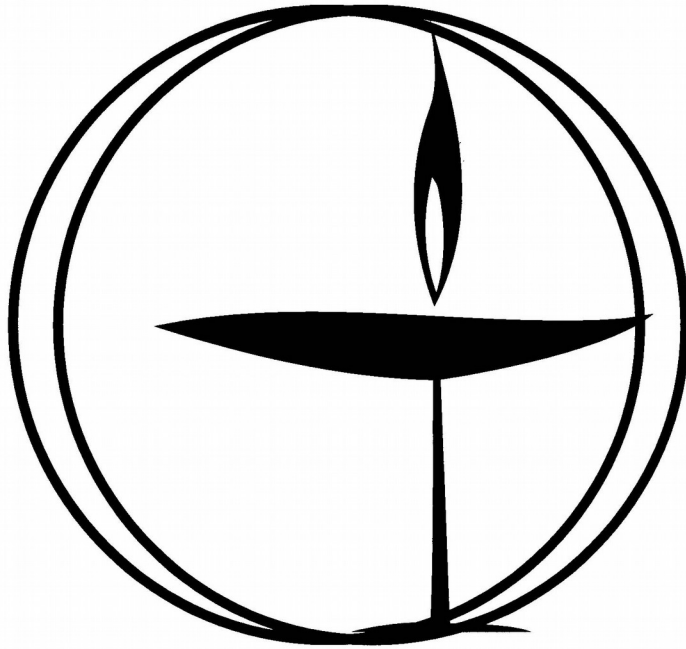


First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus
Annual Report
May 22, 2016



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Board of Trustees and Staff Member Listing

BOARD

Chair	Carlos Hoyt
Vice Chair	Ginnie Vogts
Secretary	Kitty Durham Jones
Treasurer	Debra Boyd
	James Brown
	Karen Dawson
	Fujio Hayashi
	Marge Lynd
	Nancy Nehring
	Joe Pierce
Youth Rep	Emma Merchant
Youth Rep	Willow Otten
Past Chair	John McCrystal
Moderator	Chas Williams

STAFF

Interim Senior Minister: Rev. Jennifer Brooks
Associate Minister: Rev. Eric Meter
Minister of Religious Exploration: Rev. Lane Campbell
Music Director: Tony McDonald
Church Administrator: Brian Hagemann
Pianist/Accompanist: Nathan Hamm
Bookkeeper: Joe Voltolini
Office Manager: Marian Garcia
RE Assistant/Staff Secretary: Deb McGuire
Facilities Assistant: Naoko Kobayashi
Facilities Assistant: Cathy Hausmann
Choir Director (Chalice): Minji Kim
Choir Director (Rising Voices, Spirit of Life): Karen Madden
Choir Co-Director, Peace Pals: Cath Saveson
Choir Co-Director, Peace Pals: Leigh Mamlin
Sound Technician: Jabar Cole
Peace Camp Director: Jennifer Bojanowski
Minister Affiliated: Rev. Suzan McCrystal
Minister Affiliated: Rev. Kathleen Fowler
SYC Co-Director: Susan Roscigno
SYC Co-Director: Amy Rudawsky
Minister Emerita: Rev. Carol Brody
Minister Emeritus: Rev. Mark Belletini
Minister Emerita: Rev. Wendy Fish

New Members July 1, 2015 Through May 19, 2016

Joyce Bennett
Robert Bennett
Becky Brunotte
Sheri Cameron
Nikki Coleman
Glenn Collins
Ian Davis
Niki Ducey
Laurel Durrett
Kristina Fisher
Lauren Fisher
Heather Ford
Peter Ford
Martha Gifreda
David Gosser
Yana Grinblat
Jenna Haaser
Mary Henrich
Anne Joliot
David Jon Krohn
Rochelle Lavens
Melissa Malinky
Anthony Mayabb
Sarah Mayabb
Jamie Mederer
Amanda Miller
Willow Otten
Shawna Oxier
Nancy Rafert
Stewart Rafert
Lenore Remley
Jerry Robinette
Danielle Schoon
Eric Schoon
Patricia Sieber
Bill Slattery
Marie Slattery
Andrea Smith
Bruce Smith
Debbie Sussman
Jane Tessier
Bernadette Vankeerbergen
Elissa Yoder

Annual Congregational Meeting, May 17, 2015

1	Opening Words - Rev. Mark Belletini 12:10 PM - Meeting brought to order
2	Welcoming and Announcement of Quorum - Tony Skrabak, Moderator We do have a quorum. 164 Members present.
3	Approve Minutes of 2015 Mid-Year Meeting – VOTE Approved
4	Elections – VOTE by Ballot Board of Trustees, Moderator, Leadership Development Committee Board of Trustees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ginnie Vogts• Karen Dawson Moderator: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chas Williams Leadership Development Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barb Fiorini• Ruth Gerhold• Sara Graffaginino• Beth McCreary• Cath Saveson• Chris Sullivan Steve has made great effort to provide background on all the candidates. Introduced the candidates by inviting them to stand up.
5	Report on Capital Campaign - Kitty Jones We are green! Thanked the congregation for \$1.7 million with the bank loan, we have money to complete our updates. The exterior doors and skylight are completed. Thanked the congregation for their commitment to the church. Construction will start June 1. Fencing on Panera parking side will go up for construction needs. Portable bathrooms are coming that will have running water and AC and are handicap accessible. The changes will be a little painful but necessary for our scheduled improvements. The June 1 start date allows us to have our main bathrooms done by September 1. Green is not just a color, but a commitment.

6	<p>Approve Rev. Mark Belletini as Minister Emeritus</p> <p>Motion: In honor of the meritorious, long and devoted ministerial leadership, service and love the Rev. Dr. Mark Belletini has provided the congregation of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, we the congregation of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, move to confer the honorific title of Minister Emeritus upon our beloved Rev. Dr. Mark Belletini.</p> <p>Discussion: Bob Letcher - Mark has been inspiring and truly deserves this.</p> <p>Passed unanimously</p>
7	<p>Report from the Search Committee for Interim Minister - Jim Conlan</p> <p>He thanked the members of the Search Committee. This last week was intense but successful. Made offer to our number 1 choice to Rev. Jennifer Brooks, who is presently practicing ministry at the UU of Fairfax, VA. She will start August 1 and be with us for two years. In the coming weeks and months there will be more information for you about Jennifer. You can see her sermons from Fairfax if you go to YouTube and search Fairfax Jennifer Brooks and her website is revjenniferbrooks.net.</p> <p>I have a note from Jennifer to pass along. "I'm exhilarated to be walking with First UU on this transitional journey. I eagerly anticipate two years of warm relationships, mutual learning, and vibrant congregational life."</p>
8	<p>Stewardship Report - Patricia Boughton</p> <p>Mixture of things to report. Pledge payments are ahead of last year. Some big pledges have been lost from people moving away. Through compelling messages, people have increased their donations. The desired budget included staff increases and interim minister salary there is still a \$10K shortfall. Members of the Board are increasing their pledges.</p> <p>Rev. Mark Belletini— Shared a personal insight with the congregation of his thoughts of this place and what it means to him. Our church is full of activities, all dealing with different plains in life, children playing, people learning, people celebrating the highs and lows of life. It is here, in this safe place where this happens. Changes are constant. It is important for this congregation to thrive. Tying our mission and our budget are an important function of Stewardship. Money asks are a constant factor in our daily life. We are down one staff person and no raises to your staff for three years. We are \$10K short, and on a soon to be fixed income, he is increasing his pledge and asked the congregation to review their own situation to see if more can be given. He looks forward to the next 75 years.</p> <p>Pledge cards were passed out to the congregation.</p>

