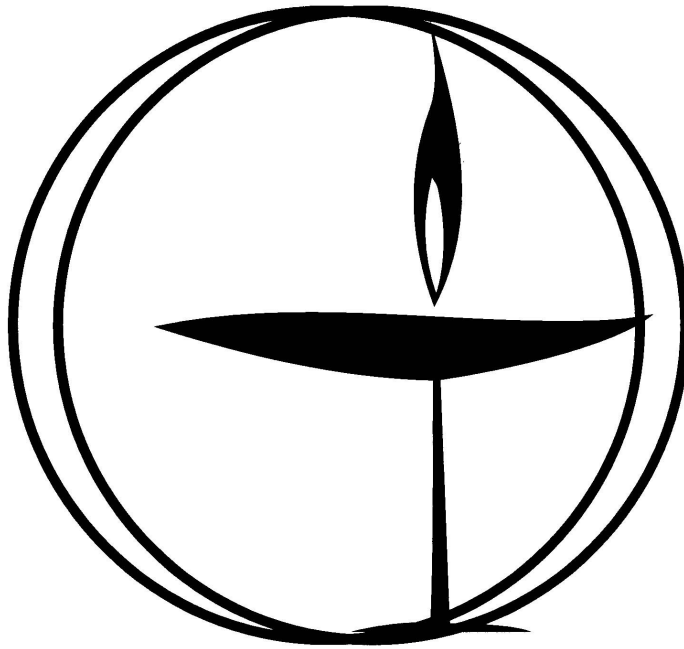


First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus
Annual Report
May 17, 2015



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Board, Staff, and New Members

BOARD

Chair	John McCrystal
Vice Chair	Carlos Hoyt
Secretary	Dennis Rankin
Treasurer	Judy Kleen
	Debra Boyd
	James Brown
	David Douglass
	Fujio Hayashi
	Nina Lewis
	Marge Lynd
	Nancy Nehring
	Joe Pierce
Past Chair	Kitty Durham Jones
Moderator	Tony Skrabak

STAFF

Senior Minister	Rev. Mark Belletini
Associate Minister	Rev. Eric Meter
Chaplain for Campus Ministry	Ben Iten
Minister Affiliated	Rev. Kathleen Fowler
Minister Affiliated	Rev. Suzan McCrystal
Minister Emerita	Rev. Carol Brody
Minister Emerita	Rev. Wendy Fish
Director of Religious Education	Lane Campbell
RE Assist./Staff Secretary	Deb McGuire
Lead Toddler Room Teacher	Deb Cannon
Peace Camp Director	Jenifer Bojanowski
Music Director	Tony McDonald
Choir Director (9:15am, youth, children)	Karen Madden
Chalice Choir Director	Chris Dent
Pianist/Accompanist	Nathan Hamm
Church Administrator	Brian Hagemann
Bookkeeper	Joe Voltolini
Office Manager	Marian Garcia
Facilities Assistant	Naoko Kobayashi
Facilities Assistant	Cathy Hausmann
Associate Co-Director, SYC	Susan Roscigno
Associate Co-Director, SYC	Amy Rudawsky

New Members July 1, 2014 Through May 8, 2015

Ryan Agnew
Carol Anelli
Gina Bell
Lisa Brandt
Ron Bruder
Richard Canter
Marcia Canter
Kylene Cary
Marty Cicchinelli
Greg Clark
Kimberley Dawley
Dave Ewoldsen
Lynda Fields
Ken Fields
Dan Gerritsen
Curtis Goldstein
Curtis Greene
Brooke Hayes
Bethany Hefner
Sylvia Howe
Charlene Johnston
Lori Jones
Nancy Kremer
Paul L'Herrou
Carolyn Madison
May Mergenthaler
Tiffany Payne
Joseph Phillips
Sara Phillips
Nancy Rhodes
Jay Ross
Charles Runyan
Stuart Smith
Rev. Lynda Smith
Bill Styer
Rebecca "Beki" Test
Rachel Woods

Annual Congregational Meeting, June 8, 2014

1 Opening Words - Rev. Mark Belletini

2 Welcoming and Announcement of quorum - Tony Skrabak, Moderator

A quorum was established.

3 Report from Strategic Planning Committee – Doug Rossiter and Anita Bucknam (See Report)

Doug and Anita provided a summary of the past six months since the February congregational meeting. Based on 2011 survey two of the largest concerns was centered around conducting a capital campaign and reorganization of church committees. SP has been continuing work on committee restructure, looking for ways to make it easier for members to find connections marrying their interests and talents with committee work. Streamlining the functioning of committee and focusing on people resources. Managing over 100 committees is a huge undertaking. . SP is not asking for a vote but asking the congregation to think about the proposed changes. Research was conducted on church structures and enlisted help from church leaders. The congregation will be called upon for final approval. In the fall, meetings will be held with the congregation to obtain input. These meetings will be reviewed and the data will be cumulated in a proposal which will be voted on at the February or June meeting. All activities will be assessable and deal with the space constraints or the facility. Activity Fair is being planned for next fall.

Questions: Debra Boyd – Thank you for the proposal and looking forward to the fall conversations.

4 Report on Survey from Committee on Shared Ministry - David Easter (See Report)

David Easter has good news. He reported on the survey given to the congregation this past year. Assessments of the overall ministry. A total of 329 responses by the congregation to the survey were obtained. Not all the data has been crunched. Very high level of satisfaction by the congregation with the programs, staff, and ministers. David thanked the members of the committee.

Questions: Thom Pegan: Gave thanks for conducting the survey and that it should be periodically. David commented that it will be done every 2 years. Tom was surprised with the response in question 15 (regarding condition of the facility).

Steve Abbott – In question 14 (regarding present means of raising funds), 10% is not commenting is not insignificant. Board needs to work with Stewardship to improve these numbers.

5 Approve Minutes of 2013 Annual Meeting –Tony Scrabak

The congregation was asked if there were any changes or correction to the minutes. No changes.

VOTE – Motion – To accept minutes

1st by Barbara Fisher

2nd by Julie Pinsonneault

Approved by the congregation.

Approve Minutes of 2014 Mid-year Meeting –

No Changes.

VOTE – Motion – To accept minutes

1st by Kay Fisher

2nd by Wesley Thompson

Approved by the congregation.

6 Elections – VOTE by Ballot- Susan William (See Report)

Board of Trustees, Moderator, Leadership Development Committee

Susan Introduced both slates for the Board and LDC. Ballots were passed out. The slate was as follows:

Board of Trustees:

Debra Boyd

Carlos Hoyt

Marge Lynd

Joe Pierce

Moderator:

Tony Skrabak

Leadership Development Committee:

Christine Raffaele

Catherine Saveson

Wesley Thompson

Edgel Alley

Pat Snyder

Diana Cook

Peggy McKee

Results -The Board and Moderator ran unchallenged and the newly voted members of LDC are Edgel Alley, Christine Raffaele, Peggy McKee and Pat Snyder

7 Capital Campaign status & proposal for construction loan – Judy Kleen, Kitty Jones, David Richter (See Reports)

Kitty Jones -Thanked all the congregants to help raise \$1.45 Million that included 240 members and friends. \$560,000 has already been collected. First activity was to replace the roof. Reflective to heat as they are light in color to conserve energy. Yet to come – new sky light and trim. Contract for new doors will be signed to have them made and installed in September. These new doors will look great but will be much more durable and energy efficient. The Building Committee has been formed the Green and Growing campaign is still active. They will work closely with the church administrator. The committee will need to redevelop the strategy as the monetary goal for the campaign has not been reached.

Dave Richter – Work is underway! The class rooms are small and plans were revised to increase the size and increased in the height to take advantage of natural light. Roof was designed to hold solar panels. There was concern about access to the kitchen – a hallway was maintained to permit that access. This fall will be the time to go to bids. Construction may start sometime in April. As the improvements were made, the costs went up.

Judy Kleen – We have a campaign that spreads over 3 or 4 years. Construction is finite. Hoping to raise \$200,000 in the fall to support the added costs. We need a construction loan to borrow the money to pay for construction as the pledged money comes in. We need approval by the congregation. Motion from the Board to obtain the loan (4.75% interest).

VOTE - Motion for Construction Loan – The Green and growing campaign has commitments of \$1.45 million and we have already collected over \$550,000. Payments on capital commitments will come in between now and 2017. The majority of the construction project will begin next spring. Therefore, we will need a construction loan to bridge the timing difference. Therefore, be it resolved that the Board is authorized to obtain a construction loan not to exceed \$800,000 which should be paid off at the end of the campaign giving period. It is **not** intended to increase the total indebtedness of the church.

Questions: - None

Motion Carried with one Nay.

8 Search for Interim Senior Minister – Kitty Jones

Kitty presented to the congregations the discussion the Board had regarding the need for an interim minister upon Mark's retirement. Two issues were discussed, the fact that the Board chooses the individuals to serve on the search committee for the interim and the discussion and approval received from the Board to have a 2 year interim period. She explained that Board felt that this is needed to allow the congregation to make the transition to a new senior minister and to permit the time necessary for the congregation to focus on their the direction of the church and search for the right person to fill those needs. Kitty also provided and Time Line for both the Interim Minister and the Senior Minister.

VOTE Motion Interim ministry – The Board of Trustees of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus voted unanimously to hire a 2-year interim minister following the June 2015 retirement of our beloved minister, Rev. Mark Belletini. Therefore, be it resolved that the congregation approves the Board-passed resolution to hire a 2-year interim following recommended UUA transition guidelines.

Questions:

Bill Hurley- Who is our district representative?

Mark Belletini – Official retirement will be July 31, 2014 (including his vacation). He pointed out that ministers also go through a grievance of leaving a position. He feels that the suggested interim period is a good choice.

John Reisman – Point of the congregation votes on the search committee for the senior committee and not the interim minister. This is true. The interim committee consists of 5 the senior committee picks five and Board appoints 2.

Tim Hooks – In the senior minister search, the congregation will vote on 3 members of the committee and the Board will vote on 2 members. They do not have vote on the interim.

Bill Fullarton – Is there a limited number of interim ministers?

Eric Meter – Did interim work for one year. There are many ministers who want this type of work.

Michael Greenman – We will be hosting the General Assembly in 2016. The Interim minister will be in position during that time and the committee needs to keep that in mind.

Diana Cook – The search committee should think of the necessary criteria the interim minister should have to work with the congregation to heal as well. Look for that strength.

Jennifer Kessler – This is like an academic search. Can a very qualified interim minister be selected as our full settled minister? No

Motion passed by congregation.

9 Budget – David Douglass

Finance committee meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month. Some of the highlights – rummage sale raised \$11,000 due to the hard work of Phyllis Byard and her committee. Auction Committee had to run two auctions and both were very successful. It was reminded to the congregation that the items for the next auction will be accepted by the committee starting in June. Dan Baer took over Stewardship chair function and has done a great job providing in providing review documents to the Board. We are full share UU giver for 2014 and 2015.

