



ANNUAL REPORT 2016
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS

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2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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2015-2016 ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

SUNDAY, MAY 15, 2016 IN THE SANCTUARY
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, MO
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, A CORPORATION

Call to Order and Welcome	Tiffany Sewell, President
Opening Words	Brian Mason, Ministerial Intern
Reading of Congregational Covenant	Kathy Wire, Peace-Building Liaison
Minutes of the May 17, 2015 Annual Meeting	Erin Milligan, Secretary
Minister's Report	Available-printed in Annual Report
Church President's Remarks and Report	Tiffany Sewell, President
Church Secretary's Report	Erin Milligan, Secretary
Church Treasurer's Report	Jim Bosnick, Treasurer
2016-2017 Budget Process Update	Steve Smidowicz, Finance Committee Chair
Recognition of Outgoing Leaders	Tiffany Sewell, President
Presentation of Slate of Nominees for open leadership positions	Tiffany Sewell, President
Vote on Officers and Trustees	<i>Action Item</i>
Long-Range Planning Update	Larry Dusenbery, LRP Liaison
Interim Minister Search Update	Kathy Wire, Peace-Building Liaison
Closing Words	Brian Mason, Ministerial Intern
Adjournment	<i>Action Item</i>

MINUTES OF THE 2014-2015 ANNUAL MEETING
 OF FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
 AND FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS, A CORPORATION
 SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2015

1. Meeting was called to order by Diane Fawcett.
2. Motion to appoint Betsy Grimm-Howell moderator for the meeting made by Kathy Wire.
 - * Motion seconded and approved unanimously.
3. Kathy Wire read the Church Covenant.
4. Reverend Thomas offered opening words.
5. Minutes of 2014 Annual Meeting
 - * Motion to approve without reading made, seconded and passed unanimously.
6. Reverend Thomas offered comments in addition to his report published in the Annual Report, noting that the congregation's spiritual component is very strong, but that the structural and governance component is lagging behind. This shows in the open leadership positions and the shifting financial position of the church. He suggested that we find ways of getting to know each other and that we use the racial issues in our community to ask "How does this change who we are?" He will be working to blend efforts with the other UU congregations in the metro area and to develop a stronger UU presence on the Washington University campus.
7. Diane Fawcett offered remarks, referring to Rev. Perchlik's "wish list" that included increased fundraising efforts outside of the canvass and more willingness to step up and serve. She emphasized that the annual giving results, while leaving a gap due to the loss of several large donors, reflected stronger generosity in many segments of the church.
 - * Motion to accept the President's Report was made, seconded and approved unanimously.
8. The Moderator presented the Secretary's report.
 - * Motion to accept the Secretary's report was made, seconded and approved unanimously.
9. Alice Crowder presented her report as Council Chair
10. Jim Bosnick read the Treasurer's report and there were some minor points of clarification. He noted an ongoing "change in the top line" of the reports due to the shifts in donor structure and the time needed to adapt to that, which should be showing up for the next few years.
 - * Motion to accept the Treasurer's report was made, seconded and approved unanimously.
11. Jim Bosnick presented the Operating the budget for 2015-2016 as developed by the Council and adapted and approved by the Policy Board, noting that there was a \$65,000 gap between anticipated revenue, including the normal draw from restricted funds, and anticipated expenditures. Recognizing that the congregation is undergoing a financial shift, the Board had to look forward and preserve function while allocating funding to areas that can support the ongoing growth and health of the congregation. The budget included a reduction in payments to the UUA/Mid-America Region and a reduction in staff due to attrition changes in the administrative assistant role.
 - * Motion to affirm was made and seconded. Discussion followed:
 - One member expressed concern that the documents presented at the meeting do not include historical data that would allow the attendees to see the shifts over time. She indicated that this is an ongoing concern.
 - Several members expressed concern over the reduction in UUA/MAR fair share payments.

- Several members expressed concern over having another year without any increase in pay for staff.
- Several members asked the Board to go back to the congregation with information on the budget to see if additional pledging results now that there is more information about the “downstream effect of the change in pledges.”
- o The question was called for a vote, and the budget was affirmed unanimously.

12. Tiffany Sewell presented the slate developed by the Leadership Development and Nominating Committee. She noted that the committee was unable to identify individuals who were interested in the President and Council Chair positions who also met the criteria for those positions as defined in the by-laws. The slate:

- * Vice-President: Emily Colton
- * Treasurer: Jim Bosnick
- * Secretary: Erin Milligan
- * Capital Budgeting Trustee (Policy Board): Ronan Wallace
- * Ministry Trustee (Policy Board): Tony Fathman
- * Membership Cluster Coordinator (Council): Brittany Hagedorn
- * Social Responsibility Cluster Coordinator (Council): Charles Kindleberger
- * President: No nominee
- * Council Chair: No nominee
- *

Motion to approve the slate was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

13. The Moderator opened the meeting to take nominations from the floor for the President and Council Chair positions. Donald Jeffries was nominated for Council Chair, but indicated that he would only take the position if he

can stay in his current positions as chair of the Social Responsibility and Public Relations Committees. Diane Fawcett and Betsy Grimm-Howell explained that those present at the meeting could approve Donald for the position, but that his election would be contingent on the Policy Board voting, pursuant to section VII of the by-laws, to waive the by-law restriction that prohibits Committee Chairs from also serving as Council Chair.

*

Motion to approve Donald’s nomination and proceed to vote on him as the candidate for the position, contingent on the decision of the Board to waive the requirement in Section VII of the by-laws, was made and seconded. The motion passed with 24 in favor and 18 against with one abstention.

14. Sarah Dashner outlined the status of the sanctuary windows (“Full Glass”) project, which is currently approximately \$18,000 short of the total needed. She asked for approval to take the remainder from restricted funds pursuant to Article IX, Section V of the bylaws.

- o Motion to approve withdrawal of up to \$18,000 from the General Fund and/or Endowment to fund the remainder of the cost of the window project made, seconded and passed unanimously.

15. Clint Cruse presented information regarding the need for an improved sound system for the sanctuary, which will improve the congregation’s experience, but also allow more outreach/media activity and will make the church more attractive to other groups that may rent the space. He indicated that the Facilities Committee will be working with other groups to move the concept forward.

16. Rev. Perchlik announced that through a generous grant from Rob Harding, the church will employ a part-time Membership Coordinator. The Job Description is complete, and he will lead recruitment and selection efforts in

POLICY BOARD ROSTER 2015-2016

Church Officers

Tiffany Sewell..... Church President
Mark Bruns.....Church Council Chair
Erin Milligan..... Secretary
Jim Bosnick Treasurer

POLICY BOARD MEMBERS

Ronan Wallace (2018)
Capitol Budget Planning
(h) 806-647-9020
ronanjwallace@yahoo.com

Tony Fathman (2018)
Committee on Ministry
(c) 314-406-1201
terrettfathman@gmail.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
2015-2016**

Mark Bruns

Church Council President

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Charlie Kindleberger (2018)

Outreach & Social Action Cluster

(h) 314-367-6868

(c) 314-6307-3398

kindlebergerc@yahoo.com

Karen Siegrist (2016)

Facilities Work Group Cluster

(h) 314-968-4683

(c) 314-210-5652

karensiegrist@gmail.com

Vacant (2017)

Stewardship Cluster

Brittany Hagedorn (2017)

Membership Cluster

(h) 920-296-9540

Brittany.hagedorn@gmail.com

Thomas Perchlik

Programming Cluster

(c) 625-7539

dharmarev@hotmail.com

MINISTER'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY REV. THOMAS PERCHLIK

SUMMARY

First Unitarian is ready to rise through the coming decade with hearty spirit and growing programs, even though you must go through a time of "ministerial transition." This congregation has abundant resources for seeking Love, Justice, Decency and Tolerance.

This past year your minister has been one of your key resources. It is an honor to serve this congregation as minister. Only my desire to live nearer to my family moved me to look for another ministry. I believe this congregation is better than when I was called to Saint Louis on April 17, 2011. Together, we have gone beyond healing to strengthening. Our shared spirit is good and our arms are full of opportunity, love, dedication and promise. We more consistently focus our conversations on cooperation, hope and healthy relationships than on divisions or fears. Our governance system is clear and running fairly well. I will miss sharing the challenges and successes of the future with you. You have helped me become a better minister.

MISSION

The ultimate goal of our church is a world of compassion, peace, gratitude, and inclusion. As always, we seek for and work for this world free of creeds, embracing diversity of belief, and being united by shared promises and goals. The mission statement that currently guides the leaders of this congregation is:

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

That work begins in each human heart, and then extends to one another, members and friends of this congregation, and finally reach-

es out to the world beyond. Love and justice demand that we work for inclusion of all and an end to poverty.

Our motto is "the search is the answer." We seek truth and a way of being that enables us to live better lives, and we are always coming nearer to our goal when we seek it, than when we think we have found it.

Our identity statement says, "this is a congregation of memory hope and reverence." Our rich history and our silent reverence ground our search.

We embody this mission and identity by working in collaboration to practice Good Stewardship, create Inspiring Worship, provide Excellent Religious Education, form Caring Community, and engage in Social Responsibility.

STEWARDSHIP

Our mission statement speaks of spiritual resources. Stewardship includes responsible planning, use and management of our material resources. These include money, talent, and time.

A very central resource of this church is its office staff with Yvette Clemons at the helm. She has had over a year now to learn how to do her job with less money and support than our previous Administrator. She has chosen Ms. Augie to be her assistant because Augie knows this church well and is dedicated to its service. I have every confidence in Yvette and her ability to run this church.