Budget – VOTE - Judy Kleen

Judy provided an overview of the budget (enclosed). Some of the highlights include:

- Increase the default rate slightly.
- Board does not want to use endowment earnings to balance the budget; this has been done in the past and it is not a good practice.
- Board has approved a salary increase pool for the staff members
- Board voted to increase the offer to the Interim Minister
- We have stopped paying our fair share to UUA.
- Building and Grounds increased for snow removal.
- Mortgage is going down – we renegotiated the mortgage with a lower interest rate.

Judy also provided a new breakout of the budget, providing categories that represent our mission, that include Ministry, Religious Education, JAM/Outreach, Denomination, Administration, and Facilities.

Questions:

Fred Vierow – Complimented the Board for their efforts. What about UUA assembly that will be held here in 2016, is there a budget line for that?

Answer – Debra Boyd – The association bears the costs and liabilities. There is nothing the budget needs to reflect. We will host through our work.

Rick Kritzer – The GA experience is fantastic. There are two items that concerns him:

Lack of funding for the campus ministry, and replacement of the sexton.

Answer - Judy Kleen Ben Iten has moved onto another position so this is no longer a budget item. We don't have the monies to fund the sexton position. The priorities are decided by the Board.

Jane Larson – Terrible that we pay Nathan Hamm so low.

Response - Judy Kleen All of our music staff have job descriptions and is in compliance with UUA requirements. John McCrystal agreed with Judy – there are lot of competing priorities. Board word with the Personnel committee. The increase is slated for staff.

Kelly Blake – Thanked the Board for their efforts. Needs and wants were considered. Need to address the income – what other income ideas do we have instead of going to the well all the time?

Answer - John McCrystal – We are looking at how we approach Stewardship. Board charged Strategic Planning with investigation into this. Report is due in June.

John Reisman – With all the budgetary concerns – We are about to celebrate 75 years. There has never been an audit of the books. Board has fiduciary responsibilities to the congregation. Provide oversight that all business is conducted in a sound way. Suggests we need to have an audit prior to selecting a new senior minister.

Response - John McCrystal – Don't know how far back the last audit was done. It is something the Board is aware of this condition. This will bring more awareness to Board.

Sue Carter – Support Jane Larson. I think we have a very special pianist and his talent – he deserves more than a categorized stipend.

John- Board recommended the full 3% increase to the staff. This

Susan Williams – We are in an adaptive time. Suggest we do not put the budget apart. Take a look at personal budgets to see what we can help.

Su Ann Farnlacher – Thanked the Board and Finance committee for their work.

Thom Pegan –What does the Denomination category represent?

Answer – Judy Kleen – Minister and Staff work.

After all discussion, the Budget was put to a vote and passed.

10	<p>Board Chair Report - John McCrystal</p> <p>Theme for the Board – Change. New members of the Board and exiting Board Members. Governance – LDC and Strategic Planning – A governance task force, led by Carlos. Green and Growing – making the dream a reality. Rev. Mark shared his retirement plans for the past two years helping the congregation in this transition. Ben Iten and Lane Campbell ministry paths. Strategic Planning committee charged with how to improve Stewardship. Recognized the Board. Thanked the church for their support.</p>
11	<p>JAM Report - Steve Palm-Houser</p> <p>Most of the focus has been on poverty alleviation. This is a systemic problem that deals with many facets. Charity begins at home and we need to be engaged with the politicians. Check JAM report.</p>
12	<p>Report on Religious Education - Lane Campbell</p> <p>Celebrated our last Sunday service for the children. Summer school will start May 24th. Peace Camp will start July 27th, and they are looking at extending the program. Focus will be on conflict mediation. Justice week is coming up. For next year multigenerational activities – better welcome/integration. Thanked Isabell Boyd helping with the pledge forms.</p>
13	<p>Ministerial Staff Report - Rev. Mark Belletini and Rev. Eric Meter</p> <p>We have a lot of fun as the staff. The caring amongst the staff make the days pass with no problem. Working with Rev. Eric has made Rev. Mark's work much easier. Rev. Eric – This has been the dream team to work with. This church can do anything they set their mind – thanked the congregation for aiding their service.</p>
14	<p>Governance Update - Carlos Hoyt</p> <p>It has been fun work and very necessary to move the church forward. The needs of a medium sized church is different from a large church. What are the staff responsibilities? We are in a unique time period with all the changes that are occurring. An interim minister who can shed light on these changes. Rev. Dan Hotchkiss' book <u>Governance and Ministry</u>, has been the guiding recipe for these Governance changes.</p> <p>What has been done?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Force was formed • Written governance policy and drafted • Management section is being worked on. To be presented to the Board • Oversight of the program] <p>Presentations will be made to the congregation.</p>

15	<p>Election Results - Steve Abbott, Leadership Development Committee</p> <p>Board of Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ginnie Vogts • Karen Dawson <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chas Williams <p>Leadership Development Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barb Fiorini • Sara Graffaginino • Beth McCreary • Cath Saveson •
16	<p>Litany of Names of Deceased Members - Rev. Eric Meter</p> <p>Transitions not only happen in leadership but also in our community:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Roll Call of Deceased Members 2014 – 2015 First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pam Argus Jennifer Bosveld Susan Gardner Don Jones Bill Keating Hans Kohles Amy Longar Lynn Marcellino John Schumacher Shirley Shank Dwight Sharp Barbara Steeg Henry Tate Dotte Turner Jean Werts Earl Wurdlow</p>
	<p>Adjourn Time Adjourn 1:43 PM</p>

