



**ANNUAL REPORT 2015**  
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS

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# FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS

## 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

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## 2014-2015 ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2014 IN THE SANCTUARY  
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, MO  
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, A CORPORATION

Call to Order and Welcome	Diane Fawcett, President
Opening Words	Rev. Thomas Perchlik, Minister
Reading of Congregational Covenant	Kathy Wire, Peace-Building Liaison
Minutes of the May 18, 2014 Annual Meeting	Erin Milligan, Secretary
Minister's Report	Rev. Thomas Perchlik, Minister
Church President's Remarks and Report	Diane Fawcett, President
Church Secretary's Report	Erin Milligan, Secretary
Church Treasurer's Report	Jim Bosnick, Treasurer
Budget Report	Jim Bosnick, Treasurer
Vote to Affirm FY16 Budget	<i>Action Item (Jim Bosnick)</i>
Leadership Development and Nominations: Report and Presentation of Slate of Officers and Trustees	Tiffany Sewell, LD&N Liaison
Vote on Officers and Trustees	<i>Action Item (Tiffany Sewell)</i>
Windows Renovation-Honor Roll, state of project and funding	<i>Sarah Dashner</i>
Sound System Upgrade-Proposal	Clint Cruse
Membership Coordinator Grant	Rev. Thomas Perchlik, Minister
Recognition of Officers and Trustees	Diane Fawcett, President
Fathman and Ross Award Presentation	Diane Fawcett, President
Presidential Transition	Diane Fawcett and Incoming President
Closing Words	Rev. Thomas Perchlik, Minister
Adjournment	<i>Action Item</i>

MINUTES OF THE 2013-2014 ANNUAL MEETING  
OF FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI  
AND FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, A CORPORATION  
SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2014

1. Meeting was called to order by Janet Oriatti.
2. Motion to appoint George Grimm-Howell moderator for the meeting made by Diane Fawcett.
  - \* Motion seconded and approved unanimously.
3. Reverend Thomas offered opening words.
4. Minutes of 2013 Annual Meeting
  - \* Motion to approve without reading made, seconded and passed unanimously.
5. Reverend Thomas offered comments in addition to his report published in the Annual Report. He feels that the Church is at the end of the period of shoring up the institutional base required by conflict over previous issues. He now feels more able to spend a majority of his time on pastoral issues. He praised the work of the Peace Building team and of Treasurer, Jim Bosnick.
6. Janet Oriatti offered remarks which highlighted the most important work and accomplishments of the last year. These are the work of the By-laws Task Force, the new Functional descriptions for positions and committees, the growth of the Peace-Building Team, new Finance policies and the formation of key committees (Leadership and Nominations; Strategic Planning, Capital budget planning, and the new Development Committee).

Work on the Committee on Ministry did not happen through this year and needs to be attended in the next year.
- \* Motion to accept the President's Report was made, seconded and approved unanimously.
7. Diane Fawcett reported on her year as President of the Church Council. The Council operation was much smoother in this, the second year of its existence. Understanding had been gained that Committees and Clusters are empowered to make many decisions without reference to "higher authority".
  - \* Motion to accept the President of the Church Council's report was made, seconded and approved unanimously.
8. Allyn O'Byrne read the Secretary's report
  - \* Motion to accept the Secretary's report was made, seconded and approved unanimously.
9. Jim Bosnick read the Treasurer's Report. He mentioned the expected deficit of \$23,000 for the current year, but indicated that next year's budget is in balance and he does not expect a similar deficit at the end of next year.
  - \* Motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made, seconded and approved unanimously.
10. Janet Oriatti asked the congregation to affirm sponsorship of Jim Crawford in his candidacy to be a UU minister. This would confirm his affiliation with this Church as a base, but he will have no ministerial responsibility and no cost will be incurred.
  - \* Motion to sponsor Jim Crawford in his candidacy was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

11. Jim Bosnick presented the Operating Budget for the FY 2014-2015. The Budget is in balance.

Highlights were the decrease in income drawn from the Endowment (which will contribute to the growth of the Endowment Fund) and the expected increase in revenue from Fundraising and Development.

On the expense side cuts have been made, notably limiting or eliminating salary increases for staff.

- \* Motion to accept the Proposed Budget was made and seconded.
- \* Discussion followed with one question addressed to the \$2000 gift from the Women's Alliance. The decision was made to incorporate all of this gift into revenue for this budget which will mean the final budget will show a positive balance of \$1001.
- \* WiFi was not budgeted but is on a list of things that are needed if funds become available in the future.
- \* Following this discussion the motion was passed unanimously.

12. Chris Fawcett presented the slate of officers for next year.

- \* Motion to approve this slate was made, seconded.
- \* Discussion: The question was raised about why no candidate designated as President Elect. The answer is that this is not required in the existing By-laws and it is felt that the idea of automatic succession is flawed and will not be continued.
- \* Following this discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

13. Allyn O'Byrne presented the First Edition of the First UU Policy Manual. She emphasized the need for continued work to make this document complete and easily

accessible by all the congregation.

14. Betsy Grimm-Howell and Lia Koehler presented the work of the By-Laws Task Force, emphasizing the major changes that will result from them and also emphasizing the desire of the Task Force for feedback on the document from all members of the congregation. After a series of informational meetings, final vote on the new By-Laws is anticipated at a special meeting in October 2014.

- \* Questions: Is there a change in the effective date of service for elected positions? Janet responded that the new By-Laws include a provision for a deliberate overlap between old and new offices to create an effective transition process.

Janet affirmed the importance of each member of the congregation to review the document and offer comments prior to the final meeting to vote on the proposal.

15. Janet recognized and thanked outgoing Board and Council members and Church officers for their service.

16. Janet presented the Ross Lifetime Achievement Award to Margaret Weck.

17. The Fathman Award will be given to Claire Birge when she returns from her vacation.

18. Janet presented a gavel to Diane Fawcett to symbolize the transition of the President's office.

19. Closing words were offered by Reverend Thomas.

Meeting was adjourned at 1PM.

*—Respectfully submitted by Allyn O'Byrne*

# POLICY BOARD ROSTER 2014-2015

## Church Officers

**Diane Fawcett** ..... Church President

**Alice Crowder** .... Church Council Chair

**Erin Milligan** ..... Secretary

**Jim Bosnick** ..... Treasurer

## POLICY BOARD MEMBERS

**Bob Franklin (2015)**  
**Capitol Budget Planning**  
(h) 314-962-2548  
Bob-franklin@msn.com

**Sarah Dashner (2015)**  
**Committee on Ministry**  
(h) 314-645-8609S  
sdashner\_1@hotmail.com

**Larry Dusenbery (2017)**  
**Long Range Planning**  
(h) 314-962-0277  
larrydusenbery@msn.com

**Tiffany Sewell (2017)**  
**Leadership and Development**  
(h) 314-954-4759  
Tiffany.A.Sewell@gmail.com

**Kathy Wire (2016)**  
**Healthy Congregations/  
Peace Building**  
(h) 314-567-7615  
kathy@wireriskstrategies.com

CHURCH COUNCIL ROSTER  
2014-2015

**Alice Crowder**  
Church Council President

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**Bill Drendel (2015)**  
Outreach & Social Action Cluster  
(h) 314-645-4942  
Bill.drendel@sbcglobal.net

**Karen Siegrist (2016)**  
Facilities Work Group Cluster  
(h) 314-968-4683  
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karensiegrist@gmail.com

**Scot Boulton (2017)**  
Stewardship Cluster  
(h) 636-346-7296  
rharding@formfast.com

**Jeremy Colton (2017)**  
Membership Cluster  
(h) 618-798-9778  
jeremy1952@sbcglobal.net

**Dwight Homer (2015)**  
Programming Cluster  
(h) 314-667-8199  
Dwight.homer@gmail.com



# MINISTER'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY REV. THOMAS PERCHLIK

## SUMMARY

Our congregation is stable. Our shared spirit is good, hopeful and healthy. Though we have our difficulties, some echoes from the years of transition and turmoil, we are responding well, and are ready to face the challenges and demands of our faith and purpose. Above all, this year has been dominated by the cultural currents of our metro-area. The movement, now known as "Black Lives Matter," rose up in August and we had to decide how to respond, how to seek understanding and then to decide where we stand. We have made good choices. Another key element of this year is the steady presence and excellent ministry of Rose Schwab as our Ministerial Intern. We are ready and able to keep making wise choices together, to deepen personal faith and extend our public influence.

## MISSION

The ultimate vision of our church is to create a world of love, decency, generosity, tolerance, inclusion, compassion and justice. We have faith that the compassionate use of reason and the thoughtful guide of love will get us to this end.

The mission statement that currently guides this congregation is:

We unite to provide a hospitable sanctuary, for seeking the sources of spiritual strength enabling people, in the church and the world, to work for love, decency, tolerance, and justice.

I seek to help us embody this mission by working in collaboration with you all on four goals: to create Inspiring Worship, engage in Social Responsibility, practice Good Stewardship, provide Excellent Religious Education, and form Caring Community.

## STEWARDSHIP

By stewardship, I mean responsible use and management of our resources of materials, money, talent, and time. Materially our building is in great shape because we have an excellent Facilities Committee, and we work at improving our religious home through such initiatives as the current Windows Project, as well as our ongoing garden and grounds improvements. In this way, we preserve our heritage, while upgrading for the future.

Financially, we have seen increases in collections and pledged income. However, we have also had to face the loss of our largest source of pledged income. I trust the wise minds in our leadership, and especially on the Finance Committee (**Steve Smidowicz**, Finance Committee Chair), to find a way beyond this challenge.

We all know that more than half our budget goes to our staff. This year we have seen the end of Mary Ward's term as our excellent Administrator, and joyfully Yvette Clemons has stepped up to run the church. We are looking to bring in a new Administrative Assistant soon, depending on how the budget develops. All in all this transition has been very smooth and church operations are moving forward into a new era.

Most exciting will be the addition of a new part-time membership-involvement coordinator. This position has been created thanks to a very generous grant from Rob Harding. We look to hire someone to begin this new job by mid-summer. The goal of this person will be to help us welcome and integrate more members and friends, and to help prevent loss of standing members and friends whenever possible. I emphasize, the

membership-involvement coordinator will not grow our church, but will create the patterns and programs that will enable us to create an ever expanding source of spiritual strength.

Sometimes mountains create what is called a rain-shadow. In our church we are in a sort of leadership-shadow, where it is difficult to find all the leaders we need. Hopefully the involvement coordinator will help us with finding new leaders. Fortunately, the new Governance structure is fully functioning, and we have adopted new bylaws. Dianne Fawcett has done a great job as President, and despite her bout with cancer, Alice Crowder has filled the role of Council Chair admirably.

Good church governance is essential to keep volunteer resources from being wasted or frustrated. Consequently, your Minister is directly involved in the governance of this church.

Our Leadership Development/volunteer management procedures are still “in process” but this congregation has never failed to find good leaders when the need arises.

### **WORSHIP**

It has been a personal and professional joy to work with Rose Schwab this year. People continually tell me that worship services, led by both Rose and me, have been excellent, and beautiful, with creative and inspiring sermons.

However, a trend that began in 2013-2014, has continued in 2014-2015. Attendance on Sunday has stabilized, just as total membership has settled around 320. This is a fine thing, except that we have been oriented toward growth. In order to shake things up, in January we went to only one service per Sunday at 10:00AM. Sadly, this had no measurable impact on attendance. For most people the change to one service per Sunday has been an improvement. However, there are a few people, well loved and valuable people, who's

needs were better served by coming to worship at 9:00AM or at 11:00. We are now waiting until we have a clear need for another service before going back to two each Sunday. Either we must reach 80 percent capacity or greater for several Sundays, or we must identify a particular compelling need that a second service will meet which the current pattern does not. In the meantime, the only debate is if the service in September should begin at a time other than 10:00.

Meanwhile, the once a month offering of Vespers services have become a well-attended part of our church life. Especially meaningful have been our Equinox and Solstice services. ERDE, (Earth Reverent Dedicants Extraordinaire) continue to offer other lovely earth-centered services as the wheel of the year turns. Attendance has also been encouraging at the two distinctly Christian evening services of our year: Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. Personally, I find that these services deepen my understanding and appreciation of our heritage, as well as Lent and Easter.

