duhart upon her retirement in autumn of 2019 (<i>2/3 vote required for passage</i>)
1:40 p.m.	Financial Report - Lisa Rosene, Treasurer
1:55 p.m.	Recognition of Outgoing Trustees (Laurel Egenberger, Kate Lenhardt, Lisa Rosene, Kenji Oshima) - Suzanne Van Houten
2:00 p.m.	Announcement of Voting Results for Election of Trustees and Election of Nominating Committee Members - Board of Trustees
2:05 p.m.	Benediction and Closing Words - Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae
2:10 p.m.	Adjourn Annual Meeting

Our Covenant

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 goals and material resources. This we covenant together.

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.

Our Ends

The First Unitarian Church of Oakland embodies beloved community as an intentionally multigenerational, multiracial, multicultural, anti-oppressive Unitarian Universalist religious community. We work for spiritual and social transformation within, among, and beyond ourselves in support of our vision, mission, and ends.

Transformation Within

Church members and friends discover and articulate personal spiritual growth. We lead lives of integrity and meaning that reflect our spiritual identity and values.

Transformation Among

People of all ages who are part of our church community experience caring relationships which connect us to an ever wider circle of life. We use our collective gifts and learning to nurture and expand beloved community. We overcome barriers that divide the human family.

Transformation Beyond

Our neighborhood, the city of Oakland, and the world community are more just and compassionate because of our prophetic role and ministries. We generously share our human and financial resources beyond the walls of our church.

Annual Meeting Rules of Order

1. The quorum for all business meetings of the Membership shall be twenty-five (25) percent of Members eligible to vote as of the most recent record date.
2. In accordance with the by-laws, only members of the congregation may vote. A simple majority of members present will be sufficient to act on behalf of the entire membership. □
3. Except where noted, 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. □
4. Nominations and other voted-upon issues, whether private ballot, show of hands, or other means, must be passed by a majority (>50%) of eligible voters present at meeting, unless a higher threshold has been called for. Only votes FOR are factored into deciding a majority vote. Votes against and abstention votes lead to the same result: a negative vote. For instance if there are 110 voters, a majority is characterized when there are 56 votes in favor). But this is not the case if there are 54 votes in favor, 20 against and 36 abstentions, even though there are far more "yes" votes than "no" votes. Not marking the ballot or not raising your hand will be counted as an abstention and may affect the decision/outcome of a vote. □
5. 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.
 - d. Any modification of the rules is at the discretion of the Moderator □
6. All speakers at the annual meeting must use of the microphones to speak. Before speaking, speakers must be recognized by the Moderator. □
7. Robert’s Rules of Order apply, except that the above rules will prevail in the event of conflict. □ □

Special Balloting & Selection Procedure For Search Committee □ □

Each eligible member will receive a ballot with the names of candidates for the Ministerial Search Committee. Voting members will vote for FOUR (4) candidates. The top four recipients of the members votes will be placed on the committee. The Board of Trustees will select the additional three members from among those remaining on the list of candidates.

Ministerial Reports

Sabbatical Minister

Submitted by Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae

It is with great gratitude that I serve as your Sabbatical Minister in collaboration with your committed Board of Trustees and professional staff. Pastor Jacqueline wisely charged me to love you and my part-time Sabbatical Minister's portfolio specifically includes worship, staff supervision, and pastoral care. I've understood my role as keeping the spiritual momentum of the community going in her absence, holding space for the Parish Minister, and providing some professional continuity and stability in a transitional period. At this point, I have been serving in this capacity for only a little over two months. Much of this introductory period has included learning the many formal and informal systems of congregation life as well as meeting as many of you as possible, and learning about the dynamic ministries of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland. I am impressed by this congregation's commitment to a vibrant shared ministry. As I've shared with the Board, I've witnessed many communities that talk a lot about shared ministry but this is the first community I've experienced that has embodied shared ministry so well. It has been integral to my work in these first few weeks, providing helpful support, guidance, and care as I've begun my service to this community. I've also been mindful that my transition into this role was accompanied by significant health challenges and have worked to practice self-care as my energy and strength are returning, and as I begin to be able to return to the life routines I had to abandon while severely ill. I am now much stronger than when I began and I am excited about the time that remains this spring.

Worship is perhaps the most consuming and life-giving element of my ministry with you. In addition to the church's themes, I have focused on co-creating worship that explores dimensions of Unitarian Universalist identity, multireligiousness, and countering oppressions. We have co-created the services: "The Radical God of Martin Luther King, Jr.," which explored the whitewashing and radical spirituality of Dr. King; "The Doctrine of Illumination," which surveyed religious history and the saving message of Universalism; "Unitarian Universalist Islam," which considered our liberal faith and Islam; and "Our Divine Covenants," which reviewed covenantal theology and the commitments we make to each other in faith. We also began our first Worship Associate created and led services last month which included: "An Invitation to Re-imagine," which invited us into the stories of creation; "Dualisms, Dichotomies, and Despair: Living in the Between," which invited us into non-dual and deeper counter-oppressive awareness; and "Promised Land Denied," which began our exploration of this new church theme. I have worked with the Worship Associates to provide support, planning, and guidance as they've really taken off and excelled with these services. Rev. Sheri is also responsible for one service each month as these have included the exceptional "Tolling of the Bells" and "Lunar New Year Celebration!" services.

In addition to working with Rev. Sheri, the Worship Associates, and our gifted musicians to cultivate our transformative worship life, I am attending the Worship Team, and I am tasked with planning your summer worship. I am hoping to bring you more professionally led worship services with multireligious faith leaders this summer. I have also been able to regularly attend our Vespers Service which is led by Chaplain Michelle Ma. I am excited about the worship calendar for the rest of the sabbatical period, including the special worship co-led by Olosha Efun T'ayo--who will bring Afro-Cuban indigenous traditions to our worship while I'm at PWR Regional Assembly in April; special worship co-led by Joanna Macy, who will join us for our Earth Day Celebration; and special worship co-led by the Rev. Tamara Lebak, the former long term Associate Minister of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa-- who will join me in leading a worship service in the beginning of May.

The staff is greatly committed to the mission and spiritual life of the congregation. I have greatly enjoyed working with everyone. Venee, Amanda, Maria, Stefan and Renee are integral to the leadership of this community. When I arrived, the Choir Director had just resigned, so we quickly had to make some unexpected adjustments to our staffing. Stefan and Renee stepped forward and provided stability and new leadership in a period of change and for that we should all be grateful. In the church office, we have a collaborative work environment that is reflective of the larger congregational commitment to shared ministry. Right now, we are celebrating Bill Blakely's commitment to the church's financial wellbeing and we are also adjusting to his transition out of that exemplary volunteer role as more tasks are taken on by our bookkeeper. We are working to make our workplace as radically inclusive as possible and the staff have been working together and with the board to implement best practices around our scent-free policies to better educate ourselves and the larger community about environmental sensitivities.