Mid-Year Congregational Meeting, Sunday, January 24, 2016

1	Sign-in and Seating	11:30 (10)
2	Opening Words – Rev. Jennifer Brooks Read “Long Haul People”	11:40 (5)
3	Welcoming and Announcement of Quorum – Chas Williams, Moderator Attendance of 158 announced. Quorum of at least 104 required. Quorum reached. Moderator reminded participants to stay as the votes on item #10 require the quorum. Meeting called to order.	11:45 (3)
4	Approval of May 17, 2015 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes No corrections noted. Minutes stand approved as presented.	11:48 (2)
5	Governance Update – Carlos Hoyt, Board Chair Reviewed meaning of the word “governance” (versus the word “ministry”). Reference to Dan Hotchkiss book, “Governance and Ministry”. Board and staff work in partnership. Also have worked to establish clarification of “committees” versus “teams”. Teams are more action-oriented while committees do more ongoing governance-type work.	11:50 (5)
6	Transition Update – Rev. Jennifer Brooks Our work is to have a model in place to help transition to the new settled minister. Announced members of newly-formed transition team: Tony Skrabak, Amy Watson, Connor McCrystal, and Ben Sostrom. They will begin work on Mission and Vision. The team will help us rediscover this together.	11:55 (5)
7	Settled Minister Search Team Selection Process – Ginnie Vogts, Board Vice Chair Informed congregation about the “best practice” of consulting all members to ask for recommendations for search committee members. Phone calls will be made by Board and LDC members to ask for suggestions of candidates, and to ask whether an individual would be willing to serve if asked. A slate of 5+ members will be compiled from this for a vote at the May annual meeting, and then the Board appoints 2 additional members. Rev. Lynn Kerr will be here next Sunday to discuss this process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Question regarding whether there will be more than 5 (potential candidates) on the slate. Board chair stated this is a new process and the slate will depend on how many people receive multiple mentions by others. - Is there a restriction on or criteria for who can be chosen as a settled minister. Do we have to stay with the UUA recommendations? Rev. Jennifer said there are no actual restrictions. Names are given to the search committee of individuals who are interested in this congregation. Search committee could look at others, including ministers already serving elsewhere. - Question about phone calls. Asked whether someone could self-nominate. Answer: Self-nomination is possible. - Clarification – the purpose of the phone calls is NOT for Board or LDC members to propose a slate, but to ask the congregants for suggestions. - Member addressed frustration with not hearing about formation of teams (transition, etc.) - Clarification question: There is no relationship between transition team and settled minister search team. Moderator called for end of discussion at this time. 	12:00 (10)
8	Treasurer’s Report – Carlos Hoyt for Debra Boyd Capital campaign going very well. First draw on equity made many months after expected, saving a good amount of interest paid. Annual operating pledges are a little short at this time. Holiday appeal also did not meet budgeted expectations. Expenses are 2% less. Asked for	12:10 (5)

	<p>continuing pledges and announced the upcoming rummage sale (and auction.)</p> <p>-Question about what percentage of the holiday appeal went to Feed My Sheep - answer was 10%.</p>	
9	<p>Stewardship Update – John McCrystal</p> <p>Presentation of principle of “all members are stewards”. Church requires every member’s time, treasure and talent. Mentioned many avenues to being a steward other than just calling people and asking for money. Call to action for all members to consider being stewards in the future, adding the important “personal touch” and to give volunteers the opportunity to engage with others in conversation about First UU. Additional reminder about the auction as it was not on the agenda.</p>	12:15 (5)
10	<p>Constitutional Amendment affecting the Leadership Development Committee – (Carlos Hoyt, Edgel Alley)</p> <p>History – approved Board reduction last year from 12 to 6. LDC was not able to propose a similar reduction in size last year before the annual meeting. Because of the dual slate and size of LDC, members spend 80% of their time reconstituting their own committee and only 20% of the time identifying potential new Board members. Decision to move role of leadership development to Adult Programs is to bring this function to a committee which has less turnover (as opposed to LDC which has significant change each year), and will free up LDC to focus on nominating. Discussed why a 4th proposal (changing LDC from a dual to single slate vote) was dropped from this meeting. (There was not strong support for this idea at the 4 listening sessions).</p> <p>2/3rd attendance at the meeting is required to pass any item.</p> <p>3-yr term considered best practice by UUA, but concerns were raised as to whether this would make finding LDC candidates more difficult.</p> <p>There will be three separate stand-alone votes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Change name to Nominating Committee, moving the Leadership Development function to Adult Programs. – Vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Question about name change. When would task change take place? Would be addressed in Board policy. -Does an abstention count as a “no”. Answer- it does not count as a “yes”. It stands alone. - Supportive comment on changing name and the role of the committee. <p>VOTE PASSED.</p> 2. Reduce size from 8 to 6 members. – Vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Question about role of past Board chair on LDC. -Answer: Role of past chair doesn’t change - past chair is an ex officio member. This proposal addresses only the elected members. <p>VOTE PASSED.</p> 3. Increase Term length from 2 to 3 years. – Vote (will not take place unless #2 passes), but #2 passed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Comment that 2-yr term encourages more “variety”. -Question whether expanding the term would expand the scope of the newly-named nominating committee. That would be a possibility. -Comment that voting should be presented at the top of the agenda and that there be more opportunities for information. -Comment about process (how many members would be required to replace per year.) Present LDC spokesperson commented that most members now support keeping the 2-year term. Comment from present-year LDC (nominating) member in support of the 3-yr term. Addressed continuity with 3-year term, maybe making fewer meetings possible. -Comment by past member that 3-yr did make more sense and was discussed previously. -Comment about streamlining LDC meetings (use of podcasts, etc.) Would help with retention. 	12:20 (20)

	VOTE DID NOT PASS. (Proposed Constitutional changes shown on next pages.)	
11	Construction Update – Dave Richter Construction is done! Occupancy of new classrooms will take place this week. Renovated rooms 7 and 8 are also available. Thanks to the congregation and especially to Rev. Lane and the RE program for their flexibility and creativity during the construction. Planting day will happen in the spring and solar panels will be installed when no snow is on the roof.	12:40 (5)
12	Justice Action Ministry (JAM) Update – Steve Palmhouser Addressed Black Lives Matter movement. Youth had addressed “school to prison” pipeline in service last week. UUA is having a 30 Days of Love campaign. MLK service projects mentioned. Highlighted multiple opportunities to work on social justice projects. Discussed CSAI which will be part of the upcoming GA here in Columbus. Theme of GA is Heartland: Where Faiths Connect. BREAD’s focus is jobs and economic opportunity. Reviewed public witness and collaboration opportunities for work on social justice. -Comment that there were some projects not highlighted in JAM talk.	12:45 (5)
13	District Consolidation Update – Laura Howe, Vice President Ohio Meadville District Board of Trustees On this Board for 5 years. Conversations about not losing the good of our district, but adding the opportunities to share more with other districts. Staffing changes have taken place. Staffing for districts comes from UUA. Board is looking at ways to connect congregations. Started a Congregational Advisory Council to address the changes. Region will be called CER (Central East Region), and will include the Ohio Meadville district and St. Lawrence, Metro New York, and Joseph Priestly districts.	12:50 (10)
14	Adjourn Meeting adjourned at 1:24 PM	1:00

Nominating Committee

Pat Hurley, Committee Member

Nominating Committee Mission: We, the Nominating Committee, pledge to mindfully advise and nominate qualified candidates for specified leadership positions in the church.