My overarching worship theme for this past year has been “Inclusion” in response to the issues surrounding race and justice. I expanded that to generous inclusion as part of the Canvass theme.

Equal in importance to spoken words in worship, is music. The variety of styles of music we use on Sunday remains very diverse, in style and instrumentation, while quality remains high. This year, we have embraced the talents and style of our new Organist-accompanist, Earl Naylor. He seems to truly enjoy working with us and that shows in his music. Yoanna Park-Haynes has been central in bringing great music to our Sunday worship through family, friends and fundraising. And of course, Joel Knapp has continued his great work as Music Director, reaching a high point with the amazing performance of Mozart's *Vespers of the Confessor*, on May 3.

Carl Bassi continues the great work ensuring that we record services and post audio files of sermons online. Due to Copyright issues we will not podcast full services but we can perhaps expand what we offer in the future.

All in all the main value of worship is not merely in its content, but in the full experience of physically gathering with our liberal religious community to shape what is of worth, and to seek the spiritual resources that enable us to live lives of love, dignity, reason and compassion, peace and justice.

### **EDUCATION/FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

Excellent Religious Education is essential for deepening the faith and character of our people. Toward this end, I conducted one Credo Group and a session on UU Buddhism and participated in other events. My involvement with Washington University Interfaith Campus Ministries continues, especially as I have been elected to serve as Vice President, and I have been actively supportive of the developing UU Student Group on campus.

It is great to know that Lynn Hunt will continue to serve this church as Life-Span Faith Development Director. She and I work together to help integrate the Children's program with all of church life, and we seek to help the church be more complete and complex in religious education offerings for adults. This year the lion's share of Adult RE work went into exploring issues of white privilege, intercultural competency and racial justice.

Covenant Group program continues steadily with Ms. Hunt and William Allen overseeing operations. I encourage this program because Covenant Groups continue to be one of our most valuable faith development programs. In the fall I led another Credo Group. The Library committee continues to maintain that valuable resource, and Dan Franklin has

continued to tend the wonderful Members and Friends Gallery.

Above all, I truly enjoy being an Internship Supervisor and am pleased that we will continue to be blessed with a vital Ministerial Internship program. The main point of offering an Internship is it to help a new minister to learn. However, it is also true that Ministerial Interns add to our church in many ways. This has been especially true with Rose Schwab. We are proud to have been part of her life and Ministerial development.

### **CARING COMMUNITY / MEMBERSHIP**

A most basic practice is that we all must truly care for one another. Claire Birge and the Caring Committee are doing a great job of maintaining connections with many people in the congregation, but in this church of over 320 Members and Friends the work of any committee could never be enough. The committee meets regularly to inform one another and coordinate our ministries. Also, I continue to use the Caring Fund to help with occasional financial needs, and we are always seeking ways to provide official care and concern within our church. In the end the real caring is always done by the members and friends of the church for one another.

Likewise, the Peace Building Team is here to help y'all do the work of building Peace, not to build peace for you. They help us see peace building as the result of our spiritual disciplines. I also facilitate coordination between their work and that of Lynn Hunt and the Safety Committee and integrate all that into the life of our church.

To further our community and connections, we have a fabulous Feasts and Festivals committee that facilitates wonderful gatherings of the active church core. Likewise, Wonderful Wednesdays are steady in attendance and appeal, though their full potential for community building has yet to be realized. It seems that much of my work is

institutional and managerial, which means I have less time to visit you during the week than I might otherwise like. As always, I invite you to set up a time to talk, in my office, on a walk outdoors or at a local café.

### **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY/ COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Inclusion and Civil Rights: This past year our attention to matters of civil rights, peacemaking and inclusion rose to dominate our social responsibility work. Lynn Hunt has done a marvelous job of expanding our classes along these lines, and stepping up to lead the Toward Justice group. Though I was on the streets of Ferguson the Monday after Michael Brown was killed, I was inspired by how almost everyone in our church found ways to engage with the issues of the day. For some protest was essential, while others participated in community conversations and panel discussions. Some sought to support the people they knew in the police community, and we even had a Children's class reach out to the local police station. Meanwhile, others of deepened old relationships, or made new connections with people out in the community around issues of Black Lives Matter. We hosted students from Union Theological Seminary, learned our congregational history in terms of race, and even came to see our literacy work through Reading Buddies take on deeper meaning and importance in terms of this year's uprisings.

Our Clark Lecturer, Dr. Stefan Bradley, reminded us that our nation continues to treat justice and democratic involvement as an experiment for some, rather than a guarantee, for all. I hope we will find other ways to partner with Dr Bradley in the future.

Also, very importantly, through worship such as UU United Nations (First Nations) Sunday, Civil Rights Sunday, and Partner Church

Sunday our ongoing programs have expanded our concerns about race and justice into larger circles.

Because of this focus on race related issues the Welcoming Congregation initiative has moved to a secondary, but still essential, part of our inclusion work.

Anti-poverty: One of our most significant efforts is to support those who are already doing excellent work in the STL metro area through our Designated Collections each month. This program allows us to connect us to people outside our church, who are making a positive difference in accord with our values and vision. We have a fantastic Sandwich Making Sunday; we supplement the Trinity Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen, and we deeply support Gateway 180. Our involvement with the Holy Ground Collaborative, especially through the Trinity Soup Kitchen, and now also through M-SLICE, help us expand our mission into the neighborhood of our church building.

Green Sanctuary: Because we know that no ministry is sustainable if the earth is stretched beyond its sustainable capacity, this is an essential dimension of our Social Responsibility programs. This year we came to realize that our initial Green Sanctuary work has become integrated into the life of the church. We continue to work to be a more energy-efficient church, by restoring our oldest windows, we are continue to sustain our sustainable Greenleaf Garden, and make our grounds more lovely and environmentally healthy. Thus we have begun the process of re-certification to continue to love the earth and all living things.

*Yours in Peace,  
Reverend Thomas Perchlik*

# LEWIS INTERN'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY ROSE SCHWAB

About this time last year, I received a phone call from a very special internship committee. I had had several interviews before, to varying levels of success and offers, but I had yet to find a church that seemed to fit. Then, one day, I was sitting on my couch in Brooklyn and I got a phone call from a group of people who were warm, interesting, kind, and honest. They were Carole Watson, Emily Jaycox, Joanne Boulton, Joan Kindleberger, Jerry McAdams, Chucky Eby, Jeanette Myers, and Thomas Perchlik. They called back an hour later and I accepted.

At the end of this internship, I am now faced with the following question: is ministry the most amazing thing that ever happened to me (a career that will suit and support me for my life's work), or is the St. Louis congregation just really, unerringly warm, interested, and kind? I prefer to think it's the former, but the idea that the goodness and stability of this congregation could give me pause to actually consider that question tells me how wonderful this internship has been.

The start of my internship was radically colored by the uprisings that took place in and around St. Louis last fall. I was therefore asked, in my first three months of professional ministry, to be present to a city in crisis. The intensity of the situation did not stop me from serving the congregation. I taught a class on African American UU History, I hopes to start a conversation about this history. I helped facilitate the Women of Color group during the fall, and hosted 20 students from Union Theological Seminary for Ferguson October. This was a powerful and intense experience for me that, although no surprise considering the economic and racial climate of our world, felt like baptism by fire. By coincidence, my preaching schedule happened to include the Sunday after the non-indictment verdict was announced. I knew that I would be expected to produce a sermon for the congregation that would do what was impossible for me to do for myself: understand. As I often feel in my writing, sermons grab ahold of me and won't let go. This sermon had me in a vice-grip,

and I sweated blood and tears over this sermon. For, I myself was grieving and torn. But, as a service to the congregation, I struggled through my personal emotional landscape and produced a sermon and a service that I hoped cut through bi-partisan debates and spoke to the heart of the issue: accountability to the African American community. I used the theological concept of covenant to trace the history of broken covenant in US racial history, and out of covenant I pulled accountability and tied it, or the lack thereof, to the racial issues in Ferguson. I invited a woman of color who is a candidate for the ministry to speak in the service, and led us through a 4 ½ minute vigil. I worked very hard to create a sermon that was clear, inspirational, loving, and serious. The service addressed the current events directly with names and instances (for we had been deeply and personally involved in every step of the conflict), but there was no blame, only grief and inspiration and a desire to move deeper into our commitment to social justice.

Which brings me to my next point: preaching. If I were for some reason made to answer what the most important, lovely, blossoming, and formative part of this internship was, my answer would be, without a doubt, "preaching!" Having not written many sermons before this year, I was pleasantly surprised to find it deeply sating. I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks for *all* of the support and love this congregation has offered me, but specifically for the love in regards to my sermons.

Lastly, I was given a resounding "1!" by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee in April. This success is, in very large part, due to the wisdom of Thomas in helping me understand that passing the MFC is a main focus of an internship. But I am also indebted to the congregation...your love and confidence gave me the idea that I actually *can* do this work. And that is a rare and beautiful gift that I accept humbly and gratefully. I will always carry First U with me in my heart and in my ministry.

# CHURCH PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY DIANE FAWCETT

Just about a year ago I urged everyone to join me in the journey of change soon to be embarked upon and this has been a wonderful journey. It's a "great good fortune" to have the privilege and honor to be a leader of this congregation. This has been a year of education, joys, sorrows and challenges. And yet, I still believe that we are in a good place on a strong path. I am eagerly waiting to watch the ongoing changes, progressions, and growth over the coming months and years. I strongly urge and encourage everyone to be engaged as fully as possible and become an integral part of the ongoing legacy of this congregation. Thank you to each and every member and friend for an incredible journey; I wouldn't have made it without you.

Below is a brief summary of the accomplishments of this year's Board, Council, and Committees. There is always work to be done and much of it is ongoing. The transition of moving toward a year-round program means that work does not come to an end; it is ongoing and vibrant, and requires the attention of all.

## ***Programming/Mission***

Our year-round programming and ongoing mission continue to be a primary focus that covers many aspects of life within and outside of Sunday services. The year started with the engagement of a new organist recommended by the Music Committee and the organist search team. We are fortunate to have the services and skills of Earl Naylor serving our congregational thirst for exceptional music since August of 2014.

We are blessed and enriched by the very capable skills, knowledge and engaging spirit of a year with our Lewis Ministerial Intern,

Rose Schwab. The selection committee is to be commended for making an excellent connection. Rose engaged the community in Women of Color; and actively supports the Toward Justice initiatives.

Many members and friends actively responded and supported the St. Louis community in response to the unfortunate situations surrounding the City of Ferguson. The Anti-racist, Anti-oppression, Multi-culturalism group evolved to Toward Justice.

## ***Governance***

### **Bylaws Revisions**

The most significant accomplishment was the adoption of proposed Bylaws revisions at the Special Congregational Meeting called for that purpose. Ably chaired by Scot Boulton, the congregation convened a quorum; listened to, discussed, and ultimately approved agreed upon revisions. Bylaws revisions were approved and became effective on October, 25, 2014.

### **Leadership Development & Nominations**

The Leadership Development Committee had three core achievements this year: introducing the True Colors personality model to the Board, Council, Long-range Planning Committee and a Wonderful Wednesday group; launch of a new skills and interests survey for members and friends; and recruitment of members to fill open positions on the Board and Council for the coming year.

### **Peace Building Team**

The Peace Building Team is still discerning its exact role, as it is a relatively new component of our congregation. Team members hosted an exercise in communicating through conflict for the Policy Board and Council members at their annual retreat and also hosted a learning

session for those interested in experiencing some simple conflict management techniques. The Team remains available for support in any situation where conflict is present or anticipated, and it can facilitate meetings or other conversations. Though we thought we might have our work cut out for us in the aftermath of the Ferguson situation and its aftermath, we did not. This is a testament, we believe, to the efforts of church leaders and staff, who engaged the issue early and often. We recognize, though, that the St. Louis area and our congregation have much more work to do as we engage in the underlying issues that led to the “Ferguson” events, and the Team looks forward to supporting that work. The congregation can also look forward to more scheduled learning opportunities from the Team.