The pastoral care organization of the church is impressive. In addition to making regular pastoral calls to congregants in need, and home visits when requested, I've had the pleasure of coordinating holistic care with the Pastoral Associates. Right now, we are working to identify and recruit new Pastoral Associates to serve in this vital ministry of the church. We begun designating parking spaces in front of the church with cones for those who may have disabilities and/or mobility concerns. Please do be sure to save these spaces for these important members of our community. Additionally, we are working to expand the outreach and marketing of the pastoral services available so that the congregation is well informed of what is available—with a special concern for disseminating this information to new members. We also now have electric candles available in the narthex on Sunday morning, and you are invited to utilize these as another space for honoring, concerns, or prayer. Admittedly, I do not have the institutional knowledge of Pastor Jacqueline, but I hope that you won't hesitate to contact me if you are in distress and/or in need of spiritual support.

Endorsed Minister Report

Submitted by Rev. Kurt Kuhwald

Thank you to the Board of this Congregation for Endorsing me to carry on my work as a UU minister. While endorsement is not necessary for me to practice in the community, for me it is essential to have a home base of UUs to ground my work in the values we hold dear—and for which my work can be supportive, educational and challenging.

This year (March 2017 – March 2018), I was engaged in volunteer work:

- Completed training and then began going inside the walls of San Quentin twice a month in a Restorative Justice based program, sponsored by the Insight Prison Project.
- Continued to engage in campaigns, and to show up to speak and witness for low wage workers through my role as a Steering Committee member of the Faith Alliance for a Moral Economy.
- Served on the Board of Trustees for the East Bay Alliance for a Moral Economy.
- Preached in two Pacific Central District Congregations: Livermore & Fremont.
- Attended the UUA General Assembly in New Orleans, LA.
- Attended several gatherings for the Movement Generation Homies and helped dispense gifts to attendees of MG's 10th Birthday.
- Served on the Internship committees for two FUCO candidates for UU ministry: Kevin Mann & Claire Eustace.
- Participated in a Conscious Elder's dialogue group in Sebastopol most Friday afternoons.
- Served on the Journey Toward Wholeness Committee of the Church.
- Participated in several street demonstrations for Rights for People of Color, Low-wage workers and immigrants.
- Travelled several times to Sacramento to advocate for issues related to mass incarceration and worker rights (Fight for Fifteen).
- Spoke several times before the City of Oakland City Council on justice issues regarding Coal in Oakland and Workers Rights.

Additionally, this Calendar year I served as the Sabbatical Minister for the Sierra Foothills UU Church while Rev. Wendy Bartell and Lynn Gardner were on Sabbatical from Mid February through Mid March.

Affiliated Community Minister

Submitted by The Reverend Mary Foran

I am pleased to be the congregation's newest Affiliated Community Minister, having been approved by the Board of Trustees in January. Besides being recommended by the Committee on Shared Ministry and approved by the Board, I function in a covenant of mutual respect and support with the called and hired Ministers of the congregation.

My ministry in the wider world is Spiritual Direction. I help people find their wisdom by listening to what is coming from the heart, mind, body and soul of the speaker. I work with people of all religions and no religion, supporting their journeys of the spirit, by holding space for the speaking of struggles and gladness, questions and answers. Beyond listening, my tools include asking questions, offering guidance, inviting silence, sharing laughter and tears, and most of all, bringing my full compassionate attention to the person or group with whom I am working.

Spiritual Direction is an invitation to find strong grounding for participating fully in the delights, sorrows, mysteries and toils of human life. I believe it is a gift for our time on this earth for every person to cultivate the spiritual resources that will allow each of us to bring more kindness, compassion, resilience, strength and joy to all the ways we act in the world.

As a member of the congregation and with the endorsement of the congregation's Ministers, I participate in coordinating the Justice Ministries Council and in the Adult Faith Development Team. You will also usually find me at the First Sundays meetings and the Conversations Beyond second Sundays group for people who have participated in Beloved Conversations. My call to ministry in 2004 came out of the awakening awareness of how racism and white privilege lived in me. These were not happy discoveries! Ever since, I have been on the quest to recognize and let go of the habits of white fragility and white supremacy culture, loaded words which I have come to appreciate as doorways to freedom and possibility.

I joined this congregation in 1988 when the building was falling down around us. Through the years I have served in different capacities and made many dear friends. On December 11, 2011 you granted me the great honor of ordaining me as a Unitarian Universalist minister. After time away ministering in other ways I have returned home, looking forward to making many new friends and being of service as one of your Affiliated Community Ministers.

Board of Trustees

Submitted by Laurel Egenberger and Michael Fitzhugh

The Board of Trustees continued to focus much of its attention and energy on the organization and governance in furtherance of preparing ourselves for entering our search for a new minister. We continued to consider and act upon the recommendations of the 2015 Transition Team, as well as considering and implementing additional updates to organization and governance.

The trustees of the 2016-2017 Board year recommended a package of changes to the Church by-laws. These were approved at the March, 2017 Annual Meeting. The Board made some headway in overhauling its policies, but the bulk of that work remains for the upcoming year.

The ebb and flow of Board of Trustee membership continued. Kate Lenhardt joined the Board in January of 2017 when she was appointed to fill the term of B Avalon who had resigned earlier. Kate's appointment was confirmed by the congregation at the Annual Meeting. At the meeting, Ella Wise was elected to fill one of four new three-year terms (2017-2020). A special meeting was held in July to fill two of the remaining terms; Michael Rothhammer and Tom Smith were elected and joined the Board at that month's meeting. Kenji Oshima resigned the same month. This month, Board members Laurel Egenberger, Kate Lenhardt, and Lisa Rosene will complete their terms. This leaves four three-year and one two-year terms open. The difficulty in recruiting members to serve on the Board of Trustees is a major concern to the Board and the entire congregation.

The board continued the relatively new practice of establishing "visioning and hiring" teams for filling church positions. These teams are made up of ministers, board members, and congregants who reflect on the needs of the church, work on crafting job descriptions, and conducting reviews and interviews to make recommendations to the Board. Integrating best practices outlined by the Personnel Committee with regard to hiring, salary management, and on-boarding these teams have successfully completed the hiring of our congregational administrator and bookkeeper. This procedure will be continued in the recruiting of a new choir director.