A big part of Yvette's job is management of our building use. Our beautiful building is in

great shape because we have maintained it and cared for it. Our excellent Facilities Committee insures regular repair and maintenance. I believe the primary reason for our endowment is to help us pay for regular maintenance and improvements. A good example of this is the Sound System upgrades in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall. These improvements were made possible by donated labor, at-cost equipment and a draw from the Endowment. In this and many other ways we, preserve our heritage while upgrading to meet the future.

We also have a fine resource in Dan Livengood. For two more years, at the least, we have funding for him to remain as our Membership Involvement Coordinator. He can help us not only incorporate new members and friends, but improve the commitment, joy and expectations of our volunteers. He and I together have helped clarify his work and goals. Dan, in coordination with the T.ED. (Talent, Engagement, and Development) Group should ensure continued leadership development.

Speaking of TED and leadership, governance is essential to keep volunteer resources from being wasted or frustrated. Consequently, your Minister will always be directly involved in the governance of this church, no matter who that minister is. Our new Governance structure is fully functioning, our bylaws are in great shape, and we are developing a fully transparent set of policies and procedures to guide our efforts. I am so very happy that Tiffany Sewell has agreed to continue another term as President of the Board. It is always inspiring to see new people joining our long standing workers to serve the church on committees, task forces, Council and Board.

Our biggest challenge, and source of danger, is in Finances. Since we reduced our draw from the Endowment into our General Find, we have (almost) completely stopped all

fundraising, and have lost some key pledges to attrition. Despite the amazing work by Jeanette Myers and all the members of the canvass team, our pledging comes in too slowly to be certain of our financial future. The steady and thoughtful work of the Finance Committee continues to improve how we handle our financial resources, but we have few strategies for how to face what I call "the coming tsunami." I trust that as you live out your mission you will also find new ways to increase pledges, to develop new revenue sources, and to spend your money more wisely and efficiently.

WORSHIP

One year and four months we have only held one service on Sundays. This practice has strengthened the church in many ways. The one downside has been that some are not served well by this limiting of our core service. Future growth will require offering more services of worship at some point in the future.

Working with John Knoll and the Worship team has been very good. I am sure changes will come with new ministers. I deeply appreciate the opportunity you have given me to create truly meaningful and inclusive liberal religious versions of two distinctly Christian services, Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday.

Equal in importance to spoken words in worship, is music. The working relationships between Earl Naylor, Joel Knapp, the Music Committee and myself have ensured our worship music has integrity with the whole of the service and is well prepared. The variety of styles of music we use on Sunday remains very diverse, in style and instrumentation, while quality remains high. Joel, with the help of members of the congregation, have brought in everything from High-Church choral music to wonderful Mariachi performances. Despite this diversity, the

music of our organ remains the anchor and foundation of our Sunday music. This year, began with some tension between the program and expectations for more transparency and clarity in Joel's recruitment and scheduling of musicians. Joel has improved his work as needed.

Carl Bassi has done great work to insure that we continue recording services and to transfer all sermons to online files. Due to Copyright issues we will not podcast full services, but with our new Sound System our sounds team may work to carry this recording project forward.

EDUCATION/FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Excellent Religious Education is essential for deepening the faith and character of our people. Toward this end, I conducted one Cre-do Group and an on-going UU Buddhists group. It is great to know that Lynn Hunt will continue to serve this church as Life-Span Faith Development Director. She and I have worked well 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.

Most important has been her willingness to take the reins of our anti-racism work. I hope we will continue to be known as a church which bravely and intelligently works to undo racism and segregation in our region.

Also with her guidance, our Covenant Group Facilitators will continue to manage that central and valuable faith development program.

I truly enjoy being an Internship Supervisor and I thank you for the excellent learning and encouragement we have given to new ministers in our movement. The Lewis Ministerial Internship program adds to our church in

many ways and is very much worth the time and energy required.

An amazing resource we have in this church is the Clark Lecture. I look forward to hearing of ways you link that program with other aspects of the church's education and social justice programs.

CARING COMMUNITY / MEMBERSHIP

We lost two members to death this past month. Marietta Hunsche was more than a member for 78 years. She was one embodiment of the stability and enduring dignity of this congregation. Bob Murphy stayed with the church mostly for intellectual stimulation. But over the years we became the only family he really had.

Dan Livengood oversees the Path to Membership, and Feasts and Festivals help run some of our big social events of the year, but new people become part of a congregation only by making friends and personal connections. To make those possible is the work of everyone.

A most basic practice of church is that we all must truly care for one another. Claire Birge is reunited with Sue Ashwell as Care and Concerns co-Chairs. Brian Mason has also been an important part of our caring ministry this past year, and even Lynn Hunt is essential to insure our caring ministries. Claire, Sue and Lynn will all be essential to integrate an interim and settled minister in the years to come. Also, the Caring Fund is of great use. Interim and future ministers will use this fund to support the caring ministry of the church and care for the people of this congregation to help with occasional financial needs, and we are always seeking ways to provide official care and concern within our church. But, real caring is always done by the members and friends of the church for one another.

Thus, the Peace Building Team is also essential to a healthy congregation. Peace making and conflict management are essential spiritual practices. For example, there have been some moments in the past year where conflict arose. In all situations I was pleased to hear so many of us referring to our behavioral covenants, and talking about how to seek a shared path forward. Conflicts are human and inevitable. What matters is the spirit and vision that guides us through conflicts. Seeking to embody this spirit is at the center of my ministry and the center of this congregation at your best.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY/ COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Our faith has always been for those who are called to work in the world for justice, love, decency, and tolerance. We embody the power of religion fused with intelligence, education of the soul and mind. As I have said elsewhere, anti-poverty, undoing and preventing the spiritual corruptions of poverty in people's lives, is at the center of our social responsibility efforts. I look forward to hearing how you continue to work and lead this area's efforts to fight poverty.

There are several programs and responsibilities that I have put significant time and energy into which I fear will fall away from our church after I leave. The first is the Washington University Students Association. This group needs minimal encouragement and guidance. But without someone to provide a personal link to UUism and the non-student world I fear the Unitarian presence on that campus will again fade, instead of grow.

Secondly, a partnership with the Danforth Center on Religion and Politics has created the Thomas Lamb Eliot lecture series. The inaugural lecture will be in December. It is

our job to make sure this series increases awareness and strength of liberal religion in our city.

Thirdly, it is essential that UUs remain visibly active in the Interfaith Partnership of Saint Louis. This is an amazing group that counters the divisive power of religion with intelligence, cooperation and shared values. Interfaith Partnership changes the individuals within the organization, deepening their faith, as well as changing our religious landscape. We helped create this organization as a direct extension of our mission and we should remain involved in it.

One of our most significant efforts is to support to promote social responsibility, social justice, and civil inclusion is our designated collections. This program has become a little unfocused, but is still essential.

We remain, unquestionably a Welcoming Congregation and Green Sanctuary, and I carry the spirit of all the good work we have done together with me into the years to come.

*Yours in Peace,
Reverend Thomas Perchlik*

LEWIS INTERN'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY BRIAN MASON

What an honor it has been to learn and work alongside you this year, here at the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis. My internship is rapidly coming to an end. It seems strange to stand on the edge of this turn of events, especially when I look back on what feels like the very recent and visceral anxiety, expectation, and excitement with which I prepared to embark on this endeavor of being the Lewis Intern. Time has a strange way of moving right along without calling much attention to itself.

And thus my time here is soon to become a source of much pride, nurturance, and humility as I prepare for the next phase of my ministry. When I interviewed with the intern committee in the winter of 2014, just as I was wrapping up my seminary education, I knew within minutes of our conversation together that serving First Unitarian was exactly where I needed to be.

Not only is First U a storied & prominent congregation in our nation's Heartland; not only is it a congregation founded by the larger-than-life Unitarian figure, William Greenleaf Eliot; not only does it host one of the two endowed ministerial internships within the Unitarian Universalist Association; First U is all of this and more: This church is the first UU church I attended, it is where I fell in love with this great religious tradition nearly eight years ago. Furthermore, it is the church where Sarah, my wife, and I married, and now it is the church where I served as an intern in preparation for ordained ministry.

I say all of this to fully convince you of this statement: A portion of my heart will forever reside within these walls. A portion of my heart will forever call this church home. And lest you forget, each and every one of you is the church. Therefore, a piece of my heart is

forever yours. I am so proud to have gotten the chance to be the Lewis Intern. I hope one day to make you proud.

For all the qualities I gained, and for all of the good that I have managed to achieve in the education I received amongst you here, I owe all of it to the wonderful committee that challenged, supported, inspired, and loved me throughout. Thank you Joanne Boulton, Jeff Cary, Chuck Eby, Joan Kindleberger, Jerry McAdams, Susan Mueller, Jeanette Myers, Carole Watson, and Rev. Thomas Perchlik.

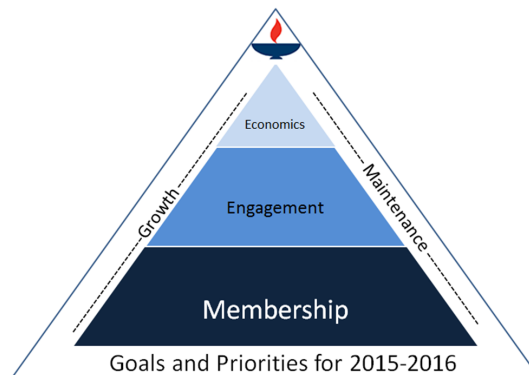
And to each and every one of you, thank you for granting me the privilege to address you from the pulpit, for getting to learn and have fun alongside you, and for assuring me that what I'm doing is far more than a job. Because of you I know that I am pursuing a wondrous calling.