We have stagnated pledge commitments compared to our increased utilities, failure of old equipment, and snow removal. This is also on top of not providing raises to our staff for the past two years. The Board has decided not to fulfill Don Hippensteel's position upon his retirement. The congregation will have to pull their fair share of weight to make up for this loss. Pledges are crucial to the operating staff.

Questions:

Doug Rossiter – Is the mortgage being paid off as part of the Capital Campaign? David -This was further down the list of things to do. It is not possible with the current funds of the Capital Campaign. Judy Kleen commented that the mortgage will be renegotiated to a lower interest rate.

Ron Rathburn – Pledges have been stagnate – what about membership? David - Children's RE has skyrocketed and there is a focus to get them to be part of the church membership.

Dan Hronek - The building and grounds has listed big ticketed items that need addressed. How are we addressing this? David - Board has not been able to address because the funds are not there to build an emergency fund.

Carole Wilhelm – Concerns of general cleaning of the church. How is this handled for outsiders renting space? David – Don's job is not concerned with cleaning, it will be handled as is usually is.

Tim Hooks – Suggest we should have a targeted market campaign to canvas for new members.

Motion Approve the budget as written
All Approved

10 JAM proposal on UUJO – Steve Palm-Houser

VOTE – Motion - I would like to make a motion that First UU join the Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio Network, or UUJO, to support the creation of socially responsible public policies at the state level for social, economic, environmental, and racial justice that are consistent with key Unitarian Universalist principles.

Membership dues for a congregation our size are \$300 per year, and would entitle First UU to 6 votes in determining UUJO's by-laws, electing officers, and setting the organization's priorities.

I move that First UU allocate \$300 from the 2014-2015 budgeted JAM funds to join UUJO, and to continue this membership in succeeding church years, unless the congregation votes to discontinue membership or modify its commitment.

Discussion –

Deb Boyd – Moved to change the wording from “I move that First UU allocate \$300” to state “I move that First UU allocate dues for our size congregation” so this does not have to be voted on in the future if the dollar amount changes.

1st – Dennis Rankin

2nd – Donna Adassa

All passed.

Comment:

Alice Rathburn – If JAM's budget is not increased, this could be a problem.

The motion passed as amended

11 Beacon Project Proposal – Ben Iten (See Report)

To provide the Beacon project with the backing of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, and to support the church's desire for outreach to the community – JAMS focus area for the next two years, Ben read this preamble, asking for support from the church's congregation. This is to help move this project forward as decided in the February congregational meeting.

VOTE

Motion – Made by Ben Iten:

WHEREAS On February 16, 2014 the membership approved the Beacon Project as a focus for our Justice Action Ministry (JAM) over the next two years;

WHEREAS The congregation has had a long history of campus ministry at Ohio State, manifest in 2011 with the hiring of an OSU campus chaplain;

WHEREAS Now is an opportune time to move forward on a more substantial involvement as part of an interfaith initiative and Unitarian Universalist outreach;

1. There is an expressed need for a progressive religious presence on the OSU campus that will provide opportunities for students to explore spiritual and moral values and to become involved in social justice work, and to relate in meaningful ways across faith perspective.
2. Leaders of other faith communities and university officials have expressed an interest in our taking the lead in forming such an interfaith initiative.
3. We have with us at this time an individual with a unique combination of skills, experience and commitment to make this happen.

WHEREAS Ben Iten our current OSU chaplain and UUA Ministerial Intern has laid the groundwork both within the UUA and in the campus community for our taking on a leadership role in Interfaith work at the Ohio State University, and will be available to guide its formation and implementation;

WHEREAS a compelling vision and programmatic plans have been put together by Ben Iten, in consultation with our ministers, a special task force made of members of First UU, as well as with leaders of the Ohio Meadville District and the Unitarian Universalist Association and representatives from OSU and leaders of campus religious groups. (See the attached summary statement on the Beacon Project.)

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

- That the members of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus (hereafter, First UU) endorse the vision and programmatic thrust of the Beacon Project as a major piece of its pastoral, social justice, and interfaith ministries in our community.
- The First UU move forward with the first steps of implementation of this project during the 2014-15 church year through our support for Chaplain Ben Iten as our OSU Chaplain and UUA Ministerial Intern, funds for support of social justice through JAM, help from campus partners, and First UU volunteers.

- The church leadership continues to seek financial support to implement the Beacon Project through securing financial and in-kind support from project partners, obtaining support from the OMD and UUA where interest has been expressed, and through other funders, such as Vetch Foundation to whom we have submitted a proposal.

1st Ben Iten

2nd Debra Boyd

Questions:

Thom Pegan asked for restatement of Who owns the Beacon Project? – Overseen by Eric and Mark. The focus is an independent project overseen by Ben Iten for the congregation. Beacon is financially independent part of the First UU church. Thom commented this is real concern is that he would not want to see it fail if Ben leaves the position of Chaplain, and to ensure there would be a plan in place for this event.

Kitty Jones – From the Board’s perspective and we thank Ben for his work and keeping the Board apprised of the progress. This motion was presented to the Board and passed.

Eric Meter – The church will be the agent but as time goes on this may change. This is a critical time for UU to move into the neighborhood and have more of a presence.

Dick Dawson – The motion is asking that the UU congregation take ownership of this project. Involvement in campus ministry has been a long standing desire of the church. This is putting the desire down on paper. It is time to do this. We are unable to make a big financial comment at this time.

Bill Fullerton called for the motion and seconded by Michael Greenman.

2/3 majority.

Motion passed.

12 DRE Report- Lane Campbell

RE council undertook a new mission statement. Looking for people to share stories that relate to reproductive justice.

13 Board Chair Report – Kitty Jones

Chuck Wolf had to move and Tom Wheeler took his place, she thanked Tom for taking on the responsibilities. John McCrystal had to take a leave due to illness, but is back and is ready to be Chair next year. Phyllis Byard and James Brown on the Board served as chairs on the CC. Thanked my people who aided in the CC work. Thanked Mark for his service to the church. Board worked on interim church minister search. Campus ministry with Ben Iten who can now perform marriages. Beth and Tim as past chairs for their service. John McCrystal for his guidance. She thanked all the Board members and staff members for their support.

14 Ministers Report –

Mark Bellentini - Thank Kitty for being Board chair without the background to pick up the reins as leader. Dominic Astile for his optimism. Thanked Dick Dawson for his service. Commented on Lane’s transition into the church and the wonderful work she has done in a short time.

Eric - Recognized new members of the church. Thanked the congregation for allowing his sabbatical to occur. Thanks to both Don Hippensteel and Dick Dawson for their hard work and service to this congregation – we are collecting cash contributions that will be given at their departure.

Mid-Year Congregational Meeting, Sunday, February 3, 2014

Meeting Started: 12:46

- 1 **Opening Words** - Rev. Mark Belletini
Opening Meeting - 12:53 PM

Rev. Mark read from Governance and Ministry – Rev. Dan Hotchkiss.

- 2 **Welcoming and Announcement of Quorum** – Tony Skrabak, Moderator
Tony announced that a quorum was established - 136.

- 3 **Approve Minutes Annual Meeting of 8 June 2014**

There was no discussion of the minutes.

A motion was put to congregation by Tony.

1st Debra Boyd

2nd Anita Bucknam

All approved

- 4 **Treasurer Report – Operating Budget** - Debra Boyd

Debra stood in for Judy Kleen for this meeting while she is on vacation. The average pledge has been increasing per household. However, the collection rate is not causing a shortfall. She invited the congregation to look to expand the annual give. Staff has not been given a cost of living raise for a few years. Congratulations were given to the Auction Committees, due to their hard work it provides a positive impact on the budget.

Questions: (Debbie Shaw) What is the short fall? We do not have a short fall. The budget runs in a cyclic fashion. The circumstances that affect the pledges stem from job losses, people moving away, etc.

- 5 **Endowment Fund Update** - David Douglass

There has been some changes since the endowment fund was started back in 1989. \$280K is presently in this fund. These funds have been invested into funds, until recently, being overseen by people on the financial committee. A recommendation by the financial committee was to move to investment funds ran by UUA. This would provide socially consensus and active investments. As of March 1, these funds have been moved. Endowment policy is changing. In the past, sound equipment, staff transition, library and other needs were taken from this fund. The Endowment Funds grows in two ways – investments and gifts to the fund.

Questions (Kevin O’Neil) Who is the contact for questions regarding the Endowment Fund? Judy Kleen or Joe Votolini.

- 6 **The State of the Church** -Rev. Mark Belletini

Rev. Mark gave praise to the congregation for their support and effort (and acceptance of change) for the successfully completing a Capital Campaign, dealing with construction, embracing the 75th Anniversary, governance structure, arrival of GA in 2016, and facing retirement of Rev. Mark. The health and groundedness of this congregation is self-evident. His final year as senior minister is moving along smoothly; the initiating of ideas today will well exceed his time here. The grieving of the transitions has been expressed by very openly by the congregation. He will have friends from California to participate in this last sermons. He recognizes the need to respect the incoming and settled ministers as they develop their own path. There is energy in this congregation. Board is strong and exhibiting good leadership. The Interim search committee is moving forward with thoughtfulness and open mindedness. There is an exciting new future for this congregation. In the 17 years that Rev. Mark as been here he has seen the city change, becoming a very attractive venue to new people coming to this city. Many older members have passed but there are new people coming through our doors. The Beacon project is stymied at this point financially. Volunteering is down and financial commitments get stretched for those asking for our support. He thanks his staff for their support as well as the Board. It is a transition time and difficult, but this is good time – something to look forward to.

- 7 **Approve Ordaining Lane Campbell into the UU Ministry- Vote** - Carolee Noonan

Lane is represented all those attributes required by ministers. She is seeking ordination.

Motion:

WHEREAS Lane Campbell has completed all training to become credentialed for ministerial fellowship including obtaining a Masters of Divinity degree from Starr King School for the Ministry in 2012, serving as

Intern Minister at Shawnee Mission Unitarian Universalist Church, completing 5 units of Clinical Pastoral Education, and receiving Preliminary Fellowship from the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association; and

WHEREAS for the past year and a half, Lane Campbell has served First Unitarian Universalist Church as Director of Religious Education; and

WHEREAS Lane Campbell has requested that First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, Ohio be recognized as the sponsoring congregation for her Ordination into the Unitarian Universalist ministry; therefore be it

RESOLVED THAT the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, Ohio endorses the Ordination of Lane Campbell as a Unitarian Universalist minister with a Service of Ordination to take place in the Fall of 2015.

The congregation approved unanimously

8 Report from the Search Committee for Interim Minister - Steve Abbott

Introduced the committee, Jim Conlan, Nancy Nehring, Cath Saveson, Megan Patten

Interim ministers are professionals who devote their ministry to this type of ministry and are known as Accredited Neutral Ministers. Works with the Board to shape the church's future with a fresh perspective. Governance, stewardship and staff supervision are the charges of interim. The committee has the task to choose and the Board will make the offer. Rev. Keith Kron and Rev. Lynn Kerr – working with the interim committee. Given the churches growth and strength of the congregation we expect good candidates to be drawn to our congregation. We are offering slightly lower in wage due to our budget concerns. April 17 is when the application is due – work is completed. Putting together a list of questions for the candidates. Early May UUA will provide potential candidates backgrounds (up to five). May 15th is date of the offer to the primary candidate. A second round can occur with offers occurring May 29th. Interim minister will start August 1st, and work until a settled minister is called in 2017.