#### **Long Range Planning Committee**

A committee was formed this past fall and has started the important process of discernment and discussion on how and where we want to take the church in the next 3-5 years. The committee is working to identify the vision, goals, and plans that will provide direction in allocating our resources and prioritizing our various programs and initiatives.

Committee members have continued the discussions that the Board and Church Council began last year. The group is in a “discovery” phase, working with each of the church Cluster groups and committee as well as seeking feedback from the congregation. The next step is to take the key “themes” that we have identified and develop specific goals and plans. These will be presented to the Board/Council and congregation.

Members include: Larry Dusenbery-chair, Charles Deal, Jama Dodson, Tony Fathman, Paulita Pranschke, and Woody Sullivan.

#### **Finance**

Our congregation continues to be challenged in generating sufficient revenues to meet operational expenses. We successfully navigated through the process of a three year staggered reduction of the capped endowment draw for operational expenditures. The canvass campaigns continue to be successful in educating members and friends on annual expenditures however, significant factors affecting future revenues became evident recently. Overall estimates of giving for the coming fiscal year represented increases and new pledges. Factors not considered on a regular basis are the loss of contributors due to relocation, financial hardships, and death. We are especially susceptible this year to all three factors. It is the belief of the Board, Council and Staff that through increases in volunteer efforts, development of yet undiscovered sources of revenue and careful evaluation of expenditures we will strengthen our connections and work through the challenges we face in the coming fiscal year. We are very fortunate to have a skilled, informed and active Finance Committee who are good caretakers of our financial well-being.

#### **ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS**

The Safety Committee submitted and received approval on and official Safe Church Policy. The Policy is comprehensive in insuring the safety of our members, friends and staff in a variety of situations. Future education is planned to insure the congregation is aware of necessary policy and procedures.

Last year Facilities embarked on the Window Renovation Project. Funding for the project to date has been covered by individual contributions. Although there still remains a balance to complete the project, it is gratifying to know that approximately 75% of the total cost was covered by your contributions.

# CHURCH COUNCIL

SUBMITTED BY ALICE CROWDER  
PRESIDENT-ELECT & CHURCH COUNCIL CHAIR

This is the third year of operation for the Council after church governance was reorganized several years ago. The current organizational design appears to be working well. The past year has seen a number of accomplishments but progress has not been without its challenges: Due to serious illness, the Council Chair was absent for most of the winter months so joint Council/ Board meetings were held in December and February. The Council did meet on schedule for most of its other monthly meetings except for November. That meeting was canceled since it was the night the Ferguson Grand Jury released its verdict in the Michael Brown death.

## **Highlights of the Year**

- Participating in the Board/Council Retreat
- Reinstating the annual Committee Fair in early September
- Working with By-Laws Task Force to assure congregational approval of the new By-Laws
- Green-lighting a new IT Task Force
- Authorizing the purchase of a new refrigerator for the Fellowship Hall kitchen
- Voting to increase rental charge for outside agencies using our facilities
- Working to advance the windows project and improve the church's sound system
- Agreeing to the single Sunday worship service until increased numbers warrant the resumption of two services
- Finally, working to resolve serious budget challenges for the next fiscal year (still a work-in-progress at time of this writing)



# CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY YVETTE CLEMONS

Six years ago I was hired as the Administrative Assistant for the office supporting the staff in various tasks. The years are going by fast and I can see the development of the church's social media visibility through Facebook, Twitter, PayPal and Wufoo. There are new channels for every member to be encouraged to take part in fellowship activities.

The church office telecommunications have improved with the new phone/internet service. We continue to work towards creating a robust social media through our Facebook page with beautiful pictures and informative posts and lively conversations.

Our website caters to the needs of our church and community. Each page states a clear message and purpose, organized with headlines and sub-headlines that allow others to transact with our church. We strive to have navigation that continues to make it easy for everyone to move around the website to view internal and external church activities. **Carl Bassi** provides the capability to listen to recorded sermons on site.

Another addition to our website is the ability to pay your pledge, pay for events and make other various contributions on-line using PayPal. You may have seen PayPal being used in Fellowship Hall for purchasing Fair Trade coffee items.

Our monthly newsletter is available on-line and provides information that aligns activities with the strategic plan for the church and its members. Thanks to **Donald Jeffries** for taking the time out of his busy schedule to help monthly with proofreading the newsletter before going to print. In addition, I would like to express great gratitude for our newsletter folders for their time every month with folding the newsletter for mail distribution.

I am looking forward to the coming year and teaming with the various committees to focus on efforts that will continue to cultivate strong relationships in the community, as well as in the church.

This past year, we hired Elliott Smith as our new church custodian. Elliott takes pride in work and it shows.

I thank our Church Council, Policy Board and Finance Committee, for the many volunteer hours put in to balance a budget that reflects the mission and vision of the church. Difficult, sometimes painful decisions were made, but they were made with loving stewardship. A reminder that our committees are essential to the life and growth of the congregation.

I would also like to thank **Rose Schwab** who we welcomed into the church office as our Ministerial Intern. Rose is very enthusiastic and insightful. I will miss her when she leaves in June, but we all wish her much success and prosperity in her ministry.

I work with the world's best office staff. It is very rewarding to know that **Rev. Thomas Perchlik , Lynn Hunt, Augie Underwood and Rose Schwab** are there in numerous ways to encourage and help when needed. In fact, "Ms Augie" volunteers hours each week to help the office while we search for a Administrative Assistant.

Of course, I have to mention **Mary Ward** for her reassuring guidance during my training.

Moreover, I thank the First Unitarian Church family for the endearing and constant support for the church office staff.

# SECRETARY'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY ERIN MILLIGAN

<b>Sustaining Members:</b>	<b>324</b>	Noelle Annica Turcotte	
<b>Associate Members:</b>	<b>16</b>	Ember Sasha Turcotte	
		Kaasya Brielle Turcotte	
		<b>Wedding/Union Ceremonies:</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>New Members:</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Resignations:</b>	<b>25</b>
Trinis Collins		Carrie Bistro	
Amanda Dever		John Bowen	
Jesse Figueroa		Vicki Carlson	
Sara Figueroa		Jim Crawford	
Meghan Garvey		Patricia Kyle Dennis	
Phillip Greene		Susan Gillespie	
Brittany Hagedorn		Ted and Carolyn Haller	
Stephen Harris		Jennifer Hranolovich	
Jeff Krull		Susan Dixie Jawad	
Dan Livengood		Alice Karandjeff	
Angela Minor		Carol and Dale Klooster	
Joel Minor		Sean McIroy	
Amanda Sherwood		Kiri O'Brien	
Eric Turcotte		Joel and Diane Pennington	
		Ambrosia Rode	
<b>Deaths, Memorial Services:</b>	<b>8</b>	Randy Sweeney	
*Dorothy Cole		Ron Scharf	
Renni Shuter		Jeff Spinks	
Gerald Little		Vicky Stringer	
Clara Gempel		Brian Tobey	
Jamie Ryan		Albert VanAmburg	
Tom Hungerford		Carolyn Widman	
Caroline Arnold			
Jeanne Casey		<b>Reinstated:</b>	<b>2</b>
* <i>Memorial Garden Interment</i>		Bobbie Fernandes Brantley	
<b>Child Dedications:</b>	<b>5</b>	Patricia Kyle Dennis	
Aubin Kai Turcotte		<b>Change to Associate Membership:</b>	<b>1</b>
Blaise Ashton Turcotte		Susan Davis	

Our total membership at the end of the 2014-15 year is at 324. 14 new members and 2 reinstated members have joined us.

Membership was reduced by through 25 resignations and 2 deaths.

Average membership growth over the last few years: 26 members.

5 child dedications performed throughout the year.

Previously, the 11 am service had twice the attendance as the 9:15 service. No statistics for the new combined service.

24 people serve as teachers, and there are 55 children in attendance.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY JIM BOSNICK

*Data as of April 30, 2015, prepared May 9, 2015*

## **Income Statement**

### **Income**

YTD total income of \$506K vs YTD budget of \$494K, a favorable variance of \$12K.

YTD pledge income of \$421K vs YTD budget of \$408K, a favorable variance of \$13K.

Other Income:

Regular plate collections of \$10.2K vs YTD budget of \$9.2K, an favorable variance of \$1.0K.

Designated collections of \$13.8K vs YTD budget of \$13.3K, a favorable variance of \$.5K

YTD building use income of \$13.9K vs YTD budget of \$10.1K, a favorable variance of \$3.8K

YTD investment income of \$26.4K vs YTD budget of \$31.8K, an unfavorable variance of \$5.4K.

YTD fundraising income of \$2.0K vs YTD budget of \$8.3K, an unfavorable variance of \$6.3K.

### **Expense**

YTD total expense of \$471K vs YTD budget of \$478K, a favorable variance of \$7K.

YTD salaries and wages of \$246K vs YTD budget of \$229K, an unfavorable variance of \$17K

YTD total staffing, including staff expenses, of \$306K vs YTD budget of \$290K, an unfavorable variance of \$16K

YTD expenses for all other major categories are collectively below YTD budget, however, are broken down as follows (negative amounts being favorable):

Administrative +5.3K, Building -9.4K, Music +0.1K, Education +0.4K,

Membership -2.4K, Social Outreach -1.2K, Denominational Support -15.5K (-18.3 is intern salary).

### **Net Income**

YTD net income of an \$36K gain vs YTD budget of \$16K gain, a favorable variance of \$20K.

## **Balance Sheet**

Total assets valued at \$4.718M, an increase of \$6K over the past month and an increase of \$20K over the past year.

The balance in our bank account decrease to \$44K from \$45K in the previous month, and an increase of \$50K over the previous year.

The value of the pooled investment portfolio, as reported in QuickBooks, is \$1.335M, an increase of \$30K over the past year.

Total liabilities were \$156K, an increase of \$2K over the past month and an increase of 37K over the past year (approximately \$8.6k is windows reserves).

**Notable Items**

2015-2016 Budget

Windows Reserves & Fundraising Efforts

Sound System Consideration

General Fund & Endowment Fund Review

Federal Bond Transfer

**First Unitarian Church**  
**Balance Sheet**  
As of April 30, 2015

	<b>Total</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Bank Accounts</b>	
10000 Cash-Pulaski Bank	40,319.65
10010 PayPal	3,762.00
10200 Petty Cash	50.00
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$ 44,131.65</b>
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	
15000 Accounts Receivable	0.00
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>Other current assets</b>	
13000 Pooled Investments	0.00
13100 General Fund	273,426.71
13110 Endowment Fund	641,528.56
13200 Lewis Fund	198,618.10
13300 Clark Fund	104,410.91
13400 CAEF	74,403.75
13500 Dodson Fund - Prin	32,578.97
13520 Dodson Fund - Res	10,316.93
<b>Total 13000 Pooled Investments</b>	<b>\$ 1,335,283.93</b>
14000 Treasury Notes	5,990.48
16000 Employee Loan	0.00
16200 Prepaid Expenses	0.00
16800 Employee Cash Advance	0.00
Undeposited Funds	0.00
<b>Total Other current assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,341,274.41</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,385,406.06</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
17200 Real Estate & Improvements	956,091.09
17300 New Chapel & Improvements	2,376,965.91
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$ 3,333,057.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 4,718,463.06</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	
20100 Payroll Liabilities	0.00
20200 Federal Liabilities Payable	78.02
20210 Federal Withholding Payable (deleted)	0.00
20220 FICA Payable (deleted)	
20221 Company FICA (deleted)	0.00
20222 Employee FICA (deleted)	0.00
<b>Total 20220 FICA Payable (deleted)</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
20230 Medicare Payable (deleted)	
20231 Company Medicare (deleted)	0.00
20232 Employee Medicare (deleted)	0.00
<b>Total 20230 Medicare Payable (deleted)</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>Total 20200 Federal Liabilities Payable</b>	<b>\$ 78.02</b>
20300 State Withholding Payable	506.00
20400 City Withholding Payable	176.81
<b>Total 20100 Payroll Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 760.83</b>
<b>20500 Benefits Liabilities</b>	
20510 Insurance Payable	
20511 Health Insurance—Employer paid	1,821.30
20512 Health Insurance—Employee paid	927.46
20513 Life Insurance	52.48
20514 Disability Ins—Employee paid	108.56
20515 Dental Ins—Employee paid	137.00
<b>Total 20510 Insurance Payable</b>	<b>\$ 3,046.80</b>
20530 Retirement—401(a) Payable	5,075.46
20540 Retirement—401(a) WH Payable	0.00
20550 Retirement—SEP IRA Payable	0.00
<b>Total 20500 Benefits Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 8,122.26</b>