Thank you, I love you,
Brian Mason

CHURCH PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY TIFFANY SEWELL

I came into this position outside of the “normal” channel of nomination and affirmation at the May 2015 Annual meeting. At that meeting, no nominees for President or Church Council Chair had been identified, and so the positions were left open. Both the Council Chair for the past year, Mark Bruns, and I were approved by the Policy Board of our church following that meeting, and I am grateful to Mark for stepping up to fill the role of Council Chair. The Board and Council began our year with a retreat at which we identified three areas of focus for our church: Membership, Engagement and Economics:



During this year, we have kept this framework in mind for all discussions and decisions made by the Policy Board.

I am eternally grateful to the members of all of our church committees for the work they have accomplished this last year. There are too many to list, which is why each committee has had an opportunity to provide an update in this Annual Report; however, there are a few things of which I am especially proud. In no particular order:

Many thanks to the facilities committee and member Aaron Blake for the purchase and installation of our new sound system. At our MidWinter Meeting, our congregation approved the use of funds from our endowment to purchase a new system for the Sanctuary.

A big “thank you” to the Finance Committee for developing a new, more transparent budget development process. Through two “Budget Summit” meetings, the Finance Committee has been able to involve many more people in the development of our budget for the coming year. The budget will be approved by the Policy Board at a meeting in the near future. I would also like to **thank our Membership and Involvement Coordinator, Dan Livengood**, for his work in developing a more effective and streamlined process to welcome visitors and new members, assist them in finding areas of our church where they can join a group, volunteer their time and feel at home.

We have many more things to be proud of at our church: our involvement in the Black Lives Matter movement, our status as a Welcoming Congregation and the work done to support the LGBT community, our status as a Green Sanctuary, the great work done by the Long-Range Planning team . . . the list goes on.

We also have some challenges that we must face together. For another year, we face a

challenge in balancing our expenses and our income. The Finance Committee, Committee Chairs, Church Council and Policy Board have worked in open sessions to help develop a budget that best fits our needs while staying within our means. Additionally, we are entering a time that is both exciting and scary as we search for an interim minister to assist us through the transition as Rev. Perchlik moves to his new congregation and we eventually begin the search for a new settled minister.

Throughout all of this, the Policy Board and Church Council remain committed to helping the congregation through the day-to-day operations and long-term efforts required to maintain the integrity and ensure the success of our church; and I have been honored to serve in the capacity of Policy Board President during this time.

So, where do we go from here? There are always many opportunities to engage and serve our congregation. Many hands make light work, and everyone benefits from a diversity of perspectives. We have a lot work to do as we engage with a new minister and, although we are striving for transparency, it's on each of us to keep our eyes and ears open for opportunities to learn more about things like our budget and the interim process. Many major church decisions are preceded by learning opportunities, and I encourage you to seek these out. We are a community of memory, reverence and hope; and we're all in this together.

CHURCH COUNCIL

SUBMITTED BY REV. THOMAS PERCHLIK

Due to Mark Bruns resignation of his position so late in the church year, only a cursory report from the lead minister is available for the Council.

Mark has been very active as Council Chair, providing considerable time and talent into his leadership of the Church Council. We thank him for his fine efforts. The council is saddened at his leaving and we hope he will be able to return to trusting relationship with the church.

The Council has worked on many projects in collaboration with the Board and other committees, including Long Range Planning. The Council has set major priorities for its shared work, and the Council has been clarifying or improving: job descriptions, responsibilities, and communication patterns of council members and committees.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY YVETTE CLEMONS

Wow! A Year as passed fast.

The church office is consistently looking for ways to improve telecommunications. We are excited about the new sound system and are looking forward to enhancing the internet and wifi 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 continues to have a good online presence that depicts the needs of our church and community. Each page states information that allows communication with our church and the community. **Carl Bassi** provides the capability to listen to recorded sermons on the site.

Our website offers 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 and Larry Dusenbery** for taking the time out of their busy schedules to help with monthly proofreading of 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.

Elliott Smith along with Darius Saulberry are doing a great job of keeping the facility clean.

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 **Brian Mason** who we welcomed into the church office as our Ministerial Intern. Brian is very enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

It is very rewarding to know that **Lynn Hunt, Augie Underwood and Dan Livengood** are there in numerous ways to encourage and help when needed. Ms. Augie, is a BIG help to me and a pleasure to train in her new role as Administrative Assistant.

Rev. Thomas Perchlik reassuring demeanor and support will be greatly missed by all in the church office. We wish him well and many blessings at his new church home, near his family in Olympia, Washington.

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

Sustaining Members:	308	Wedding/Union Ceremonies:	15
Associate Members:	17	Resignations:	14
		Julie Bilgere	
New Members:	9	Alice Crowder	
Brian Blosser		Cameron Crowder	
Eric Boswell		Teresa Deshields	
Jessica Boswell		Leslie Martyn Gennari	
Sue Fazio		Bruce King	
Laurel Heddens		Deanna Lally	
Chris Kocher		Tom Luebben	
Alicia Lloyd		Ben and Stacey Mcclusky	
Susan Novak-Tibbet		Sarah Noman	
Jim Talbert		Allyn O'Byrne	
		Pat Piety	
		Jana Pereau	
		Chelsey Rowland	
		Joanne Sivier	
		Tom Stringer	
		Suzanne Swope	
Deaths, Memorial Services:	6	Andrea Urice	
*Jack Carpenter		Ed Wright	
*Sam Crews		Stuart Yoak	
Joseph Davis			
*Marietta Hunsche			
Esther Meyer			
Robert Murphy		Reinstated:	0
* <i>Memorial Garden Interment</i>			
Child Dedications:	0	Change to Associate Membership:	0

Our total membership, including sustaining and associate, is now at 325, which is slightly less than in recent years. The church saw more losses due to deaths and resignations than there were new members joining the church.

There were 25 new members in 2012-2013, 29 new members in 2013-2014, 14 new members in 2014-2015, and 9 new members in 2015-2016, to contrast our current new membership with recent years.

Regarding Sunday service attendance since the last Annual Meeting, the average attendance is 115. It should be noted that a little over 35% of our membership attend service on any given Sunday. About 20 members are involved as teachers each Sunday with an average of 52 students in attendance.

TREASURER'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY JIM BOSNICK

Data as of March 31, 2016, prepared April 11, 2016

Income Statement

Income

YTD total income of \$390K vs YTD budget of \$407K, an unfavorable variance of \$17K.

YTD pledge income of \$307K vs YTD budget of \$317K, an unfavorable variance of \$10K.

Other Income:

Regular plate collections of \$11.5K vs YTD budget of \$8.4K, a favorable variance of \$3.1K.

Designated collections of \$11.2K vs YTD budget of \$12.3K, an unfavorable variance of \$1.1K

YTD building use income of \$11.1K vs YTD budget of \$9.7K, a favorable variance of \$1.4K

YTD investment income of \$35.0K vs YTD budget of \$45.0K, an unfavorable variance of \$10.0K.

YTD fundraising income of \$3.3K vs YTD budget of \$4.6K, an unfavorable variance of \$1.3K.

Expense

YTD total expense of \$382K vs YTD budget of \$392K, a favorable variance of \$10K.

YTD salaries and wages of \$210.6K vs YTD budget of \$192.8K, an unfavorable variance of \$17.8K

YTD total staffing, including staff expenses, of \$273K vs YTD budget of \$249K, an unfavorable variance of \$24K

YTD expenses for all other major categories are collectively below YTD budget and are broken down as follows (negative amounts being favorable): Administrative -3.5K, Building -7.1K, Music -1.6K, Education -6.1K, Membership -2.6K, Social Outreach -1.7K, Denominational Support -11.9K (-13.7 is intern salary).

Net Income

YTD net income of an \$8K gain vs YTD budget of \$15K gain, an unfavorable variance of \$7K.

Balance Sheet

Total assets valued at \$4.621M an increase of \$2K over the past month and a decrease of \$109K over the past year.

The balance in our bank account increased to \$75K from \$73K in the previous month, and an increase of \$20K over the previous year.

The value of the investment portfolio, as reported in QuickBooks, is \$962K for Restricted Investments and \$244k for Unrestricted Investments, a decrease of \$129K over the past year.

Total liabilities were \$211K, an increase of \$13K over the past month and an increase of 57K over the past year (approximately \$60K is membership coordinator funds).