Questions (Rev. Mark Bellitini) Rev. Keith Kron has friends here and is working hard to provide us the best candidate. He was approached by many candidates in California expressing an interest in coming here.

Questions (Thom Pegan) – Thanked the committee for their work. Besides the committee, who else is involved in choosing the candidate? The Board has appointed this committee to present the best candidate to them.

(Kelly Blake) How can one get involved in this selection? There will be listening session held with the congregation; attend one of these meetings to express your comments/concerns.

9 Board Chair Report - John McCrystal

Happy to be here today and making the quorum. He expressed his excitement for being part of the successful congregation. We have dreams for the future and we are embracing these changes. Lane discussed changes with the Board and we quickly listed changes that include senior minister transition, Lanes ordination, construction, Board reduction, committee restructure, robust stewardship governance change, arrival an interim minister, GA, more visitors (due to GA), and our 75th anniversary. Change is imminent. Thanked previous Board Members and to those who will serve. Thanked Gus Brusy being the youth leader and representative at the Board meetings. Thanked the congregation for being full share givers to UUA. John read thank you letter from UUA. Church Governance – The Board, Senior Staff, Strategic Planning took a survey (Dennison). There was a consensus that the Board had to pay close attention governance issues. A Governance Task Force was established comprised of John McCrystal, Christine, Susan Williams, Carlos Hoyt, and Lane. Several sessions will be held with the congregation. Please approach any one of the members with questions.

10 Constitutional Amendment for Size of Board – Vote - Jim Conlan, Kitty Jones

More change, on behalf of the Board the Strategic Planning proposing this motion to reduce the board from 12 to 6. This implementation will start this year, taking a total of three years to complete and ending with a Board consisting of 6 members. The backbone of the motion looked at governance structure and Rev. Joan

Becelaere, and Rabbi Unger, the Dan Hotchkiss book and other UU churches. Much of the information indicated a reduction in board size. Smaller congregations tend to have larger Boards. The Board will move into strategic planning. Presently we have a executive committee and this will not be necessary. Strategic Planning has spent a lot of time in research on this topic.

Motion:

Article V – Member Elected Leadership

- Board of Trustees
 - The government of this church, including the conduct and control of its corporate powers, business and property, shall be vested in a Board of Trustees consisting of ~~twelve~~ **six** elected members, ~~four~~ **two** of whom shall be chosen by the members of the church at each Annual Meeting to serve for three years each. Trustees shall be elected at large and not for particular positions. Trustee shall take office on the first day of July. No Trustee who has served a full three-year term shall be eligible for reelection until one year after that term of office has expired.
 - In addition to the ~~twelve~~ **six** members specified in section 1.A. above, the youth of the church (14 to 19 years of age) shall select a youth to serve as a representative to the Board of Trustees. The youth representative shall serve a one-year term, beginning July 1 and running through June 30 of the following year.

Questions (David Maywhoor) Were there any cautionary notes in Strategic Planning's data survey? We are reducing the Board in the course of three years. The Board needs to change the governance issues that goes hand in hand with the Board reduction. We could not find Board in existence of over 10 members. The interim minister will be overseeing this transition as well.

(Linda Thompson) I have been through this before. Why can't there be consecutive service in regards to Board members after their initial 3 year service? This is part of the existing policy.

(Karen Dawson) How is the youth representative chosen? The language is vague in the policy.

The motion was unanimously approved by the congregation.

11 Report on Capital Campaign - Kitty Jones, David Richter

We have received \$1,585K in pledges. 265 households have supported the Capital Campaign. Thanked Art Beach who promoted this campaign. Early payment on pledges will help reduce the proposed loan amount. The construction progress is running ahead of schedule. Plans were submitted to the city. David warns us that there will be interruptions during the construction time. The installation of the outer door and skylight came in \$28K under budget. With this savings, and moving some other money around, we can perhaps look at some solar panel installation to support the green and growing. This would be a start of the solar panels. We also hope to ship funds to paint Room 7 and install a new a ceiling. Amy Duct will design the gardens and new butterfly garden. Plans are available for those who wish to see.

Questions (Debbie Shaw) We have two major events – Rev. Mark's retirement and the 75th Anniversary – should be concerned about that and postpone the date of some of this construction? We have considered this; if we don't move forward on the dates planned we will run into bad weather and not have bathrooms. All are aware. Starting this is a positive thing to show Rev. Mark what he has accomplished. Rev. Mark commented that the construction poses no problem for him..

12 Capital Campaign Loan Proposal – Vote - Debra Boyd

This congregation has historically has carried long term debt. The mortgage stands at a \$635K balance. \$54K per year payoff, Less than \$500K to pay off. There have been several bids 4.75% saving \$14K per year. The congregation approved a construction loan, which bridges us to permit the construction. With the project at hand, that budget exceeds by \$85K. The banks want us to guarantee more than the \$85K, we need to promise the bank to cover the debt. The Boards intent is not to exceed the necessary amount.

Questions (Kelly Blake) What has caused \$85k shortfall? We did a great job in Capital Campaign but the project's final costs exceeds the current take compared to project incoming funds. We have cut back on the

project and does not make sense to cut back further. We don't want to exceed the \$85K but the banks insist on assurance of completing the work.

(Tim Hooks) Estimates prior to going to the banks are just that, estimates. We have scaled back the project and these are true estimates.

(Patricia Boughton) We have approved a loan for the roof. We did not need that loan since insurance took care of that piece. There has been very good work by the Board to oversee these costs and concerned effort to keep prices down.

(Phyllis Byard) This is not guaranteeing indebtedness. We may use a piece of this and we are not required to spend it. The bank is looking for a guarantee.

(Mark Pinsonneault) The mortgage payments are important. Will they drop? Yes, it is our hope that this will be reduced. We need to commit, as a congregation, what we are willing to take on this responsibility. This motion is for the shortfall that we predict may occur.

Motion:

Currently, the anticipated expenses of the Green and Growing Capital Campaign are estimated to exceed our pledges by \$85,000. In order to prudently manage the congregation's resources and comply with the bank's request, the Board is seeking congregational approval to increase the long term indebtedness of the church not to exceed \$150,000 for the specified building project.

The congregation unanimously approved

13 JAM Report - Steve Palm-Houser

The congregation voted and JAM has been working on two priorities – Beacon Project, Poverty and Economics.

When you increase your pledge, you also commit your help to social justice.

14 Report on Religious Education - Lane Campbell

The youth group has had amazing attendance – thanking Heather Pierson for her help. Highlights: Programs Justice Week Program – youth attend reproductive justice. Racial and economic justice will be presented this week. Ohio Students associate (students of color) will partner with the program. Invitations to outside youth groups. Peace Camp will be held this summer. Invited the congregation April 12 – to the Holy Celebration – Hindu celebration between the services. Look for announcements.

Gratitude was extended to Religious Education partners.

Adjourn

Tony presented the motion to adjourn

1st Debra Boyd

2nd Kitty Jones

Adjourned at 2:18PM

Respectfully Submitted – Dennis Rankin, Board Secretary

Board of Trustees

John McCrystal, Chair

The unofficial theme of this year's Board of Trustees has been CHANGE. The year began and ends with expected changes. In July, we welcomed Debra Boyd, Carlos Hoyt, Marge Lynd and Joe Pierce to the Board, and next month we will bid farewell to David Douglass, Nina Lewis, Dennis Rankin and myself. I want to thank all the Board members for their efforts, dedication and love towards our congregation.

Governance: During the Board retreat in August, which included members from Strategic Planning, Leadership Development and the senior staff we all agreed to put effort into identifying a church governance model that better fits our size and structure. Two follow up meetings were held with a focus on our governance and a Governance Task Force was started. Also related to this effort was our congregation's support of shrinking our Board size from 12 to 6 members over the next three years.

Green and Growing: Following a successful capital campaign this year, effort was turned towards making the dream real. Our new doors were installed, a new loan was secured (thank you Loan Task Force) and major construction begins next month. Thank you Construction Team.

Interim Senior Minister: Rev. Mark Belletini gave us a gift several years ago by sharing his retirement plans so we would have time to develop an intentional transition approach. In mid-May, the Interim Search Team will have a candidate recommendation for the Board.

Personnel: In March, our congregation supported the Board's motion to ordain Lane Campbell. In April, after receiving wonderful feedback from the congregation, the Board voted to Sponsor Ben Iten's Ministerial Candidacy.

Stewardship: The Board worked with the Stewardship Committee to better understand the challenges we have funding all the wonderful work we have been and desire to do. Early this winter, the Board charged the Strategic Planning Committee to "investigate best practices for church financial stewardship and...develop ideas to implement for our 2015-2016 church year.

It has been wonderful this year working with you, our staff, our volunteers and the Board. This wonderfully loving and healthy culture is one thing I don't see changing.

Board Members (2014-15)

John McCrystal (chair)

David Douglass

Nina Lewis

Dennis Rankin (secretary)

James Brown

Fujio Hayashi

Kitty Jones (past chair)

Nance Nehring

Debra Boyd

Carlos Hoyt (vice chair)

Marge Lynd

Joe Pierce

Staff Reports

Final Report of the Senior Minister in the year 2015
Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Mark Belletini

What a strange title to type into my keyboard. It hit me hard when I read it back to myself.

Yet, for 17 years I have been preaching that all things end as well as begin... a choral anthem, a vacation, a span at school, a book, any song that floats in our heads, and of course, the length of a minister's time at any single congregation.

Hello and goodbye are not just ordinary courtesies...they are each a summons to a spiritual grounding. They are the substance of any good life. Hello and goodbye.

My last year serving the Columbus congregation has been the same as any year I have served this congregation, only "more so." I have been aware of the last this, and the last that. But folks coming in off the street with hardship stories are the same. Meetings are the same. Weddings and memorials are the same. Deadlines are the same...order of celebration in by Friday AM. Clergy meetings both interfaith and UU. Preparing the four Senior Gathering worships. Board Reports. Counseling sessions with those going through transitions, or just wondering about the deeper meanings of those transitions. Staff meetings.

Some stand out events from this year:

Solemnizing the weddings of Ramona Palm Oslin and Tim Shafer Jr., Bill Hurley and Pat Snyder, our Music Director Tony McDonald and Judith Truman, Paisley Nash Dooley and Nicole Graff, Tim Riesdorf and my longtime friend Rosario Schifano. Several marriages, and renewals, are coming up soon too.

Three Naming Ceremonies for me, something I have always loved to do:

for Leah Colette Phillips, daughter of Joe and Sara Hall Phillips

for Morgan Patten and Cara Greenberg's daughter Tavi Ann Patten,

and later, after this report goes to press, on the 17th of May, the twins newborn to Jeffrey and Sarah Elliot.

I preached at the ordination of Chip Roush in the fall, a former member now a minister.