A similar team was also instituted for the hire of our sabbatical minister, this one receiving considerable input from the leadership retreat.

The Board instituted a policy that, with some exceptions, prevents members from being employed by the church. Exceptions are for part-time positions in Religious Education, de minimis employees, and those already employed at the time of the new policy.

Most of the committees recommended in the Transition Team report have been created and have been or are being populated. Their reports speak to their accomplishments. Notably, the Committee on Shared Ministry conducted a congregational survey and made recommendations that led to the decision to move from two services to one on Sunday mornings. The Personnel Committee worked diligently to revise and update the personnel handbook, which is now being used in draft form pending a legal expertise review.

The Board gave Journey Toward Wholeness the go-ahead to plan and conduct an assessment of our anti-racism, anti-oppression practices and their impact on our church and congregation. It is believed that the assessment will help inform the search committee in its work.

The Board has stepped up the practice of assigning a board member as liaison to its committees. This was a recommendation from the Transition Team.

A Building and Grounds committee has been formed, though its membership remains to be filled. The Communication committee also needs to be reviewed and members appointed. Committees that still need to be formed are Right Relations and Finance. In addition, a team should be formed to create a “safe sanctuary” policy, that covers the building and grounds, physical safety, and appropriate behavior.

The Board passed a budget for 2018 (see finance report). Some of the features of the 2018 budget are: □

- funding of the first year of the search committee expenses
- cost of living raises for the staff
- costs of hiring our sabbatical minister
- funding a part-time pastoral care minister
- continuing to build reserves □ □

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on Shared Ministry, the Board appointed Rev. Mary Foran as a Community Minister affiliated with our church. In so doing we began a discussion and consideration of better defining the relationship of affiliated Community and Endorsed Ministers and the church.

Our relations with the Pacific Western Region (PWR) and Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) continue to grow. For the first time in a long time, we paid our full “fair share” dues to both UUA and PWR. Board members attended Pacific Central District “Board Development Day” in Sacramento, reviving a practice that had been neglected for a few years. Monthly conversations between the PWR Congregational Life representative and Board president are proving fruitful and helpful and will most likely be continued by the next president.

Over the past years, much has been accomplished by the Board of Trustees to help bring our Church to a place where we can seriously contemplate calling a new minister. The Board contract with the Pacific Western Region for a “transitions coach,” we met with her, and instituted the procedure for putting a Ministerial Search Committee in place. That committee will be constituted at this Annual Meeting.

Reports from the Congregation

(Reports listed in alphabetical order)

Administrative Visioning Team

Submitted by Kate Lenhardt

The Board of Trustees created the Administrative Visioning Team during Spring 2017. It was charged with understanding the administrative needs of the Church, creating staff positions, writing job descriptions, setting wages, and filling the positions. The Team received input and guidance from the Church staff, the PCD, and the UUA.

The Team determined that the Church needed a 30-hour/week Church Administrator and an 8-hour/week bookkeeper. The positions were advertised and interviews were conducted. Venee Call-Ferrer was hired as the Church Administrator and Tamar Enoch was hired as the bookkeeper.

Unfortunately, Tamar resigned as the bookkeeper after 3 months to assume a full-time position.

The Team reconvened, discussed how to proceed, and decided to seek a full-charge bookkeeper that had a satisfying job, but wanted to add 8 hours to their portfolio. We also sought someone that was eager and able to serve on the Finance Team and assist various Church groups with bookkeeping issues. Maria Santiago was hired in December.

I am grateful for the Church members and staff who served on the Administrative Visioning Team in 2017: Pastor Jacqueline, Reverend Sheri Prud'homme, Venee Call-Ferrer, Bill Blakely, Judith Hunt and Michelle Ma.

Adult Faith Development Team

Members: Rev. Sheri, Isabel Call, Carol Emert, Mary Foran, Bill Pezick, and Emily Stoper

The Adult Faith Develop Team has offered these programs this year:

- **Many Paths to First Unitarian: A Sunday Morning Faith Sharing Series** – each monthly offering has been attended by 30-40 people listening to the faith journey of one of our congregants and having some discussion afterwards
- **A House for Hope** – a UU theology course led by Rev. Sheri with attendance at each session ranging from 10-17 people

- **Beloved Conversations** – an anti-racism curriculum that will begin in March. This is the first time the curriculum is being coordinated by the Adult Faith Development Team instead of JTW.

And these ongoing groups:

- **Buddhist Sitting group** with Carol Emmert
- **Book Group** with Emily Stoper
- **Poetry Circle** with Ron Weisberg

A subset of the adult faith development team has begun meeting along with Noemi de Guzman from JTW to consider the question: what would be included in a core curriculum for adults at First Unitarian Church of Oakland so that we might deepen our spiritual lives in a meaningful way and be equipped to live out the mission and vision of the church?

Assessment Team

Submitted by Linda Propert

In September 2017, the Board of Trustees approved the formation of the Assessment Team, as requested by our Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team. The Board charged the Assessment Team to assess our congregation's progress to our goal of being an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural congregation. The team's goal is to have a report of our findings of our current progress and recommendations for next steps to offer to the Board, JTW and the congregation. We plan to have this report completed in June 2018, to allow its findings to be of use to the Ministerial Search Committee.

In our work, we collect a list of specific benchmarks from sources used to assess our progress; convene forums and conversations to gather congregant opinions about our progress with respect to those benchmarks; gather congregational responses, including perspectives, concerns, and suggestions of different populations within the congregation; gather resources that might help our congregation take the next steps to move us forward toward our goal; and develop recommendations for approval of the next steps our congregation may take to move us forward toward our goal.

We recognize that this inquiry may be challenging. The Assessment Team is charged to conduct it in a kind, caring, and compassionate manner. We hope that this process will help our congregation build resilience around these conversations, strengthen the systems we already have in place, and move us forward toward being a more anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multi-cultural congregation.

We are Anthony Elias, Donna Fujioka, Brianna Keefe-Oates, Heather MacLeod, Dennis Rowcliffe, Linda Probert Sanford, Sherry Weston-Vigil and Dan Wright. Email us at assessmentteam@uuoakland.org.

Center for Urban Family Life

Submitted by Ben Thompson

The Center for Urban Family Life is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that is affiliated with our church and is the fiscal sponsor of the McClymonds Merit Award (MMA) program. MMA provides small college scholarships to graduates of McClymonds ('Mac') High School in West Oakland. Any Mac grad that attends any type of college (inc trade schools) is eligible to receive between \$1200 and \$1600 per year, as long as they maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA. For many of our students, the MMA award is the only scholarship they receive. Again this year, we are supporting approximately 35 college students who graduated from 'Mac' between 2011 and 2017. Their thank you letters to us are a window to their lives and we plan to read some from the pulpit.