Notable Items

2016-2017 Budget Process

Lewis Intern Fund accounting adjustment for 2014-2015 & 2015-2016 reduction

UUA Dues end of year correction

Fund transfers to close out windows and sound system account

General Fund & Endowment Fund signed

First Unitarian Church
Balance Sheet
As of March 31, 2016

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
10000 Cash-Pulaski Bank	75,399.87
10010 PayPal	0.00
10200 Petty Cash	50.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 75,449.87
Accounts Receivable	
12000 Accounts Receivable	0.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ 0.00
Other current assets	
13000 Investments - Unrestricted	0.00
13100 General Fund	242,008.33
13105 Transfers - Unrestricted	2,404.79
Total 13000 Investments - Unrestricted	\$ 244,413.12
13109 Investments - Restricted	
13110 Endowment Fund	574,354.76
13200 Lewis Fund	182,672.44
13300 Clark Fund	98,633.89
13400 CAEF	68,245.43
13500 Dodson Fund - Prin	30,473.68
13520 Dodson Fund - Res	10,106.77
13900 Transfers - Restricted	-2,404.79
Total 13109 Investments - Restricted	\$ 962,082.18
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
Total Other current assets	\$1,212,485.78
Total Current Assets	\$1,287,935.65
Fixed Assets	
17200 Real Estate & Improvements	956,091.09
17300 New Chapel & Improvements	2,376,965.91
Total Fixed Assets	\$3,333,057.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$4,620,992.65
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
20100 Payroll Liabilities	0.00
20200 Federal Liabilities Payable	14,315.31
20300 State Withholding Payable	-351.02
20400 City Withholding Payable	1,419.89
Total 20100 Payroll Liabilities	\$ 15,384.18
20500 Benefits Liabilities	
20510 Insurance Payable	
20511 Health Insurance--Employer paid	3,642.60
20512 Health Insurance--Employee paid	1,854.92
20513 Life Insurance	104.96
20514 Disability Ins--Employee paid	217.12
20515 Dental Ins--Employee paid	274.00
Total 20510 Insurance Payable	\$ 6,093.60
20530 Retirement--401(a) Payable	2,971.60
20540 Retirement--401(a) WH Payable	0.00
20550 Retirement--SEP IRA Payable	0.00
Total 20500 Benefits Liabilities	\$ 9,065.20

21000 Other Liabilities	
21010 Due to outside charities	0.00
21090 Miscellaneous liabilities	0.00
21092 A/C Repair Payable	0.00
Total 21000 Other Liabilities	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Direct Deposit Payable	0.00
Payroll Clearing	0.00
Payroll Tax Payable	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 24,449.38</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 24,449.38</u>
Long-Term Liabilities	
23000 Reserves	
23100 Holt	0.00
23200 Sabbatical	44,230.00
23300 Capital Maintenance	8,103.19
23310 Windows	-5,272.00
23400 Partner Church	5,273.36
23500 Prepaid Pledges	0.00
23575 Prepaid Contributions	0.00
23600 Intern Fund	2,550.00
23630 Membership Coordinator Fund	60,000.00
25011 Memorial Fund	7,908.12
25012 Special Gifts	10,041.80
25020 Social Responsibility	5,058.95
27000 Other Custodial Accounts	
27005 Auction Items	220.00
27010 Office Equipment Reserve	0.00
27020 Bookstore	586.25
27024 Boston Trip Reserve	6,978.04
27030 Piano Reserve	8,819.00
27040 Landscape Reserve	16.20
27050 Renovation Reserve	0.00
27060 RE Reserve	6,405.06
27065 Sandwich Making	4,543.21
27070 Women's Alliance Op Shop	643.80
27080 Caring Ministry Reserve	15,835.19
27090 Keyboard Reserve	456.37
27100 Healthy Congregation Reserve	2,526.48
27110 PR / Marketing	1,071.77
27120 Library	166.00
27130 Men's Wellness Ministry	434.00
Total 27000 Other Custodial Accounts	<u>\$ 48,701.37</u>
Total 23000 Reserves	<u>\$ 186,594.79</u>
Total Long-Term Liabilities	<u>\$ 186,594.79</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 211,044.17</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	574,359.76
35200 Lewis Fund	182,672.44
35300 Clark Fund	95,589.88
35400 Community Action Endowment Fund	74,355.91
35500 Dodson Fund - Prin	29,472.88
35520 Dodson Fund - Res	10,106.77
Total 35000 Fund Balances--Restricted	<u>\$ 966,557.64</u>
39000 General Fund--Unrestricted	102,410.94
Net Income	7,922.90
Total Equity	<u>\$4,409,948.48</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	<u>\$4,620,992.65</u>

First Unitarian Church
Profit and Loss
July 2015 - March 2016

	Total
Income	
40000 Operating Pledges	
40010 Current Year Pledges	296,512.06
40090 Prior Year Pledges	10,551.43
Total 40000 Operating Pledges	\$ 307,063.49
40200 Contributions & Collections	1,421.00
40210 Regular Plate Collection	11,472.92
40250 Designated Collections	11,182.38
40270 Restricted Contributions	660.00
Total 40200 Contributions & Collections	\$ 24,736.30
40310 Women's Alliance Op Shop	1,440.20
40400 Building Use Income	11,115.00
40500 Investment Income-Endowment	18,085.00
40520 Investment Income-General	2,762.78
40700 Miscellaneous Income	279.42
40750 Unrestricted Gifts	895.00
40800 Fundraisers	25.00
40811 Schnucks	899.26
40819 Miscellaneous Fundraisers	2,378.98
Total 40800 Fundraisers	\$ 3,303.24
40910 Interest Income	16.68
41000 Transfer from Lewis Fund	5,830.40
41500 Transfer from General Fund	14,120.00
41700 Transfer from Care and Concern	300.00
Total Income	\$ 389,947.51
Gross Profit	\$ 389,947.51
Expenses	
50000 Staffing	
50100 Salaries and Wages	
50120 Gross Wages--Salaries	151,578.70
50130 Gross Wages--Hourly wages	19,258.25
50135 Gross Wages-Contract Labor	13,479.96
50190 Housing Allowance	26,249.94
Total 50100 Salaries and Wages	\$ 210,566.85
50200 Benefits	
50210 Health Insurance	35,075.16
50220 Dental Insurance	411.00
50230 Retirement--401(a) Expense	10,740.24
50260 Life Insurance	629.76
50270 Payroll Taxes	9,749.17
Total 50200 Benefits	\$ 56,605.33
50500 Staff Expenses	
50510 Administrator Staff Expense	70.00
50520 Religious Educator Staff Expense	1,227.47
50530 Music Director Staff Expense	171.76
Total 50500 Staff Expenses	\$ 1,469.23
50600 Minister's Expenses	3,894.52
Total 50000 Staffing	\$ 272,535.93
51000 Administrative	
51050 Canvass	-55.65
51100 Internal Communications	2,222.93
51200 Board Expenses	7.56
51400 Office Supplies	859.66
51500 Office Equipment & Repairs	728.59
51600 Bank Charges	30.07

51650 Payment Processing Fees	724.85
51700 Computer Expense	609.30
51800 Legal & Accounting	2,479.54
51900 Postage	2,068.47
51995 Special Events	-801.00
91997 Leadership Dev & Nominating Comm	300.00
Total 51000 Administrative	\$ 9,174.32
52000 Building	
52100 Building Maintenance	5,294.21
52150 Housekeeping & Supplies	3,440.40
52200 Insurance	8,956.00
52250 Telephone	2,308.03
52300 Utilities	17,212.52
52350 Equipment & Repairs	11,745.16
52400 Contract Labor	12,950.00
52500 Landscaping	5,218.34
52550 Security	6,509.25
Total 52000 Building	\$ 73,633.91
53000 Worship	
53100 Music	
53110 Guest Musicians	1,450.00
53190 Miscellaneous	605.29
Total 53100 Music	\$ 2,055.29
53200 Worship Expenses	1,454.15
Total 53000 Worship	\$ 3,509.44
53500 Education	
53510 Children and Youth RE	1,906.23
53520 Adult Religious Education	533.39
53600 John Learned Library	115.00
Total 53500 Education	\$ 2,554.62
54000 Membership	
54200 Hospitality	1,098.86
54300 Feasts & Festivals	-1,178.07
54303 Welcoming Congregation	39.32
54600 Website	75.12
54990 Archives	0.00
Total 54000 Membership	\$ 35.23
55000 Social Action & Outreach	
55100 Social Responsibility Committee	
55110 Fair Trade Coffee	407.28
55130 Sandwich-Making	3,474.70
55150 SRC--Other	864.20
Total 55100 Social Responsibility Committee	\$ 4,746.18
55200 UUSC	-96.35
55300 Designated Collections	6,781.68
55600 Minister's Discretionary Fund	450.00
55610 Green Sanctuary	328.50
55620 Arts Presence	76.25
55750 Care & Concern Ministry	439.23
Total 55000 Social Action & Outreach	\$ 12,725.49
56000 Denominational Support	
56020 UUA	3,490.00
56035 Mid America Region	3,344.55
56050 Partner Church	497.49
56060 Internship	
56065 Intern Prof. Expenses	523.63
Total 56060 Internship	\$ 523.63
Total 56000 Denominational Support	\$ 7,855.67
Total Expenses	\$ 382,024.61
Net Operating Income	\$ 7,922.90
Net Income	\$ 7,922.90

LIFE SPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT REPORT

SUBMITTED BY LYNN YARRINGTON HUNT,
CREDENTIALLED RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR

Children's and Youth Religious Education classes were offered at 10:00am (average attendance was 52 compared to 54 last year). Enrollment was 90 (compared to 113 last year).