21000 Other Liabilities	
21010 Due to outside charities	0.00
21090 Miscellaneous liabilities	2,003.87
21092 A/C Repair Payable	0.00
Total 21000 Other Liabilities	<u>\$ 2,003.87</u>
22000 Transfers from Specific Funds (deleted)	
22100 Transfer from Endowment Fund (deleted)	0.00
22200 Transfer from Lewis Fund (deleted)	0.00
22300 Transfer from Dodson Fund (deleted)	0.00
Total 22000 Transfers from Specific Funds (deleted)	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Direct Deposit Payable	0.00
Payroll Clearing	0.00
Payroll Tax Payable	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 14,740.35</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 14,740.35</u>
Long-Term Liabilities	
23000 Reserves	
23100 Holt	0.00
23200 Sabbatical	33,290.90
23300 Capital Maintenance	16,603.19
23310 Windows	35,861.00
23400 Partner Church	2,549.77
23500 Prepaid Pledges	34,155.00
23575 Prepaid Contributions	0.00
23600 Intern Fund	5,050.00
25000 Memorial and Special Gifts (deleted)	0.00
25011 Memorial Fund	4,401.62
25012 Special Gifts	0.00
25020 Social Responsibility	2,392.22
27000 Other Custodial Accounts	
27010 Office Equipment Reserve	0.00
27020 Bookstore	3,408.87
27024 Boston Trip Reserve	9,316.92
27030 Piano Reserve	8,819.00
27040 Landscape Reserve	3,682.85
27050 Renovation Reserve	0.00
27060 RE Reserve	3,573.74
27065 Sandwich Making	4,367.62
27070 Women's Alliance Op Shop	2,825.78
27080 Caring Ministry Reserve	9,907.33
27090 Keyboard Reserve	456.37
27100 Healthy Congregation Reserve	2,526.48
27110 PR / Marketing	1,125.00
27120 Library	115.00
Total 27000 Other Custodial Accounts	<u>\$ 50,124.96</u>
Total 23000 Reserves	<u>\$ 184,428.66</u>
Total Long-Term Liabilities	<u>\$ 184,428.66</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 199,169.01</u>
Equity	
30000 Opening Bal Equity	0.00
33000 Building Fund	
33100 Building	956,091.09
33500 Building Improvements	2,376,965.91
Total 33000 Building Fund	<u>\$ 3,333,057.00</u>
35000 Fund Balances--Restricted	
35110 Endowment Fund	622,026.60
35200 Lewis Fund	192,057.48
35300 Clark Fund	100,156.37
35400 Community Action Endowment Fund	69,578.38
35500 Dodson Fund - Prin	31,368.71
35520 Dodson Fund - Res	7,549.62
Total 35000 Fund Balances--Restricted	<u>\$ 1,022,737.16</u>
39000 General Fund--Unrestricted	114,602.60
Net Income	15,834.97
Total Equity	<u>\$ 4,486,231.73</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	<u>\$ 4,685,400.74</u>

Saturday, May 03, 2014 01:30:49 PM PDT GMT-5 - Cash Basis

**First Unitarian Church**  
**Profit and Loss**  
 July 2014 - April 2015

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Income</b>	
40000 Operating Pledges	
40010 Current Year Pledges	402,315.37
40090 Prior Year Pledges	18,781.77
<b>Total 40000 Operating Pledges</b>	<b>\$ 421,097.14</b>
40200 Contributions & Collections	
40210 Regular Plate Collection	10,169.42
40250 Designated Collections	13,794.76
40270 Restricted Contributions	
40275 Contributions for Music Program	2,520.00
<b>Total 40270 Restricted Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 2,520.00</b>
40290 Bequests	6,033.29
<b>Total 40200 Contributions &amp; Collections</b>	<b>\$ 32,517.47</b>
40400 Building Use Income	13,918.55
40500 Investment Income-Endowment	22,974.00
40520 Investment Income-General	3,404.63
40800 Fundraisers	
40811 Schnucks	1,261.96
40814 Goodsearch	45.23
40819 Miscellaneous Fundraisers	685.00
<b>Total 40800 Fundraisers</b>	<b>\$ 1,992.19</b>
40910 Interest Income	25.60
40950 Landscape Reserve	1,499.00
41000 Transfer from Lewis Fund	9,000.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 506,428.58</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$ 506,428.58</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
50000 Staffing	
50100 Salaries and Wages	
50120 Gross Wages--Salaries	162,080.76
50130 Gross Wages--Hourly wages	34,688.72
50135 Gross Wages-Contract Labor	20,437.03
50190 Housing Allowance	29,166.60
<b>Total 50100 Salaries and Wages</b>	<b>\$ 246,373.11</b>
50200 Benefits	
50210 Health Insurance	19,783.60
50220 Dental Insurance	136.94
50230 Retirement--401(a) Expense	15,445.94
50260 Life Insurance	551.04
50270 Payroll Taxes	11,265.00
<b>Total 50200 Benefits</b>	<b>\$ 47,182.52</b>
50300 Sabbatical Accrual	4,476.00
50500 Staff Expenses	
50510 Administrator Staff Expense	539.34
50520 Religious Educator Staff Expense	2,764.41
<b>Total 50500 Staff Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 3,303.75</b>
50600 Minister's Expenses	4,352.36
<b>Total 50000 Staffing</b>	<b>\$ 305,687.74</b>
51000 Administrative	
51050 Canvass	3,143.00
51100 Internal Communications	2,557.13
51200 Board Expenses	109.00
51400 Office Supplies	1,556.81
51500 Office Equipment & Repairs	718.92
51600 Bank Charges	30.00
51650 Payment Processing Fees	738.98
51700 Computer Expense	3,705.27
51800 Legal & Accounting	2,873.25



51900 Postage	2,243.70
51920 Mileage	204.08
91997 Leadership Dev & Nominating Comm	300.00
<b>Total 51000 Administrative</b>	<b>\$ 18,180.14</b>
<b>52000 Building</b>	
52100 Building Maintenance	6,404.33
52150 Housekeeping & Supplies	4,648.86
52200 Insurance	9,540.41
52250 Telephone	2,505.91
52300 Utilities	19,807.01
52350 Equipment & Repairs	17,056.13
52400 Contract Labor	15,990.00
52500 Landscaping	3,840.23
52550 Security	5,075.24
52600 Capital Maintenance Reserve	-200.00
<b>Total 52000 Building</b>	<b>\$ 84,668.12</b>
<b>53000 Worship</b>	
53100 Music	
53110 Guest Musicians	4,560.00
53120 Music Supplies & Materials	379.95
53190 Miscellaneous	81.00
<b>Total 53100 Music</b>	<b>\$ 5,020.95</b>
53200 Worship Expenses	952.34
<b>Total 53000 Worship</b>	<b>\$ 5,973.29</b>
<b>53500 Education</b>	
53510 Children and Youth RE	7,411.20
53520 Adult Religious Education	1,619.48
53530 ERDE	14.96
53600 John Learned Library	517.40
<b>Total 53500 Education</b>	<b>\$ 9,563.04</b>
<b>54000 Membership</b>	
54100 Membership Expense	714.03
54200 Hospitality	1,720.75
54300 Feasts & Festivals	-740.87
54303 Welcoming Congregation	37.50
54600 Website	453.89
54980 Safety Task Force	1,361.95
<b>Total 54000 Membership</b>	<b>\$ 3,547.25</b>
<b>55000 Social Action &amp; Outreach</b>	
55100 Social Responsibility Committee	-17.00
55110 Fair Trade Coffee	-637.01
55130 Sandwich-Making	5,945.38
<b>Total 55100 Social Responsibility Committee</b>	<b>\$ 5,291.37</b>
55200 UUSC	-126.23
55300 Designated Collections	11,883.64
55600 Minister's Discretionary Fund	-478.73
55610 Green Sanctuary	1,062.57
55620 Arts Presence	175.93
55700 Interfaith Partnership	-40.00
55750 Care & Concern Ministry	112.61
<b>Total 55000 Social Action &amp; Outreach</b>	<b>\$ 17,881.16</b>
<b>56000 Denominational Support</b>	
56020 UUA	17,450.00
56035 Mid America Region	6,689.10
56050 Partner Church	920.00
56055 Covenant Groups	7.76
56060 Internship	
56065 Intern Prof. Expenses	290.83
<b>Total 56060 Internship</b>	<b>\$ 290.83</b>
<b>Total 56000 Denominational Support</b>	<b>\$ 25,357.69</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 470,858.43</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 35,570.15</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 35,570.15</b>

# LIFE SPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT REPORT

SUBMITTED BY LYNN YARRINGTON HUNT,  
CREDENTIALLED RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR

In the early Fall Children's Religious Education classes were offered at 9:15 & 11:00am (average attendance at 9:15 was 30 and at 11:00 it was 7). Middle School and Youth classes met at 10:00am with an average attendance of 21. All RE classes moved to 10:00am when the church moved to one service time. The yearly average attendance for the children and youth programs was 55 (compared to 67 last year) and enrollment was 111 (compared to 129 last year).

## Worship

Rev. Perchlik gives the **Message for All Ages** at the beginning of church services. This gives the children a chance to interact with the minister on a regular basis and allows Rev. Perchlik to weave the story into the overall service.

The children continue to meet for **Family Chapel** once a month (usually on the first Sunday). Some of the Chapel themes this year were: Being Kind to Yourself and Others (with a Buckingham the Teddy Bear story), Harvest Feast (in which we used produce from the gardens for a feast) and Waking Our Gardens with a Zuni tale called 'Grasshopper's Song.' Our RE Gardens continue to be a central focus of many of our Chapels. These services offer a chance for parents and children to explore a worship theme in a multi-generational setting.

The Christmas Pageant continues to be a cherished tradition in the RE program and in the life of the church. Many thanks to **Sue Herzberg** for directing this year's pageant and to **Jerry McAdams** for overseeing the scenery.

## Education

The Religious Education classes are organized to cover three basic themes in a year: Unitarian Universalist Values and Identity, World Religions and Jewish and Christian Heritages. The classes for the year were:

### 9:15 am

**Pre-School** – *Windows on the World* with **Karen Siegrist, Steve Wilke, Jason McClure and Amanda Kracen.**

**Kindergarten & First** – *Around the Church, Around the Year and Picture Book of World Religions* with **Rebecca Durst, Molly Koebbe, Sue Herzberg, Todd O'Boyle and Shannon O'Boyle.**

**Second & Third Grade** – *Free to Believe* with **Danielle Kozemczak, Kathy Wilke, Grace Munie and Janet Oriatti-Bruns.**

**Fourth & Fifth Grade** – *Windows and Mirrors* with **Kelly Dopman, Laurel Heddens, Tara Perry and Sarah Francois.**

### 10:00am

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade** – This was a very small group this year and a traditional curriculum was ineffective. Creative teachers, **Jim Kirby and Claire Weichselbaum** energized the group around a movie making project – *Why do Bad Things Happen, The Movie* – and a second video project to warn young people about posting too much personal information on social media sites.

**7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class** with teachers **Heidi Meister, Josh Peck and Teresa Deshields** explored relevant topics of racism using the curriculum *Race Towards Justice* and the ever important sexuality course -- *Our Whole Lives*.

