

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
2018-2019

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany**

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**Annual Meeting  
of the  
First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany  
Sunday, May 19, 2019  
Agenda**

**Call to Order and Words for Gathering**

**Appointments**

Parliamentarian  
Timekeeper  
Quorum/Vote Counters  
Floor Managers

**Approval of Agenda**

**Adoption/Rules of Procedure**

Governed by Albany UU's Policy on Congregational Meetings (see next page)

**Nominating Committee Report and Election**

**Update on Stewardship Campaign**

**Update on Growth Through Service Program**

**Presentation/Adoption of 2019-2020 Budget**

**President's Report to the Congregation**

**Announcement of Election Results**

**New Business**

**Adjournment**

# FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF ALBANY

## POLICY ON CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

### I. Rules of Procedures on Debate

After the meeting has been called to order, the president shall appoint the following: a quorum counter, a parliamentarian, a timekeeper, and pro and con floor managers.

Next, the Agenda shall be submitted for approval.

Next, the following Rules of Procedures shall be submitted for approval, after allowing amendments from the floor or suspension by a majority vote:

#### A. Rules of Procedures for Presentation

1. The person or committee that prepared a resolution or motion on the agenda for congregational vote shall make a supporting presentation limited to 10 minutes.
2. If there is a minority or dissenting opinion, the spokesperson for the opposition shall make a presentation, also limited to 10 minutes.

#### B. Rules of Procedures for Discussion

1. Those wishing to speak shall form a line behind either the pro or con microphone station, consistent with the views he or she wishes to express.
2. The chair will alternately recognize a speaker at one station and then at the other.
3. No person may speak for more than 3 minutes on any one item.
4. No person may speak more than once on an item as long as anyone else stands before him at a microphone station.
5. When there are no speakers waiting at either one of the stations, the debate may be closed.
6. After initial presentation, debate time for each item requiring a vote shall be 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, a motion shall automatically be put, "Shall debate be extended for fifteen minutes?"

Any time that a majority shall fail to extend the time, debate shall be closed and the question on the floor put to a vote.

### II. Pre-Meeting Educational Efforts

Resolutions, bylaws or budget changes, or other non-routine matters being brought to a congregational meeting, shall be presented in writing in advance of the meeting and be accompanied by brief explanations. If there is an opposing view, a brief summary of opposing arguments shall also be presented in writing.

Furthermore, there shall be ample opportunity to conduct pre-meeting discussions to educate the congregation, and for congregation members to ask questions and seek clarification from the resolution authors. Such pre-vote meetings shall consist of a church-wide town meeting, a series of neighborhood gatherings, and/or brief sessions incorporated in regularly scheduled committee meetings.

**Board of Trustees' Recommendation for FY 19-20 Budget**

Ordinary Income and Expense	Account Number	2018-19 Budget	2019-20 Request	Board Recommendation	% Difference From 2018-19	NOTES
<b><u>Income</u></b>						
<b><u>Contribution Income</u></b>	<b><u>4100</u></b>					
Back Pledges	4110	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$12,000	-33.3%	based on actual for current year
Collection Plate	4120	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	0.0%	based on actual for current year
Current Year Pledges	4130	\$458,000	\$456,400	\$458,725	0.2%	based on best estimate of finance & stewardship committees
Other Contributions	4150	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	0.0%	based on actual for current year
<b>Total Contribution Income</b>	<b>4100</b>	<b>\$495,000</b>	<b>\$493,400</b>	<b>\$489,725</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>	
<b><u>Other Income</u></b>						
Building Rentals	4215	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$42,000	20.0%	based on actual for current year
Interest Income	4220	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000	100.0%	interest rates have increased
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>4200</b>	<b>\$36,500</b>	<b>\$36,500</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	
<b><u>Program Income</u></b>						
FUN/D Raisers	4320	\$25,000	\$20,200	\$20,400	-18.4%	\$19,600 Auction + \$800 Wine & Cheese
RE Income	4340	\$1,860	\$2,000	\$1,500	-19.4%	based on actual for current year
<b>Total Program Income</b>	<b>4300</b>	<b>\$26,860</b>	<b>\$22,200</b>	<b>\$21,900</b>	<b>-18.5%</b>	
<b><u>Total Income</u></b>						
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>\$558,360</b>	<b>\$552,100</b>	<b>\$556,625</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>	
<b><u>Expense</u></b>						
<b><u>Non-Ministerial Sal. &amp; Ben.</u></b>						
Music Director Salary	5010	\$17,000	\$18,676	\$18,676	9.9%	COLA + raise to 37% of salary band + increase of 1 hr./wk.
Church Administrator Salary	5015	\$43,425	\$46,141	\$46,141	6.3%	COLA + raise to 37% of salary band
Administrative Assistant Salary	5016	\$15,600	\$16,380	\$16,380	5.0%	\$ .75/hr increase
Sexton Salary	5027	\$7,878	\$8,099	\$8,099	2.8%	COLA
RE Director Salary	5030	\$51,000	\$52,428	\$52,428	2.8%	COLA
RE Assistant	5032	\$10,800	\$9,891	\$9,891	-8.4%	COLA
Youth Advisor	5033	\$6,300	\$6,200	\$6,200	-1.6%	COLA
Sunday Nursery Care	5035	\$2,900	\$2,981	\$2,500	-13.8%	based on actual for current year
Staff Benefits - Health	5042	\$1,225	\$2,450	\$2,450	100.0%	additional staff covered by dental insurance
Staff Benefits - Retirement	5043	\$9,442	\$12,484	\$11,495	21.7%	additional staff receiving retirement benefit
Music Director Prof. Dev.	5050	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,500	-25.0%	budget constraints
Church Admin. Prof. Dev.	5051	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$500	-75.0%	
RE Director Prof. Dev.	5053	\$8,399	\$2,360	\$2,360	-71.9%	no sabbatical this year