Worship

Rev. Perchlik gives the **Message for All Ages** at the beginning of the church service. 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: Annual Harvest Feast with a Buckingham the Teddy Bear story, The Power of a Promise using a Buddhist Jataka Tale and Animal Friends with a special visit from Chip the dog. 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:

10:00 am

Pre-School – *Story Time* with **Karen Siegrist, Lynda Mueller-Drendel and Katy Wittwer.**

Kindergarten– *A Discovering Year* with **Claire Weichselbaum, Steve Wilke and Sue Herzberg.**

First & Second Grade – *Moral Tales* with **Joel Minor, Shannon O'Boyle, Danielle Kozemczak, Jason McLure and Amanda Kracen.**

Third & Fourth Grade – *Timeless Themes* with **Kathy Wilke, Dan Wilke, Grace Munie and Danielle Kozemczak**

Fifth Grade – *History of Religious Thought* with **Janet Oriatti, Tara Perry and Jan Herzog.**

Sixth & Seventh Grade – *Amazing Grace* with **Brian Mason, Jon Fisher, Kevin Pumm, Sarah Francois and Noah Durham.**

Eighth and Ninth Grade Coming of Age Class with teachers **Heidi Meister and Laurel Heddens** explored Unitarian Universalist History, Values and Theology. Mentors for the class were: **Amy Genova, Catherine Hunter, T. J. Hunter, Lynda Mueller-Drendel and Heidi Meister.**

The **Youth Group** had a very full year. They served a hot lunch 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 on the topic of 'Teen Angst,' and hosted the southern MidAmerican Region Youth Conference. The conference theme was defCON5 – Peace Time Readiness and consisted of workshops around the concept of peace and social justice education and action around the issue of settling refugees in St. Louis and countering Islamophobia.

Graduating Youth Group seniors were: **Reid Doctor, Anna Drendel, Alan Meister, Shannon O'Brien, Earth Swartz and Eden Vitoff. Sara Park, Victoria Bonvento and Ben Rosensweig** were the able advisers.

Summer Religious Education was held in June, July and August. The Pre-School class was led by **Rhonda Buergler** (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**.

Adult Education offerings were: **Rev. Perchlik** offered two classes this year: **Credo**, which helps people articulate their thoughts and beliefs about the big questions of life and **Liberal Interpretations of the Bible. Poetry in the Bible** was led by ministerial intern **Brian Mason**.

The Toward Justice anti-racism group sponsored three classes: **Examining Whiteness** led by **Lynn Hunt and Dan Livengood** and book discussions on **The New Jim Crow and Just Mercy** led by **Cathy Rauch**.

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

Author, **Liz Zellman** gave a presentation on her book **Our Beleaguered Species**.

The **Pragmatic Buddhist** group, which meets in the church, started a book discussion group in which several of our members participate.

Wonderful Wednesday (a once a month gathering including a vesper service and programming) met for the first part of the year, but was discontinued in 2016 due to low attendance. Programming the past year was varied and included: Soul Cards with **Dahven Doctor**, Adult Coloring with **Pam Gempel**, Medical Ethics with **Allan Doctor**, Preston Sturgess Movies with **George Matusek** and Sustainable and Responsible Investing sponsored by the Green Sanctuary Committee.

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

Special activities for children and families included: beginning of the year Family Potluck Brunch, Chili Cook-Off and Sing Along, 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. 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, Sue Herzberg, Grace Munie, Amanda Kracen, Jason McLure, Sarah Figueroa and Shannon O'Boyle**) supported all areas of Religious Education programming. The task force to look into the feasibility of creating a play space for the children and families was reorganized and met with members of other church committees, the church council and board. Work has begun on preparing the site for the play area and final plans for the space and funding is being developed. Members of the task force are: **Mark**

Bruns, Rob Meister, Karen Siegrist, Connie Goss and Grace Munie and gathers information from many other parents.

Looking forward to a new year supporting our Living Faith Tradition --

—Respectfully Submitted,
Lynn Yarrington Hunt

Professional Activities

I completed my time as the Good Officer representative for the Central Midwest District Liberal Religious Educator's Association (LREDA). I finished serving as a mentor to a candidate in the Unitarian Universalist Association Religious Education Credentialing Program.

Closing

The Religious Education support staff, **Augustine Underwood and Rhonda Buergler** continue to be wonderful colleagues who are always flexible and good natured! They offer invaluable support to the program on a weekly basis. I also greatly appreciate the child-care support of **Ashley Cox and Adrienne Norise**.

Ministerial support for a Faith Development program is invaluable and I thank **Rev. Thomas Perchlik** for his interest, support and participation. **Brian Mason** was a wonderful ministerial intern and I valued his time here.

I truly appreciate all the behind the scenes support the program receives from the administrator **Yvette Clemons**. She always sees the best in every situation and is a joy to work with.

It has also been a pleasure working with and getting to know better the new Membership Coordinator, **Dan Livengood**.

It has been a pleasure working with Rev. Thomas over the last years. His support and wisdom will be missed, though I am very happy that he has found a way to serve Unitarian Universalism and be close to his family as well. I am sure the future holds many blessings for him and his family.

Long Range Planning Committee

The Long Range Planning Committee has developed a planning strategy to translate the broader church vision that members have for their congregation into an actionable strategy for implementation.

This past year the committee has continued to seek feedback on our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. While we are a church of a proud legacy and many strengths, certain themes emerged in our analysis that indicated areas of opportunities for change and initiatives for the church:

Stewardship

- Improve and strengthen our church governance
- Increase our financial resources
- Enhance and maintain our facility and site

Community

- Engage our community in focused social change
- Recruit and retain new members
- Integrate new members
- Increase unity and participation
- Communicate effectively

To address these opportunities, the committee recommended to the Policy Board and Church Council, a series of mission/vision oriented goals to be accomplished over the next 2-5 years. The goals were approved by the board and council this spring. The LRPC's next steps include collaboration with church leadership and the congregation to prioritize and obtain resources to create plans for achieving these goals.

Current committee members include: Larry

Dusenbery (chair), Tony Fathman, Susan Lammert, Dan Livengood, Alicia Claire Lloyd, Karen Siegrist, and Stan Veyhl.

—submitted by Larry Dusenbery

MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

SUBMITTED BY JOEL KNAPP

The First Unitarian Choir is a rock. Year after year, they have committed themselves to preparing and presenting quality music for the congregation. When I came in 2006, I began challenging them with the diversity of choral music including jazz, Buddhism, a variety of languages and styles. While not always in our comfort zone, they embraced the diversity and were able to effectively share that with the congregation.

This year we stretched our diversity even more. Within two weeks, we performed Mozart's Missa Brevis (k. 194) with the help of Yoanna and Leah Haynes, and Robert Ray's "Gospel Mass" (Aiden Haynes on drums). The two completely different styles were presented beautifully by the choir.

The major offering for the fall was "A Day for Dancing" by Lloyd Pfautsch, accompanied by flute, oboe, bassoon, and percussion. Personally, I was delighted to hear the choir that morning.

The choir stays about the same size. We've added several new members to the choir, and lost a few. The steady core of the choir are excellent. I don't know of any other church group that meets six times a month. They sacrifice their time in order to share the gift of music to everyone. It is a labor of love, but don't minimize the "labor" part. They deserve your thanks. We continue to look for singers who share a love of music and are willing to commit the considerable time it takes.

I can't say enough good things about our organist, Earl Naylor. He is steady, talented, and easy to work with. His preludes and postlude are well-presented and full of variety. He thoughtfully plans his music, helps with

hymn selection, and works with all special music providers. Pat him on the back the next time you see him.

Instead of one Jazz Sunday we had two, both of which included our own Greg Hoeltzel! Rick Haydon came first and did his usual splendid job on guitar. Then for Valentines Day, we brought in Ric Vice, former member of our congregation. With Greg on piano and Ric on bass, the choir joined in and sang The Nearness of You and But Beautiful.

We lost our children's choir this year. The Music Committee (especially Carolyn Toft) has a plan to reintroduce singing into the RE program, contingent on funding.

Who to thank.....

Yoanna Park-Haynes provided several Sundays of special music, with and without the choir, sharing the talents of her children (Aiden and Leah).

All the church members and friends who share their talents.

Julie Oyen-Keller, Chair,
Music Committee

FINANCE COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY STEVE SMIDOWICZ

Thank you to the Council and Policy Board for electing me to serve as the FUSTL Finance Committee Chair back in December 2014.

This will be my second full year as Chair of the Finance Committee. While my first year was fraught with personal uncertainty and a sense of little direction, I feel that-- with the help of a great team, both in the Finance Committee and with the other leaders of the congregation -- we are tuning a corner in improving our fiscal transparency, and broadening the understanding of the long term fiscal challenges our church faces.

The Finance Committee is comprised of **volunteers** elected by the Council to serve as your best assurance that the First Unitarian Church of St Louis (FUSTL) is behaving in a fiscally responsible manner. The Finance Committee provides the Board and Council with an **independent** and **knowledgeable** evaluation of financial issues and the fiscal health of the FUSTL. The Finance Committee also recommends changes that will improve the quality of fiscal planning and management of the FUSTL.

The Finance Committee's work is carried out *in the public arena* of committees, the board, and council. This work is also conducted *behind the scenes* in private conversations with the Minister, the administrator and individual leaders. The public arena is particularly important for our congregation to ensure all leaders are behaving fiscally responsible. The private sphere is equally important, where most concerns are resolved and more risks are taken in examining ideas and options.

At meetings of the Board and Council, the Treasurer -- on behalf of the Finance Committee

-- provides a report on the financial health of the Church and occasionally issues pertinent to the financial wellbeing of the church.

Activities

The Finance Committees provide oversight of 1.2 million dollars in FUSTL financial assets, as delegated to perform that work by the Board and Council, which have direct fiduciary responsibility for those assets.