The **Youth Group** had a very full year. They served two hot lunches at Trinity Episcopal (part of the Holy Ground Collaborative project to help meet the nutritional needs of hungry people in our neighborhood) and planned and presented a Youth Sunday Service, and the southern MidAmerican Region Youth Conference. Senior and graduate **Sloan Marion** was instrumental in developing the Social Justice program for the conference. It was a look at income disparity and how that has helped to create neighborhood inequality in the St. Louis area. This was followed by a discussion on White Privilege and a 'Black Lives Matter' witnessing. **Sara Collier and Victoria Bonvento** were the advisers. **Ben Rosenweig** also served as an adviser until he became the Director of Religious Education at Emerson UU Chapel.

#### **11:00am**

Two classes met at 11:00am. The **Young Learners** used a *Treasure Hunting* and were led by Lynn Hunt and RE Sunday Assistant Rhonda Buegler. The **Upper Elementary** group used the *Timeless Themes* (a Bible story curriculum) and the group was led by **Tara Perry**. The children in these classes blended in with the 9:15 classes when we went to one program at 10:00am.

**Summer Religious Education** was held in June, July and August. The Pre-School class was led by **Rhonda Buegler** (paid position) using the "Celebrating Me and My World Curriculum." The multi-age class focused on teachings from Native American spirituality and environmentalism with **Lynn Hunt**. Youth Group member, **Leah Haynes** helped as a classroom assistant.

**Adult Education** offerings were:

A one semester course, *Credo*, which helps people articulate their thoughts and beliefs about the big questions of life was led by **Rev. Perchlik**.

*The African American Experience in Unitarian Universalism* was led by ministerial intern **Rose Schwab**.

**Charley Kempthorne**, a UU and professional writer from Manhattan, KS, led a workshop on *Writing Your Memoir*.

The Toward Justice anti-racism group sponsored two classes. One a book discussion of *Darkening the Doorway* by Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed which was facilitated by **Margaret Weck** and a several week class on *Examining Whiteness* led by **Lynn Hunt**.

**Great Books** discussion continued and was facilitated by **Margaret Weck and Mike Nolan**.

*Who Are Our Neighbors – Developing Inter-Cultural Competencies* was a weekend long workshop presented for the congregations in the St. Louis metro area by UUA MidAmerica staff members **Rev. Lisa Presley and Rev. Ian Evison**.

The **Care and Concern Committee** sponsored a presentation on *Elder Housing Options* with a specialist in this field – **Diane Smith**.

**Wonderful Wednesday** (a once a month gathering including a meal, vesper service and programming) continued to serve as venue for members to share their interests. Programming the past year was varied and included: a presentation by Mark Biehl of Tibetan Singing Bowls, a talk about economic development in Vietnam with Mike Boehm, a look at Islamic Art with **Melanie Fathman, Deborah Richie** shared her experiences on hiking the Camino

de Santiago, **Linda Mueller Drendel** led an embroidery class, **Lynn Hunt** gave a presentation on Selma and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, **Dahven Doctor** led a felting workshop, **Mike Ward** led a wine tasting, yoga with **Kim Swartz**, a history of St. Louis using maps with **Emily Jaycox** and a leadership class with **Chris Fawcett and Tiffany Sewell**.

Groups of the church are encouraged to participate in the Adult RE program by proposing topics for which they would like to sponsor events.

### **Community, Special Programs and Social Justice**

**Hope Children's Choir** continued with director -- **Sprite**. Sprite has brought a lot of knowledge of children's music programs and energy to this position. **Betsy Grimm-Howell** continued as the parent liaison. The group performed during several worship services. They also presented the musical component of the Christmas Pageant. The choir continues as a great addition to the RE program and the worship life of the church. Our goal for the coming year is to increase the size of the choir!

**Special activities for children and families** included: Stone Soup lunch and Puppet Show (with members of the Youth Group presenting the show), Halloween Party, Cornbread Baking Potluck, Nifty Gifty, Easter Egg Hunt, UnFish Fry. In addition, the Boston Trip Group parents sponsored a Book Fair and Trivia night. In addition, the Gardening Committee continues to work with RE in supporting the garden activities of the children (garden themes started this year were: Bible Lands, Teddy Bear, Rainbow, Stone Soup, UU Gardeners, Sense Garden and Three Sisters).

**Social Justice** projects included our annual Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF, Guest at Your Table for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Project ARK Toy Collection, sandwich making, canned goods collection and classroom recycling.

### **Initiatives**

The Religious Education Parent Advisory Group (**Heidi Meister, Sharon Deem, Joel Minor** and RE Activities Group (**Danielle Kozemczak, Mark Bruns, Molly Koebbe, Sue Herzberg and Shannon O'Boyle**) supported all areas of Religious Education programming. The Parent Advisory Group updated the Safe Church Policy to include directions as to how to handle an incident of sexual abuse that may occur at the church. A task force to look into the feasibility of creating a playground area for the children and families was reorganized and met with members of other church committees, the church council and board. The group is now in the phase of assessing funding for such a project and implementation. Members of the task force are: **Mark Bruns, Rob Meister, Karen Siegrist, Connie Goss and Grace Munie** and gathers information from many other parents.

### **Professional Activities**

I continue to serve as the Good Officer representative for the Central Midwest District Liberal Religious Educator's Association (LREDA) chapter until next fall. I finished serving as a mentor to a candidate in the Unitarian Universalist Association Religious Education Credentialing Program and started mentoring a new candidate. Given time constraints, I resigned from the LREDA Endowment Committee.

## Closing

This was a tumultuous year for the St. Louis region. The events of the outside world clearly demonstrated why the values of Unitarian Universalism are so desperately needed in our complex world. In our busy lives, church and Sunday School can often feel like one more thing impinging on our lives. Yet, the world has demonstrated how vital our commitment to a church community is. This is the place where our children learn deep listening, to respect all life and that working toward justice, equity and compassion is holy work. It is an honor to be a part of this community, your lives and lives of your children.

The Religious Education support staff, **Augustine Underwood and Rhonda Buergher** continue to be wonderful colleagues who are always flexible and good natured! I also greatly appreciate the child-care support of **Sloan Marion and Ashley Cox**.

Ministerial support for a Faith Development program is invaluable and I thank **Rev. Thomas Perchlik** for his interest, support and participation. **Rose Schwab** was a wonderful ministerial intern and it was great working with her. She will bring a lot to the future of Unitarian Universalism.

I truly appreciate all the behind the scenes support the program receives from the administrative staff, **Yvette Clemons and Mary Ward**. They always cheerfully help out in a myriad of ways. Of course it was bitter sweet saying good-bye to Mary as she departed for new ventures and I look forward to working with Yvette in new and creative ways.

—Respectfully Submitted,  
Lynn Yarrington Hunt

## TOWARD JUSTICE

The Toward Justice group is committed to the cause of anti-racism. The Toward Justice Group was formed in the wake of the death of Michael Brown and the subsequent events in Ferguson and the St. Louis area. The group meets monthly to discuss and plan justice actions in which we can participate or initiate and reform issues for which we will advocate. The group also plans educational opportunities and members attend programs that are offered throughout the metropolitan area.

Our activities for the year include the writing of a mission statement, participating in the Ferguson October March and hosting students from Union Theological school for that event, witnessing at the corner of Hampton and Chippewa and Kingshighway and Lindell, participating in several Mother's Marches in Clayton, and marching in the 4 Mile March on Martin Luther King Day. The group also led a book discussion of *Darkening the Doorways* by Mark Morrison-Reed and sponsored the *Examining Whiteness* class. We also coordinated participation in a city wide project of placing yard signs that say 'Black Lives Matter' in various neighborhoods and creating a 'Black Lives Matter' banner to hang in front of our church.

Members of the group are very dedicated to living out our Unitarian Universalist value of justice, equity and compassion for all and have done much to educate themselves on this topic and raise awareness in our congregation and in the community. We are currently looking for ways to best advocate for meaningful reforms in our community and state. It has been an honor to work with this dedicated group of people.

Submitted – Lynn Yarrington Hunt

# MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY JOEL KNAPP

Being the Music Director of this church is humbling. I am dependent on a group of people who are talented, smart, caring, and busy with many things other than music. But they make a huge commitment when they sing in our choir. We meet every Wednesday. We have fun, but we also work hard to provide the congregation with beautiful and varied music. I couldn't be more proud of the work they do, and the product they consistently produce. When you see a choir member give them a pat on the back and thank them for what they do.

The choir had a great year. We started off singing an original composition by Richard Wappel, Composer-in-Residence at the St. Louis Cathedral Basilica. In our continuing effort to provide a wide variety of music, we sang in Latin, Hebrew, Spanish, German, and Swahili.

Our major offering in December was Charpentier's Petite Messe pour Noel (Midnight Mass for Christmas). Accompanied by a string quartet of SIUE students, and included Dr. Emily Truckenbrod, Soprano, the performance was delightful.

Jazz Sunday with Rick Haydon and Friends is always fun. In the Jazz spirit, Rick had to improvise more than he expected when his bass player became ill and couldn't come. Rick is retiring from SIUE this year, but I hope we'll be able to bring him back regularly.

The rest of the Spring went well and culminated in our May major offering. Mozart's Vesperae solennes de confessore was a challenge for us. We spent four months preparing it! I've been leading choirs since 1981; I can't remember a more exciting performance than this one. The energy and

musicianship was superb. I know it may not sound like a compliment, but it was so comfortable and organic. It's like the music had always been in us, and it just flowed out in a beautiful way. Like a flower seed that germinates and grows until the day it explodes open. I was especially proud of the choir members who sang solos in the work. They studied on their own, and came to extra rehearsals. The result was lovely. And who couldn't like the sound of our guest Soprano, Melissa Payton.

Yoanna Park-Haynes took charge of several Sundays and filled them with beautiful music provided by her children, St. Louis Symphony members, herself, and other excellent musicians. Being able to share Handel's Hallelujah Chorus with strings and tympani on Easter Sunday was especially nice.

A big hello, welcome, and thank you to Earl Naylor who is finishing his first year with us. He is talented, friendly, and easy-going. I look forward to making more music with him.

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY CHRIS FAWCETT

The Leadership Development Committee has a focus on providing a year-round effort to help fulfill volunteer needs throughout the church, from serving as Board and Committee members and chairs, to people who just want to find out how to get more involved. In a nutshell, the committee will continually seek to match the skills, interests, and availability of its members and friends to the ever-present and changing needs of the church.

There's an old story that's often been told in MBA programs and motivational speaking circles, about three stonemasons. Now, this story has many versions and usually gets a lot of embellishment, but basically it goes like this: back in the Middle Ages, a traveler came upon a large building site where many workers were busy going about their duties. The traveler saw three stonemasons working nearby, all busy with a mallet and chisel working over large blocks of stone. The traveler was curious about their work so he asked each of them in turn what they were doing.

The first stonemason said, "I'm just sitting here hammering on this piece of rock."

The second stonemason said, "I'm squaring up this stone so that it fits properly into that wall over there."

The third stonemason said, "I'm building a cathedral!"

This story is popular because it speaks well to the nature of work, all kinds of work, as well as to vision and to commitment. The first stonemason clearly didn't see how his work was an important contribution to the overall effort, or perhaps he had been spending too much time on the same piece of stone and was

a little burned out and just wanted to be done with it. The second stonemason did see how his work fit more into a larger task, and seemed to be attentive to the work he was doing, at least to that wall he was building. But it was the third stonemason who really understood it all. It wasn't about drudgery for her, or even about awareness of how to build a single wall. No, she saw the big, big picture, and was clearly in it for a long-term goal. She had vision and commitment. She was building...a cathedral!

But missing from the story are the others around the job site. There was the new stonemason, just joined the group, but uncertain if he had the proper tools in his bag, unsure of where he might be able to start. There was another, a more seasoned stonemason, who sat off to the side, saying, "Do you see that old chapel over there? That's what I spent years building. It's someone else's turn at the mallet now." Then there's the stonemason who keeps making all sorts of oddly-shaped stones, lots and lots of them because she's busy and goes from one stone slab to the next, only to find that the pieces she makes don't quite go into the walls very well. They're nicely finished stones, but she doesn't know about blueprints. Or there's the biggest group, the large crowd who are just standing around, waiting for the cathedral to be built.