I told a colleague recently that after 40 years of this calling, 37 after ordination, I have never once lost the sense of privilege of this work. To DO a wedding! To eulogize someone you love! My heart has never ceased to be amazed that I am doing this. Holding the lives of Pam Argus, who for years designed and built remarkable altarpieces and parented the amazing Jordan Argus, and Don Jones in whose studio I painted a portrait of my son, and with whom, over the years I have had many restorative conversations, along with his wife Karen...these are remarkable privileges. To stand in tender witness with Tex Kohles as he buried his beloved son Hans, whom I got to know, is to stand on hallowed ground. Watching Steve Abbot eulogize his friend Jennifer Bosveld was a privilege too. Like Moses before the flaming bush, I find myself wanting to be unshod as I participate in memorials for folks I have loved.

I share the privilege of ceremony with Rev. Eric Meter, whose ministry overlaps with mine almost telepathically at times. Spending time with him every day, talking about things going on in the congregation, reviewing pastoral needs, trends, news, always feels as welcome as a warm breeze on a cold day. I can't imagine having shared these last years at Columbus with anyone more supportive or kind or skilled.

Working with Lane has been a gift too. She has really poured her energy into our Religious Education program so thoughtfully, and with such a clear vision, that again, I think the congregation has been blest. And Brian, who is also visionary in his understanding of how the congregation can move forward this coming year with all the transitions and huge construction disruption, is the model of the famed "non-anxious presence," something that we ministers strive for but rarely achieve with Brian's grace.

I co-led a Mysticism class this year with Ray Pantle, engaged in a letter correspondence with a woman in Idaho in hospice care who asked to read by book on grief ahead of time, for which I had to get permission from my publisher. It was a moving event for both her, me, and my publisher, Skinner House. I co-edited a book and wrote the preface for a new book of readings for worship which just came out this last week. It's a rosy book that does for the readings in the

back of the grey book what the turquoise book does for the songs in the grey book...its a supplement to enrich worship. I also completed an essay for a new book on aging by Kay Montgomery, the long time VP for the UUA, who preached here to mark the end of our last capital campaign funded building. It's *Landscapes of Aging and Spirituality*. My friend Jane Rzepka is in the book too; she preached my Installation sermon, a few of you will remember.

I've attended BREAD clergy caucuses, spoke at the Nehemiah action, and had several one-on-ones with BREAD staff. Sometimes I go out to lunch or coffee with various BREAD clergy, like Joel Miller, Tim Ahrens, or Jeffrey Key. These collegial experiences are usually moving to me...different religions, similar hearts among us all.

I participated in a Marriage Equality interfaith service, and led a closing prayer after the march to the Ohio Supreme Court building. I participated with Eric in our usual clergy study group (this year we studied racialization) and helped lead two discussions about the film Selma.

I hosted a larger givers event at my loft, and did an online interview about my book with the Church of the Larger Fellowship. Monthly I met with our excellent Board Chair, John McCrystal, in my office, something I very much enjoyed on top of the executive council meetings and the Board meetings themselves. Worship meetings led by the most reliable and excellent Mary Rogers were on the first Tuesday of the month. She runs a meeting so well. it's like an art form.

The jocular conversations with folks when we just meet in the hall are always a reminder of the work of this congregation...to weave a community that cares for each other in such a way that we can be strong to share that care for others outside our walls, with whom we are privileged to live together in this great world. Laughter in front of the wonderful art on our Gallery walls is one of my favorite memories.

One of the most fun events each year, this year being no exception, is to cook a UUction dinners. Glad to raise that much for the church, yes, but cooking Native American food and Romanian food is so much fun it's almost embarrassing.

That I would eventually depart from the ministry of this fine congregation was never a secret. After all, as I said, everything has a beginning and an end in the world. I knew that, and you knew that when I arrived in 1998. But what gives me the strength to go forward with my retirement life is the remarkable power I find in this congregation...the care and love and encouragement I see people offering to each other. I am feeling very confident in the future of this congregation as I prepare to leave it for the next stage in my life. I will be in town, but not around until the new settled minister is established, which is only fair. But I have faith in this congregation, and by that faith I shall live until I return, as I just said to a colleague recently, as that old guy with his picture on the wall with all the rest.

Lots of retirements ahead for clergy...the ministers in Rocky River will retire next year, and within five years, 50% of all UU ministers will be hitting the retirement trail, especially since recently, so many have entered the ministry halfway through life, so that their career times are shorter.

But the new younger ministers coming down the pike are superb, and my faith is also in them.

My last annual report. Wow. And I just got here yesterday!

With deep thanks and affection,

Mark

Let me begin with some verbal postcards collected since the congregation's last Annual Meeting –

The pure fun: picking apples out in Utica, OH once again for the church Labor Day retreat last summer.

The unexpected: taking a field trip last fall with Lane Campbell to the Ginghamburg United Methodist Church north of Dayton. Having heard great things about this mission-driven congregation, we were hoping to attend their regular 5pm Saturday worship. What we discovered was a church sponsored fair, complete with cotton candy, a rock band, balloon tents and more than a few of racially diverse families. This was the congregation's Fall Festival, and it looked like a county fair. A member of their staff tasked with hospitality even took us on a half-hour tour of their building. Amazing.

The profound: the light in Ruth Gerhold's eyes when I visited her last summer in a Chicago hospital after she had received a new liver and kidney.

The heartbreaking: meeting a family for the first time in which the wife and mother was dying, knowing that her end was near and that, because I had a plane ticket for a trip beginning the following week, I would likely need to hand off responsibility to someone else for the woman's memorial service. (Which was conducted exquisitely by Rev. Kathleen Fowler.)

The surreal: My partner Ann taking a call offering her a job while in we were in Cleveland as part of the Youth Reproductive Justice trip last June. We were viewing a museum exhibit on the history of contraception when the call came. Like I said, surreal.

This has been a year of changes, and getting ready for changes. As you know, Dick Dawson completed his six years as our pastoral chaplain last spring. Since then, Carole Wilhelm, Su Ann Farnlacher and the rest of your pastoral team have been invaluable in helping me keep tabs on those in our community going through hard times.

With Dick Dawson no longer available to help lead our grief groups, David Maywhoor gratefully accepted the invitation to join Rev. Kathleen Fowler, Rev. Suzan McCrystal and myself on that team. David brought a new program to our attention, The Grief Recovery Method (GRM), which he had been trained in several years ago. Kathleen and I took a four-day training in GRM in January, and she and David led the congregation's first 10-week GRM class earlier this spring. In the past, we've offered four six-week grief groups we call the Healing Journey. David, Suzan, Kathleen and I will be meeting soon to decide how we want to move forward. I expect we will either alternate the longer GRM with the shorter Healing Journey, or just offer Grief Recovery Classes. It is an excellent program, looking at each participant's history of grieving (we all have one) before focusing attention on one particular grief.

Speaking of hard times, we have said goodbye to many fabulous people in the last year. Since last year's Annual Meeting, I've led or been part of memorials for: Bill Keating, James Norman (brother of member Lindsey Norman), Henry Tate, Susan Gardner, Lynn Marcellino, Dwight Sharp, Jean Werts, Dotte Turner, Hans Kohles, Pam Argus and Don Jones. That's eleven. The total number of members and former members we've lost in that time frame is fifteen, more than enough for any year.

Changing gears, as it happens, I only officiated at one wedding this year, that being for Becky Wolff and Bill Echols. At this point, however, I am working on two wedding ceremonies for this coming fall and a renewal of vows celebration for Karen and Dick Dawson to mark their 50th anniversary this summer.

Continuing in this series of rites of passage, I officiated at one child naming ceremony outside of church this year, that being for Pierce Gerristan, the son of Allie Bonsteel and Daniel Gerritsen, and I'll be doing another with another for Mike Bethel's twin grandsons soon.

This year I did less preaching than in years past, leading worship six times, including once with Lane at the church Labor Day Retreat. There would have been more, but I was sadly too sick to fill my Sunday in March. That said, I did preach at the church Rev. Bill Gupton (our former Interim Assoc. Minister) serves in Cincinnati. Previously in my ministry, I would do two or sometimes three pulpit supply or exchanges each year. With my programming responsibilities here though, I've only been able to do this twice in the last seven years.

Speaking of programming, this year's Coming of Age (COA) class tied (at least during my tenure) for the largest class we've had, namely, 14 youth. In addition to myself, the teaching team included Lauren McCrystal, Ben Sostrom, Melanie Boyd, Mark Nehring and Molly Toth. Sadly, Molly and Mark needed to step down during the year. I want to thank them for their many and rich contributions to the group. I have missed them both. Thankfully, Melanie Boyd stepped in (even though she was asked to do so well past the mid-year mark) to help keep things running smoothly.

Equally as appreciated, Gary Miller continued once again in his important role as the cook for our two retreats.

Our COA Mentors this year are: Sandy Aska, Gail Baxter, George Byrd, Larry Drake, Kay Fisher, Danya Furda, Kay Gaskill, Rich Humenick, Julia McCain, Roger McElroy, Martha McFerran, Marla McMichael-Liston, Sharon Oliver, Bob Papps and Ginnie Vogts. Kudos to them all.

This year our Covenant Groups are being facilitated by Debra Boyd, Mary Day, Su Ann Farnlacher, Jane Knuppel, Jenny McLaughlin, Chris Sullivan and Faith Van Horne. I've consistently been impressed with how they bring out the best of those in their groups. Covenant Groups, for those who are okay with listening without always directly responding, are fabulous ways to get know a small group of people well whether or not you are new to the church.

Pud Baird, Doris Cornell, Chris Sullivan and Kathleen Fowler have been leading our two Wellspring groups this year. These groups expand on the foundation of deep listening practiced in our Covenant Groups and add study, reflection and spiritual practice to help participants understand themselves more fully as people of faith. Whatever that faith may be.

After stepping down from BREAD's Keeping Kids in School group after four years on the team, I agreed to join BREAD's new issue team on Crime and Violence. While I was far from able to make all of the research meetings with over 20 professors, civic leaders, police officers, etc., this still proved to be quite an education for me, though I remain no where near an expert. And with both Rev. Mark and me on the podium at BREAD's recent Nehemiah Action, First UU's justice work was well represented.

Mark, Lane and I continued our tradition of Dinner with the Ministers – monthly Sunday evening meals during the fall with our congregation's high school seniors. I'm proud that we are showing our youth how much we value them.

I was also thrilled when three youth from the church reached out to me to either shadow a minister for a day, interview me for a school project or simply help out around the church as community service. Those were delightful afternoons.

In my report to you last year, I began with a photograph from the then-recent youth pilgrimage to our partner church in Bolon, Transylvania. This year I want to say how heartened I am that the First UU Partner Church team has invited our partner church minister, Rev. Albert Kozma, and his wife to visit us next summer, perhaps during the time we host the UU General Assembly next June.

With that underway, I was still surprised when a call came in early in the spring from a member UU Partner Church Council nominating committee. Seems they think I'd pass the grade as a member of their Board of Trustees. Several conversations later, I agreed for my name to be among the candidates and expect to be voted in during this June's General Assembly in Portland, OR.