Nominating Committee Ministry: To fulfill our mission, this committee identifies 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) Nominating Committee. We serve as a nomination resource for other leadership positions as we are able.

Membership: Continuing members: Barb Fiorini, Sarah Graffagnino, Beth McCreary, Cath Saveson; out-going members: : Edgel Alley, Pat Hurley, Peggy McKee, Christine Sullilvan. : Edgel Alley served as chair and Pat Hurley as recorder during 2015-16.

Challenges and Accomplishments: During this transition year, our Committee's mission changed from providing leadership development and nominating leaders, to simply nominating leaders. Discussions about the prospective change began at the Labor Day Retreat, with current and past members of the Leadership Development Committee (LDC), past and present Board chairs and ministerial advisers. Discussions continued throughout the fall and culminated in a constitutional change at the mid-year meeting, which narrowed our mission to a nominating function, renamed us the Nominating Committee, and transferred the leadership development function to Adult Programs.

Also at the mid-year meeting, the number of positions on the Nominating Committee was reduced from 8 to 6 with 3 elected each year and 2 nominated for each position.

As a result of the proposed constitutional changes, it was not clear during the first half of the year what functions we would be recruiting people for (Nominating only? Nominating and leadership development?) or how many we would need to recruit. We decided to put leadership development planning, begun in the summer, on hold pending the mid-year vote.

Adding to the challenge was a lack of clarity on exactly what our role would be in the appointment of the Ministerial Search Committee or what the search nomination process would look like. The Board ultimately requested that we participate along with the Board in an extensive person-to-person calling effort, seeking every member's suggestions on people they felt they could trust on the search committee.

Despite these challenges, we were able to come up with an excellent slate of 6 nominees for Nominating Committee, 11 nominees for the Ministerial Search Committee, 2 candidates for Board, and 1 for Moderator. As a result of the person-to-person calling campaign, we ended the year also with a broader base of interested members who might be recruited in the future.

Two of the continuing members – Barb Fiorini and Cath Saveson – have agreed to serve as co-chairs next year.

Interim Senior Minister Rev. Jennifer Brooks

For the first time in nearly 20 years, First UU is experiencing a transition in Senior Minister. This warm and welcoming congregation has responded to this big change with grace and creativity (and perhaps a dollop of trepidation). It has been an honor and pleasure to serve this wonderful congregation during this first (of two) transition years.

This has been an exciting year of celebration and accomplishment: celebration of our 75th Anniversary; the ordination of Rev. Lane Campbell and her welcome as *Minister* of Religious Exploration; the completion of the “Green and Growing” renovation and construction project (with new solar panels on the roof); successful implementation of the first year of modified policy governance, bringing greater clarity about leaders’ roles and responsibilities. And, not a small thing, we have engaged a Clintonville CPA firm to conduct a financial review, with a plan to continue this practice at UUA-recommended three-year intervals.

During a ministerial transition, the primary task of the Interim Senior Minister is to prepare a congregation to bond well and warmly with a new settled Senior Minister.

One of the most difficult adjustments facing a congregation is the inevitable change in worship style. Perhaps even more daunting is the recognition that the end of the transition period means the arrival of a new Senior Minister with yet a different worship style. The purpose of the interim process is to allow a congregation to experience these changes with the interim minister (who has promised to move on); to discover that members have a wide range of preferences in worship style; and to practice talking about the differences in a way that educates both minister and members. It is heartening to see the long-term members of First UU coping well with these changes, despite the broad spectrum of reactions (from dismay to delight). The innate graciousness coupled with plain-speaking bodes well for First UU’s adjustment to a settled Senior Minister.

Another adjustment this year (we might again call it “practice”) is implementation of the governance changes. Prior to Rev. Mark Belletini’s retirement, and in conversation with him, First UU’s Board decided adopt modified policy governance. With this change, the Board’s role is the development of broad policies and big-picture vision and values. The Senior Staff plus two member-volunteers meets as a Coordinating Team (“CT”) to manage the week-to-week operational decisionmaking in consultation with volunteer ministry teams, Board advisory committees (Finance, Personnel) and the Board. Current members of the CT are the three ministers, Administrator Brian Hagemann, and member-volunteers Christine Davidson and Judy Kleen. Although we’ll be evaluating and likely tweaking the new governance structure, it has allowed the CT’s decisionmaking to be thoughtful, made in consultation with ministry team stakeholders, timely, and fully in support of the Board’s vision and goals for this year.

One of the key steps during a ministerial transition is a visioning process that invites member participation. First UU’s Transition Team (Amy Watson, Ben Sostrom, Connor McCrystal, and Tony Skrabak) is currently offering a series of Visioning Circles so that members can share their connections, values, and vision for First UU. This isn’t a minister-focused visioning (the Search Committee will offer that in the Fall), but is congregation-focused. The response has been good and the visions inspirational. After the final Visioning Circle in September, a Visioning Workshop will give First UU members the opportunity to distill from the Circle scribe notes the best of First UU’s vision and values. That information will help the Search Committee present a balanced picture of our members and their shared mission.

A significant development during this interim period has been First UU’s willingness as a congregation to voice and engage with racial justice and the “Black Lives Matter” movement. While two small-group Diversity Learning Circles encouraged intercultural competency, a broader conversation began through a book discussion group, a racial justice stakeholder meeting, and a workshop on racial justice. The Justice Action Ministry team has taken the lead in encouraging this engagement without purporting to dictate its specifics or duration. Becoming a more multiculturally welcoming community is essential to the future of any UU congregation in the 21st century. It’s also the right thing to do.

In another development this spring, after the news about North Carolina’s harsh “bathroom bill,” First UU added programs and learning opportunities around transgender and gender-fluidity. It has been a hallmark of Unitarian Universalism to stand in solidarity with people who are oppressed or marginalized. In welcoming learning on the “T” in “GLBT,” First UU carries on this historic tradition.