MMA volunteers include: Andrew Beretvas, Ben Thompson, Joan Poulter, and Don Hermes. We seek additional volunteers for this worthy program. Contact Andrew.

Children's and Family Ministries Team

Submitted by Rev. Sheri Prud'homme

Members: Rev. Sheri, Nicole Fitzhugh (Children and Family Ministries Coordinator), Jenny Berggren, Claire Eustace, Johanna Metzgar, Ingrid Mittermaier, and Kathy Radez

This year our congregation received national recognition for our children's and family ministry program. We were selected as a 2017-2018 Breakthrough Congregation by the Unitarian Universalist Association for our "ground-breaking perspective on religious exploration, particularly your summer focus." Our innovative approach, responding to the realities of families' lives and church involvement on the west coast, has led us to center our Sunday morning program on worship and focus our intentional educational offerings into short term high-commitment programs like the Our Whole Lives Sexuality and Relationship Education (OWL) classes, Coming of Age, and Chalice Camp.

This year 74 children and youth from nursery through high school were active in our program. We also served a good number of visitors on Sunday mornings and a number of members of the broader community in our OWL classes this year. Sunday morning worship rotated among multigenerational worship in Hamilton Hall for the whole community, a time for all ages at the

beginning of worship in Hamilton Hall, and children's chapel based on the spiritual theme of the month in the Starr King Room. Children's chapels also included several faith in action Sundays when the youth participated in some community service or an education experience/action for justice.

OWL 7-9th grade has 6 participants and 4 volunteer teachers, OWL 4th-5th grade has 11 participants with 2 volunteer teachers, and OWL K-1st grade has 8 participants and 2 volunteer teachers. All the classes are going very well. Two of our high school youth – Aria Killebrew-Bruehl and Sara Leyser – are paid on Sunday mornings to be Spirit Games and Spirit Art Room leaders, which has provided the kind of consistency, fun, and loving attention that children cherish. A paid Club UU leader for our middle school youth – Michelle Ma through June 2017 and now Maya Ibrahim-Bartley – has also allowed that group connect and thrive. Two volunteer youth group advisors, Jenn Beach and Claire Eustace meet with the high schoolers about once a month after church. It has been a challenge to find activities that are compelling enough for our high school youth to prioritize church in their busy schedules.

Additional programs organized by Children's and Family Ministries this year were the Church Picnic, Halloween Carnival, Secret Buddy Program, and Nursery Families Potluck and Toy Swap.

Committee On Shared Ministry

Submitted by Barbara North

Committee Report on Worship Services

The Committee on Shared Ministry produced a substantial report to the Board of Trustees about the current state of worship including a review of attendance numbers and patterns, results of our interviews with the worship team, results of a congressional survey, and some additional material (articles and book excerpts) we encountered as we reviewed the information we collected. The COSM Report and Appendix are available on the Church's website under the July 2017 Board minutes.

The Committee conducted a survey of church members, visitors, and guests about their experiences of worship to go with this report. We received 128 responses to our survey.

Fulfilling our Charter

As a committee, we reviewed our charge and updated our charter to reflect both our charge from the Board of Trustees and the current needs of the church. These updates were approved by the Board of Trustees and can be found on the UU Oakland website under About > Governance > Committee On Shared Ministry.

Additionally, the committee has been reviewing the ministries offered by the church and creating a schedule for ongoing review and assessment. Ministries for upcoming assessment this year include: the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program, Children's Chapel, and Church Communications.

Ministerial Aspirants

The Committee on Shared Ministry continues to be in touch with potential ministerial aspirants, and completed one interview and recommendation.

Community Connections Team

Submitted by Clark Sanford

Our church's Membership Committee is now the Community Connections Team, expanding our focus from making connections not only for visitors & prospective members, but also for existing members & friends. We manage Sunday Greeting & Welcome Tables, Orientations & Embracing Journeys classes for newcomers, Ingatherings for new members, and now other events for all members & friends. We provide church brochures, name tags, and visitor packets.

In the last year, 24 people became members. Since September, when we upgraded our recordkeeping, 78 people filled out visitor connect cards. We held Embracing Journeys classes in the spring & fall, and several Ingatherings to welcome our new members into the congregation. In expanding our work beyond newcomers, we hosted a well-attended Every Member Ministry Volunteer Fair in January, and a first-time Game Night after Tuesday Vespers in February.

Behind the scenes, we have been working with office staff & volunteers in several areas: To improve the data & usage of our FellowshipOne church database, as a directory, for tracking active & inactive members, and to provide visitor outreach. We implemented Signup Genius to facilitate volunteer signups. We are now gathering information on our many church groups to get our printed & online resources updated. We hope these efforts help all of us find what we need to connect at the church!

In the coming year, we would like to improve on what we are currently doing, host other events & activities to connect us, better engage with visitors & new members, and reach out to the larger community. We are a bit short-staffed right now, and would welcome additional greeters on Sundays, and more people to join our team to help us do this important work.

We are Rev. Sheri Prud'homme, Maria Bielass, Jodie Mathies, Emma Dugas, and Clark Sanford

Covenant Groups

Submitted by Anita Thomson, Covenant Group Coordinator

Covenant Group participation is up this year from last year. We still have six groups but each group has grown by two to five bringing each group total to about ten members. A few people left their groups and some of those people joined other groups. We publicized covenant groups at a couple of events in the last year and that increased interest, bringing some people to covenant groups who hadn't known about them before and some who had not participated in a number of years.

We have changed from just assigning prospective new members to a group to giving them the option of visiting more than one group. This is fitting because the groups vary in where and how frequently they meet and the general flavor each group. We called this "open house season" when we first tried it, but my tendency is to just let people visit multiple groups on an ongoing basis, getting agreement from the leaders of the groups involved.

Ella Baker Center For Human Rights Faith In Action Partnership

Submitted by Micky Duxbury

Our partnership during most of 2017 has been in a less active mode. Micky D. continued to be engaged with the Criminal Justice committee of the Mental Health Advisory Board as a continuation of the work around the jail expansion, but she stopped that engagement in June. That campaign was much in the weeds: not the kind of campaign that would be compelling for the church members.

Many congregants signed petitions to end participation in Urban Shield - the highly militarized expo hosted by Alameda County Sherriff's Department. We gather signatures for a petition about Urban Shield before the fall 2017 expo.