Earlier I spoke of changes and getting ready for changes. Beyond the start of capital campaign construction soon, there are two examples of the latter I want to mention before I end this report.

I want to let you know that Lane and I are in the midst of a plan to trade responsibilities for two programs. Next year, if all goes as we expect, I'll take on oversight of Adult Programs and she'll lead our Coming of Age class. Whenever I had teachers, and to some degree mentors, to recruit for COA, I'd always check with Jolinda or Lane first. The argument had been that a minister should lead COA, but Lane is seminary trained and will be ordained here in October. In all but job title, she's a minister. At the same time, I've been leading Covenant Groups and the church's grief groups. Several years ago, we added Wellspring. Seems I'm already doing a fair share of adult programs here at First UU. So this change just makes sense. And while I'll miss Coming of Age, it is time to move on and accept a new challenge.

Lastly, it has been more of an honor than I can say to have served with Rev. Mark Belletini over the last seven years. Few of you know that in my first year of professional ministry, the congregation Mark served was just 20 miles down the road. I took a class he taught on Jesus in my first year of seminary. I keep the prayer he delivered at my ordination in a frame on the wall of my home study. And it was at my ordination, in March of 1998, that he told me he was the candidate for the senior minister position in Columbus, OH. I'd never seen him smile that brightly before. Turns out he had reason to. Long may you run, Mark. May your retirement shine just as brightly.

with all respect,
Rev. Eric Meter

Director of Religious Education Lane Campbell

I write to you all this week in the midst of a Study Leave. This is time I am using to put together a curriculum template for our children's programs. This template lines out week by week what lessons teachers are being asked to teach. It helps me to keep track of covering five central topics or themes of our programming: Unitarian Universalist identity, connection with the natural world, Jewish and Christian heritage, world religions, and social justice. Each youth, by the time they have completed our program in high school, will have had multiple opportunities to learn about each of these essential pieces of being a Unitarian Universalist and religiously literate member of our community and our world.

The mission statement for our religious education program is, "Exploring Faith, Building Community, and Having Fun." Following a mid-year evaluation of our program, led by our wonderfully talented Religious Education Council, we found we are progressing well in living into this vision. There are some aspects of curriculum and teacher support that could be tweaked and will be changed in the year to come. What we found is that our children are remembering what they are learning in Sunday School and that they are able to tell us and show us what a Unitarian Universalist is.

Some highlights of this year include a new focus on multi-generational events. Many people of the church came back to the classrooms for our Sunday School Open House in February. This was a time to appreciate all of the work our teachers have been doing this year. There were thank-you cards provided, as well as snack. We also hosted our first-ever all-ages Holi celebration, a Hindu festival welcoming Spring. It was a messy, fun-filled, activity-packed half-hour between services. My gratitude goes to all who participated.

One of the articulated goals with our RE Council in the coming year is to increase these multi-generational programs two-fold. Our hope is to continue Sunday School Open House and Holi and to also add in two additional programs. One idea has been to add a Secret Friends program, which helps to develop friendships between adults and children. This program would begin with pairing an adult with a child, encouraging each of them to write letters to one another without knowing their identity. The program ends with a big party following the worship service where the secret friends get to meet one another. These relationships between adults and children in our congregation will be essential for sustaining and building one church community.

An additional highlight has been the beginning of our Children's Chapels during both our Bread Communion and Flower Communion services. Our children gather together for an interactive worship experience that fits their ages and developmental levels. The Chapel services feature stories as well as embodied meditations and LOTS of opportunities for participation.

Adult Programs (changed from Adult Enrichment) have been consistently working this year on building the backbone and support for our adult educational offerings to continue. We worked to create an application to teach adult programs and to compile a list of resources available to facilitators. Our focus has also begun to turn to offering an orientation for facilitators of these programs, so you have the information and training you need to teach. The work will continue with an eye to evaluation and program/curriculum design in the year to come.

First UU's Sunday School program saw the wonderful addition of a Spirit Play program this year for our preschoolers. Spirit Play is a story-based Montessori-inspired program, where children hear stories at the beginning of the class acted out by miniature manipulatives. Kids are then given a choice of what kind of "work" they want to do, with a wide array of craft supplies, and fun activities. The program was such a success, we are expanding it up to our Kindergarten through 1st Grade class next year. Please contact me if you would like to get involved.

Another highlight of the Sunday School program has been our High School group. They began the year with High School Our Whole Lives and are currently engaged in High School Covenant Group. Attendance in this group has been high due to the bonds between the youth involved and the relevant programming created by their fabulous teaching team. Room 6 has been a bit cramped all year, but I am so grateful for all that is being done in that class.

As we move into summer programs, I'd like to tell you a bit about what we are offering. First UU will provide toddler care, as we always have. And then we will be providing two additional classes: one for preschoolers through 1st graders and one for 2nd grade and up. For preschool through 1st grade, we will be bringing Spirit Play to this group. Jen Bojanowski will be teaching and has been Lead Teacher in our preschool program this past year. Second grade and up will be taking part in a gardening class, where we will be traveling all over the outside of the building at First UU to help pull up weeds, clear out our nature trail, and beautify our grounds. This will be a wonderful outdoor class!

One additional highlight of the summer is our Justice Week 2015. This year, our high school youth are invited to take part in a Justice Week addressing Racial and Economic Justice. Given all that has been going on around our country, most recently in Baltimore, this is an extremely timely topic. We will host a variety of activities here at First UU, including presentations from local activists involved in Black Lives Matter right here in Columbus. Youth from other churches are also invited to come. Justice Week takes place June 15th-19th right in our Worship Center. For more information and to register, please visit the First UU website- there is a link right on the home page.

I want to end this annual report by expressing deep gratitude for all of the volunteers and paid staff that make our religious education program possible. We have over 50 people teaching and supporting Sunday School throughout the entire year. It takes time and energy to make our programs happen. I am deeply grateful to each of our teachers who show up week after week to teach these wonderful children. They are making a huge difference in the lives of our kids, who often can feel somewhat isolated or different in their school settings due to the religious beliefs or non-beliefs they hold. Our teachers ask the questions and lead the activities that bring meaning and spiritual depth to the lives of our children and youth. Their impact lasts for years to come and we have had such a dedicated group this year. This program cannot run on my efforts alone. We certainly do need one another. Thanks to our teachers, who constantly embody honesty, caring, and commitment in the lives of our children and youth.

Church Administrator Brian Hagemann

The major facility news for this church year has clearly been the very successful Green and Growing Capital Campaign and the beginning of construction. Last summer saw the replacement of our entire pitched roof (shingles, gutters, downspouts etc.) and Worship Center skylight as the result of a long-fought insurance settlement. We were able to use an additional portion of funds from the capital campaign to remedy the uneven Worship Center roof and replace a small portion of the flat roof adjacent to the Worship Center (over Slowter Lounge). The remainder of the existing flat roof over all the classrooms, Fellowship Hall, kitchen and offices remains in need of replacement soon (likely a staged replacement by section, as we have the need and funds to do). I've been asked many times about a leak with a question around "hasn't the roof been replaced?" and I want to be clear that only about 1/3 of our total roof area was replaced (the asphalt shingled portion). The rest (flat roof) was not, and is seeing a need for ongoing maintenance and repairs, with eventual replacement.

Also, as part of Green and Growing, the doors of the Worship Center and Gallery (main entrance) were ALL replaced in the fall of 2014. These beautiful and functional new doors are aluminum-clad wood (WC) and fiberglass (Gallery) for durability and feature high-end energy-saving properties as well. Hopefully, you will find them as attractive as I do!

Speaking of Green and Growing, my role as Administrator has taken on additional responsibility for the local coordination of construction planning, staging and day to day operations. I've spent a considerable amount of time meeting with church committees, individual members of the congregation, and our construction committee (headed up by Dave Richter and Kitty Jones). The financial team, appointed by the Board (Judy Kleen, Debra Boyd and Doug Kauffman), did a fantastic job of pursuing and securing our construction financing! I've also, of course, been working closely with the architects from Dave Kerr's firm, the various sub contractors and our friends at Lincoln Construction. This has been an additional amount of work on my plate, as well as a learning opportunity in architecture and engineering that I've thoroughly enjoyed!

At the time of this writing, we are scheduled to begin major construction on June 1st. The work will start with the interior demolition and construction of new restrooms, widening of the main east/west hallway to improve accessibility, installation of new energy efficient glass around the courtyard, adding an interior hallway on the classroom side and new landscaping in the courtyard. They will begin staging and foundation work outside where the new classrooms will be built. Our hoped-for goal would be to finish the interior construction and concurrent disruption of the facility use by late summer/early fall with the outside construction of new classrooms to continue through the fall into winter, with completion sometime in a February timeframe. If some construction budgeting issues can be worked out, we will see a solar array installation above the Gallery roof soon, as well as (some) needed renovation to classrooms 7 and 8.

So some other things have been going on here as well... it's not all construction news. THIS WINTER was brutal on our facilities budget. We spent well over \$10,000 on snow removal and de-icing alone! Unfortunately, instead of two or three big snow events, we had a dozen or so "little" snow events, each of them resulting in a service visit. Due to the needs of keeping us open and safe on weekends, and for the School for Young Children during the week, we had a lot of times where we needed to plow and salt. For next winter, we will be recalibrating both the frequency of plowing and amount of salt. (The biggest cost is salt and chemical de-icer, not labor.) We will also need, as a congregation, to consider changing our expectations of when snow gets removed and the lot salted.

Other facility repairs have been ongoing as expected (plumbing, lighting, HVAC, etc.), but a higher than usual number of roof leaks have appeared (that flat roof I talked about earlier) and a few larger repairs such as replacing storm basins and repairing ovens took place this fiscal year.

On the personnel side, we are still trying to cover for the loss of our Event Coordinator/Sexton staff position. To some degree, these tasks have been taken on by other staff members, but clearly this is not a long term solution to our staffing needs AND we are missing a number of things that now fall through the cracks. Event setup and cleanup is sometimes being done on a self-serve basis. However it has become an issue with outside rentals and other times when we don't have an obvious volunteer to help out. Sound and A/V setup and operation is also not adequate, as our volunteer sound team is stretched thin and nowadays virtually every event requires some kind of A/V support in setup. It is my hope that some combination of an Event Coordinator/Sound & AV staff position will be a possibility in the near future.

Other challenges for the short term future include much of what has been mentioned in earlier reports. Lack of budget for: refinishing floors (carpeting and Fellowship Hall), replacing lighting in the Worship center, Fellowship Hall and

classrooms, classroom carpeting replacement, resealing parking lot, addition of better outdoor lighting, and larger HVAC repairs outside the scope of the annual operating budget, to name a few.