Ordinary Income and Expense	Account Number	2018-19 Budget	2019-20 Request	Board Recommendation	% Difference From 2018-19	NOTES COLA= 2.8%
Employer Payroll Taxes	5080	\$11,707	\$13,754	\$13,017	11.2%	increased staff compensation
Workers Comp.	5090	\$2,862	\$2,843	\$2,843	-0.7%	premium reduced due to janitorial service
NYS Disability & Family Leave	5091	\$856	\$856	\$844	-1.4%	
Hourly Custodian	5260	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	0.0%	based on actual for current year
<b>Total Non-Ministerial Sal. &amp; Ben.</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>\$194,394</b>	<b>\$200,543</b>	<b>\$196,324</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	
<u>Administration</u>	<u>5100</u>					
Audit, Banking & Payroll Services	5140	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500	0.0%	
Credit/Debit Charges	5141	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$900	-18.2%	based on actual for current year
Office Equipment & Copier	5150	\$3,240	\$6,290	\$6,290	94.1%	increased copier costs
Office Supplies	5160	\$3,077	\$2,839	\$2,639	-14.2%	based on actual for current year
Postage	5170	\$750	\$500	\$600	-20.0%	based on actual for current year
Telecommunications	5280	\$4,686	\$4,932	\$4,932	5.2%	
Rental Costs	5287	X	\$500	\$400	X	based on actual for current year
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>5100</b>	<b>\$22,353</b>	<b>\$25,661</b>	<b>\$25,261</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	
<u>Building Maintenance</u>	<u>5200</u>					
Buildings & Grounds	5210	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	0.0%	
Janitorial Supplies	5230	\$3,250	\$3,250	\$1,000	-69.2%	some supplies provided by cleaning service
Janitorial Services	5235	\$15,600	\$16,000	\$16,000	2.6%	replaced staff with cleaning service
Mortgage Principal and Interest	5240	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	0.0%	
Utilities	5270	\$13,000	\$15,400	\$15,400	18.5%	based on actual for current year
Insurance	5470	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$7,700	-48.7%	insurance quote
<b>Total Building Maintenance</b>	<b>5200</b>	<b>\$116,850</b>	<b>\$114,650</b>	<b>\$110,100</b>	<b>-5.8%</b>	
<u>Church &amp; Community</u>	<u>5300</u>					
Board of Trustees	5310	\$200	\$200	\$200	0.0%	
Governance Work Group	5311	X	\$1,000	\$1,000	X	
Annual Dinner Subsidy	5315	\$400	\$500	\$500	25.0%	
Stewardship Committee	5320	\$600	\$600	\$600	0.0%	
Board Training & Development	5325	\$500	\$500	\$500	0.0%	
Nominating	5330	\$50	\$100	\$50	0.0%	
Receptions/Appreciations	5335	\$100	\$50	\$50	-50.0%	will use designated fund, if needed
Child Care (General)	5340	\$250	\$200	\$150	-40.0%	based on actual for current year
Membership Committee	5350	\$480	\$4,580	\$980	104.2%	additional activities



Ordinary Income and Expense	Account Number	2018-19 Budget	2019-20 Request	Board Recommendation	% Difference From 2018-19	NOTES COLA= 2.8%
Kitchen & Coffee	5355	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,000	-33.3%	based on actual for current year
Caring Network	5357	\$250	\$200	\$100	-60.0%	
Joy Library	5361	\$400	\$400	\$400	0.0%	
Religious Services Committee	5365	\$6,830	\$7,339	\$7,464	9.3%	reallocation of liturgical supplies from Office Supplies
Publicity Committee	5370	\$800	\$500	\$250	-68.8%	based on actual for current year
Music Committee	5375	\$4,700	\$5,700	\$5,200	10.6%	budget constraints
Archives Committee	5385	\$50	\$50	\$50	0.0%	
PCC	5386	\$135	\$75	\$50	-63.0%	
Inclusivity Team	5388	\$2,000	\$1,800	\$1,800	-10.0%	
175th Anniversary Committee	5389	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$0	-100.0%	budget constraints
<b>Total Church &amp; Community</b>	<b>5300</b>	<b>\$22,245</b>	<b>\$29,794</b>	<b>\$20,344</b>	<b>-8.5%</b>	
<b>Denominational Affairs</b>	<b>5400</b>					
Partner Church Council	5410	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,000	-33.3%	budget constraints
HMUU Cluster	5415	\$500	\$750	\$500	0.0%	
UUA/CER Program Fund Dues	5420	\$29,088	\$30,000	\$26,766	-8.0%	final calculation from UUA
Denominational Affairs Subsidy	5440	\$4,660	\$4,660	\$4,660	0.0%	
Unirondack Dues	5450	\$150	\$150	\$150	0.0%	
<b>Total Denominational Affairs</b>	<b>5400</b>	<b>\$35,898</b>	<b>\$37,060</b>	<b>\$33,076</b>	<b>-7.9%</b>	
<b>Ministerial Expenses</b>	<b>5500</b>					
Minister's Salary/Housing	5550	\$98,032	\$100,777	\$100,777	2.8%	COLA
Minister's Insurance	5560	\$9,895	\$9,653	\$9,653	-2.4%	
Minister's Retirement	5565	\$9,803	\$10,077	\$10,077	2.8%	
Minister's Professional Expenses	5566	\$5,459	\$6,050	\$6,050	10.8%	
<b>Total Ministerial Expenses</b>	<b>5500</b>	<b>\$123,189</b>	<b>\$126,557</b>	<b>\$126,557</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	
<b>Other Expenses</b>	<b>5700</b>					
Contingency	5720	\$2,736	\$0	\$0	-100.0%	difference between income and expenses
FUN/D Raiser Expenses	5790	\$1,125	\$200	\$200	-82.2%	based on actual for current year
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>		<b>\$3,861</b>	<b>\$200</b>	<b>\$200</b>	<b>-94.8%</b>	
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>5800</b>					
Children & Youth	5820	\$4,250	\$7,449	\$7,250	70.6%	Rite of Passage every 2 years
Lifespan Learning	5810	\$850	\$900	\$900	5.9%	
<b>Total Religious Education</b>	<b>5800</b>	<b>\$5,100</b>	<b>\$8,349</b>	<b>\$8,150</b>	<b>59.8%</b>	