In late fall, the Justice Council, with leadership from Mary Foran, began reaching out to other local UU congregation for them to be part of the Audit the Sheriff campaign. Mary was successful in soliciting support and a presentation at the Livermore fellowship, and the Hayward church that will have a follow up meeting this spring. Had very visual posters from the campaign and went to the hall on two Sundays and they elicited a lot of interest and about 50 signed postcards from the congregation. We will do that again this spring.

Steering organizational structure

Since the creation of the Justice Council there has not been a separate steering committee for the Ella Baker partnership. The work we have done in this area has been an outgrowth of the Justice Council. The Ella Baker Center has requested that we have a dialogue to re-invigorate our partnership. We are attempting to have time in a service in the spring to lift up the seven-year partnership followed by a meeting after service for people that are interested in being part of reinvigorating and recommitting to the partnership. Unless a few people step forward that are interested in becoming point persons for the partnership, the work we do will continue to be under the auspices of the Justice Council.

The EBC continues to feel somewhat supported by our congregation and some in the congregation continue to feel like stakeholders in the partnership. However, we need a concrete campaign that congregants can participate in with various levels of engagement. That is the task before us. Many relatively new people in the congregation might have heard about the partnership, but they don't know what we do or how they can be engaged. We are hoping that our upcoming dialogue will educate many about what the Ella Baker Center is doing now and how we can contribute.

Communication

We have had few events with Ella Baker so there has been relatively little need for communication. As we hopefully reengage, we are aware of the many avenues to reach members of that church.

Endowment Team

Submitted by Ron Weisberg, Tom Haw, Laila Ibrahim

Our endowment funds ensure and strengthen the vision, mission and presence of First Unitarian Church of Oakland for the future. In our second year we said goodbye and thank you to Joan Poulter and added Ron Weisberg. We stay abreast of the status of all of the church's endowed funds, review their use, promote their funding, and report on them at the annual meeting.

Our three congregational accounts are held by the UUA common endowment fund (<http://uucef.org>). In addition to our congregational accounts the UUA holds two trust accounts for our congregation that we have no oversight or control over.

The Wendte Endowment for Building Maintenance and Improvement

Grew from \$194,280 to \$514,995 thanks to generous donations from congregants we are half way to our goal of \$1,000,000! Wow!!

Provides revenue for the maintenance of and improvements to First Unitarian Church's historic building. Permissible uses of the fund are restricted to those that specifically pertain to the building itself and any building needs. Uses may include repairs or maintenance of any kind, replacement of any furnishings or finishes, salaries, acquisition of any new furnishings or finishes, expansion or modification of the facility or any other capital use. (opened in 2016).

The Aurelia Henry Reinhardt Endowment for Justice
Grew from \$10,679 to \$12,699.

Will provide revenue to support the justice ministries of First Unitarian Church of Oakland. Permissible uses will include salary and benefits specifically restricted to justice work; program expenses specifically restricted to justice work; any special events specifically related to justice work; and materials or other expenses related to justice work including transportation, food, rentals, printing or other expenses. (opened in 2016).

First Unitarian Oakland Memorial Endowment Fund
Grew from \$113,653 to \$129,341

Provides general operating support for routine, ongoing or normal expenses in the Church's annual budget, including but not limited to salary and benefits, administrative expenses, facility maintenance and repairs, utilities, taxes and insurance, program expenditures, dues and fees, building mortgage, fundraising expenses and accumulation of reserves. (opened in 1930s).

The Operations Endowment paid to the congregation: \$5322

Each individual endowments will not make payments until they reach \$500,000 each so the Wendte Endowment will make a payment in 2018.

In gratitude for this congregation and faith in its future.

Financial Leadership Team

Submitted by Lisa Rosene

The Financial Leadership Team (Finance Team) oversees the financial transactions and well-being of the church. The team is responsible for:

- Financial oversight and reporting

- First line budget preparation
- Data support for Stewardship and Capital Campaigns
- Follow-up and maintenance of pledge database
- Year-end donor letters and 1099 forms
- Acknowledgement of all pledges and donations
- Recommendations to the Board as needed

The 2017 team has continued to work on improving the financial health and transparency of church transactions. Team members for 2017 are Bill Blakely, Hester Green, Brian Joaquin, Janet McFarland, Laurel Egenberger and Lisa Rosene.

For the second year in a row, church finances have remained “in the black”. Team members, most notably Bill and Hester, have spent countless hours ensuring accurate updating of QuickBooks and Vanco, the system used for automatic deduction of pledges. Reconciliation of the 2017 budget is happening as this is being written and we expect the reconciled budget to be available soon for review.

Last year at this time, we were preparing to hire a bookkeeper. Maria Santiago has filled that position and we are grateful for her skills and expertise in this area.

By far, the most important fiscal news of 2017 was the retirement of the church mortgage through the successful Capital Campaign led by Dick Bailey and Noemi De Guzman. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to all who worked on and contributed to this campaign enabling FUCO to leave 2017 mortgage free!

We would like to express a special thank you to Bill Blakely. Bill worked on the Executive Team and continued on with the Finance Team, putting in years of service to this church in the financial arena. Bill has consistently volunteered between 10-20 hours a week in the church office and is now ready to retire from his volunteer job! Thank you, Bill, for your outstanding volunteer service to our church.

The Finance Team meets the second Saturday of each month from 9:15 to 11:00 AM in the Library on the third floor of the church. Please contact any member of the team if you would like to join us in the rewarding work!

Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team

In 2017 the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team (JTW) maintained a steady focus on the work to which it is dedicated: Keeping the vision of being an actively anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural congregation front and center in the life of the Church.

- We work to understand how racism and oppression have shaped our lives and engage in meaningful dialog about the ways we experience internalized racism and oppression.

- We develop tools to move beyond guilt and blame and create processes and offer workshops to help those involved in all aspects of church life to work toward dismantling racism and oppression individually, organizationally, and institutionally.

Our work this year included continued generation of and support for major programs focusing on anti-racism and white privilege. Early in the year we realized that meeting once a month wasn't enough to get our work done, so we set a twice-monthly meeting schedule and stuck to it. JTW participated in and provided support for the two denomination wide white supremacy teach-ins in May and October initiated by BLUU (Black Lives UU) as well as the national A/PIC (Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus) conference held in Oakland and San Francisco in September.

Last summer, JTW concluded that we needed to assess our congregation's progress toward becoming an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural institution. In part, we wanted to know where we should focus our limited time and energy. We also wanted to provide prospective ministerial candidates a picture of where we think we are. The Board of Trustees approved our Assessment Team charge, and a team composed of some JTW members and more non-JTW members was established and has been conducting its work. The Assessment Team is submitting its own annual report.