Specific activities of the Finance Committee for this Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-2016 include:

- Took a more active role in defining and managing the budget process for FY2016-2017

- Split out General fund monies into a separate physical account for better transparency of discretionary and restricted monies.

- Returned to a more robust and clearer year-end financial report for the congregation

- Continued and increased engagement with other committees such as Long Range Planning, Facilities, etc. to better understand and make recommendations on issues directly impacting the financial well being of our church

While the church is currently financially 'stable', we continue to be challenged with decreased pledge revenue. Pledging accounts for 80% of the church's total revenue.

While the church does gain some income from collections and building use, it is primarily dependent on the generosity of both members and friend who are committed to supporting the

mission of the church financially. We were additionally challenged this year by an unforeseen loss of pledges from members who pledged previously, but chose to not do so during the year. We have also lost a small number of extremely generous member's donations due to death and or relocation.

Last year for FY2015-2016, the Board decided to decrease the church's spending by 5% across the board, held salaries steady for a second year because of a continued trend of reduced pledging, as well as a reliance on large pledges that didn't appear. Last year's budget also relied on a \$20K withdrawal from the General Fund. Last year was also the second year where we utilized the current 5% drawdown -- reduced by congregational approval from 10/7.5% over the past few years -- of the Endowment account to support the operations of the church.

Prior to the budget process for this year (FY2016-2017), the finance committee raised serious concern about the state of our General Fund, being half of what it should be for a congregation of our size. As such, the committee strongly recommended we withhold a draw from the General Fund as was done last year.

The proposed FY2016-2017 budget is still heavily reliant on larger pledges, and does not rely on a transfer from the General Fund.

This year's budget continues to be shored up by the 5% Endowment withdrawal.

Additionally approximately 60% of church membership supports the church financially, as well as 23% of friends. With that, we have been able to provide church staff with a modest salary increase, and a very slight increase to the RE budget. All other budget items are either reduced again or held flat to last year's spending levels.

In short, our congregation is financially surviving, but not prospering. Without an increase in revenue, the church will continue to 'bump along', unable to expand programs and

services to support its mission.

Financial Results and Goals

Investment returns for the FUSTL Endowment Fund remained strong over the long term. Last year's portfolio return was 0.6%, and a five year return of 6.3%. The finance committee has structure the endowment investment mix to be focused on long term growth which we feel, over time, should continue to allow our endowment to perform reasonably well into the future.

In terms of goals, we are in support of many of the ideas set forth by the Long Range Planning Committee. We will continue to be actively engaged with that committee so that the long term mission goals of the church can be managed in a fiscally responsible manner.

One such goal the Finance Committee feels strongly about is to support the need for a Capital Maintenance Reserve. Based on information from the Facilities Committee, the church ideally should be budgeting \$9,000 annually into a reserve account. Just like a household that plans for the future, we need to be more proactive to ensure we have sufficient reserves to address potentially urgent needs to maintain our aging infrastructure. In the event projected pledge income for FY 2016-2017 is greater than anticipated, we will support some level of funding for that reserve account.

Growth: Urgency and Hope

Our adult membership has declined gradually back to where we were about five years ago. While we feel it is prudent to work towards a higher degree of fiscal support from all members, we feel the greatest opportunity for growth within the church is to pursue a larger base of membership. It is the hope of the Finance Committee that with a directed effort to identify membership opportunities -- by our new Membership coordinator -- we are optimistic that we can expand the membership of the church in support of the missions we all support and engage our efforts.

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Finance/Stewardship Cluster

Canvass Committee

The canvass theme was “April Showers.” The campaign was moved from February to March with a culminating catered Celebration Brunch on April 10. A Program Budget was developed and circulated to the congregation via the website and print copies. This document ties the budget to the programs the church supports to fulfill its mission: worship, lifelong learning, the community within, the wider community and social responsibility. All expenses, including salaries, are distributed among these five programs. This method of presenting the financial needs of the church makes it easier for the congregation to see how pledges support the mission of our church. This presentation is more effective than a focus on what the church needs to balance its budget.

Several modifications to Herb Miller’s “Consecration Sunday” model introduced last year blended this new approach more successfully with the culture of this church. We offered pledging in advance of April 10 by mail or e-mail, in addition to all-church pledging on Celebration Sunday. As of the end of April, \$316,000 or approximately 75% of the anticipated pledge income was pledged. This included pledges by 51% of the members households and 24% of the friends' households. Many increased their financial commitment over last year. Throughout the balance of the current fiscal year, the committee will be making direct appeals to the remaining 49% of our membership in order to give the board a more realistic basis for finalizing the 2016-2017 budget.

A column entitled “Money Matters” was included in every issue of the Newsletter beginning in November. We drew additional attention to the canvass in the yellow sheet that

accompanies the Sunday Order of Service. Affirmations were delivered from the pulpit as were announcements by members of the committee, members of the congregation, and Rev. Perchlik.

I would like to recognize and thank the members of the Canvass Committee for their commitment, dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work: Sarah Dashner, Larry Dusenbery, Lynn Hunt, Emily Jaycox, Rosemary Lawton, Judy Meyer, Carolyn Toft, Rev. Perchlik, the entire office staff, and those who helped with the brunch and letter mailings. We thank those who wrote articles for the newsletter and who made affirmations from the pulpit. And finally we thank all those members and friends who responded to “April Showers” by pledging in a timely fashion.

In the words of Reverend S.J. Wolfe: "We give...not because our giving makes the church possible; we give because the church helps make the flowers of love, justice, dignity and peace possible."

Submitted by Jeanette Myers, chair

Chalice Lighters

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 2015-16, 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. I did not hold a membership drive in the past year. I am working with church leadership to schedule a drive for over the summer.

Submitted by Emily Jaycox

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, but there is not dramatic change in the market. There have not been any substantial new claims. The church's employee health insurance remains with the UUA plan, where premiums are determined by the age of the individuals covered. Premiums for that coverage have increased, as the cost of health insurance generally is increasing. The

church is not directly affected by the health insurance requirements in the Affordable Care Act.

Submitted by Kathy Wire

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:

Jack Carpenter

Nick Detering

Lydia Long

Robert Murphy

Marietta Hunsche

Submitted by Yvette Clemons

Facilities Work Group

Arts and Aesthetics

Dan Franklin has retired but was chair for much of the fiscal year.

Linda Fiehler is now Aesthetics Chair as part of the facilities cluster.

Danielle Kozemczak now oversees the Fellowship Art Exhibits.

Dan put up 3 exhibits in the past year:

"Growing in Love," on Ashleigh Lynne and Stewart's wedding day (July 5, 2015)

"Mother's Jewels: the floral photography of Mark D'Harlingue" (July 19-August 16, 2015)

"Twelve Meditations" by George Grimm-Howell (October 4-25, 2015)

Danielle has put up an excellent exhibit of Partner Church keepsakes and is currently displaying the artwork of member Stanley Veyhl.

Linda recently installed do not open signs on non-opening windows in the Hosmer and Dodson rooms.

Submitted by Clint Cruse

Facilities Committee

Overview:

The Facilities Committee & Cluster oversees maintenance, repair, modification and upgrades to the building and grounds owned by the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis at 5007 Waterman Blvd. Facilities, Landscaping, Green Sanctuary and Esthetics all fall under the facilities cluster and meet together as "Facilities." All focus specifically on maintenance, beautification and the "greening" of the

church grounds.

Current Members: Clint Cruse (Facilities Chair), Connie Goss & Lisa Cary (Landscaping Co-Chairs), Stanley Veyhl, Vicki Carlson, Karen Siegrist (Facilities Work Group Cluster Council Representative), Linda Fiehler (Aesthetics Chair), Green Sanctuary is Lisa Ross, Kiri Ulmschneider, Susan Lammert, Sarah Dashner, Connie Goss (Chair), Yvette Clemmons (staff liaison). Dan Franklin (Emeritus member, Aesthetics Chair). Thanks to the many volunteers who have helped out with various work projects over the year. All 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:

- Completed refurbishment of all stained glass windows.
- Completed repainting of exterior windows sills associated with stained glass windows.
- Working closely with the Long Range Planning Committee to identify and plan for future significant building and grounds needs.
- Acoustic evaluation for Fellowship Hall.
- Complete repair of Chapel Roof leak.
- Installation of drinking fountain in Fellowship Hall (with help from the Woman's Alliance).
- Sound System upgrades in Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall
- Installed 2 new bike racks
- Installed automatic external defibrillator (AED), in lobby.
- Installed projection screen in Chapel
- Fire safety inspections conducted
- Casual workdays instituted.
- Boiler repaired
- New backflow preventers installed in furnace room.
- Purchased additional hearing devices.

Purchased new wireless doorbells.

Ongoing/Pending projects:

- Continued updated of the Long Term Maintenance Planning Document
 - Support of Playground design and installation.
 - Repainting of East side fencing.
- Implement more formal training for things like boiler and sound systems.

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).
- Acoustic treatments for Fellowship Hall (\$500-\$5K).
- Touch-Up Hope Chapel Overhang.
- Repair concrete in front of main entrance.
- Repainting of exterior windows sills, overhangs and iron piping.
- Various interior painting and plaster touchup.
- Conduct exhaustive structural building inspection.
- Sound system installation in Clark Room

—*Respectfully submitted by Clint Cruse*

Green Sanctuary

Thanks to help from Michael Smith, a Ferguson protester who needed Community Service hours, and Sarah Dashner, who believes certification for Green Sanctuary status warrants volunteering to help with recertification, we have begun the recertification process. This said, lack of congregational support for Green Sanctuary activities still makes it difficult to make as big an

impact as we would like.