As First UU embarked upon this transition in ministry, with the uncertainty it inevitably brings, First UU members have been gracious, welcoming, and open-minded. It’s a measure of the welcoming nature of this community that despite uncertainty, since July 1, 2015, First UU has added 43 new members. Only a vibrant and friendly congregation attracts members at this rate during an interim time.

Serving this community brings me deep joy.

Associate Minister Rev. Eric Meter

While this has clearly been a year of transition, I want to begin this report by pointing out that not all of the changes had to do with the retirement of our former Senior Minister or our recent capital campaign.

The decision that Rev. Lane Campbell and I made last year to swap responsibility for the Coming of Age class and our Adult Programs took effect this fall. Then, in January, my job description changed to include oversight of the congregation's Religious Exploration program. The goal is twofold. First, to look at what we offer as a whole: Where are we duplicating efforts or missing opportunities? And second, to create a program in which we offer classes and other activities that build upon one another.

The importance of our Covenant Groups for both long-time and newer members became increasingly clear over the church year. A need for next year is to make them more available to newer members. Six covenant groups met this year. Our goal is to host up to eight next year.

The congregation's Caring and Pastoral Teams continue doing excellent work. The guest speakers at Caring Team's workshop on addiction were as brave as they were clear. I also want to specifically thank Florence Jain, who is stepping down after several years of organizing our Caring Network. She is handing off the baton to the capable hands of Gail Baxter and Karen Torvik.

Six Path to Membership classes have been held since last summer. The Membership Team has also offered new member potlucks, which in addition to its focus on mentoring new members, has helped membership integration.

Beyond our church walls, I continue to serve on the UUA's Partner Church Council Board and the Central East Region Commissioned Lay Ministers Team.

Of course, and while it has yet to take place, the fact that General Assembly is coming to town next month has also colored much of the last church year. As a congregation, we have had to organize in ways we haven't had to do before (providing home stays for example).

Over the course of the year, I have officiated at three weddings and one renewal of vows ceremony, led naming ceremonies for three children, and either led or participated in nine memorial services, not including several separate ceremonies in our and other scatter gardens. Church members who have died since the 2015 Annual Meeting include Jackie Angelino, Paul Brody, Ruth Gerhold, Myra Hine, Sylvia Kelch, Cindy Kerkoff, Ruben Maloyan, Carol Fisher and Shirley Shank.

As always, I want to close by saying thank you to others on the staff and lay leadership, whom I learn from each and every day, to the team members who keep showing up because you realize that giving to the church enriches not just your community but also your life, and to the church members who continue to amaze me with stories of how, despite formidable life lessons, you keep your hearts open.

Minister of Religious Exploration Lane Campbell

The 2015-2016 year in Religious Exploration got off to a different start, as building construction restricted access to all of our classrooms through January. Our children in Kindergarten through fifth grade took part in all-ages programming together, learning about hunger issues in our community, leading a food drive in their neighborhoods, and inviting the entire congregation to join them. All other classes met as regularly scheduled, though in an interesting array of locations.

Beginning in January, First UU opened four new, beautiful classrooms. These rooms provide dedicated youth space, a classroom for our Neighboring Faiths class, and rehearsal space for the Peace Pals Choir. As we look ahead to next year, we will shift room assignments as we continue to live into the new, expanded area.

November brought a vote by First UU's Board of Trustees to confer the title Minister of Religious Education to me, following my ordination into the UU ministry on October 4. This has brought an opportunity for me to serve First UU in ways that are in line with my calling and give the church the full capacity of my leadership and skills.

The Religious Education (Exploration) Team brought forward policy proposals for an age-based placement policy for our Sunday morning program and an arc of learning to guide all programming with children and youth. The Team also suggested First UU refer to Religious Education as Religious Exploration, more accurately naming what it is we are doing with learners of all ages.

First UU has a vibrant and lively youth program. Thirty-three youth came through our Youth Group program this year alone. Our young people raised funds to attend General Assembly 2016, raising over \$2,000 and received a scholarship for \$1,000 from the UUA Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.

Average attendance in our Sunday morning programs was 122 children, youth, and volunteers. As our program currently stands, it takes 62 volunteers teaching Sunday School, many part of four-person teams that rotate. This year, we had 48 volunteers between both services teaching our children and youth.

I want to extend a special bit of gratitude to our teachers who stuck with RE, especially during this particular year, when so much has been changing and shifting. The work you have done is nothing short of extraordinary. Thank you.

Church Administrator Brian Hagemann

The 2015-2016 church year has seen a number of significant transitions and change. One of the big ones for myself, as Church Administrator, has been the completion, after four years of planning and construction, of Green & Growing — our capital improvement project. Yet the ministerial transition, programming changes, and leadership/governance changes that you will have read about elsewhere, or as reported by the board, have also had significant impact on day-to-day operations and planning.

Construction: We celebrated the opening of the new classroom spaces, corridors, restrooms and meeting space renovation this year. The four new classrooms, including a dedicated youth space, are already busy with classroom activity. The changes to the facility are really quite amazing, from the solar panels above our main entrance to the landscaping details in the new courtyard and classroom exterior. Green construction and renovation has been a hallmark of the work and we plan to have materials and signage available in the future to indicate this. A few finishing details of furniture on order and painting/finishing out remain, but it has been, for the most part, a smooth and successful project.

Facility: We've kept costs down (a lack of snow helped), and we continue to focus on efficiency and quality in ongoing maintenance. The lighting solutions in the new and remodeled construction have been well received and plans are being made to phase in other lighting improvements as needs arise and funds are available. We are discussing the continued need for a facility rainy day fund in the budget. Long-term planning has begun for future needs in carpeting, parking lot resurfacing, outdoor lighting, and small capital projects that will be coming up soon.

Staffing: In response to a long-term decline in volunteer participation and availability, we recently added a paid sound technician position to be responsible for Sunday morning services and I'm hoping to add the role of larger A/V and training support to this position in the near future. We've also expanded the hours of one of our custodians to provide coverage for the new spaces. As part of the interim ministerial process, we will be reviewing all of these positions in the next church year with the intent to staff appropriately for growth.

One staffing issue I have been reporting for a few years now: we have a clear need for a facilities assistant to fill the position that has been vacant since our sexton retired. I spend a lot of hours and mental energy context switching to handle the day to day facility needs (and at all hours). This continues to impact my ability to focus on the larger picture roles in facilities/operations, communications, stewardship/membership and finance.