All of these stonemasons can be found on our jobsite, at this cathedral we're trying to build right here on Waterman Boulevard. I'm looking to find some of those stonemasons who know how to square up the stone so that it fits into the wall, or who are unsure if they can but are willing to try, or maybe who have just been waiting to be asked. I'm also looking for

the busy ones so we can teach them about those blueprints. And I'm looking for those seasoned stonemasons who built the old chapel to step back up and help with this new building, and for those who have been wearily pounding on the same old stone slab and want to find something new to create. And I'm really looking for those who are standing around, waiting to see what the cathedral is going to look like, because you can help build it faster and shape it into a marvelous thing, but only if you pick up your mallet and chisel. We can help you find your place here, your own stone block that you can carve your initials into. Come! Help build this glorious cathedral!

To meet this overarching goal of trying to solve the volunteerism paradox (most of the work that needs to be done in the church must be performed by volunteers who must come from the membership that is being served), the committee set forth the following goals for 2014-15:

1. Develop a church-wide skills and interest inventory through surveys, questionnaires, and interviews.
2. Develop a database to maintain the skills and interest inventory data.
3. Identify skills and experience profiles for all committee and board positions, based on job descriptions and interviews with key church leaders.
4. Meet ongoing needs to find interested and qualified candidates for vacant committee and board positions, matching needs with volunteer capabilities.
5. Provide selection and funding for one adult and one youth member to attend Midwest Leadership School (MWLS) for a week-long leadership course held annually.
6. Provide coaching and guidance for connecting other leadership development opportunities for the congregation at large. The committee's long-term goal is to provide an ongoing commitment to actively support leadership and leadership development capabilities within the congregation, by

providing formal training opportunities to identified leaders (emerging and existing) as well as informal training and ongoing support through the development of a cadre of members who have been provided with exposure to church leadership principles and skills. Alumni of the MWLS program will be an essential part of this ongoing effort by committing to "giving back" to the congregation, directly by applying the lessons learned from MWLS within the role served within the congregation, and indirectly by serving as a resource for internal leadership development activities.

Goal #1 has been met by the launching of our Skills and Interest Survey hosted on Survey-Monkey.com. The survey was "soft-launched" earlier this spring and we are asking all current and new members to take the survey. Details are in the yellow sheets on Sundays, in the monthly newsletters, and on the church's web page. Goal #2 is tied to the success of Goal #1 and is being developed. Goal #3 is mostly complete for Board and Council positions, but needs to be extended to committee chair roles. Goal #4 will never fully be met, but it's what keeps giving us something to talk about in our LDC meetings. Goal #5 did not meet with our reduced expenditure requirements and was deferred until such time as our financial commitment levels have been improved. Tied to Goal #5 to a large degree, Goal #6 is seen as a future capability, though we do have some excellent resources within our membership, if we can mobilize and focus them on some specific efforts.

In fulfillment of the committee's nominating function, in April 2015, the committee presented a slate of recommended candidates for all open Policy Board and Church Council positions for approval by the sitting Policy Board, and the Board approved the slate. This slate is put before the congregation for affirmation during the May meeting.



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## ***Finance/Stewardship Cluster***

### **Canvass Committee**

We tried something different this year with our “Generating Generosity” theme. We continued to receive support from those in our church providing a strong financial commitment. We did however, experience a decrease in the level of giving we have come to expect in past years. Losing some of our generous givers due to relocations and deaths has created challenges we will have to face as a congregation going forward.

Modeled after a published program by Herb Miller called “Consecration Sunday,” the program taught us stewardship on the basis of the need of the giver to give for their spiritual benefit rather than on the need of the church to receive to balance the budget.

The formal canvass started March 1 with a Generosity Sunday Celebration; a guest speaker, Rev Sunshine Wolf; and a catered brunch. An unexpected snowstorm dampened our attendance, but we were pleased over 100 undaunted member/friends made it to church that day! We also had a leadership dinner and various pulpit messages and affirmations given by the committee members and Rev. Thomas.

At the end of April we had reached a pledge amount of \$347,000 from 174 or 54% of our member/friend households. 61% of our sustaining members made a pledge. “Estimate of Giving” cards continue to come in after the formal close of the canvass.

I would like to recognize and thank the members of the Canvass Committee for their commitment, dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work in helping make this year’s canvass a

success: Scot Boulton, Kelly Dopman, Tony Fathman, Chris and Diane Fawcett, Emily Jaycox, Jeanette Myers, Kate and Tom Polokonis, Kelly Sellers of Formfast – courtesy of Rob Harding, Rev. Thomas Perchlik, Rev. Sunshine Wolfe, the entire office staff, and those that helped with the brunch and letter mailings. And of course, a big thanks to all who “Generated the Generosity!” It took a village!

*Submitted by Larry Dusenbery*

### **Chalice Lighters**

The Chalice Lighters (CL) program was founded to harness the energy and resources of Unitarian Universalists within each UUA district to support growth. Examples of projects include adding professional staff or building or renovating space.

In 2014-15, three calls were issued from the MidAmerica region (which was consolidated in 2013 from three previous districts including the Central Midwest District). Information about the Chalice Lighters program and funded projects can be found at: <https://midamericauua.org/programs/chalice-lighters>

I continued to serve on the committee that reviews the proposals from congregations applying for Chalice Lighter grants. The current number of Chalice Lighters from First Unitarian is 48. I did not hold a membership drive in the past year.

*Submitted by Emily Jaycox*

### **Finance Committee**

No Report Submitted

## **Fundraising**

No report submitted

## **Insurance Committee**

The church continues with the insurance program it started 2012 with GuideOne, a company that has a specialty in covering churches. The rates have not increased. Premiums for comprehensive property coverage for churches generally continue to slowly increase due to the number of natural weather disasters in the last few years. We were pleased to avoid an increase. There have not been any substantial new claims. The employee health insurance remains with the UUA plan, where premiums are determined by the age of the individuals covered. Premiums for that coverage have been relatively stable. The church is not directly affected by the health insurance requirements in the Affordable Care Act.

*Submitted by Kathy Wire*

# Facilities Work Group

## Arts and Aesthetics

The committee produced six exhibits for the Members & Friends Art Gallery in Fellowship Hall:

- *Reticulated Reality* — watercolor paintings by Stan Veyhl (June-July 2014)
- *Freedom Fellowship Character: Thoughts of John C. Learned* —quotations of the first minister of the Church of the Unity, curated by Terry Yokota and Dan Franklin (September-October 2014)
- *The Great Outdoors and the Seventh Principle* — nature photography by AshleighLynne Packard (November-December 2014)
- *Karen Albin's Angels* — angel collection of Karen Albin (December 2014-January 2015)
- *Ancient and Modern China* — photography by David R. Hanlon (February-March 2015)
- *Sunflower Song* —photography by Tony Renner and poetry by Amy Genova (March -April 2015)

*Submitted by Dan Franklin, Chairperson*

## Facilities Committee

### **Overview:**

The Facilities Committee oversees maintenance, repair, modification and upgrades to the building and grounds owned by the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis at 5007 Waterman Blvd. The Landscaping Committee is a subcommittee of the Facilities Committee and focuses specifically on maintenance and beautification of the church grounds.

Current Members: Clint Cruse (Facilities Chair), Stanley Veyhl, Connie Goss (Landscaping Chair), Vicki Carlson, Lisa Cary, Karen Siegrist (Facilities Work Group Cluster Council Representative), Linda Fiehler, Dan Franklin (Arts and Aesthetics Chair), Yvette Clemmons (staff liaison). Thanks to the many volunteers (Chris Fawcett and the men's group, Joseph Pennington, many others), who have helped on various projects. Special thanks and best wishes to Mary Ward for all her help and support. Both committees continuously seek new members.

During the period encompassed by the current budgetary cycle the Facilities committee has completed/assisted in the following building projects:

- Refurbishment of all stained glass windows.
- Repainting of exterior windows sills.
- Various plumbing repairs.
- Various minor roofing repairs.
- Purchase and install of two more bike racks.
- Replacement of exterior wall lights.
- Replacement of interior lobby lights.
- Replacement of RE stairway lights.
- Ongoing repainting of various railings and fencing.
- Acoustic evaluation for Fellowship Hall.

Ongoing/Pending projects:

- Working closely with the Long Range Planning Committee to identify and plan for future significant building and grounds needs.
- Acoustic evaluation for Fellowship Hall.
- Touch-Up Hope Chapel Overhang.
- Complete repair of Chapel Roof leak.
- Repainting of East side fencing.
- Repair concrete in front of main entrance.
- Repainting of exterior windows sills, overhangs and iron piping.

- Various interior painting and plaster touchup.
- Development of short and long-term project planning document.
- Conduct exhaustive structural building inspection.

Installation of drinking fountain in Fellowship Hall (with help from the Woman’s Alliance).

**Facilities projects under consideration and/or anticipated next 1-5 yrs:**

- Repaving/replacement of parking lot. (~\$6k-\$40k).
- Replacement of additional HVAC systems (~\$3k+ each).
- Replacement of appliances (stove ~\$5k).
- Sound System enhancements (~\$7k-\$30k).
- Acoustic treatments for Fellowship Hall (\$500-\$5K).

—*Respectfully submitted by Clint Cruse*

**Green Sanctuary**

Certification for Green Sanctuary status must be renewed periodically with the UUA to maintain our status. After much discussion; we have decided to move forward on our recertification. Lack of congregational support for Green Sanctuary activities makes it difficult to maintain ongoing projects and develop new ones. Green Sanctuary will need to recruit greater support from the congregation to continue.

Currently Green Sanctuary supports a variety of projects and collaborates with other committees such as ERDE, Religious Education, the Unfish Fry and the Facilities Committee on a range of projects. The most significant project of the past few years is the window renovation of the 100 year old Ittner Building. While preserving and beautifying the building; the project developed from the energy audit required by the UUA for Green

Sanctuary certification as an energy conservation measure. The Greenleaf Garden which provides fresh produce for the Trinity Food Pantry will continue to be our largest ongoing project.

*Submitted by Connie Goss*

**Landscaping Committee**

The Landscaping Committee continues to work toward a more sustainable and beautiful Church property. Lawn mowing and woody waste removal are contracted out with Blue Sky Landscaping Company. Our custodian provides significant help with vacuuming and shredding leaves. Volunteers provide all other landscaping jobs. In addition to Church congregation volunteers, this spring we were able to move forward on some projects with the assistance of a group of Washington University Physical Therapy students arranged through our affiliation with Gateway Greening and a group of attendees at the EmotiCon.

Last summer we had to remove a large dying birch tree. However, through purchase, a grant from Forest ReLeaf (Mo Dept. of Conservation) and some shrubs donated from a Church member we were able to add two small trees and almost new 30 shrubs. We will be planting more perennial plants obtained through Gateway Greening’s Great Perennial Divide. We also donated some unneeded grasses to the Great Perennial Divide to support some of the other 230 community gardens in their network.

*Submitted by Connie Goss*

## **Safety Task Force**

This group finished its work last year with the completion of a Safety Manual. The manual was adopted by the Policy Board this year. Full implementation of the plan is still underway which includes the creation of permanent safety team. An AED was purchased for the church.

*Submitted by Lynn Yarrington Hunt*

## **Membership Cluster**

### **Care and Concerns Committee**

Care and Concern Volunteers, about thirty in number, and the Auxiliary Volunteers, about 25 more, work in collaboration with the minister to provide help to those of our congregation who are elderly, disabled, ill, or experiencing a life crisis and need support from fellow members. We view this mission as part of the church's covenant to be a caring community and to lend support to one another. Specifically, we offer visits, cards, meals, calls, transportation, shopping help, caregiver respite and emotional support in times of need. Our volunteers also assist in memorial services held at the church.

At Christmas time, the Young Adults Group baked holiday breads for delivery to home-bound and bereaved members. In Spring, on Flower Sunday, we distributed flowers. The Knitting Ministry made and contributed shawls, hats, and lap robes to bring comfort to members with health concerns.

Reverend Thomas and the church staff have been invaluable in supporting the mission of the Care and Concern volunteers.

Many thanks to our Volunteers and caring congregation for support of our work.