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 Greenleaf Garden which provides fresh produce for the Trinity Episcopal Church Food Pantry continues to be our largest ongoing project. Developing a more sustainable Church landscape continues. This past year we hosted a press release in support of the Climate Summit in Paris sponsored by the Sierra Club and MO Interfaith Power and Light featuring Dr. Peter Raven. This past month we also hosted a garden tour with Gateway Greening, CRC and the Central West End Garden on Waterman.

As a way of further integrating Green Sanctuary into the fabric of the Church; the Green Sanctuary Committee has become part of the Facilities Committee. Consolidating in this way should help maintain the Green Sanctuary program.

Submitted by Connie Goss

Landscaping Committee

Our church landscape is always changing and growing as we get plant donations from members and the Great Perennial Divide program. Our goal, as always, is to fill our gardens with hardy perennials and ground covers that are low-maintenance and can help keep the weeds at bay!

In April, we organized the first Casual Work Sunday, where people can wear jeans to the worship service so they can stay afterwards for an hour of cleanup inside and outside the church. We plan to have these once or twice every year, along with a gardening day on the 1st day of each month in April through October.

One of the most popular additions to the grounds this year was the paving stone path that now provides a shortcut across the front lawn from the parking lot to the church's front

door. This path was made possible by a lovely anonymous friend of the Landscaping Committee, who we appreciate very much!

We have another wonderful donor who helps pay for tree trimming, which is important for the look and safety of our landscape. Through the Plant 4 Peace program with the City of St. Louis, we were able to plant a Burr Oak tree (from Forest ReLeaf) in the big square bed that fronts our parking lot on Waterman.

The majority of our budget goes to lawn care and occasional pickups of wood waste. We also use a service that helps maintain the irrigation systems for the Memorial Garden and the lawn and raised vegetable beds on the Kingshighway side.

The Landscaping Committee would like to thank all of the volunteers who have helped weed, rake, and trim this past year. We look forward to more help and fellowship in the gardens during the coming year – come join us!

Submitted by Lisa Cary and Connie Goss

Safety Task Force

This group was not active this year, but needs to reorganize in order to fully implement the Safety Plan that was adopted. An AED was purchased and installed in the foyer of the church building.

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

William Allen, Peggy Feinberg and Susan Knoll continue as committee chairs. Chairwoman Emerita Kathy McVoy lent invaluable leadership in helping to expand our number of groups.

We had a successful year, increasing the number of groups from 6 to 8. Maintaining group membership growth has been a challenge thru factors that do not include dissatisfaction of the participants.

We had a very rewarding Covenant Group Mixer this year: there was a lot of solid fellowship and a lot of interest in joining groups from newcomers to the event.

We are confident in more fun and fellowship, and more groups and membership in the coming year.

Submitted by William Allen

Men's Wellness Group

The ministry started in the autumn of last year [2015]. I have given a sermon on men's wellness and plan to give more in the future. The men's group has truly had 'growing pains', but it is slowly maturing and growing in membership. I have not as yet found a female co-facilitator to work with me to foster the kind of male/female communication group that I proposed in my initial plans, but I'm still searching. As the ministry is an outgrowth of a nonprofit that I started 13 years ago -- the Mariposa Men's Wellness Institute -- it is an aspect of my personal 'life's journey' and the embodiment of many of my concepts surrounding Unitarian Universalist values, men's emotional wellness, and the multi-faceted issues that confront males in American culture, many of which continue to be unrecognized and/or trivialized.

Submitted by Donald Jeffries

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. In 2015 we continued to offer our solstice and equinox celebrations as Wonderful Wednesday vespers service, 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 "gathering in the harvest," based around a Native American story about the corn harvest and the importance of caring for the Earth. Each attendee reflected on what they wanted to gather in for the winter, as they "harvested" an actual piece of corn from a corn stalk.
- We continued our annual Honoring Our Ancestors tradition in late October, celebrating Samhain/Day of the Dead, complete with altar (courtesy of Lynda Mueller Drendel). This is one of my favorite annual traditions, as we share memories and artifacts of ancestors important to us, and light a candle in their honor.
- Our winter solstice theme was "building transformation in ourselves and the world." We celebrated around a fire in the courtyard, with music, chanting, and adding a twig to the fire while reflecting on what we wanted to transform over the winter.
- In March 2016 we had a very special spring equinox celebration with guest artist Mark Biehl playing Tibetan singing bowls. Our theme was balance, and our celebration included the "tree" yoga pose, planting seeds (using ashes from the winter solstice fire!), and the regenerative music of the Tibetan bowls.

As always, it has been a true joy working with our group. In addition to veterans Susan Morse, Sue Herzberg, Linda Kulla, and Danielle Kozemczak, this year we welcomed new members Alicia Lloyd, Lindsey Bastedo, and Shawn Stacey.

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. This past year our events were Hanging of the Greens, Mid-Winter Meeting Potluck, and Fellowship Dinner. We are also responsible for keeping the church kitchen organized and providing laundry service for kitchen towels and tablecloths.

We added two new members, but still were a relatively small committee: Victoria Bonvento, Lori Calcaterra, Amy Genova, Jane Hoekelman, Jamie Laing, Carolyn Nolan, Sara Park, and Margaret Weck (chair for 2015-16). This year many more volunteers stepped up when personally recruited and reminded. The success of the two largest events and most labor intensive events, Hanging of the Greens and Fellowship Dinner, was attributable to the more intense volunteer recruitment this year.

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. The theme for this year's Fellowship dinner was "The Fellowship of the Church," taking inspiration from the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien. One of the innovations tried this year was to cook the meal ourselves in the church kitchen, rather than having it catered. This required more volunteers. Even though the volunteers received a reduced admission price, and we cover the cost of the honorees'

dinners, we managed to do a bit better than braking even and the two kitchen crews managed to get quite a bit of enjoyment out of the process.

I would be remiss if I did not give a very special thank you to Jane Hoekelman who has served on Feasts and Festivals since its formation as an outgrowth from the old Program Council about 15 years ago. It is Jane who has been the creative genius behind all the table centerpieces that always put the festivity into Feasts and Festivals events. Jane and I will both be stepping down from formal positions on Feasts and Festivals, but we will make sure to update all of the event binders and pass our collective wisdom on to whomever takes up the work.

Submitted by Margaret Weck

Hospitality Committee

The Hospitality Committee has had a great year bringing Fair Trade coffee, tea, donuts, fruit, bagels, etc. to Fellowship Hall most every Sunday, with youth group and children's group bake sales popping up on many second Sundays. We have also started a "spotlight table" featuring one of the many teams or committees for visitors, friends and members to become involved with. Many thanks to our team: Sarah Dashner, Pam Gempel, Susan Knoll, Susan Novak-Tibbet, Mary Broida, Tiffany Sewell, and Judy Till. We'd also like to thank Bob and Cathy Reszinski for leading this committee for many years! They passed the reins to Dan Livengood last August. We're always open to new team members, so if you'd like to help with coffee hour and welcoming visitors, friends and members, just let one of us know!

Submitted by Dan Livengood

Membership Committee

See Minister's Report

PR/Marketing Committee

The PR/Marketing Committee continues to set up our table in Fellowship Hall to sell First Church marketing merchandise whenever I happen to have the time and energy available. Given that the committee only has 4 members, and I am the only member who is willing to maintain the table on any kind of a consistent basis, what we are doing is the best we can generate. We hope to add First Church license plate frames to our line of merchandise 'at some point in the future', but having the assistance of a graphic artist will be essential to that possible venture. We hope, someday, to have sufficient funds to sponsor radio ads on St. Louis Public Radio [NPR], but as we all know, given the budgetary constraints that our congregation is facing, that plan may remain 'on hold' for quite some time to come. We are always open to the involvement of members of the congregation, especially those with public relations experience..

Submitted by Donald B. Jeffries

Young Adults group

No report submitted

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, and distribution of contributions to the church and charities.

The Women's Alliance officers this year were Pamela Gempel (Pres.), Deborah Richie (VP),

Judi Crouch (Secy.), and Judy Till (Treas.).
Chairs included Carolyn Nolan (Finance), Jean
Morrel-Frqnklin (Program), and Dori Miller
(Churchmanship).

The Alliance met twice a month during the
church year (second and fourth Tuesdays) and
once a month during summer 2015. During the
church year business meetings were the second
Tuesday. Lunch in Fellowship Hall followed
by an educational program was the agenda for
both Tuesdays of the month.

Programs were presented by members of the
church, including Doris Pree, Noah Durham,
Deborah Richie, Rev. Thomas Perchlik, Lynn
Hunt, Stanley Birge, Emily Coulton, Esley
Hamilton, Yvette Clemons, Gwenne Hickman,
Thomas Archer, and intern Brian Mason, with
Emily Jaycox to present at the second May
meeting. We are grateful to all of our
speakers.

Monthly summer meetings were at area
restaurants.

The Alliance did not present a scholarship this
church year, but anticipates resuming awarding
scholarships in the future.

The Alliance presented the church with \$2000
for its operating budget, and \$1100 toward
support of the intern. Approximately \$1400
was distributed to various local charities.

Dues are \$30 per year.

The Women's Alliance at First Church had its
beginnings in the nineteenth century. We
encourage interested women to attend several
meetings as guests in the hopes that they will
be interested in our programs and activities,
and join us as active members.