Ordinary Income and Expense	Account Number	2018-19 Budget	2019-20 Request	Board Recommendation	% Difference From 2018-19	NOTES COLA= 2.8%
<b><u>Social Responsibilities</u></b>	<b>5900</b>					
Social Responsibilities Council	5901	\$6,970	\$5,970	\$3,470	-50.2%	Sheridan Prep budget transferred to its own budget line
Sheridan Prep	5905	X	\$4,000	\$4,000	X	
Interfaith Impact	5910	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	0.0%	
<b>Total Social Responsibilities</b>	<b>5900</b>	<b>\$7,970</b>	<b>\$10,970</b>	<b>\$8,470</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	
<b>Total Expense</b>		<b>\$531,860</b>	<b>\$553,784</b>	<b>\$528,482</b>	<b>-0.6%</b>	
<b><u>Planned Transfers</u></b>						
Sabbatical Fund	5570	\$600	\$600	\$750	25.0%	rising costs of substitutes
Capital Reserve Contribution	9010	\$15,000	\$26,500	\$18,393	22.6%	pillar replacement (will need additional funds from reserve)
Ministerial Intern Reserve Fund	9020	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	0.0%	
<b>Total Planned Transfers</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>\$24,600</b>	<b>\$36,100</b>	<b>\$28,143</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	
<b>Total Budgeted Expense</b>		<b>\$556,460</b>	<b>\$589,884</b>	<b>\$556,625</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	
<b>Net Budgeted Income</b>			<b>(\$37,784)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>X</b>	

**Annual Meeting Minutes of the  
First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany**  
Sunday, May 20, 2018

**Call to Order and Words for Gathering**

President Dick Dana called the meeting to order at 11:45 AM. It was determined that there was a quorum of the members. Section 2 of the Bylaws (adopted January 10, 2016) states that persons are eligible to vote and hold office thirty days after signing the book and being considered active members.

Rev. Sam Trumbore opened with words of gathering and welcome to honor the vital role of annual meetings in the Unitarian/Universalist tradition and at Albany UU. Sam also urged members to consider their heart when voting on our crucial Sanctuary Resolution.

**Appointments**

Dick announced the names of those who would be assisting with the meeting.

- Parliamentarian    Karen Kaufman
- Timekeeper         Jim Hutchins
- Quorum/Vote Counters:    Nominating Committee (4 of 6 members), plus Board members Lee Newberg and Molly Daniels substituted for Nominating Committee members Meredith Mercer and Mike Myers.
- Floor Managers    Patti Jo Newell and Jon Newell

**Approval of Agenda**

Dick Dana made a motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Jacqui Williams. The motion to approve the agenda passed unanimously.

**Adoption/Rules of Procedure**

Dick Dana summarized the rules in Albany UU's Policy on Congregational Meetings. Dick made a motion to adopt the procedures written on page 6, which was seconded by Neil Rice. The motion passed unanimously.

**Nominating Committee Report and Election**

Bob Franklin, Nominating Committee Chair, presented the Nominating Committee Report. He noted a typo, saying that the number of pages should be 1-4. Bob humorously remarked, "We got a slate this year." He read the names of the other Nominating Committee members: Mary Applegate, Al DeSalvo, Kathy Hodges, Meredith Mercer and Mike Myers. Bob thanked Meredith Mercer and Mike Myers, who have completed their terms on the Nominating Committee. Bob then announced the names of the candidates for the uncontested elections.

### **Uncontested Offices\***

#### Officers to be elected (1-year terms)

- President: Dick Dana
- Vice-President: Patti Jo Newell
- Secretary: Linda Hunt
- Treasurer: Reese Satin
- Assistant Treasurer: Seth Edelman
- Religious Education Chair\*: Jim Hutchins
- Social Responsibilities Chair\*: Matt

\*REC and SRC chairs are Ex-officio members of the Board of Trustees.

#### Board of Trustees

(2 to be elected for 3-year terms)

Meredith Andrews, Frederick Eames

(Continuing Board Trustees: Molly Daniels, Lee Newberg, Annika Pfluger, Nancy Shay)

#### Religious Education Council

(3 to be elected for 3-year terms)

Leah Akins, Ela Kessel, Mike Myers

(Continuing REC Members: Elizabeth Baldes, Paula Brewer, Michele Desrosiers, Becky Edvalson, Sheila Gray, Liz Halvorson, Amy Jesaitis, Tracie Tilgner)

#### Social Responsibilities Council

(2 to be elected for 3-year terms)

Michael Braunstein, Karen Kaufmann

(1 to be elected to 1-year term)

Zach Cunningham

(Continuing SRC Members: Jean Poppei, Elena Reynolds, Ann von Linden)

Bob Franklin requested a motion to approve the ballot for uncontested offices. The motion was made by Sandy Stone, seconded by Paula Moskowitz and approved unanimously.