JTW has continued to offer on-going programming on the first Sundays of each month following the Service. The First Sundays alternate each month between caucusing where those identifying as Persons of Color and those identifying as white meet separately and non-caucus programming. The latter has included field trips to the new Black Panther mural in West Oakland and the Oakland Museum of California, piloting Assessment Team materials, and discussions on other prescribed and self-generated topics. A group for those who identify as being of mixed race has also convened. First Sundays has contributed strongly to offering members of the Church continuing opportunities to work on, learn about, and practice anti-racism within their Church family in spaces that are both brave and safe.

JTW has continued to process monitor most Board meetings as our schedules permit, and we encourage this practice in other church gatherings, particularly at larger meetings. We purchased flash cards and educational books in part to assist the Board in conducting its Multicultural Exercises.

JTW is particularly thrilled that the current Beloved Conversations class has been taken on by Adult Faith Development and that Conversations Beyond, an informal ongoing monthly discussion group of alumni from the prior Beloved Conversations classes, was initiated without JTW. To us, this is tangible evidence that anti-racism/anti-oppression work has spread beyond JTW's own direct efforts. JTW does not want to be regarded as the group that holds it all; we cannot hold it all as we are only five people, two who identify as persons of color and three who identify as white: Donna Fujioka, Noemi de Guzman, Heather MacLeod, Dennis Rowcliffe, and Rev. Kurt Kuhwald.

JTW also celebrates the work of the Justice Associates as they form an accompaniment team to support and “accompany” new immigrants in this time of heightened xenophobia and racism. For many years our congregation has worked against the incarceration of people of color, in cooperation with the Ella Baker Center. The work of the accompaniment team (in conjunction with the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, another organization led by people of color) represents a step forward in our collective understanding of working with humility in accountable partnerships under the leadership of people of color. Our hope is that we will continue to respectfully learn about the lives of those who are most vulnerable in our society, as we accompany them and build mutual, accountable relationships.

We continue to do our best to act boldly with the interests of the whole congregation at the center of our decisions—despite sometimes taking action that is challenging to some of our members. We accept with humility the difficulty of representing the leadership of anti-racism work within a largely white congregation and remain open to and welcome the critique (as well as the support) of Church members.

Respectfully submitted,

(in alphabetical order): Donna Fujioka, Noemi de Guzman, Rev. Kurt Kuhwald, Heather MacLeod, Dennis Rowcliffe

Justice Ministries Council

Submitted by Bev Smrha

The Justice Ministries Council was formed in the spring of 2016 to support the integration of, and collaboration among our justice ministries at our church.

We are guided by our commitment to:

- deepen our spiritual values and practices while engaging in the soul work of justice;
- nurture each other and warmly invite congregants to discover their gifts of justice activism as a spiritual practice;
- follow the guidance of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr: “Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”
- Some of our goals:
 - We hope to decrease silos and grow our capacity to address the intersectionality of our justice ministries
 - We hope to explore how social justice/earth justice/anti-racism can be more at the center of the life of the church
 - We hope to coordinate and complement each other’s work through shared media, communication, and shared events

- We hope to engage the Board of Trustees and leadership of the church in being stakeholders in our justice work – both within and beyond our walls

Current active participants: Debbie Brown, Amy Carlson, Helen Duffy, Micky Duxbury, Gayle Eads, Mary Foran, Sherry Larsen-Beville, Kate Lenhardt, Lauren Poole, Corless Smith, Bev Smrha

Our current justice focus is to support these specific ministries:

- Immigration Justice Ministry
- Ella Baker Partnership Ministry
- BOOST! West Oakland Ministry
- Earth Justice Ministry

We urge all curious congregants to connect with the Justice Council via justicecouncil@uuoakland.org so that you can then talk with those folks that are directly and actively involved with each of these specific ministries. **Our Justice Ministries commitment is a significant component of how The First Unitarian Church of Oakland is actively and passionately building the world we are dreaming about. This ministry belongs to the entire congregation.**

Immigration Justice

Submitted by Lauren Poole

Called by our faith and our principles, UU Oakland has joined the movement embraced by many religious denominations (including our Unitarian Universalist Association) and countless people of faith to respond spiritually, publicly and actively to the targeting and suffering of our immigrant brothers and sisters residing in the United States.

We held a summer worship service lifting up the situation facing Bay Area immigrants and the work of the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity - an organization working for immigrant justice and against mass incarceration. The service featured staff member and seminarian, Miriam Noriega, who subsequently returned to UU Oakland in the fall to offer us opportunities for engagement.

On December 2, 2017, UU Oakland led the monthly interfaith vigil at the West County Detention Center in Richmond. A team of about twelve congregants created and led the vigil which included our traditional chalice lighting, poetry, song, words, prayer and advocacy in the shadow of the detention center where up to 300 immigrants are detained. About 35 members and friends of UU Oakland joined us along with people of faith from other congregations in the Bay Area.

Following the vigil, we realized a goal articulated in the fall - that of forming an Accompaniment Team. Accompaniment Teams are groups of congregants who “walk with” a recently arrived individual or family as they adapt to the challenges of their new lives here in the US.

Accompaniment comes from the Latin root words to be together (“com”) face to face (“panis”) and bread (“pan”). Accompaniment is a spiritual process allowing us to welcome and love a “stranger”. Accompaniment involves helping with concrete and practical needs and the practice of bearing witness and providing solidarity. Our first team consists of seven congregants who have just begun to accompany a family of four from Honduras. There are several other congregants interested in forming a second team. The congregation as a whole will have the opportunity to support the people we are accompanying as their needs become apparent.

We are also working to create channels for our congregants to become advocates in the arena of policy affecting immigrants. Such policy areas include: protecting due process for immigrants, advocating for policies that oppose mass deportation and fear by creating separation between ICE and local law enforcement and engaging in actions and educational events that shift public discourse from scapegoating immigrants to the root causes of immigration and displacement and our responsibility in addressing those.

Two of our members have begun attending the monthly meetings of the East Bay Interfaith Immigration Coalition where opportunities for advocacy on the federal and local level are discussed and planned. It is our intention to create the means to communicate these opportunities to our congregation.

In this time of increasing attack on those most vulnerable among us, working for immigrant justice is one of the ways we can “Side with Love” and to live our principles.