SYC - As usual, I love to be able to call attention to our School for Young Children. You can read their updates in the SYC section but I will highlight two important changes at SYC for next year. I think you will agree that we are super fortunate to have long time teachers, Amy Rudawsky and Susan Roscigno, taking on the direction of SYC as co-directors with the retirement of Stephanie Rottmayer. Stephanie has been a pleasure to work with and I'm hoping we see her around often as she will remain as an advisor to SYC. Also we have the transition of the office manager at SYC into the capable hands of Holly Adams. Adele Stratton is retiring after many years at SYC and will be missed!

Looking forward:

I'm very excited as I look ahead and see the changes that are in the pipeline! Construction projects, changes in our governance structure and policy, and especially the time we will have with an interim minister. The next few years will be an opportunity to plan and position ourselves for the next stage in the history of First UU Church of Columbus. The changes I've seen in five years are pretty amazing... the growth of our RE program, the number of young families and children brings a vitality to the congregation that I've heard is not typical of churches these days. I'm optimistic that we will take these gifts we've been given — the growth opportunities that present themselves — to further our mission and its' reach among our congregation and in the larger community!

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns, want details about construction or other projects....or want to volunteer your skills and talents where we can best use them.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve this congregation,

Brian

Goals

Our goal continues to be to maintain the quality of our four choirs (Peace Pals, Rising Voices, Spirit of Life and Chalice), to present concerts and musical events that are of high caliber and of interest to the church, and to keep the church musically involved in the outside community.

Choirs

The biggest issue of the year was the resignation of Brandon Moss as the Chalice Choir Director in March, 2015. He left to assume a position at another church and to pursue his own individual spiritual path elsewhere. Brandon suggested an experienced substitute, Christopher Dent, to finish out the year as Chalice director. Chris was interviewed, offered the position and accepted. He will lead the group through the end of the season, to the middle of June, 2015. After that, a committee will convene to choose an interim director for the 2015-16 year, while a new permanent director is chosen.

Aside from the disruption of the above events, the choirs have maintained their high standards throughout the year, as was evident at the exciting Holiday Concert in December, 2014. All four choirs have continued to do quality work during the regular Sunday services, though the numbers for the two youth choirs have gone down recently.

As of this writing, the choirs have not yet performed their spring concert, scheduled for May 24, 2015. The music area budget was cut by a third late in the year which caused some question about whether the choirs would be able to get all the necessary music for the May 24 concert, but the choir directors were creative in their solutions, and the concert will proceed as planned. Choirs are also scheduled to sing for upcoming special events: Spirit of Life and Rising Voices at the church's 75th Anniversary Celebration on May 30, and Chalice Choir at the Party for Mark, celebrating his retirement, on June 14.

Special Events

The church enjoyed another fine concert season, combining regular church events like the Talent Show with bringing in outside groups such as The Singleton Duo and FBnCC. Audiences were good-to-excellent for all events, and I would draw special attention to the Columbus Youth Jazz Orchestra on January 18, which had an impressive and enthusiastic audience of over 160. We also tried something new, having a local rock band (FBnCC) perform a concert in a cafe-type setting in Fellowship Hall.

One result of the musical activities of the year (below) was that the Music Program was able to generate enough income through requested donations to make contributions to arts organizations affiliated with the performers:

- \$500 to JAG scholarships for Columbus Youth Jazz Orchestra players
- \$130 to the Mid-Ohio Food Bank
- \$150 to the Ohio Hispanic Fine Arts Assoc.

The complete list of all musical events:

- A Concert of Quartets (trombone and barbershop quartets) – November 9, 2014
- Choirs Holiday Concert – December 21, 2014
- Columbus Youth Jazz Orchestra – January 18, 2015
- All-Church Talent Show – February 7, 2015
- The Singleton Duo (cello and piano) – February 15, 2015
- Church Sing-along with guest Doug Morris (“music from Joe Hill”) – March 7, 2015
- “Flautango” (flute and guitar duo) – March 8, 2015
- A Recital of Music for Trombone, Trumpet and Piano – March 29, 2015
- FBnCC (local rock band) – April 18, 2015
- Combined Choirs Concert – May 24, 2015
- (choirs performing for) 75th Anniversary Celebration – May 30, 2015
- (choir performing for) Party for Mark – June 14, 2015

Music in the Community

Along with the above, a small group of church members went caroling to the group residences of UU seniors before Christmas, and a large group from church again participated in the annual Messiah Sing-along sponsored by ProMusica Chamber Orchestra in the Southern Theater, also in December.

Also, with the help of Clifford Adams, we were able to revise and update the Music pages of the church's website to better reflect current personnel and activities of the Music Program.

Problems

The main problem was dealing with the sudden resignation of Brandon Moss (see above).

Plan for the upcoming year

Our main plan for the coming year is to secure an Interim Director for Chalice Choir for 2015-16, then hire a permanent director for Chalice for 2016 and beyond. We strive to have all choirs continue to improve as ensembles and to perform varied and challenging music, and we want to continue to present a range of fine concerts and events for the musical enrichment of the church.

Committee Reports

Archives Team

Linda Thompson, Historian

Mission Statement The mission of the Archives Team and Historian is to collect, preserve, and make available for research and reference the records which reflect the origins, programs, goals and the development of the church. The Archives provide information that assists the operation of the church, along with serving members of the church and community in their historical research. (Reviewed and revised in 2009, to be reviewed in 2014.)

Membership: The Archives team consists of Olwen Firestone, Marguerite Molk, Nancy Morr, Jane Reisman, Linda Royalty, Jan Waters, Ohma Willette and historian Linda Thompson. The Team is not listed as a committee but it does make decisions about what goes in the files, the ordering of materials, displays, articles, etc. The team works every Tuesday morning, and sometimes two Wednesday afternoons a month, except for holidays and summer vacation. The Team functions as a church working group and a support ministry for its members. Work, laughter, and good snacks help create a community.

Service and Accomplishments: The Team has done the following:

- Researched questions given to it
- Located photos for various church activities and displays
- Reviewed, sorted and filed materials or recycled/shredded them
- Prepared articles and displays for the 75th Anniversary Celebration
- Researched files for photos and items for the timeline
- Prepared posters showing recent history reviewing the decades
- Donated \$1,000 for a dedicated Archives computer
- Hosted members who were searching for information
- Packed up files and materials for storing during construction

The Team will continue working as is possible on the 75th Anniversary displays and articles. Archives files may not be available to the Team during construction period.

Goals: The Team's goals and objectives (see last year's annual report) are being put on hold until the construction is completed. Storage space will be provided for the Archives, but the work of the Team will have to take place in a separate room.

Auction Committee

A Subcommittee of the Stewardship Committee

Danya Furda, Past Auction Chair

Mission

Our mission is to have fun, to promote fellowship, and to raise funds for the budget by holding an auction. Members are encouraged to celebrate each other's talents by offering items of all sorts, especially dinners, events, and services. The auction and its associated events are a vital part of the church social calendar.

Membership

Active committee members for this past year included: Danya Furda, Brian Hagemann, Roger Hansen, Paula Hook, Jennifer Johnson, Marylou MacDonald, Peggy McKee, Jenny McLaughlin, Cathy O'Neil, Jim Pinkham, Bruce Reed, Jeannie Sperling, Jo Anne St. Clair, and Carole Wilhelm. The auction also depends upon many volunteers who come together to make the event run smoothly and be as inviting and fun to attend as possible.

Activities

We spend several months preparing for a Saturday night auction. The Worship Center, Fellowship Hall, and other spaces in the church are decorated according to a theme, and we have both a silent auction and a live auction with professional auctioneer, Paul Delphia. Guests typically are asked to bring a side dish to share for the buffet dinner, an appetizer or bake goods to sell. Members bid on each other's talents and offerings in a fun atmosphere, and the

proceeds support the mission of the church. A web-based software system manages the details and provides online statements, event reminders, and advanced bidding.

The October 2014 Spook-A-Palooza auction netted \$32,336 and counting!

Plans for the next auction

There will be no auction in 2015. In a close voting decision, the committee decided to move the auction back to the winter so the next auction will be on Saturday, February 20, 2016.

If you are interested in joining the auction committee, please contact Jo Anne St. Clair at joastclair@wowway.com.

Bookstore and Library

Jim Davenport, Bookstore Chair; Kathleen Boston, Library Chair

Mission Statement

The Bookstore provides spiritual, self-help, political, intellectual, and social stimulation by making high quality reading material regularly available in a comfortable environment to the First UU congregation and its visitors. The Bookstore is also about the social, as well as the intellectual, interactions of congregants and it provides a secure place for newcomers, potential new members, and other visitors in the crowded, post-service Fellowship Hall.

Membership

Committee Chair: Jim Davenport

Membership: Kathleen Boston

Additional Committee Members: Greg Denby, Karin Erikson, Jake Huber, Pam Hussen, Chris Johnson, Chris Meadows, Linda Miller, Bob Papps, Kay Smith, Tom Stone, Lynne Thomas, Lisa Wilson

Service to the Church Community / Accomplishments

When feasible, handling book ordering at discount for other committees.

Estimated \$700 profit generated for the Church from the sales of books.

Estimated Sold over 200 books

Support Other Committees using our sales platform (Estimated)

Sold over 70 copies of Mark's Sonata and latest book

Sold 9 hymnals

Adopted Square Credit Card system to lower credit card fees for the church and ease purchasing by congregation/visitors to the bookstore.

Note: All counts and money are annualized to represent July 1 – June 30 based on data from July 1 – April 1.

Issues

Membership turnover has been moderate, with some departing and new ones joining. The team is still healthy. We'd like to get the word out to new members of First UU about volunteering with the Bookstore, but with our current numbers this is a back-burner concern.

Sales have begun to pick up somewhat, although sales of Mark's new book have certainly helped. We continue to stock new titles and regularly brainstorm new ways to serve and promote.

Plans for 2015-2016

Align our monthly discounts to the church theme calendar.

Continue to support specific requests (author visits, book orders for other groups in the church).

Continue to mix in new titles on the table for regular shoppers who may be getting turned off by seeing the same old books.

Caring Committee and Neighborhood Network

Olwen Firestone and Claire Hagan-Bauza, Co-Leaders

Members: Olwen Firestone and Claire Hagan-Bauza, Co-Leaders; Vanda Hughes, Florence Jain, Linda Miller, Christine Raffaele, Jane Reisman, Erica Scurr, Chris Sullivan, Carole Wilhelm, and Ohma Willette.

Mission Statement: The Caring Committee seeks to be aware of and respond to joys and sorrows of church members and friends by sending Caring Cards. The Committee also provides: a Caring Network of volunteers, under the leadership of Florence Jain, which offers short-term supportive and emergency care in 12 local geographic areas; memorial service receptions, organized by co-coordinators, Carole Wilhelm and Chris Sullivan; loan of medical equipment, arranged by Susan Marcum; an annual educational workshop generally related to life's issues; and an umbrella under which the Ministerial Appreciation Committee and the Funeral Consumers Alliance exist.