Submitted by Claire Birge

## **The St. Louis Unitarian Foundation for**

**Children** is the name under which the Mission Free School Board now does business. Since 1856, this board has been underwriting the living and learning of St. Louis' children. The Board members want the congregation to know of the distribution this year of over \$200,000 to 13 agencies in St. Louis supporting children in various ways.

You may be interested knowing more about agencies we support, or have suggestions about worthy organizations we might consider. If so, the trustees would welcome your interest. They are Jane Hoekelman, Melanie Fathman, Bob Franklin, Sue Ashwell, Claire Birge, Jeff Cary, and Scot Boulton.

Claire Birge, President, Board of Trustees

## **Covenant Groups**

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Peggy Feinberg and Susan Knoll complete the executive council. Lynn Hunt lends invaluable assistance.

Peggy Feinberg and the team of Stan Veyhl and Susan Kelley lead general theme groups. Victoria Bonavento leads the Young Adult Group. Jeremy and Emily Colton leads a group focusing on UU principles. Terry Yokota and Dan Franklin facilitate a group which is oriented to service projects. Susan Knoll heads the group which deals with metaphysical topics. Stan Veyhl and Susan Knoll also front the Writing Group.

*Submitted by William Allen*

### **ALL CHURCH COVENANT GROUP FUNCTION**

In March there was a Covenant Group "Mixer" which provided people the opportunity to come and learn about small group ministries

and bring together members of different covenant groups.

There were 30 people in attendance and 10 new people expressed interest in joining a group. This summer we are planning a picnic under the supervision of Peggy Feinberg and Dan Franklin is spearheading a "Birds on the Bat" experience to attend a St. Louis Cardinals baseball game..

### **CONNECTION WITH AREA CHURCHES AND THE UU SMALL GROUP MINISTRY NETWORK**

No activity.

### **VISION FOR COMING YEAR**

We will support the present covenant groups and encourage the formation of new groups. Groups in developing include an Animal/Nature lovers/concern group; Men's Wellness group and a group based on gnostic principles, the Interconnectors. We will continue more connection with Lynn Hunt and the cluster group. We will continue to give service to our church and the wider community. To collaborate with other churches in projects and rejoin the UU Small Group Ministry.

### **ERDE**

ERDE (pronounced air'-deh) stands for Earth Reverence Dedicants Extraordinaire. Our committed, fun loving and dynamic group continued to provide earth based celebrations for the spring and fall equinoxes, summer and winter solstices, as well as 3 cross-quarter holidays – Beltane, Samhain, and Imbolc. We now offer our solstice and equinox celebrations as Wonderful Wednesday vespers services, while the cross quarter holidays are usually celebrated on a weekend, with craft before the service and potluck afterward. All are family friendly and participatory.

Some examples of this year's rituals include:

- For fall equinox our theme was regeneration and rebirth. We reflected on what we wanted to plant in ourselves and nourish through the winter, to be reborn in the spring. Our celebration was graced by the flute and Tibetan bowl music of Mark Biehl.
- We continued our annual Honoring Our Ancestors tradition in late October/early November, celebrating Samhein/Day of the Dead, complete with altar (courtesy of Linda Mueller Drendel). For our craft we made Silver Bell Branches, with which to call the spirits of our ancestors. During the ritual we shared memories and artifacts of ancestors important to us, and lit a candle in their honor.
- Our winter solstice theme was honoring loss, while holding on to the hope of light returning. We each wrote a personal loss on paper, and reflected on the light we hoped to bring to it. We then offered these to the fire in the courtyard.
- Imbolc celebrates the first stirrings of spring and honors Brigid, the Goddess of fire. This year we presented a full Sunday service, led by our ministerial intern Rose Schwab, and Paulita Pranschke. Other ERDE members participated as well. The theme was "Fire in the Belly."
- Our Beltane (May Day) ceremony was held outdoors with smudging, a planting ritual, honey comb communion, maypole dance with chanting and instruments, and May wine (grape juice for the children) with Woodruff and strawberries. The fertility of the earth was celebrated by all!

In addition to celebrating the cycles of the Earth, this year Lisa Ross was honored to have a "croning" ceremony. We hope to be able to offer a coming-of-(old)-age celebration to others in the church next year.

As always, it has been a true joy working with our group. In addition to veterans Paulita Pranschke, Susan Morse, Sue Herzberg, Linda Kulla and Bill Drendel, this year we welcomed new members Danielle Kozemczak and William Allen.

*Submitted by Lisa Ross*

### **Feasts and Festivals**

The primary function of the Feasts and Festivals Committee is to create annual opportunities for all members of the church community to engage in fellowship together. Our primary annual events are the Welcome Back Barbecue/Potluck, Hanging of the Greens, Mid-Winter Meeting Potluck, and Fellowship Dinner. This year we added organizing of the potluck portion of the Special Congregational Meeting to discuss bylaws changes. We are also responsible for keeping the church kitchen organized and providing laundry service for kitchen towels and tablecloths.

Our committee membership has dwindled to a small but dedicated core of Victoria Bonvento, Sara Collier, Jane Hoekelman, Jamie Laing, Carolyn Nolan, and Margaret Weck (chair for 2015). Because of the previous organizing work of the committee we have detailed “job descriptions” to help others help us put on these events. We would not be able to put on either of the catered meal events if we could not attract as many volunteers as we do.

Although Feasts and Festivals prices the catered events to break even (meal costs plus table decorations and paper goods), we ask for a budget allocation each year to be sure we will be able to cover craft supplies and durable decorations for Hanging of the Greens as well as consumable paper goods and any necessary odds and ends for each event. As the Feasts

and Festivals Committee periodically cleans the kitchen we try to keep track of the inventory and replace utensils, glasses and towels, etc. as necessary and our budget allows. There are some larger ticket items (such as the round tables and chairs) that need replacement, but we do not generally have the funds to be able to afford those purchases.

We continue to look for ideas for how to make our annual fellowship events more attractive to younger members of the congregation and still honor our traditions. We will be seriously engaged in recruiting both planning committee members and event volunteers this coming church year.

*Submitted by Margaret Weck*

### **Hospitality Committee**

The Hospitality Committee provides Fair Trade coffee, tea, cocoa or juice, donuts, bagels, and fruit during the coffee hour every Sunday, except for the second Sunday of each month when the youth group or children’s groups have a bake sale. We have a great committee who helps with the coffee hour and we always welcome new volunteers. This is a good way to get involved with the work of the church and meet other members.

*Submitted by Bob & Cathy Reszinski*

### **Membership Committee**

See Minister’s Report

### **PR/Marketing Committee**

Chair: Donald Jeffries; Members: Linda Fiehler, Diane Fawcett, Bob Reszinski, Suzanne Swope (now moved out-of-town).

The PR&M Committee printed ‘branded’ t-shirts two years ago, with the First Unitarian of St. Louis logo on the front and the slogan “The Search Is The Answer” on the back. We



sold an initial order of 48 t-shirts (primarily to marchers in the 2013 & 2014 Pride Parades), and then ordered another batch of 48 t-shirts. As of April 2015, we had sold most of those. We also printed church logo decals for use on the inside windows of members' vehicles. This year, we added church logo coffee cups to our merchandise.

We plan to add more short-sleeved t-shirts, possibly hooded sweat shirts, and long-sleeved t-shirts (so we can have more assured sales during the colder months of the year -- and our members will be more motivated to wear their shirts year-around, thereby increasing the 'public awareness' of the congregation). We also plan to add license plate frames, reusable grocery bags, and church logo decals that can be affixed to the outside of vehicle windows. All items will have both the church logo and slogan affixed, so that we can continue to keep our 'church brand' out in public visibility. We hope, eventually, to have enough funds for a permanent sign in front of the church (to replace the banner we have affixed to the fence), but that will require considerably more funds than we presently have in our budget.

Just like most of the committees in the congregation, we would appreciate more members, especially people who have advertising & marketing skills.

*Submitted by Donald B. Jeffries*

### **Young Adults group**

No report submitted

## ***Programming Cluster***

### **Archives Committee**

No report submitted

### **Clark Lecture Committee**

The Clark Lecture Committee serves to bring at least one speaker a year to the church as a tribute to past minister Thaddeus Clark. This living memorial to Dr. Clark strives to bring outstanding leaders of opinion, thought and creativity to the St. Louis community.

Members of the Clark Lecture Committee are Melanie Fathman, Jean O'Brien, Jerry O'Brien and John Knoll, Chair. Rev. Thomas Perchlik serves on the committee ex-officio.

This year's speaker was Dr. Stefan Bradley, Professor of History and Director of the African American Studies Program at St. Louis University.

Stefan M. Bradley is one of the most respected and sought-after African American history educators and lecturers in the country. Author of the award winning *Harlem vs. Columbia University: Black Student Power in the Late 1960s*, Dr. Bradley has produced nearly thirty publications and has been featured as a guest on MSNBC, NPR CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera, and BET.

Dr. Bradley's talk, "The Democracy Experiment: Black Youth in America," focused on the problematic relationship of white America with Black young people. Dr. Bradley summarized his Clark Lecture as follows:

"As the United States has tested the boundaries of democracy in the last century, it owes a debt to black youth. Young black citizens have endured national, state, and local attempts to experiment with their constitutional and human rights. In doing so, the majority of Americans have realized just how far democracy can or cannot be stretched. This presentation will cover the tenuous relationship that black youth have had with American democracy from the Scottsboro Boys to the youthful protesters of Ferguson."

Over a hundred people attended the lecture. A reception and book signing followed the talk. Dr. Bradley was enthusiastically received and most appreciative of the role of First Unitarian Church in the progressive history of Saint Louis.

*Submitted by John Knoll*

### **Denominational Affairs**

#### **Committee**

No report submitted

#### **Flower Coordinator**

Flower arrangements for Sunday services were provided through the generosity of members and friends of the Church. The flowers contribute to the ambience of worship while giving donors the opportunity to commemorate special people and occasions in their lives. During the winter holidays, poinsettias purchased by members and friends helped decorate the sanctuary. Finally, special thanks go to Cathy Rauch for creating the beautiful Thanksgiving cornucopia this year.

*Submitted by Dottie Kinscherf*

#### **John Learned Bookshop**

The First U Bookshop continues to offer, at reasonable prices, donated items such as books, music CDs, and videos, most of which are priced in the range of 25 cents to \$1, with a few exceptional items priced higher. The money from such sales goes directly toward the operating expenses of the church. Volunteers William Allen and Tom Archer assist in the operation of the bookshop.

*Submitted by George Matusek*

#### **John Learned Library**

Our mission: The John Learned Library seeks to support the spiritual quest, religious education, and other church-related activities of members and friends of First Unitarian Church by providing materials on Unitarian Universalism specifically, religious matters generally, and appropriate related areas.

An Open House held in October was well attended, drawing both regular patrons and people who were new to the library.

T.J. Hunter won the door prize (a gift card for Left Bank Books).

In the past year, the Library Committee has purchased 33 books and a subscription to the *UU World*; we have accepted 10 books as gifts.

The collection now contains more than 1500 items, including audio and video materials. There are 324 people in our patron database. This year, 88% of the materials circulated were in the areas of religion and philosophy. The overwhelming number of those books were specifically related to Unitarian Universalism and, secondarily, comparative religion. Ten percent of circulations were in the area of Buddhism and meditation.

The collection is available for browsing online at [www.firstuustlouis.org/learning/john-learned-library](http://www.firstuustlouis.org/learning/john-learned-library). You can search for books by title, author, publisher, subject area, and key words. You can also direct an inquiry to the library committee through the online interface.

Special displays this year have included Unitarian Universalism, Leadership Resources, and displays related to Adult RE offerings, such as Buddhism & Meditation and Race & Diversity. Our New Books bookshelf is a very popular feature of the library.

Members of the Library Committee in 2014-2015: Sarah Dashner, Carol Iglauer, Dottie Kinscherf, Dori Miller, Woody Sullivan, and Terry Yokota.

*Submitted by Terry Yokota, Chairperson*

### **Lewis Ministerial Internship**

The Intern Committee has had a most enjoyable year working with our Super-Intern, Rose Schwab. We have enjoyed helping her grow more competent, more excellent in all of her endeavors. The highlight of her year (and ours) has been her passing the MFC (Ministerial Fellowship Committee) with flying colors. We are very proud of her and will miss her next year.