Boost! West Oakland

The Boost! West Oakland tutoring program, started by members of the church 21 years ago, once again provided one-and-one-half hours of tutoring a week for approximately 70 children at Lafayette Elementary School. This year eight of the Boost tutors were from First Unitarian. Many healthy snacks were collected from members of the congregation and delivered to the program. One member of the church serves on the Boost Advisory Board and many church members contributed to the annual fund-raising campaigns.

Men’s Fellowship

Submitted by Ron Weisberg

The Men’s Fellowship held its first activity of 2018, a breakfast and conversation about its role in our church community. Among the many ideas were emphasis on deepening men’s emotional

sensitivity and ability to be of support to one another. Also, planning has begun for a "Men and Kids (and friends)" camping trip to coincide with the Women's Retreat in July. A Men's Retreat in the Fall, Men's support groups, regular activities, and service project in the church were also on the menu. We men of the church look forward to being an active, visible part of church life.

Pastoral Associates

Submitted by Judith Hunt

Would you like to have someone to talk to at a stressful point in your life? Would you like to have someone lend support when you come home from the hospital with a total knee replacement? Pastoral Associates are lay members of the church who aim to give comfort and help to fellow congregants who are housebound, or have a new baby, or are nearing the end of life, then with memorial services, and with a variety of expected or unexpected situations. We can also provide a listening presence by phone or in person, and we keep confidentiality.

Referrals come via pastoralcare@uuoakland.org, from the clergy, church office or other congregants, or by people who read our name tags. Many tasks are carried out by a larger group of lend-a-handers who volunteer for specific kinds of activity from providing meals to a ride to an appointment and are called on to do a specific task. PAs meet monthly, year round and the workload is relatively unpredictable.

You will soon see more outreach and announcements concerning pastoral care both to inform new congregants of our availability and to encourage more congregants to apply to become a pastoral associate. At the time of writing, we are Dick Bailey, Judith Hunt, Daphne Parson, Corless Smith, Ben Thompson, Annette Williams and Chaplain Michelle Ma.

Personnel Committee

Submitted by John Shinnick

In 2016, the Board of Trustees established a Personnel Committee with the mission to "ensure that church employees have the training and tools to perform their jobs, are held accountable for achieving goals, and are compensated appropriately for their efforts."

This past year, the Committee has focused primarily on the revision of the Church's Personnel Handbook, last updated in 2010. The revisions were presented to the board and subsequently approved, pending legal review. While this review takes place, the Handbook has been made available to affected employees and supervisors.

Another item pending approval for inclusion in the Handbook is a revised format for Job descriptions. The job description should serve as a basis for job postings, interviews, performance reviews, and wage and salary determinations. The Committee recently took existing information and placed it into the new format to ensure the functionality of the form and to provide a framework for further discussion.

We drafted and the Board approved a Confidentiality Policy for the Committee.

The role of the Board representative on the Committee (as required in the charter) was defined as liaison only.

The Committee currently has one vacancy anticipated in March, as one current member finishes his two-year commitment.

Stewardship

Submitted by Janet McFarland

Stewardship is our yearly commitment of time, talent and treasure to our shared ministries that seek to transform our hearts and lives, our communities and our world. The practice of pledging is an opportunity for each of us to engage in ethical and/or spiritual reflection on the ways we each can support this beloved community, and is necessary for honest and transparent budgeting.

Each December the Board of Trustees approves a budget for the following year based on the pledging commitments friends and members have made during the fall stewardship campaign.

We emphasize the use of a giving guide based on percentages of individual baselines. The spirit of the campaign is personal generosity and gratitude for all the gifts given and received. Members who are unable to make financial commitments request ministerial waivers of the minimum donation required to be a voting member.

Final report on 2017 Pledges (Pledge Drive of Fall 2016)

The total pledged for 2017 was \$444,063. \$435,524 was received. For the third year in a row we achieved a fulfillment rate of 98%. This is a great testament to the commitment and generosity of the congregation.

Report on 2018 Pledges (Pledge Drive of Fall 2017)

The total pledged was \$426,208 from 181 families and individuals representing 238 members. This is a 4% decrease from last year.

The Team recommends that the Board solicit feedback from members who decreased their pledges so that the budget can be better reflective of members' goals and commitments.

This year's generous donations will fund the following:

- A part time sabbatical minister
- The work of the Search Committee for a new called Minister in Fall 2019
- Cost of living increases for our full-time staff
- Pay increases for our hourly staff
- Repairs to the building
- Fair share giving to the UUA and regional organizations
- Building our reserve

Stewardship Campaign Summary

This year we:

- Mailed out invitations to a month of events culminating in Celebration Sunday
- Hosted Kick-off Sunday with Reverends Mary Foran and Jacqueline Duhart
- Welcomed guest preacher Reverend Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa to our pulpit
- Received 96 pledges and hosted a catered lunch for 140 people the same day
- Hosted four "salons" with about 45 people attending
- Made good use of the short-and-simple pledge form
- Encouraged use of the online pledge form
- Invited our youth to pledge
- Emphasized the deep love and sense of connection we are growing together

Our goal is to encourage everyone to consciously commit to our community each and every year as part of an ethical or spiritual practice while making the act of communicating those commitments easy and convenient.

Gratitude

The Stewardship Team is responsible for maintaining a year-round presence and running our fall campaign. We are supported in these efforts by the Finance Team, the Board of Trustees and many generous volunteers. Thank you to all who opened your homes or hosted a salon at the church. Conversations on the JTW assessment and stewardship were hosted by members of JTW and the Board.

Bill Blakely and Brian Joaquin (Finance Team) spent hours in the church office updating the tracker as pledges came in. Hester Green and our new bookkeeper kept records.

The Finance Team updated the automatic payment system.

Board members made phone calls and sent out thank you notes to pledgers.

Pastor Jacqueline supported and advised us on our campaign.

Thank you all for your willingness to invest your time, talent and treasure in this beloved community. Together we serve our mission to weave a tapestry of love we call community, to gather in worship and service to nourish the spirit, to work for justice, and to celebrate the divine in all. Together we work toward our vision of building a radically inclusive community and deepening our commitments to countering oppression as an intentional multiracial, multicultural, multigenerational anti-racist congregation.

Sunday Bookstore

Submitted by Ron Weisberg

Your Bookstore continues to raise funds for the church budget; and to be a welcoming place for newcomers. We are grateful to the many members who have donated their books. Our shelves are overflowing with beautiful fiction, edifying informative writing, social commentary, religion and spirituality and especially books to educate and entertain our children. Newcomers and long time members stop at the book tables to say hello, chat, tell us about recent reads, and of course look over our offerings. We especially enjoy greeting newcomers, talking with them about the church, any questions they have, and learning a bit about their background and what has brought them to church. We are proud to carry books written by members of the congregation; and to offer information material on ongoing projects with the church.