Submitted by Pamela Gempel

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'Bri-
en, and John Knoll, Chair. Rev. Thomas
Perchlik serves on the committee ex-officio.

Theresa Carrington, founder and CEO of *The
Blessing Basket Project*, delivered the 2015
Clark Lecture. Ms. Carrington's topic was
"Where the Grass Grows: The Place Where
Peace and Prosperity Begin When You Break
All the Rules." Her presentation explored how
the world can be changed from poverty to
prosperity, one basket at a time. Her develop-
ment of The Blessing Basket Project focuses
on ensuring that the makers of baskets be
compensated properly, without having to cede
the majority of the profits to a middleman.

Over the last decade Theresa Carrington's
Blessing Basket Project has been perfecting
unique approaches to sustainable poverty
reduction. The organization has created
sustainable prosperity for more than 10,000
people. The project's patented financial model
enables the artisans to earn "Prosperity Wages,"
which are significantly higher than fair
trade wages for their products. These wages
enable the artisans to start their own business-
es. It is these enterprises that empower the arti-
sans to lift themselves out of poverty.

A reception featuring *Blessing Basket Project*
products followed her lecture. An enthusiastic

audience of seventy-six attended Theresa Carrington's inspiring presentation

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.

Between May 1, 2015 and April 30, 2016, the Library Committee purchased 19 books and accepted 21 books into the collection as gifts. The collection now contains more than 1500 items, including audio and video materials. There are 335 people in our patron database. Fully 91% 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.

The collection is available for browsing online at 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; displays related to Adult RE offerings (Buddhism & Meditation and Race & Diversity); Sermon Resources to showcase books referenced in Sunday morning sermons; Partner Church; and Parenting. Our New Books bookshelf is a very popular feature of the library.

Members of the Library Committee in 2015-2016: Sarah Dashner, Carol Iglauer, Dottie Kinscherf, Dori Miller, Woody Sullivan, Joel Minor, and Terry Yokota.

Submitted by Terry Yokota, Chairperson

Lewis Ministerial Internship

No report submitted

Lifespan Faith Development

see page 26

Music Committee

The Music Committee provides support for Music Director, Joel Knapp and Organist/Accompanist, Earl Naylor. and coordinates with other music matters that may be needed church-wide.

This spring the Choir prepared two different works for Sunday Services: the first by Mozart, the second by contemporary composer Robert Ray. Choir members also participate in Memorial Services. Depending on next year's church budget, the committee proposed having a children's music program to enhance their RE experience and to promote a potential start of a children's choir.

The committee is responsible for providing special music for summer services. This is typically done by choir members and other interested church members.

Submitted by Julie Oyen-Keller, Chairperson

Personnel Committee

Among the many personnel changes the past year has brought, Yvette Clemons stepped into the position of church administrator with enthusiasm and a helpful attitude and continues to grow and evolve in that role. Last summer she hired Augustine Underwood as her part-time office assistant. "Miss Augie", as most of the children in church know her, was already filling the important role of providing childcare to our youngest congregants and has added the office assistant job to the list of her contributions to church life. The Personnel Committee has offered support and assistance to Rev. Thomas and the church staff as those transitions took place.

Next year promises to bring even more transitions as a result of Rev. Thomas's resignation. The Personnel Committee is ready and eager to assist in the process of welcoming and orienting the incoming ministerial staff. We will continue to reflect on ways we can improve in our role of supporting the minister

in his or her role as chief of staff and also providing 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 Policy Board President or me for more information on joining our committee.

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 Community Action Endowment Fund (CAEF) was started through an initial gift of \$1,000 in 1995 with Renni Shuter serving as the founder and steadfast center for the CAEF until her death in 2014. The purpose of the CAEF is to provide small grants to a variety of direct service and social action agencies and projects that serve our community. The primary fund raising event for the CAEF is an annual dinner, which had been the first week of advent but has now for the past two years been shifted to the Sunday of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend in January.

\$1,000 was raised through this event in 2016. Requests for proposals were sent in July to the mailing list of over 90 local organizations, and sixteen grant proposals were received in Sept. 2015 with a total request of \$8,175. These proposals were reviewed by the committee and nine organizations received funding this cycle: Joint Neighborhood Ministry, Trinity Episcopal Church, The Grace and Peace Winter Shelter, St. Louis Art Works, Gateway 180, Cornerstone Center - Early Learning, International Institute, Places for People, and Peace Economy Project. The finances for CAEF are managed as a restricted portion of the church's larger endowment fund. As such the committee is normally restricted in the same way that all other expenditures from the endowment fund are restricted. In celebration of Renni's memory the CAEF committee petitioned the policy board and was granted a special one-time permission to distribute \$4,000 in this cycle. The largest grant awarded in 2015 was for \$500 and the average grant was just over \$444. The awards were announced and checks distributed in person to representatives from each organization during the Sunday Service on October 25th. 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. The members of the committee for 2015-16 were: Margaret Weck (chair), Vicki Carlson, Reena Chesla, Kay Dusenbery, Beth Herbster, Donald Jeffries, Rosemary Lawton, Rev. Thomas Perchlik, Anne Pride, Dale Shuter, Lynn Shuter, and Laura Zacher.

Submitted by Margaret Weck

Holy Ground Collaborative

The Collaborative continues to grow 'as an interfaith family in it's 14th year. All of the 6 congregations continue to participate, once a month on a rotating basis, in the preparation of a meal for the Trinity Hot Lunch program. Tom Craddock & I continue to be the sole representatives on behalf of First Unitarian, but it is an enjoyment that we would not readily dispense with. The group is truly a 'family' and we have mutually looked after the welfare of our members and our congregations these many years. Working with the other congregations has been an important involvement by our congregation. New projects will be generated in the years to come, as we continue to foster interfaith involvement in social justice projects in the Central West End of St. Louis.

Submitted by Donald Jeffries

Partner Church Committee

Our efforts of the current year have focused on the following goals: 1) to build an awareness and knowledge about the UUA Partner Church program on the part of First Church members, 2) to raise funds to assist our Partner Church, and its members, in Csokfalva, Romania, and 3) to expand communication and interactions with our overseas partners. The following actions were undertaken to achieve these goals:

- Installation of a permanent display in Fellowship Hall including a plaque, wood-carving and the Sekeley flag presented to our church on previous visits to our Csokfalva partner church.
- Development of a temporary exhibit of photos and other memorabilia from previous pilgrimages to help publicize Partner Church Sunday and our Annual Dinner and Program "An Evening at the Hotel Tran-

sylvania,” during the week of 3-13 through 3-19, 2016.

- Coordination of RE children’s activities to correspond with the Christmas holiday season and Partner Church week.
- The annual Holiday Bake Sale, Designated Collection Sunday and Dinner-Program were successful fund-raising events during the year helping to fund a small, salary supplement of our partner church minister’s meager salary, scholarships to five worthy students (4 in secondary school and 1 in theological school) in their congregation, assisting with repairs to the minister’s car, addressing mold problems in the parsonage, helping purchase materials for rebuilding a porch, and repairs and maintenance of the aging church building. (Our partners provided their own sweat equity in the building projects.) A portion of our fund-raising money is also designated for a “travel and exchange fund” to help assist interested members from First Church with a portion of their trip expenses, if needed. It will also be used to provide the same assistance to Csokfalva members to visit us, in the future.
- Our multi-year push to launch another pilgrimage to Transylvania is also coming to fruition in September with ten people from our congregation registered and preparing to go. All participants will be going for the first time. Eliot Chapel will have a smaller contingent joining us on the tour of the larger Transylvanian region, but then visiting their own partner church.

We look forward to strengthening our bond with our international friends and infusing new excitement into our own church community for this wonderful program.

Submitted by Tom Crouch

Social Responsibility Committee

The SRC continues to foster the Sandwich-Making project, and to annually generate a list of potential designees for the Designated Collections process, which allows First Church to contribute funds to socially-important programs in the St. Louis community. Those are our two main projects throughout the year. In the past, we had worked on clean-up projects in the Kensington Neighborhood, but that project depended both on a partnership with Romona Taylor Williams, who has since taken a position out-of-state, and in partnership with the Metro UU Social Justice Chairs, but that coalition has, as well, collapsed due to personnel changes and declining inter-congregation interest. We are always open to having new members on the committee, who can generate renewed interest in social justice involvement by First Unitarian.

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 the church year:

A Special Collection for the UUSC was held in January of 2016.

The Fair Trade Coffee Project at First Church sold Fair Trade coffee, chocolate, cocoa, 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 \$7338.00 in the past year (5/1/15 through 4/30/16), providing

support to small farmers around the world (Terry Yokota, Dan Franklin, and Susan Mueller)

Submitted by Kimberly Perry

Fair Trade Coffee

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Submitted by Terry Yokota, Dan Franklin, and Susan Mueller

Welcoming Congregation

No report submitted.

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 included: supporting legislative efforts of the Don't Shoot Coalition (specifically the Fair and Impartial Policing Act) through hosting town halls, canvassing, lobbying and letter writing, attending and monitoring Ferguson Commission meetings and advocating with elected officials the implementation of the Calls to Action in their final report and supporting legislative initiatives of Metropolitan Congregations United. 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. The group also sponsored several educational events for the congregation.

Members of the group are dedicated to our continued education in the areas of racial justice and attend many educational and cultural offerings in the metropolitan area.

The group is living out our Unitarian Universalist value of justice, equity and compassion for all. We will continue to look 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