*Submitted by Joan Kindleberger  
Chair Intern Committee*

### **Lifespan Faith Development**

*see page 26*

### **Music Committee**

This past year was extremely time consuming for members of the music committee. The music committee typically supports the music program through planning and coordinating with the worship committee for music for the summer services.

Due to the retirement of organist Emily Pearce this past spring, the committee needed to find someone to play piano for each of the summer services as well as performers to do the special music. In addition, the committee organized the search for a new organist, reviewed applications, and conducted a thorough audition process. As a result, Earl Naylor was selected. When he was hired the board added

summer services to his contract assuring coverage for the entire church year.

Earl's contributions have been wide ranging and have been a great asset to the music program. The committee also coordinated a donation of a piano from Marilyn Carpenter's family and the moving of an old piano that was replaced by the donated piano.

Thanks to committee members Judy Meyer, Carolyn Toft, Greg Hoeltzel, Dwight Homer, Bill Drendel, and Becca McBride for all of the time and dedication you have given to our work.

*Submitted by Julie Oyen-Keller, Chairperson*

### **Personnel Committee**

In the past year the Personnel Committee has offered support and assistance to our minister and church staff on issues relating to workplace policy. In March of this year Mary Ward tendered her resignation as the Church Administrator in order to pursue a business venture with her spouse, and Rev. Thomas initiated the search process for a new Administrator. The search committee interviewed several promising candidates and ultimately chose to offer the job to our own Yvette Clemons, who transitioned into the position of Administrator in April. Unlike in past decisions to hire staff, the Personnel Committee took an active role in this process. We will continue to examine how we can best support Thomas in his role as chief of staff and also provide a sounding board for all church staff. We continue to seek new members for our committee; I strongly encourage anyone interested in serving on the committee to contact the incoming church President or me for more information.

*Submitted by Betsy Grimm-Howell*

## **Ushers**

Jim Marks is the “Usher Coordinator” for the Sunday service. The church office works with Jim in making sure time slots are filled and usher volunteers receive instruction. If you are interested in helping out with ushering, please contact the church office.

*Submitted by Yvette Clemons*

## **Worship Committee**

See Minister’s Report

## ***Outreach and Social Action***

### **Community Action Endowment Fund (CAEF)**

The formation of the CAEF was the brain child of member Renni Shuter who convinced the first handful of donors to join her in pooling their initial gifts into a special purpose restricted fund within the umbrella of the larger endowment fund of the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis. The Shuter family’s own initial lead gift of \$1,000 in 1995 has been joined by the contributions of many and through time received the blessings of compound interest. The fund is now substantial enough from interest and dividends to have generated the \$3,613.00 awarded as grants to nine separate local social service agencies in the 2014 grant cycle. Following Renni’s death in September of 2014 over \$4,000.00 in memorial gifts to the CAEF have been received.

Renni’s death altered the normal time-line of our grant process this year. Grants are normally announced and distributed in October. This year the actual ward checks

were mailed in December 2014, but not formally announced to the congregation until January 2015. Approximately 90 not-for-profit organizations received the annual request for proposals. Additional calls for proposals are placed in the West End Word and local UU church newsletters. The organizations receiving grants this year were: Americorps St. Louis, Cornerstone Center - Early Learning, Food Outreach, Gitana, The Grace and Peace Winter Shelter, Reading is Fundamental, Sage Metro St. Louis, and St. Louis ArtWorks. The average award for this grant cycle was just over \$400 per grant.

The mission of the CAEF Committee remains true to Renni’s intention of being a place where small social service organizations can come to get their first grants and build the track record needed to go after much larger grants or expand their program offerings. Moving forward former vice-chair, Margaret Weck, has stepped into the role of chair of the CAEF Committee and the current members of the committee are: Rev. Thomas Perchlik, Vicki Carlson, Reena Chesla, Kay Dusenbery, Donald Jeffries, Rosemary Johnston-Lawton, Beth Shuter, Dale Shuter, Lynn Shuter, and Laura Zacher.

*Submitted by Margaret Weck*

### **Green Sanctuary**

See Facilities Work Group

### **Holy Ground Collaborative**

No Report Submitted

### **Partner Church Committee**

This last year has been a busy time for our committee. Planning and preparations have begun in earnest in anticipation of our next First Church pilgrimage to Transylvania in September, 2016. Committee Members

Gwenne Hickman and Laura Zacher volunteered to serve as coordinators of the trip and have worked diligently to recruit travelers and develop the final itinerary. Several meetings were held to inform potential travelers in the church about the trip, and the theme of our annual dinner and program this year was "Transylvania or Bust," reflecting this objective. Ministerial Intern Rose Schwab presented a fascinating program about her experience in Transylvania, which inspired several of the attendees to add their names to the trip list.

In addition to the foregoing effort, we have tried to increase communication between our churches. We have had regular e-mails between our committee and the Csokfalva church minister, Lorant Tokes. Further, we have made a conscious effort to increase news about our partner church in our articles for First Church's monthly newsletter, and from the pulpit, via Rev. Thomas Perchlik's sharing of joys and concerns and through references to partner church issues in his sermons. The annual Partner Church Sunday service was also a part of this ongoing activity.

Our annual fundraising events, the bake sale and dinner/program, were again financially successful and helped support special projects dealing with building and equipment concerns pertaining to the aging, historic Csokfalva church and parsonage. Our church budget allocation also provided scholarships for students, a monthly supplement to Rev. Tokes meager salary, and annual dues to the UUA Partner Church Council. The latter provides invaluable support to the worldwide, UUA partner church movement and its travel bureau, which we are using in our trip planning.

*Submitted by Tom Crouch*

### **Social Responsibility Committee**

Chair: Donald Jeffries; Active Members: Rosemary Lawton, Susan Kelley, Kimberly Perry,

Margaret Weck, Charles Kindleburger, George & Christine Sessen.

The SRC continues to have two major responsibilities: Sandwich-Making (coordinated by George & Christine Sessen) and Designated Collections (coordinated by Susan Kelley). We also, via our Chair, facilitate the Metro Unitarian Universalist Social Justice [UU SJ] Chairs (which currently includes First Unitarian of St. Louis, First Unitarian of Alton, and Emerson Chapel) and the Gateway 180 project (coordinated by Rosemary Lawton).

The Church Council for the past several years has given the Sandwich-Making project a basic budget of \$4800 per church year; all other funds are acquired through the Designated Collections route. The Designated Collections sponsor congregational donations primarily for community organizations (outside the church) and a few church committees. It represents our congregation's 'socially responsible gift to the larger St. Louis community'. Between all of the congregational donations, conducted every two weeks at Sunday services, \$..... has been donated to community groups and \$..... has been donated to First Unitarian projects in the 2014/15 church year.

The Metro UU SJ Chairs jointly organized the participation of UU marchers in the 2013 & 2014 Pride Parades, and plan to help in the planning for the 2015 Pride March (in conjunction with the Welcoming Congregation Committee). They have also, in coordination with M-SLICE and the Central West End Holy Ground Collaborative, planned and implemented several cleanups in the Kensington Neighborhood [north of Delmar] in the spring and autumn of 2014, and are planning another cleanup for May 16, 2015. This is part of their 'racial justice and inclusion' project. Additionally, we assist Gateway 180 with food and clothing projects.

*Submitted by Donald Jeffries*

## UUSC

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) has been supporting human rights and social justice projects all around the world for over seventy years. The following First Church projects supported the UUSC during this church year:

- \* Guest At Your Table Boxes were distributed to the congregation in December and collected in January. A total of **\$60.50** was collected and sent to the UUSC (Lynn Hunt).
- \* A Special Collection for the UUSC was held **1/18/15**. A total of **\$716** was collected.

The Fair Trade Coffee Project at First Church sold Fair Trade coffee, chocolate, tea, olive oil, honey, and jams; most of the products are also organic. For every pound of fairly traded products sold through the UUSC Coffee Project (of which we are a part), Equal Exchange donates 20 cents to the UUSC Small Farmer Fund. At First Church, sales of Fair Trade products totaled \$8212.00 in the past year (5/1/14 through 4/30/15), providing support to small farmers around the world (Terry Yokota, Dan Franklin, Susan Mueller).

*Submitted by Kimberly Perry, Chair*

## Welcoming Congregation

The mission of the Welcoming Congregation Committee is to create a welcoming community at First Unitarian for LGBTQIA people. The 2014-2015 church year was a challenging one for our committee as we saw our original committee chair Mary Markiewicz relocated to Kansas City and, coincidentally, several other committee members also moved away. George Grimm-Howell assumed the leadership role for 2014-2015. In addition to the committee chair, current active members include Diana Arand, Elizabeth Grimm-

Howell and Paulita Pranschke. The Committee is currently seeking new members and volunteers.

Each year, Welcoming Congregation focuses on two primary projects: Feel the Love Coffee House in February, and the joint St Louis metro Unitarian-Universalist participation in St. Louis Pride events in June. The Coffee House event has now completed its second year and has become a cherished time for our community to share its talents in support of celebrating human love in all its forms. Pride events the past few years have included marching in the Pride parade and supporting a joint worship service the morning of the parade that brings the metro-area UU congregations together. In addition, we continue to wear our rainbow lanyards each Sunday to signal welcome for LGBTQIA visitors and members. Finally, we support the COLAG group (Children of Lesbians and Gays) which is a joint effort with Central Reform Congregation.

*Submitted by George Grimm-Howell*

## Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance of First Unitarian Church continues to be a group that provides a forum for women of the church to gather for conversation and fellowship, enlightenment through educational programs, distribution of contributions to the church and charities, and the awarding of a scholarship to a Unitarian woman pursuing higher education.

The Women's Alliance officers this year were Lori Calcaterra (Pres.), Nadine Vlietstra (VP), Judy Till (Treas.) and Judi Crouch (Secty). Chairs included Doris Pree (Scholarship), Carolyn Nolan (Finance). Renni Shuter was Program Chair until her death in September, 2014. Lori represented the Alliance at a meeting of the church Membership Cluster in April.

The Alliance met twice a month during the

church year (second and fourth Tuesdays) and once a month during the Summer, 2014.

Usually during the church year the meetings start with lunch in Fellowship Hall, followed by an educational program. On the second Tuesday, a business meeting preceded the luncheon.

Programs are often presented by members of the church. This year's program presenters from the church were Ron Glossop, Carole Watson, Stan Birge, Diane Fawcett, Judi Crouch, Amy Genova, and Tom Archer. Church staff who met with us included Rev. Perchlik, Mary Ward, Lyn Hunt and Rose Schwab. We also met with representatives of the church Long Range Planning Committee, Larry Dusenberry and Tony Fathman. In late May, our program will be presented by a local foods advocate, Maddie Earnest. We are grateful to all of our speakers who take time from their busy lives to meet with Alliance members.

The Women's Alliance scholarship award is largely funded by a bequest from Edna Landzettl. This year's \$3,000 award winner is Andrea Berin.

From our other funds (e.g. dues of \$30 per year). we budgeted \$3,850, which was distributed to the church operating budget, church staff at Christmas and various charities. The Alliance also provided a matching grant of \$5,000 for the Windows Project, for restoration of the windows of the sanctuary.

The Women's Alliance is a church group that had its beginnings in the nineteenth century. While we have added new members recently, we are in need of more to build the ranks. Our hope is that more women of the church will take the time to join us and participate.

*Submitted by Lori Calcaterra*

## ***Special Gifts and Bequests***

Throughout the year the church receives contributions in memory of deceased members and friends, or in honor of significant events. Unless otherwise noted, these funds are accumulated in the Special Gifts & Bequests Fund.

From time to time, by authorization from the Board of Trustees, special projects or acquisitions may be funded from this Fund.

Bequests, when they are received, are added to the Endowment Fund of the church according to a policy adopted by the Board, unless they are specifically designated.

### **Gifts in memory of:**

Caroline Arnold  
Jeanne Casey  
Dorothy Cole  
Clara Gempel  
Tom Hungerford  
Gerald Little  
Renni Shuter

*Submitted by Yvette Clemons*