### **Contested Elections\*\***

Bob Franklin explained the procedure for the contested elections for the two positions respectively on the Nominating Committee and on the Endowment Trust. Ballots were distributed and members instructed to rank candidates in order of preference, with 1 being the highest preference. The following members were candidates:

#### Nominating Committee

(2 to be elected for two 3-year terms)

Sharon Babala, Pat Bailey, Carol Butt, Ann Lapinski

\*\*The bylaws call for the Nominating Committee to be contested.

(Continuing Nominating Committee members: Mary Applegate, Al DeSalvo, Bob Franklin, Kathy Hodges)

#### Endowment Trust

(1 to be elected for 5-year term; 1 to be elected for 2-year term)

Jeff English, Larry Gambino, Jon Newell

\*\*The bylaws call for the Endowment Trust to be contested.

(Continuing Endowment Trust members: John Cooley, Jan McCracken, Tom Mercer)

After the ballots were distributed and collected, the Nominating Committee retired to count the ballots.

#### **Update on Stewardship Campaign**

Chuck Manning, co-chair of Albany UU's Stewardship Campaign, expressed appreciation for co-chair Patti Jo Newell, for her assistance in streamlining the approach for our current and subsequent stewardship campaigns, simplifying this year's pledge collection process, and for the overall success of our 2018-19 Stewardship Campaign. The theme of our Stewardship Campaign is "Do Your Part to Keep Our Beacon Bright". As of the date of the Annual Meeting, we have achieved an overall pledge rate of 98%. We have received pledges from 260 of 270 pledge units. We reached a goal of \$465,000. This amount exceeds the amount in the Budget summary.

Dick thanked Chuck Manning for his extended tenure as Stewardship Campaign Chair, from which Chuck will now retire.

#### **Presentation/Adoption of 2018-2019 Budget**

Treasurer Kathy Harris presented the 2018-19 Budget. Generally, it is pretty much as was requested. All requests made were funded fully. Some observations and questions were raised regarding the budget.

One member made a series of observations. This budget reflects a continued trend in the congregation to abdicate responsibility of polity to senior staff. There are large increases in professional development. There are a variety of items in this budget that demonstrate that this congregation is outsourcing its responsibilities. We have a responsibility not to just say, "You take care of us." We have a responsibility as members to actively oversee programs and activities. This budget does not do much for the wider world. This observation received the following responses.

- The Board read a book called Governance in Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership by Dan Hotchkiss, which presents various leadership models for different sized congregations. It is

common for congregations this size or larger to delegate many functions to staff. Members are urged to read it.

- This congregation has a large contingent of retired members who appreciate the freedom to travel and pursue other activities while programs and activities at Albany UU continue in their absence.
- There was no significant increase in salary expenses; in fact, salaries have gone down.
- The Social Responsibilities Committee (SRC) requested and received an increase in funds to pursue important community and national social issues.

Another member observed that new items in the budget were not described. This observation received the following responses.

- Copies of the budget were available for review well before the Annual Meeting.
- A conversation was held about the budget, which was poorly attended.
- It is reasonable and appropriate to expect in the budget process that funding requests will be based on what committees determine they need, and that the budget will fully fund requests that are justified.

Some questions were asked about DRE Leah Purcell's 2019 Sabbatical. It was asked if it is appropriate to give anyone who goes on Sabbatical money for housing and travel, and whether the information Leah learns will be shared. These questions received the following responses.

- Leah will be taking a two-month sabbatical.
- Leah postponed for one year, taking a sabbatical.
- As part of the LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association) guidelines, we decided to give her money to visit other congregations to observe their RE programs. It is a short-term sabbatical with a limited amount of money.
- Leah wants to do some professional development.
- RE is going through significant changes, which Leah is addressing very proactively.

It was asked Why a Youth Advisor is being hired. This question received the following response.

- We are hiring a Youth Advisor to rebuild the Senior High program to achieve adequate youth participation and leadership.
- A Youth Advisor is needed to focus specialized resources and time to manage and address the unique needs and challenges required to revitalize the Senior High program.
- The DRE cannot accomplish this major task along with performing her overall responsibilities to maintain the quality of the entire RE Program.

The vote for the budget passed with the majority in favor, 7 abstentions and 1 opposed.

### **Proposed Resolution to become a Sanctuary Congregation**

Dave Monroe, Karen Kaufman and Eileen Casey-Campbell provided introductory remarks concerning the Sanctuary Resolution endorsed by the Board on May 18, 2018. Approximately 70 people attended three congregational conversations about the Resolution. Jean Poppei made a

motion to adopt the resolution for Albany UU to become a Sanctuary Congregation, which was seconded by Zach Cunningham.

Reese Satin then proposed an amendment to revise the last sentence of the Resolution to require that the Social Responsibilities Council report to the Board of Trustees, “and the congregation at large,” on a regular basis. The proposed amendment was seconded by Al DeSalvo. The amendment was discussed.

Support was expressed for the importance of reporting to the congregation what the SRC is doing to implement the Resolution, the need for ongoing communication about our sanctuary activities, and the need to keep the congregation in the loop.