Another facet of our service is spreading the word about the FUCO book group, in fact the book table is a pretty good conduit for all kinds of general information about the church. The Bookstore is an island of calm, without agenda - a neutral space: you can walk up, browse, and walk away; or talk about whatever's on your mind, from favorite mystery writers to the paradox of free will; or ask how you might find pastoral counseling for a relationship problem. Positioned next to the the Welcome Table which may be the host putting out their hand and smiling, the Bookstore is the hostess pouring a cup of tea, settling back in their chair, and asking how you're doing.

Note, we've welcomed a new member to our previous team of four now five with Emily Letts.

Carolee, Carol, Emily, John and Ron

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Submitted by Emily Stoper

Two church members, Jane Facente and Emily Stoper, are members of the Stewardship Circle of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). In April, they hosted a talk at the church by Tom Andrews, then president of the UUSC, on the work of the UUSC, especially in Myanmar. Both Emily and Jane attended the annual meeting of the Stewardship Circle in Chicago, and Emily traveled with the Stewardship Circle to Myanmar, in order to meet with the leaders of the Rohingya and other human rights activists there.

Vespers Community Night Annual Report

Submitted by Lanie Peterson and Lynn Gallogly

The Vespers Team is committed to providing a monthly community night of meaningful activities held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. We start with community cooking, followed by eating together, and then a short contemplative worship service, and then a community activity.

Over the past year, community activities have included movie screenings, open mics, game nights, and social justice-related speakers. There is also an ongoing Adult Faith development class, led by Rev. Sheri, during this time. We hope to continue to collaborate with other committees as well as individuals who are excited about a particular idea to put on fun and interesting programs during this portion of each 2nd Tuesday.

The committee is currently comprised of Michelle Ma, Lynn Gallogly, and Lanie Peterson. Vespers has traditionally been hosted by the Young Adult Group, but we are branching out in order to make the committee more sustainable. We would like recruit more people to be on our committee, especially in the following roles: coordinating or leading worship, cooking, advertising, and coordinating the programming activities. Over the past year attendance has fluctuated, but the average tends to be about 15 people. We are open to ideas on how to grow attendance and interest in Vespers. We recently conducted a survey which shows that people are most interested in having game nights, movies with a post-film discussion, unstructured bonding, arts/crafts, and discussion about a social-justice issue.

Vision Team

Submitted by Rinda Bartley

Team members:

Jeff Leyser, Rinda Bartley, Tara Miller, Michael Schafer

Board Liaison:

Ella Wise

The Vision Team was recruited by the Board of Trustees in September of 2017. The charge: "Lead the process of gathering input, drafting, and recommending to the congregation for approval a new UU Oakland Vision Statement by the end of 2017." It was clarified that the Mission Statement and any other supporting documents/statement would be created with the support of the new called minister.

The team engaged with the congregation in many ways between October of 2017 and February 2018, including meeting with key committees and church groups, meeting with the children and middle schoolers, meeting over dinner at Vespers, soliciting input via Chalice Chatter, email, meeting with individuals, and in many formal and informal settings. Many excellent conversations and much deep reflection about who we are as a religious organization and where we see ourselves going occurred.

Not surprisingly, we discovered that there are many varying reasons why people come to church and many varying visions for where we are going as a spiritual community. But we found wide agreement that the First Unitarian Church of Oakland is and should increasingly be a force for the reduction of oppressions of all kinds, starting with our own church community and continuing out into the Oakland community and beyond. Putting words to that central vision was wonderfully challenging. In our work, we held in mind these characteristics of a vision statement:

- Forward looking - pointing to where we want to be in the future
- Powerful, concentrated language
- Aspirational/inspirational
- Pleasing cadence
- Short and memorable
- Based on congregational input and feedback□

Our team proposal, to be voted upon at the 2018 annual meeting is:

We are building a spiritual community in the heart of Oakland, welcoming all to end oppression with more love, more peace, more joy, more justice.

Women's Retreat

Submitted by Kem Tetlow

"Finding Faith in an Age of Fear" was the theme of the 2017 Women's Retreat. It was held again in Loma Mar, CA at Redwood Glen May 19-21, 2017.

Forty-one women and children attended the retreat which featured special workshops on Healing Through Singing, Improvisational Theater, Political Action, Yoga, Mindful Walking and

the usual Campfire Circle, Women's Dance, Worship service, a Goddess ritual, and Secret Sister exchanges. The Committee included Emily Stoper, Kate Lenhardt, Janet McFarland, Kem Tetlow, Hilary Near, and Debbie Brown.

Young Adult Group

Submitted by Lanie Peterson and Brian Joaquin

The FUCO Young Adult Group is for anyone 18-35+ (and those young at heart, no age limit!) who are interested in Unitarian Universalism, building community, or just want to have fun. The group currently has 194 members on the FB group, but the number of active participants is estimated to be around 20 to 30. Over the past few months we have had several new people join, and so we would like to offer them opportunities to meet others and to get involved.

Brian Joaquin, and Board Member, Ella Wise, facilitated the first annual Halloween Young Adult Salon Party to discuss our hopes and dreams for FUCO's 2018 church program year. Six participants attended with lively discussions regarding what it means to be called to love and its relationship with stewardship.

The Young Adult Group recently conducted a survey to gauge what sorts of activities and events the young adults would like for the group to offer. Our survey (20 people completed it) shows that most people joined the Young Adult Group because they want a sense of community. Other reasons for joining include searching for a spiritual home, or that they are drawn to the social justice oriented approach of the church. The survey also revealed that 70% are "very interested" in a potluck, and 75% would like to have it monthly.

The following ideas were also suggested by those who filled out the survey: service days (cleaning Oakland Parks, etc), life skills workshops/classes (budgeting, parenting, etc), self-care practices, men's emotional support, annual camping trip, and local field trips. The Young Adult Group plans to start offering monthly potlucks in March 2018 on the 4th Friday of each month, and would also like to offer some of the above suggestions throughout the year. There is a UU Young Adult Camp for the Pacific Southwest District over Labor Day weekend near Los Angeles that the FUCO Young Adult Group plans to attend.

FUCO Young Adult business cards are currently being made and will be available starting in March so that the Hospitality Team can give them to new people attending church. The current leadership of the FUCO Young Adult Group is Brian Joaquin, Sarah Letson, Lynn Gallogly, Michelle Ma, and Lanie Peterson.