Finance: I've been taking on a larger role in budget preparation and staff coordination. The Coordinating Team (made up of senior staff and two lay leaders) developed the budget that was sent to Finance and the Board for approval. This is the budget that is presented for congregational vote in May. This is the first time that staff have been involved in budget planning at this level and the benefits of this were clear as we went through the process. I also have ongoing staff responsibilities for assisting with the auction, stewardship and holiday appeal campaigns, rummage sale and Sunday merchandising (Fair Trade, bookstore, etc.).

Music Program: Tony McDonald, Music Director

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

Choirs

There were two major changes in the directorships of the choirs this year. First, the leadership of Peace Pals changed from Karen Madden, with her consent, to Cath Saveson and Leigh Mamlin as co-directors. The results have been excellent. Membership in Peace Pals has increased, the directors have introduced some new policies, including regular communication with parents, creating CDs so the kids can practice at home, and having them sing at more events, including the Christmas Eve program and at a Soulful Sundown, along with church services and on choir concerts.

The directors offer songs that speak to UU principles—some of them written specifically for Unitarian Universalist children and occasionally written by the Peace Pals themselves. The leaders make sure the kids understand the meaning of the lyrics, feeling that the religious exploration and spiritual growth of the children is important throughout the year. In addition, Peace Pals has worked with a wide variety of church musicians including adult singers, instrumentalists both young and old, and Rising Voices.

Chalice Choir also had new leadership. Minji Kim, an OSU graduate student, was selected by the search committee to serve as interim director for the year. She has done very well, working intensely and with enthusiasm to keep the choir's standards high and perform a wide variety of works, from Gershwin to Mozart to Marvin Gaye. She will be leaving at the end of this year to pursue doctoral studies at Texas Tech. We learned that former Chalice Choir director Brandon Moss was interested in returning. After a vetting and reviewing process, he was offered a contract and will assume the position of Chalice Choir Director in the fall of 2016.

The other choirs, Spirit of Life and Rising Voices, have continued to do good work and though membership of Rising Voices is a bit low, it has not affected their sound or ability to perform regularly and well. Spirit of Life membership has remained steady for many years, as has Chalice. All choirs performed on the Holiday Concert in December; even singing all together for two pieces, and all four groups will come together again for the Spring Concert, scheduled for June 5.

Instrumental accompaniment

At the request of Rev. Brooks, we added bass and drums (Mark Merchant and Ted Royalty, respectively) as a “House Band” once monthly to the musical offerings of worship, including choir performances. This helped make the music more spirited, and complemented the non-classical selections of the service. Nathan Hamm, our talented accompanist, was key to arranging for and rehearsing this ensemble.

Youth Engagement

The church's young people were very involved in music this year. Several performed solos during worship, including Erin Rotherth, Willow Otten and Emma Merchant, vocalists/ukulele, Makayla McCreary, violin. Lindsay Adams played saxophone with three choirs in a performance of Marvin Gaye's “What Going On” at both services. There was a separate Youth Talent Show/fund raiser in April, and we formed a Youth Orchestra of some 15 members to perform “This Little Light of Mine” at both services May 8.

Special Events

The church enjoyed another fine concert season, combining regular church events such as the Talent Show and the Sing-Along (featuring folk music, with live accompaniment by Cath Saveson et al) with outside groups: Wade Jones and Friends Jazz Trio, Ucelli, the (professional) Columbus Cello Quartet, and a performance by the church's own talented young adult Rain Maxwell in a cafe-style setting in Fellowship Hall. Audiences were quite large throughout, especially compared with previous years. Overall the entire series was a resounding success.

The complete concert series for 2015-2016

Event	date	time	attendance
Holiday Choirs concert	Dec. 20, 2015	4:00 pm	ca. 325
Wade Jones & Friends (jazz)	Jan. 22, 2016	7:30 pm	45
All-church Talent Show	Feb. 27, 2016	7:30 pm	60
Folksong Sing-along	March 19, 2016	7:30 pm	50
Ucelli (cello quartet)	April 10, 2016	7:00 pm	115
Evening with Rain Maxwell	April 24, 2016	7:30 pm	80
Spring Choirs concert	June 5, 2016	4:00 pm	

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.

Music retreat

In April we had our first music retreat involving the entire music staff and the ministers. Brandon Moss, Karen Madden, Cath Saveson, Leigh Mamlin, Nathan Hamm, Tony McDonald and Revs. Brooks, Meter and Campbell were together, the first time ever, for a 3 hour retreat. We discussed the style and type of music we might consider performing more often going forward, and plans, general and specific, for music for the coming year.

Plans for 2016-2017

The Music Program is in a good position for the coming year. 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.

School for Young Children: Amy Rudawsky and Susan Roscigno, Co-Directors

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 7 voting and 4 non-voting members this year consisting of church members, teachers, office staff and parents of the school.

Our SYC Staff this year consisted of 18 staff members: 14 part-time teachers, 1 program consultant,, 2 part-time co-directors (who also teach) and 1 part-time office personnel.

III. Service to church community:

- Our First UU community outreach program served 129 families with 147 children during this school year. Of these families, 14 are members of this church. Two of our staff are church members.
- This year, our annual Scholarship Auction provided \$11,730 among 13 families who applied for financial aid for the school year of 2016-17.
- Long-time director, Stephanie Rottmayer, who has most recently been the Program Consultant, retires at the end of this year.
- Susan Roscigno and Amy Rudawsky took on the role of Co-directors this year.
- Our staff continues to build relationships within the early childhood community through an online presence and visits from professionals building a special-needs preschool in Toledo.
- Nine members of our staff attended the first annual Play EmPowers Rally in Maryland this spring, networking and learning with early childhood professionals from around the US, Canada, and Australia who advocate for the power of play.
- The author of the SYC-based parenting book published a new book this year. We hosted a book launch/signing event this spring.
- The SYC staff participated in a workshop about supporting gender non-conforming preschoolers and their families and have discussed ways that we can be less gendered in our language with children.
- SYC host a new family event this spring: a Family Dance Party.

IV. Issues:

We continue to make structural improvements to our learning spaces, including carpet and blacktop, and to work to find the funds for these projects. Many of our classes continue to have long wait lists although our 4/5s class has lower numbers at this point.

V. Plans for the upcoming church year:

We hope to present several workshops at next year's Play EmPowers Rally and will welcome visits from other early childhood professionals. We will also begin the five-year review process for our NAEYC accreditation.

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.

Justice Action Ministry (JAM)

Steve Palm-Houser, Chair

Mission:

Working for justice is as much a spiritual practice as prayer and meditation. Justice Action Ministry (JAM):

- is the unified work of the Board of Trustees, committees, youth, choir members and musicians, covenant groups, members, friends and staff of First UU, and
- boldly engages the justice issues of the day and provides our church members and our larger community with ample opportunities for public witness of their faith.