It was asked what reporting to the congregation at large would entail, and how the confidentiality of persons in sanctuary would be protected.

It was asked if there had been any practical conversations about the meaning of offering available temporary shelter “in cases of extreme need.” Jean Poppei, a delegate to General Assembly, responded that various sanctuary-related issues will be discussed at GA this June.

Reese Satin’s amendment to revise the last sentence of the Resolution to require that the Social Responsibilities Council report to the congregation at large as well as to the Board passed with clear support and 4 abstentions.

Linda Hunt then proposed an additional amendment, seconded by Larry Gambino, to postpone a vote on that part of the Resolution about providing any available temporary shelter in cases of extreme need until we perhaps get more information at General Assembly. It was clarified that the amendment would strike from the Resolution and postpone for a future vote, “in cases of extreme need, ... we will offer any available temporary shelter to immigrant(s) ...” In a brief discussion of this second amendment, a member expressed “extreme” confidence in the SRC, etc., to implement the Sanctuary Resolution in full. This second amendment was defeated, and there was no further discussion of the Resolution.

Following the passage of the first of two proposed amendments, a vote was taken on the original motion to adopt the resolution for Albany UU to become a Sanctuary Congregation. The motion passed with substantial support and 3 abstentions.

### **Comments of the President**

Dick said that it has been a very busy year.

- We celebrated the 175th anniversary of Albany UU’s founding with a presentation by the new Environmental Team of their vision and options for the aesthetic experience of walking into our building from Washington Avenue and going down to Community Hall.
- We also celebrated the tenth anniversary of our building expansion, which, for inclusivity purposes, children and adults participated in renaming “Community Hall.”

- A cultural shift is underway through the efforts of the Growth Through Service Team to identify what activities congregants are best suited for and find most satisfying, rather than what committee or task needs attention at present. This change has led to establishment of specific teams based on matching skills and interests to tasks.
- Technical improvements in the lighting and sound systems in Community Hall are coming soon.
- Other forthcoming changes include a team working on revision of Albany UU's Governance structure.
- The Covenant Team, with input from the congregation, Board approval and, ultimately, an up-or-down vote at a future annual Meeting, is developing a congregational covenant to express how we will relate to each other.
- The Inclusivity Team assists us to discover if we can be truly welcoming to marginalized groups, especially persons of color, and if our words and actions are appropriate.
- Dick thanked Al Berzinis for his donation for the enhancements to Community Hall in memory of Sue Berzinis, and for serving on the Board during a very difficult time in his life.
- Dick also thanked Jon Newell for his service on the Board. Jon's prior experience was helpful to reign us in and to clarify our Board decisions.
- Dick thanked Kathy Harris, for her attention to detail and persistence to get to every penny during her term as Treasurer.
- Lastly, Dick thanked those stepping down from their terms on the Board and Councils.

### **Announcement of Contested Election Results**

Bob Franklin reported the results of the contested elections.

- Nominating Committee: Sharon Babala and Pat Bailey received the highest number of votes for the two positions. They were elected for 3-year terms each.
- Endowment Trust: Jon Newell was elected for a 5-year term. Jeff English was elected for a 3-year term.

### **New Business and Adjournment**

Hearing no requests to address new business, Dick Dana declared the meeting to be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Linda Hunt



## YEAR IN REVIEW

### Minister's Annual Report

Rev. Sam Trumbore

#### **Overview**

Two decades can seem like a long time ... but in some ways my ministry in Albany still feels young and fresh. A large percentage of the congregation and some leaders are the same people as when I first arrived. During those years some moved from active employment to retirement. I'm very grateful they stayed here rather than moving to Florida (most of them). And I'm grateful that many of them have chosen to get more involved in congregational life rather than less.

And new people are here too – a fresh crop of young folks some of whom you'll be electing to office this year. This is one of the assets of our congregational life, both long serving dedicated folks for 10 to 40+ years and younger folks getting involved in their first 1 to 9 years. It is a wonderful sign of health for our congregational life.

Each year has new congregational challenges that keep my work fresh with learning and growing opportunities. The wider world keeps changing providing a never ending stream of things to discuss and confront. And unchanging themes of deep significance remain constant that I never get tired of holding up and appreciating.

I am probably healthier, more energetic (though my head is much grayer) than I was when I arrived in the fall of 1999. I am just as committed and enthusiastic about the potential for Unitarian Universalism here in the Capital Region. I believe there is the potential for at least another 500-1000 UU's in the Capital Region were we more effective in helping people understand our unique way to do religion. If the "nones" decide they want to connect with a religious organization, we are a likely choice. If Catholics and Evangelicals get fed up with their creedal, misogynist, anti-gay, anti-evolutionary/science approach, we will be one of their prime choices to consider. A huge number of Millennials are starting families right now.

*This could be our time for growth*, if we can help folks out there understand who we are and how we approach the religious journey.

#### **New Office Administration**

Tammy Hathaway gracefully stepped into the role of Church Administrator this year following Amy Lent's retirement from the position. Sapphire Correa was hired to fill Tammy's old administrative assistant position. Both of them came up to speed quickly and are doing terrific jobs.

Tammy discontinued our monthly paper Windows and brought a bigger focus to the Weekly Windows delivered electronically by email and web site. She also worked to put a new front page on our web site with a different layout of Josh Shea's original design. Both innovations have brought positive comments and appreciation. Our Albanyuu.org web site has also been enhanced by the work of Barbara Spink to highlight the Green Sanctuary.