Service to Church Community: 159 caring cards sent (for joys, sorrows, senior birthdays, Coming of Age, graduations, and remembering ministers for significant dates); 10 memorial service receptions for members and former members and assistance with 7 for non-members; 37 holiday cards sent to staff and former ministers; 25 cookie and fruit plates delivered to seniors and staff; 7 members and friends received the loan of medical equipment. The Caring Network provided assistance for 20, transportation 14 times, meals 23 times, calls to at least 20, and home visits totaling 7. Florence Jain reports, "These numbers just scratch the surface. Some people needed a simple call to say we cared; others needed a multitude of assistance. Most, along with others who declined help, also received support provided spontaneously by church friends that isn't recorded anywhere. We are a generous community." In addition, there were numerous emails and calls to recruit volunteers for providing these services.

We acknowledge the continued assistance of Deb Baillieul, who creates our cards; Pat Larson, who provides flowers for milestone birthdays; Nan Beamish, who is a caring card coordinator; Linda Royalty, who assists with the Ministerial Appreciation Committee; and the 31 volunteers who write cards and sit at the Caring Table each week. The many who assist with food and a variety of roles for memorial services are appreciated and recognized in *The Discoverer*.

Issues: Because of conflicts, our program planned about General Assembly (in place of our annual workshop) was postponed. It will be held in the fall which will now be more timely with GA coming to Columbus in June 2016.

Plans for Upcoming Year: 1) seek new committee members, 2) obtain a co-coordinator for the Caring Network, update the brochure, and consider reorganizing the geographic areas for more practical coverage, 3) advise the Worship Coordinators of pertinent caring card policies and ask if they have any new criteria for announcements, 4) suggest ways to acknowledge new members and invite their involvement with those responsible for new member classes, 5) decide about continuing new method of caring card records, and 5) update the committee brochure.

Vision Statement: We will strive to meet the needs of the congregation in the ways stated in this report and look forward to new people who are interested in committing to help us.

Committee on Shared Ministry

Rich Humenick, Chair

Mission: The primary function of the Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) is the stewardship of First UU's Mission and Vision. Therefore COSM focuses on shared ministry, congregational vitality and respectful relations. Together with the Board of Trustees and our professional leadership, COSM helps develop objectives and standards of excellence within the mission of the church. COSM will appraise, report and advise the congregation, the professional leadership and the board on the progress of our mission and vision.

Members: Rich Humenick served as Chair for the 2014-2015 church year. Members have been Su Farnlacher, Donna Greenman, Julie Henderson and Tom Tucker, with one unfilled spot. The chair for 2015-2016 has not been selected.

Accomplishments:

COSM has followed a three-year plan for assessing the overall health of First UU's congregational life: (1) In-depth staff interviews, (2) In-depth Standing Committee Chair interviews, and (3) Congregational Survey. In this, the fourth year of its existence, COSM began the cycle again with in-depth staff interviews.

Twenty paid and volunteer staff were offered the opportunity to be interviewed. One person declined the interview and one did not respond to the request. The remaining 17 interviews were conducted. The results will be analyzed during May and a report will be given to the Board in June.

There were no conflicts which needed to be brought to the Board's attention for resolution.

Issues:

COSM could not find a sixth member (required by the Standing Rules) for the 2014-2015 church year in spite of approaching several candidates and asking Leadership Development for assistance.

Su Ann Farnlacher and Donna Greenman are completing their third year and (per the Standing Rules) final year of service on COSM. We anticipate difficulty filling these two additional vacancies.

Travel, health issues, and the general distractions of life made it difficult to schedule COSM meetings and do the work of COSM.

Plans for Next Year:

COSM will continue to monitor the overall health of our congregational life, and monitor potential areas of conflict and the need for conflict resolution. While we have not yet determined the focus of the committee for the coming church year, assessing the various ministries of the church will continue. Of particular interest will be how the congregation reacts to the organizational changes planned by the Board and the changes surrounding the Interim Minister.

Justice Action Ministry (JAM): BREAD

Steve Palm-Houser, Chair

BREAD Team

Alice Rathburn, Captain

First UU is a founding member of the BREAD Organization, an interfaith, interracial community organization of more than 50 central Ohio churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques. BREAD's **mission** is "to build the power of people of faith to act effectively to solve local community problems through processes of relationship building, direct action, and negotiation with decision makers." It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan corporation that does not provide direct services nor accept government money for its internal budget.

First UU's BREAD Team and 34 additional First UU BREAD Justice Ministry Network members were responsible for 316 of the attendees of the 2015 BREAD Nehemiah Action Meeting. Ever-larger numbers are crucial to persuading public officials and other decision makers to work with BREAD to bring about systemic improvements in criminal justice, health care, mental health care, education, jobs, and housing.

The First UU BREAD Team this year has included Sue Carter, Chris Collins, Larry Drake, Don Hippensteel, Chris Johnson, Stephen Lovejoy, Rev. Eric Meter, Tracy Moebius, Alice Rathburn (Captain), and Noel Williams, several of whom have served on BREAD committees:

Executive Board – Alice Rathburn

Board of Trustees – Alice Rathburn

Crime and Violence – Rev. Eric Meter, Tracy Moebius, Alice Rathburn, Noel Williams

Keeping Kids In School – Rev. Eric Meter, Alice Rathburn, Noel Williams

Mental Health – Ingrid Silvian, Noel Williams

Truancy Stakeholders – Alice Rathburn

Welcome Columbus – Sue Carter, Noel Williams

And the 2015 First UU Justice Ministry Network members, pivotal to our achieving the second-largest Nehemiah Action turnout of any congregation and our largest ever are: Marilyn Beerman, Rev. Mark Belletini, Marty Ciccinielli, Jill Cohen, Karen Dawson, David Easter, Cathy Elkins, Alice Faryna, Ken Finch, Carol Fisher, Bill Fullarton, Danya Furda, Jane Gardner, Pat Hoffman, Oliver Jones, Nancy Kremer, Jane Larson, Kathy Lin, Marylou MacDonald, David Maywhoor, Judith McDowell, Marguerite Molk, Georgeann Neuzil, Susan O'Donnell, Bob Papps, Donna Papps, Heather Pierson, Jim Pinkham, Ron Rathburn, Doug Rossiter, Ingrid Silvian, Wesley Thompson, Fred Vierow, and Marilyn Webster.

Also, First UU's members and friends helped to support BREAD's work financially with investments totaling \$13,058.

BREAD is our church's primary and most visible vehicle for bringing about local systemic change to alleviate serious social justice issues. Our membership in BREAD helps us to develop stronger relationships among ourselves and with people of different faiths and cultural backgrounds. Our church's participation allows members of this congregation to contribute to making change for justice in the central Ohio community on many levels, including:

- serving on our own BREAD Team,
- working on one or more of BREAD's research and action committees,
- participating in the listening process to surface problems in the Central Ohio community for BREAD to address,
- becoming a member of the First UU BREAD Justice Ministry Network to help increase BREAD's power to make change
- attending meeting(s) with public officials to win and/or monitor implementation of an issue
- working on BREAD's corporate investment drive
- recruiting for and/or attending BREAD's public assemblies to gain allies,
- supporting BREAD's efforts financially .

Since its 2014 Nehemiah Action, BREAD has had the following issue victories:

Crime and Violence: Restorative Justice circles established in seven high-crime neighborhoods to reduce youth crime and divert first-time, non-violent youth offenders from the juvenile justice system. Additional RJ circles are to be added later in 2015.

Care, Not Crisis Mental Health Care:

Two additional Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams to provide comprehensive and flexible treatment and support to individuals in Franklin County who live with serious mental illness.

ADAMH CEO David Royer visited Magnolia Clubhouse, a fully accredited Clubhouse, Intl.

An ADAMH team was trained to establish an accredited Clubhouse in Franklin County.

Keeping Kids in School:

Continued funding for the KEY (Keep Engaging Youth) Truancy program.

Almost total elimination in the Columbus City Schools of out-of-school suspensions for truancy (2008-09: 4,262; first ¾ of 2014-15 school year: 30) and major declines in out-of-school suspensions for Level 1 disruptive behavior.

Continued truancy sweeps reducing daytime crime and "keeping kids in school."

At BREAD's electrifying 2015 Nehemiah Action, First UU's were proud of the wonderful presentations made by our ministers and pleased by some of the progress made toward justice:

- support from the executive director of NAMI Ohio for the establishment of an accredited Clubhouse International in Columbus,

- a commitment from the CEO of ADAMH to present a plan for a Franklin County Clubhouse to the ADAMH Board in December, contingent on passage of the ADAMH levy in November,

- announcement of a third ACT Team to support mentally ill prisoners before and after they are released from incarceration.

- encouragement by the Department of Criminal Justice and the US Attorney's Office, Southern District of Ohio, for establishment of a CIRV-type (Community Initiative to Reduce Violence) program in Columbus.

- support by James Ragland, Mayoral Candidate, for both the Matricula Consular and establishment of a Municipal ID to provide identification for undocumented immigrants.

The work will continue all year. BREAD's power to effect change is directly related to the number of people attending BREAD's public assemblies, especially the annual May Nehemiah Action. The response of First UU's members and friends to BREAD's call for justice is a source of inspiration and motivation to other BREAD congregations and to the BREAD staff.

Leadership Development Committee

James Bailey, Committee Member

Mission: We pledge to nurture the leadership gifts of congregational members and to mindfully advise and nominate qualified candidates for specified leadership positions in the church.

Ministry: To fulfill our mission, this committee:

Develops: We sponsor and conduct leadership-related learning and development events.

Supports: We award scholarships to events that provide leadership and development experiences.

Identifies and Recruits: We identify candidates who reflect the church's commitment to inclusiveness and diversity. We recruit and nominate, for election by the congregation, candidates for: Board of Trustees, Moderator, Search Committee for a Settled Minister, and (our own) Leadership Development Committee. We recruit and nominate, for selection by the Board, candidates for: Strategic Planning Committee, Committee on Shared Ministry. We serve as a nomination resource for other leadership positions as we are able.

Recognizes: In small ways and in large, we thank, celebrate, honor and commemorate our congregation's leaders, past and present.

Membership: Continuing members: Edgel Alley, Pat Hurley, Peggy McKee, Christine Raffaele; outgoing members: Steve Abbott, James Bailey, Tony Rice, Judy Vazquez; Past Board Chair: Kitty Jones.

Experiments, Accomplishments, Problems: With none of the four members continuing from 2013-14 willing or available to serve as Chair for 2014-15, we agreed to divide the duties of the Chairmanship. Susan Williams, outgoing Chair, provided a rubric of the duties and responsibilities and led a discussion in which we worked out a division of labor (with Judy Vazquez as nominal chair). The experiment has been successful, with only a few glitches, and the model has also been adopted by the continuing members of the 2015-16 LDC.

In collaboration with Membership Committee, we began honoring a "member of the month" to recognize the volunteer activities of those whose contributions are often not publicly acknowledged.

With the reduction of the size of the Board, LDC nominated two instead of four Board members; however, nominating responsibilities continued to take a lion's share of time as we reviewed the entire membership data base and interviewed potential candidates. We tried to offer a balanced slate of candidates, seeking to enlist the talents of newer members as well as of veteran leaders. With six candidates recruited for LDC, we fell short of nominating eight candidates (as mandated by the Constitution), and so publicized via an e-mail blast the option of nomination by petition. Based on our experience, we proposed to the Board a constitutional change mandating LDC should nominate no fewer than six candidates for four elected positions.