Membership:

JAM currently has a church-wide email list of over 200 people and a community-wide email list of another 200 interested in its events and activities. Non-UU participants at JAM events have been from different faith backgrounds such as UCC, Muslim, Episcopalian, United Methodist, Hindu, and Jewish. The chair of JAM is Steve Palm-Houser. Meetings are held usually on the fourth Monday of every month.

JAM committee members and meeting attendees include Alice Faryna, Bill Fullarton (Treasurer), Alice Rathburn, Ginnie Vogts, Marge Lynd, Jane Larson, Michael Greenman, Cathy Elkins, Marilyn Webster, Sue Carter, Rick Kritzer, Lisa Iacobellis, Tim Hooks, Barbara Taylor, Peter McDonald, Wesley Thompson, Lane Campbell (DRE), and many other justice workers.

Sponsored Events:

The events sponsored by JAM during 2015-16 included:

- Fair Trade Coffee
- Numerous rallies, marches, and store visits on behalf of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers
- Clintonville Resource Center (CRC) Summer Lunch Program
- BREAD Nehemiah Action
- UU Justice Ohio Network (UUJO) statewide conference
- Candidates/Issues Forum
- International Workers' Day march

Projects currently* supported by JAM include:

Athens County Appalachia Project
Building Responsibility Equality and Dignity (BREAD)
Care and Share Time Bank
Clintonville-Beechwold Community Resources Center
Coalition of Immokalee Workers
Equality Ohio
Fair Trade Coffee
Faith Mission Dinners
Franklin County Consortium for Good Govt.
Mid-Ohio Workers Association
Move to Amend
NARAL Pro-Choice Ohio Foundation
RESULTS: Power to End Poverty
Single-Payer Action Network Ohio
UUs for a Just Economic Community
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
YWCA Family Center

*supported projects may change based on budget and current priorities. The list is by no means comprehensive.

Below are some of the social justice initiatives that JAM supports.

Animal Ministry

Purchased gift certificates for First UU Auction.

Revised our brochure.

Now have 52 “Friends” on Facebook.

JAM approved AM’s request to send a proposed “Plant Based Food Option Policy” to the Coordinating Team, 1/28/16.

JAM approved AM’s request to send a proposed change in the First Principle to the Board, 2/22/16.

Developed a relationship with Mercy for Animals (MFA). Researched and provided MFA with brochures about Christianity and vegetarianism.

Rick Kritzer <rick94037@yahoo.com>

YWCA

First UU members prepare and serve a taco dinner to hungry families. The crew loves their work, feeding hungry families. The kids love the tacos. We use ground chicken now—lower cost, healthier. We also always serve some fresh fruit now, usually orange or apple wedges. Steady at 150 to 250 people getting fed. Costs are between \$300 and \$400 dollar per month to buy food. Thank you for your support of this project.

Tim Hooks <hookstj@gmail.com>

Building Responsibility Equality and Dignity (BREAD)

First UU is a founding member of BREAD, an interfaith organization of more than 40 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.” 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. Since its 2015 Nehemiah Action, BREAD has had victories on the issues of Crime and Violence, Mental Health Care, and Keeping Kids in School. At the 2016 Nehemiah Action:

- Department of Public Safety Director George Speaks reported on creating a “Safe Streets” program in Columbus.
- Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O’Brien and County Commissioner Candidate Dr. Terry Boyd committed to *support* a municipal ID program for Columbus residents.
- City Council member Elizabeth Brown’s aide agreed that Brown would collaborate with BREAD to draft an ordinance that would give preference to companies bidding for city business which would hire an agreed-upon percentage of ex-offenders. City Council members Shannon Hardin and Jaiza Page committed to work on and support the ordinance and to give an update on its status at BREAD’s Annual Assembly in November.
- Mayor Andrew Ginther was to be asked to support several initiatives toward creating worker-owned businesses in low-income neighborhoods, including Linden and the Hilltop. However he did not attend BREAD’s 2016 Nehemiah Action. The BREAD Jobs Committee met with Ginther’s aides, who are excited by the idea and are investigating it.

Alice Rathburn <eulala1905@me.com>

Single Payer Action Network (SPAN):

This state-wide organization continues to promote comprehensive universal health care under a publicly-funded, privately-operated plan. Estimated savings by removing multiple private payers from the mix is \$350 billion dollars annually despite broader coverage and elimination of co-pays and deductibles. A DVD produced by a large business owner is available to demonstrate to other businesses that such a plan is in their economic interest.

Alice Faryna <alice.faryna@gmail.com>

Care and Share Time Bank:

Our numbers continue to grow as more people in Central Ohio learn of the benefits of joining a community which fosters friendship, collaboration and innovations in strengthening ties through exchange of services based on time, not currency. Although most of our members are not members of First UU, many participate in building and garden workdays for the church. The church is an affiliate of this timebank and we are exploring ways the timebank can help the Caring Team fulfill its mission to help church members with transportation and other needed services.

Alice Faryna <alice.faryna@gmail.com>

Fair Food Program — Justice for Farmworkers:

The Fair Food Program is transforming the lives of migrant farmworkers in Florida and beyond, preventing slavery, abuse, sexual harassment and other abuses while providing safe working conditions for tens of thousands of

farmworkers. Working with 14 corporate partners and Florida growers, the farmworkers are proving that all partners benefit from this groundbreaking collaborative program. Yet, Wendy's refuses to participate and purchases tomatoes from Mexico, where farmworkers suffer from horrendous abuses. Since 2011, First UU of Columbus has served as a key Columbus consumer ally, helping to bring about these changes. We invite all First UU members to join in the Wendy's Boycott to bring Wendy's into the Fair Food Program.

Sue Carter <susanjtcarter@gmail.com>

RESULTS is a movement of passionate, committed everyday people. Together, we raise our voices to influence political decisions that will bring an end to poverty. As volunteers, we receive training, support, and inspiration to become skilled advocates. In time, we learn to effectively advise policy makers, guiding them towards decisions that improve access to health, education and economic opportunity. Together, we realize the incredible power we possess to use our voices to change the world. Volunteer advocates are backed by in-depth research, the legislative expertise of RESULTS staff, and detailed training. We learn to write letters, work with media, and meet with members of Congress. With every hour of our time, we multiply our impact through advocacy—whether helping change policy to support millions of families putting food on the table or helping raise billions of dollars for the most vulnerable children. RESULTS advocates are not paid lobbyists; we are volunteers. We come from every corner of the country and from around the world. We prove that every voice has power, and that by bringing all of our voices together, we can change the world.