## **Religious Services**

Leah Purcell and I continue to use the Meaning Matters/Soul Matters Theme of the Month approach to coordinate with Sunday services and the religious education program. This continues to be an effective way to bring a multigenerational approach to connect the Sunday service to RE. Working within a theme, I strive to address the range of people's interests such as theology, pastoral and social issues, UUism, spirituality and inspiration.

The fall mid-term elections and anti-democratic forces at work in Washington DC encouraged me to do a sermon series on America. Dismantling white supremacy culture was a big theme at UUA General Assembly 2018 and continues to be an important congregational priority, especially in January. Two services coordinated with the Inclusivity Team.

Here is a sampling of the Sunday services this year:

### **Sunday Morning Service Highlights**

- **“Finding Truth and Meaning on the Margins,”** September 16
- **“The American Tradition of Dissent,”** September 23
- **“How to Keep Our Heart Open ... In Hard Times,”** September 30
- **“America: The Minority Report,”** November 4
- **“America: The Glorious Vision,”** November 11
- **“America: Our Responsibility,”** November 18
- **“Mystery: Of the Light,”** December 2
- **“Mystery: Of the Conception,”** December 9
- **“The Evidence of Things Unseen,”** January 6
- **“#metoo: Stand Up, Fight Back,”** January 13
- **“Love and Power,”** January 20 (snow day video!)
- **“The Road to Jerusalem,”** March 3
- **“What Will You Pack?”** March 10
- **“Pilgrimage,”** March 24
- **“Encountering the Unexpected,”** March 31
- **“Stuck in Brokenness,”** April 14
- **“Finding Wholeness,”** April 21

If you missed one of these sermons or would like to read it, you'll find most of them archived here: <http://members.albanyuu.org/wp/services/sermons/>

### **New Sound System in Community Hall**

Through the generosity of Al Berzinis in memory of his late wife Sue Berzinis, we were able to significantly upgrade the lighting and sound in Community Hall last summer. The new high quality audio console, speakers and lights were significant improvements over what we had before in the ability to cover the room with sound and the stage with light.

What we have not been able to do effectively, especially for people with hearing loss issues, is make that sound clear enough for easy understanding. This is partly a problem of installation choices and of the poor tuning of the system after it was installed. This is mostly a problem of the sound reflective properties of the Community Hall that are very challenging to compensate for in that tuning process.

Your minister, who is very technically adept, and who learned a great deal about how the new system works and about acoustics in the process, has worked very, very hard to optimize the sound in Community Hall and “lock in” the tuning so it can’t be broken. Most of the time it sounds okay until something new gets introduced and sound quality deteriorates. Or adjustments are made such as the volume gets set too high because someone complains and everything starts to sound like mud.

Part of the problem is the complexity of the system and the many places small changes can be made that can either make things a little better or wreck the sound. The sound quality mostly is much better than it was in the fall, but more work is needed. My hope is to get more of that work done in the coming months. We *will* get it right sooner than later. In the meantime, if you are having trouble hearing, the sound is the best in the balcony or take advantage of the excellent hearing assistance system.

### **Social Justice Work**

A highlight of my social justice work this year was taking a trip with Philomena to Montgomery, Alabama with the group John Brown Lives. We visited the Equal Justice Initiative’s Legacy Museum (of slavery and Jim Crow), the National Memorial for Peace and Justice to remember the over 4,400 black people lynched in a campaign of terror from 1877 to 1948, the Rosa Parks Museum about the bus boycott, the Freedom Rider Museum, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and attended Sunday services at Dexter Ave. Baptist Church, where the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. served from 1955-1960.

Anti-racism work is a continuing focus for me working with the Inclusivity Team. I visited Soul Fire Farm, saw Tim Wise speak at Sienna, and attended NYS Writers Institute presentation by black author Ibi Zoboi. I attended dismantling white supremacy trainings sponsored Didi Delgado and the Troy YWCA with Debbie Irving. Our Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship Convocation 2019 in April at the Garrison Institute in Garrison, New York’s theme was “Making the Invisible, Visible: A Multi-media Exploration of Race and Racism in the U.S. through a Buddhist Lens,” with a retired Black Tibetan Buddhist scholar Dr. Jan Willis. I am committed to learning and growing, striving to keep up with the latest ideas about how to engage white folks in doing this work and being effective at dismantling white supremacy culture both inside our congregation and in the world at large.

On the Open Question front, being a good neighbor, I have done some community outreach arranging a meeting with Catholics who work in Mary’s Closet and visiting Catholic Charities director Jenn Hyde looking at the social services situation in West Hill.

I continue to serve on the Board of Interfaith Impact and participate in its advocacy day.

### **Hudson Mohawk UU Cluster**

This was a challenging year for the Cluster as we realized that we had spent a lot of money last year on our tenth anniversary joint service and didn’t have much left for this year. We were also not able to secure a high profile speaker as our featured presenter for our joint service. Our home

brew service worked very well and stabilized our finances a little bit. Still, our income has not been sufficient from the other congregations besides Albany UU to support our joint advertising program on WAMC. This has meant that we brought that program to an end.

With new ministers in our Cluster and new leaders, it is time for the Cluster to reassess its direction and priorities. I have stepped back and let go of the vision of the Rev. Linda Hoddy (former minister of Saratoga Springs and driving force behind the organization) of the Cluster to plant new congregations. The HMUU Cluster must decide where it wants to go next. I expect the four core ministers in Saratoga, Schenectady and Albany will be stable for a while. We need to build that new vision of the work we want to do together to advance UUism in the Capital Region.