Acknowledging that LDC's leadership development and training activities were minimal this year, the continuing members are discussing and planning how better to fulfill that part of the committee's mission. Also, we offered no scholarships to training events because of budget cutbacks but hope that will be remedied in future budgets.

Membership Committee

Leslie Armstrong, Chair

Mission Statement: Welcoming, orienting and enrolling new members. A review of the mission and function of the Committee, as stated in the Standard Rules, was begun this year and will continue next year. We are considering organizing the functions of the Committee under Outreach, Welcoming, and Connecting and hope to expand some of these functions to include not only new members, but current members.

Membership Committee Members: Steve Abbot, Leslie Armstrong, Tom Beerman, Marylin Beerman, Allie Bonsteel, Heidi Drake, Paula Egbert, Maureen Keyhani, Judy Kleen, Kay Gaskill, Bob Mills.

Membership Teams:

Greeters: Coordinated by Paula Egbert, our greeters warmly welcome and orient all newcomers on Sunday mornings and engage visitors in conversation both before and after services. It is at the Greeter's stand that visitors indicate their interest in being contacted to be enrolled in membership classes. This year, Paula successfully recruited some new

greeters to reflect our diversity and work is underway to develop a visitor's packet. Our greeters: Tom Beerman, Marilyn Beerman, Ben Blee, Eve Catus, Kay Gaskill, Pat Hoffman, Lisa Iacobelli, Darlene Lazarow, Pat Larson, Kathy Lin, Carlos Lugo, Candee Rothert, Betsy Smally, Betty Virag, Amy Watson, Ron Bruder, Marty Cicchinelli.

Getting to Know UU: Coordinated by Steve Abbot, volunteers meet with visitors after church services to facilitate conversation about what folks are seeking and provide information about our church community and Unitarian Universalism. Additional volunteers are needed to help with this rewarding and very important role. Current facilitators are Steve Abbot, David Easter, Tony Skrabak, and Ben Iten.

Path to Membership: Rev. Eric Meter facilitates these new member classes with co-facilitators Allie Bonsteel and Bob Mills. Serving as new member mentors and also as facilitators are Kay Gaskill, Michael Greenman and Donna Greenman. Heidi Drake provides administrative support with enrollment. This year we continued to tweak the curriculum and the enrollment process and develop the mentoring program. Next year we hope to coordinate more with the new member class provided in the Religious Education program.

Photo Directory Team: With the leadership of Heidi Drake, a new photo directory was compiled, published and distributed (this occurs every few years). Our goal was to not only have this book to be a tool that connects us as a community, but to use the process itself as a tool to build community. Even non-members were encouraged to participate, and important connections were made when welcoming folks coming for their photo sessions. The information gathered at the photo sessions was also used to update the church data base. This Team consisted of Heidi Drake, Sandra Aska, Laurie Weltlin and Matt Cook.

The year began with Leslie Armstrong as the new chair and only the Team Leaders in place as committee members. Individuals were recruited to serve on the committee and regular meetings were established. Work was begun with Stewardship to identify and contact those participating regularly in our community who had not yet joined as members. The Photo Directory Team was established and this labor intensive project consumed much of the Committee's focus. Understanding, improving, and recording the process by which visitors are identified, become members and are integrated into our church community is ongoing. Mentoring new members is a program we will continue to expand in the coming year. As we work on ways in which to integrate folks into our church community, we hope to expand this function to include not only new members, but current members. In partnership with Leadership Development Committee, we began to recognize a Member of the Month, both to honor and encourage service.

We currently have 618 church members. We added 36 new members this year as of April, 2015, and, sadly, this year we lost 14 members who are deceased or moved away. A list of new members can be found toward the front of this Annual Report. The Membership Bulletin Board is updated regularly with pictures and biographies of our new members. WELCOME to all our new members this year! And THANK YOU, all who are mentioned in this report, for your service and valuable contribution to our church community.

Partner Church Team

Kevin O'Neil, Team Member

We are Paula Hooks, Elaine Fujimura, Danya Furda, Fujio Hayashi, Gretchen Faulstich, Rev. Eric Meter and Kevin O'Neil.

We met to reinvigorate our connection with our partner congregation, the Unitarian Church of Bölön in Rumania. We've started planning for a fundraiser (dinner/dance) with the aim of bringing the minister and his wife to visit us in the summer of 2016. If you would like to jump on board, contact any of the persons above.

Personnel Committee

Kevin O'Neil, Chair

Members: Steve Abbott, Betsy Duckworth, Brian Hagemann and Kevin O'Neil (Chair)

The mission of the Personnel Committee is specified in First UU's Standing Rules (May 2012), http://www.firstuucolumbus.org/index.php?option=com_rubberdoc&view=doc&id=404&format=raw,), Article V, Section 2. Our mission aligns with First UU's mission most closely in the words "true hospitality" and "committed stewardship".

Our major accomplishments for FY15 are as follows. We updated the Personnel Handbook to keep it up to date. We also met with Finance on the Interim Minister search. For FY16, we expect to advise the senior minister search committee as needed and update the Personnel Handbook and other documents as needed.

School for Young Children

Stephanie Rottmayer, Director

I. Mission Statement

Our weekday preschool is open to young children and their families without regard to race, creed, sex, socioeconomic level or physical or mental abilities. A child development approach to growth and development is facilitated in an environment of play.

II. Membership

The SYC Committee had 8 voting and 5 non-voting members this year consisting of church members, teachers, office staff and parents of the school.

Our SYC Staff this year consisted of 20 staff members: 17 part-time teachers, 1 full-time director, 2 part-time co-associate directors (who also teach) and 2 part-time office personnel.

III. Service to church community

- Our First UU community outreach program served 134 families with 147 children during this school year. Of these families, 15 are members of this church. Three of our staff of 20 are church members.
- SYC mentored a student teacher from the ECE program at Columbus Community College.
- This year, our annual Scholarship Auction provided \$10,580 among 16 families who applied for financial aid for the school year of 2014-5.
- Long time office administrator, Adele Stratton, will retire at the end of this year. Holly Adams, our part-time administrator, will be taking over the role.
- Director Stephanie Rottmayer will assume the role of Program Consultant next year, while Amy Rudawsky and Susan Roscigno will become Co-Directors.
- Our social media presence continues to increase due to our improved website (by Brian Hageman) our school Facebook page and an independent SYC parent Facebook page. This has increased communications in our school community to include old friends and alumni families in our daily operations.
- Our staff continues to build relationships within the early childhood community through an online presence and through visits to and from several preschools in Cincinnati. Last fall, the staff from one school traveled to Columbus to tour SYC and meet with our staff. This spring, the SYC staff traveled to Cincinnati to visit that school and the lab school at the University of Cincinnati. The staff of all three schools then met to discuss best practices and how they look in our unique programs and we hope to continue learning from each other.

IV. Issues

While we continue to have waiting lists for our classes, the increased demand due to the 2013 book published about SYC-based parenting seems to be tapering off. However, a sequel will be coming out in the spring of 2016 so we anticipate another surge of interest in our program. We admitted 38 new families for the coming year.

Due to the severe weather this past winter and the number of days that school was closed, we have revamped our severe weather policy to allow school to remain open when roads are safe to travel although the temperatures are very low. While this change has been approved by the SYC Committee and we have systems in place to alert parents and staff of

the school closures, there may be some adjustment related to this change.

V. Plans for the upcoming church year

In the Spring of 2016, many of our staff will travel to Maryland to attend a Play EmPowers rally with other play-based educators which will include nationally and internationally known speakers in the field. In addition, we expect to continue our relationship with the schools in Cincinnati through further visits and discussions. Within the school, we have hired one new teacher for next year, while many of our long-time teachers will be trying out new classrooms and new teaching teams as the co-directors begin to spend more time in the office and less time in the classroom.

VI. Vision Statement

We will continue to promote our play-based learning environment with a focus on social/emotional development along with meeting the requirements of the Ohio Jobs and Family Services Daycare Licensing and the accreditation guidelines of National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Worship Committee

Mary Rogers, Chair

Members: Steve Abbott, Mark Bellitini, Bill Hurley, David Krohn, Judith McDowell, Charles Miles, Mary Rogers, Debbie Shaw, Wes Thompson

Inactive Members: These individuals are available to assist when needed: Carolynn Arnou, Ben Iten, Steve LeFevre, Ruby Linhan, Gina Phillips (Coordinates ASL services), Joe Pierce

Mission Statement

Promote and implement the mission, vision, and goals of the church

Assure a welcoming atmosphere in the Worship Center during services for members, visitors, and guests

Assist the minister by coordinating details of the worship service thereby providing freedom for the minister in development of the spiritual experience

Liase with all affiliated groups with effective communication and inclusion in planning

Accomplishments

Committee Retreat and Preparation for Interim Minister Transition: Held in October. this was a planning retreat with an emphasis on understanding and preparing for the Interim Minister.

Communications

We have established and maintained:

1. An email contact list which includes all Worship Committee members.
2. A worship affiliate email list that includes contacts for music, ushers, sound, chancel decor, and other individuals that participate in the worship process or contribute content such as the Caring Committee, etc.
3. Issued invitations to Worship Committee meetings to affiliated committees and other groups that interact with us. i.e. 75th Anniversary Committee and Buildings and Grounds regarding the building impact on worship.

Support for Affiliated Groups

1. Worked with Sharon Oliver, Chairman of Usher Committee to develop an Usher Training Program and to maintain communication with usher volunteers that supports their needs and concerns. To date training was provided in November with a follow-up meeting in April. Such issues as safety concerns, when latecomers may enter service, and best practices for ushers on duty to create a welcoming experience have been addressed. Usher volunteers have expressed their appreciation of the training and response to their concerns. Usher were encouraged to attend the CRASE with an excellent response. Some also attended the follow-up session.

2. Participated in the Church Recruitment Fair, September 21, with an emphasis on recruiting for the Chancel Decor team. We welcomed two new members to the team.

3. Working with the Sound Team with two goals: basic sound training for Worship Committee Members and obtaining a coordinator for the team.

Recruitment and training for Lay Lead Summer Services

Actively recruited for volunteers in January, finalised summer schedule in March, and held training sessions for volunteers in March.

Support for Special Services

We have successfully coordinated all special service such as Christmas, Flower, and water services

Challenges

Interim Minister: The interim minister may or may not want changes in the way the Worship Committee functions. We will be supportive in his/her requirements.

Sound Services: We recommend that a paid position be established for this vital aspect of the worship service. We are currently considering what the parameters of that position would be.

Plans For 2015 -2016

Update and revise Worship Coordinator Workbook (Manual) to document best procedures and practices

Create an accurate annual budget

Create an annual calendar of Committee responsibilities

Become more proactive in recognizing those who contribute to the worship experience

Implement Summer Service recruitment and training following this years methods and procedures

Vision Statement

Foster an atmosphere within the church community that delivers the most inclusive, diverse, and accessible worship experience to all