Ginnie Vogts <gvogts43@gmail.com>

Naral Pro-Choice Ohio Foundation

Our mission statement: to support and protect, as a fundamental right and value, a woman's freedom to make personal decisions regarding the full range of reproductive choices through education, training, organizing, legal action and public policy.

Every woman, no matter her economic status, race or religion, should have the right to make her own personal decisions when she finds out that she is pregnant—decisions that include if and when to have a child, whether to continue her pregnancy and either chose to raise a child or chose adoption, or whether to terminate her pregnancy. In that final case, we work to continue to keep abortion, which is legal because of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe vs Wade*, a safe, affordable and accessible option for all women of Ohio, which includes fighting to keep clinics open and funded.

Jane Larson <janelarson47@gmail.com>

Move to Amend Interfaith Caucus

This national network, with its focus at First UU, is developing support in UU congregations and in other faith and ethical communities around the country, to move towards a constitutional amendment that will eliminate corporate constitutional rights and money as speech. When successful, "We the People" will be able to impose restraint through our elected representatives on the irresponsible actions and emissions of the fossil fuel and meat-agribusiness industries—and many others. Over 50 UU congregations have endorsed this amendment (including First UU), and over 900 UUs are "Friends" to our Facebook Page, and much more!

Michael Greenman <mgreenmanoh@gmail.com>

Other 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.)

Membership: The Archives team consists of Olwen Firestone, Marguerite Molk, Nancy Morr, Jane Reisman, Linda Royalty, Jan Waters, Ohma Willette and Historian Linda Thompson. An additional member will be joining in 2016-17. 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 at other times when needed. The Team functions as a church working group and a support ministry for its members. Work, laughter and good snacks help create this community.

After a hiatus of 9 months, during church addition construction, the Archives Team was back on the job by February 2016 and is adjusting to working in the library and newly allocated storage closet. Thanks go to Barb Fisher for building shelves.

Service and Accomplishments:

- *Researched questions given to the Team.
- *Reviewed and sorted material for filing or recycle/shredding
- *Prepared articles and materials for the second phase of the 75th Anniversary Celebration, October 2015
- *Prepared materials from the 1984 UUA General Assembly in Columbus for poster and newsletter article during June 2016 UUA General Assembly again in Columbus.

Goals:

- Continue information gathering activities
- Reduce volume of material where not deemed of primary importance
- Interview long-standing members of the church; record for preservation
- Sort through audio visual materials—slides, tapes, CDs, etc.
- Meet with other UU Association church historians to learn of their church archives management
- Determine what computer system might be useful to us

Bookstore, Library, and Book Bites

Greg Denby, Bookstore; Kathleen Boston, Library and Book Bites

This year was a year of transition for the Buokstore. Long-time Coordinator Jim Davenport turned over that responsibility to Greg Denby. Kathleen Boston continues to coordinate Buokstore volunteers and manages the volunteer schedule. The Buokstore currently has 10 active volunteers, many of whom became active in the last year. There is a high level of cooperation, communication and support within the Buokstore Team. All the volunteers have the flexibility to arrange and display the books in any fashion they think is effective. This creates variety in the browsing experience so that the Buokstore experience is fresh every week.

We're experimenting with different approaches to inventory maintenance, pricing, and display procedures. We're trying to reduce slow moving titles while still maintaining a sufficient variety of subject resources and books with a wide range of appeal factors. We're featuring more children's materials, UUA recommended titles, transgender materials and racial justice resources. We have also featured titles by First UU members that have been popular sellers. We had a successful year, selling over 200 books and raising over \$850 for the church. We also increased our use of Square technology to take credit and debit cards and increase convenience for our shoppers.

According to the Bookstore Policies and Procedures, the mission of the bookstore is “to provide spiritual, self-help, political, intellectual and social stimulation by making high quality reading material regularly available in a comfortable environment to First UU congregants and its committees. The Bookstore is as much about the social 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.” The Buukstore volunteers are continuing to meet this goal and to make valuable connections with people who visit the Buukstore. We will continue to explore new ideas to increase the effectiveness of Buukstore operations through our quarterly Volunteer Meetings and informal discussions during Buukstore open hours.

The Library Team began this work in July 2010. The members are Paula Hook, Florence Jain, Susan Vierow and Kathleen Boston. In May 2015, renovation of the church began and the Library became a storage place for Archive records and many odds and ends so that we were unable to meet monthly or do our Library work. The Library was officially closed on June 1, and the congregation informed through the Newsletter.

On February 9, 2016 we finally had access to the Library to begin organizing and planning for its future. In May, we had received Rev. Mark Belletini’s 350 book collection as well as a request from one other church group for shelf space for a small collection. (This request has been tabled for now.) On Febraury 25, we announced to the congregation that the Library was open for business, although it was a work in progress.

Our accomplishments for the year as follows:

1. Shelves Rev. Belletini’s collection on the south wall shelves, althoough they are not organized, nor ready for use by the congregation, as of this date.
2. Received and acknowledged donations of books from the family of Cindy Kerkoff, from Barbara Avery, from JoAnne St. Clair, and a book from the Partner Church Council of the UUA.
3. Worked with Tom Tucker of the Zen Columbus meditation group to obtain a portable book cart for their collection. The cart can be rolled to the meditation meetings, making their library more accessible to the group members. It is stored in the Library otherwise.
4. Several new books will be obtained using the Leona Hollander Fund by the end of the year.

We were unable to accomplish much this year, due to eight months of having no access to the room. Our plans are to organize the Belletini Collection, reorganize the circulation library books, including the children’s collection, and publicize the Library to increase usage. We appreciate the assistance of Brian Hagemann and David Richter in cleaning the Library and making it workable again.

Bookbites has been meeting for 17 years to discuss books we choose by topic, rather than all reading the same book. This meets our mission: to expand our knowledge of interesting books through group discussion of topics chosen by consensus.

We meet monthly and average attendance is 8-10 readers. We allow 10+ minutes per person (timed by a smartphone!) so each person can report during the two hour meeting. Discussion between reports and at the end follows.

Our topics for this church year were: Revolutionary Ideas, Heat, A Play or Theater Read, Ghost Stories, Medicine/Medical Issues, Women Adventurers, Nature, Roots, Law, Plants/Flowers and Marriage. Our December holiday party included, a “gently used” book exchange, Christmas readings and food.

There were several inquiries from Adult Programs contacts about Book Bites. Although each inquirer was sent an invitation and information about the group, only one person actually showed up one time. Either our format did not appeal, or the date was not convenient. We are open to new members.