### **Lifespan Religious Education**

I continue doing **Meditation Workshops**, five this year, to introduce people to mindfulness meditation. Attendance continues to be strong. It continues to be a way I offer for people to deepen their growth and development process through the development of concentration and mindfulness of moment to moment experience.

**Meaning Matters** continues to be a way I connect on a monthly basis with those who want to go deeper into their spiritual lives by contemplating the monthly theme. I distribute a packet I receive and edit from the Soul Matters network just before the beginning of the month. This twelve page packet has a couple of short essays on the theme, deepening exercises, questions for reflection, quotes, electronic media and podcast links, books, movies, music, all to assist the participant to go deeper into the theme. This year I ran three groups that had about thirty people signed up and about twenty regular participants. It continues to be a very helpful way to integrate new people into our congregational life.

The three classes I ran were:

- **Metta or Loving-kindness Meditation** – Two classes on the basics of Buddhist heart-centered meditation that cultivates a non-specific love-for-all that becomes specific in caring for and serving others. Cultivating a sense of goodwill toward all beings has many side benefits in our personal lives. In fact, cultivating metta can greatly sharpen the mind as it assists us in staying with difficult situations that tempt us to run away.
- **House of Hope** – The purpose of this class was to go deeper into Unitarian Universalist progressive theology with a former Starr King School for the Ministry President Rebecca Parker and former UUA President John Buehrens using their book of this title. I used audio recordings from a UUMA workshop of the two of them teaching to allow the class to hear them talk about what they discuss in their book.
- **Letting Go** – Instead of just giving something up for Lent, this class provided an alternative by diving into the process of letting go itself. A companion book for this class was Dr. David R. Hawkins, *Letting Go: The Pathway to Surrender*. Dr. Hawkins (who died in 2012) was a psychiatrist who did deep exploration into the nature of human

suffering. His work connected with both Christianity and Buddhism and was guided by his own intense personal experience.

### **Institutional Development Work**

My primary institutional development work has been with the Governance Working Group. It was tasked by the Board to come up with a way to revise our governance system using the modified policy governance model as advocated by Dan Hotchkiss, UUA CER governance consultant David Pyle, and our former District Executive Joan Van Becelaere. The Working Group came up with a model then did presentations to committees, councils and congregational conversations to introduce our congregation to the model and make modifications based on the feedback. We also consulted with the Athens, Georgia UU congregation that uses a model very similar to the one we came up with to further tweak our work.

The Board has approved the working group's final draft at the April Board meeting and began the transition to the new model starting with the "Program Team." Stay tuned for further progress this coming year.

### **Passages**

I've done more weddings this year than I usually do for members and their families. I've done more child dedications than memorial services (as of this writing). I think these are very positive signs for the future that I hope to see continue!

### **Intern Selected for Next Year**

After reviewing a smaller number of applications than two years ago, the Intern Search Committee (Jean Poppei, Winston Hagborg, Linda Hunt) settled on Dan Miyake who will be here in the coming budget year from August until the middle of June. Dan brings maturity, pastoral skills and musical talents as well as being engaging in the pulpit. We are excited to have him joining us.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

We are a healthy, exciting and attractive congregation. New people who visit with us consistently say we do a great job of welcoming them and making them feel at home. Unfortunately, our membership numbers have been plateaued for the last few years and for the first time since I've been here, our estimates of congregational giving have declined.

As I began, I believe we have a great congregation and program to offer. We are not a congregation for everyone just as our UU approach will not be widely popular. For the people who are interested in our approach to religion, there are few other places to find what we offer.

What is missing, in my assessment, is outreach. The one part of our strategic plan from 10 years ago we haven't been effective at is becoming a beacon of liberal religion in the Capital Region. We need to put more energy into helping the people who would be UU and join us if they knew about us and understood who we are and what we do. My hope is we can make that a priority in the coming year.      Rev. Sam

## **Board of Trustees, President's Report**

Dick Dana

### **Officers:**

Dick Dana, President

Patti Jo Newell, Vice President

Reese Satin, Treasurer

Linda Hunt, Secretary

### **Trustees:**

Meredith Andrews

Molly Daniels

Fred Eames

Lee Newberg

Annika Pfluger

Nancy Shay

### **Ex-Officio voting members:**

Jim Hutchins, Religious Education Council Chair

Matt Lesniak, Social Responsibilities Council Chair

### **Ex-Officio non-voting member:**

Rev. Sam Trumbore, Minister

#### *Albany UU Board Covenant, adopted August 18, 2016*

*We, the Board of Trustees, covenant with each other to:*

*Commit our energy and talent to the work of the Board, ready to assume our fair share of responsibilities;*

*Participate fully, respectfully and honestly in Board dialogue, striving to understand the viewpoints of others;*

*Be accountable to one another, supporting each other and assuming goodwill;*

*Deal with conflict responsibly and respectfully;*

*Respect Board decisions and represent those outcomes with integrity; and*

*Be faithful to the Albany UU mission*

### **Governance Structure Changes**

It has been a transition year for the Board of Trustees. The Governance Working Group – Molly Daniels, Jon Newell, and Peggy Sherman – have finished their work designing our new governance structure, modeled after policy governance, which is used at many non-profit organizations. Their final report has been accepted by the Board. The major building blocks of our new governance structure are now in place. We have a Program Team under the guidance of our minister, which consists of our Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry Leah Purcell, our Church Administrator Tammy Hathaway, and four lay leaders – Matt Lesniak, Barb Manning, Dave Munro, and Jon Newell.

The program Team is charged with carrying out the Board's vision of ministry. The Board of Trustees is retaining direct supervision and oversight over the Finance Committee, Personnel Committee, Stewardship Committee, and the Buildings and Grounds Committee. These are the committees which carry out the basic functions which keep the community and its facility running.

The supervision and oversight of all other committees - the committees which minister to those within and outside the congregation in so many ways, from Religious Services and Religious Education to Caring Network and Social Responsibility and the many others that minister to our needs, wants, and desires - the Board has delegated to be under the supervision of the Program Team. And to make the split more obvious between committees under direct Board supervision and those groups the Board has delegated to be under the Program Team, those under the Program Team will be called teams rather than committees.

For the past year, the Board has been working into its new role as a visioning body, learning how to take the time to envision the future of Albany UU, and how to express their ideas in terms of a long-term vision and short-term goals for the congregation. This is a cultural shift for the Board, which is taking time to implement. The Board will continue to transition away from many of the day to day details of running the congregation, and towards more big-picture planning and goal setting.

The Board has just appointed Peggy Sherman to head a committee to rewrite our bylaws to reflect the changes in governance. We expect this to be a year-long process of writing, presenting to the congregation, and discussion, culminating in a vote at the 2020 Annual Meeting.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of our Community Hall and 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Albany UU**

Better late than never, on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 176<sup>th</sup> anniversaries, we celebrated Community Hall and the founding of Albany UU, respectively. Community Hall received a new wall hanging, thanks to the efforts of Anny Lapinski and her team. Thanks to George Shear and his team, our 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a congregation was celebrated with a major upgrade to our front hall: new ceiling panels and new lighting. And with the monies donated by Al Berzinis in memory of his wife Sue Berzinis, we installed a brand new state-of-the-art sound system, stage lights, and a console capable of handling multiple inputs, video projection within Community Hall, and video capture and streaming to the Web. We hope to have video streaming of our services up and running soon. Next on our list of improvements are a permanent LED projection screen for Community Hall, and carpeting for the front hall.

### **An Open Question**

This year, the Board decided to ask the congregation for assistance in answering a question it felt we needed the answer to: "What would it be like for Albany UU to be a good neighbor?" The response was quick and enthusiastic. A total of more than 50 unique ideas were suggested as ways to be a better neighbor. The Board used one of our Sunday services to engage the congregation directly with some of the ideas that congregants brought back to the Board. This was followed by congregational conversations where even more ideas were suggested. Ultimately, the Board chose the two most popular, based on the number of people who stepped forward to offer help implementing them, and teams have been formed.

For the first project, a team is working with the City of Albany and a number of non-profit partners to renovate housing around our church and Sheridan Preparatory Academy, the public

school which our congregation adopted a couple of years ago. Our goal for the first house, which will be renovated and ready for occupancy sometime this summer or fall, is to identify two of the Sheridan Prep families who are currently living in homeless shelters – and there are more than a half dozen at any given time in that predicament – to move in. Our responsibility as a congregation will be to support their transition into the world of renters, making that transition sustainable for the families.

The second project approved by the Board to come out of the Open Question discussion was to hold a monthly free breakfast on a Saturday morning for our neighbors. The first breakfast is scheduled for May 2019.

The Board intends to ask a new Open Question every once in a while to engage the congregation and gain their input.

### **Thank you**

Special thanks go to Annika Pfluger for her three years on the Board. Annika has been our conscience, always sticking up for those who don't have the power to stand up for themselves, be it the children in our religious education program who were given a choice of only two possible new names for our Community Hall when they had been promised a choice of three, or so many other instances when she was the person to speak up and point out where the Board needed to move with more awareness and sensitivity.

Special thanks, also, go to Lee Newberg for his three years serving on the Board. Lee has a creative mind that has led the Board into many wonderful discussions, taken us to places we weren't expecting, and, in many cases, resulted in the Board making decisions that we initially did not expect. Lee's thoughtful, insightful turning of arguments on their heads has resulted in better decision making over the past three years.

And special thanks, as well, go to our intrepid secretary for the past three years, Linda Hunt. It was Linda who, in the interest of making sure she got the details correct, persuaded the Board to allow her to record our meetings, which she used to prepare the minutes each month. The fact that she had the backup of a recording, I think allowed her to participate more fully in Board discussions, which was a benefit to all of us. Linda made it a habit of challenging the Board's underlying assumptions as we grappled with issues. She forced us to look, metaphorically, at whether the survey pin at the corner of our property is actually in its proper location before we go and survey the rest of the property off that one pin. Thanks, Linda, for your challenges.



## **Treasurer's Report**

Reese Satin

### **Background**

Because our Annual Meeting is held in May (requiring a report to be submitted in April) while our fiscal year (FY) ends in June, choosing the timeframe for the Treasurer's Annual Report is problematic. Rather than report on the last complete FY which ended ten months ago or the last calendar year which spans two different budgets, the following report covers three quarters of our current FY from July 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019. Consequently, many of the numbers presented are only approximations of what they will be at the end of this FY in June.

### **Highlights**

To start, it is important to note that our most recent *Independent Accountant's Review Report* for the FYs ending on June 30, 2017 and 2018 gave us a "clean bill of health." Thanks to Kathy Harris who was Treasurer during those years.

Beyond this, the most consequential financial event of the FY so far, has been the paying off of both our Berkshire Bank mortgage and the Endowment Trust interest-bearing loan. This was accomplished by using a combination of assets from the Operating Budget, Looking Forward Campaign and reserve cash accounts (partially made up of the proceeds of member promissory notes). This "frees-up" a substantial amount of money that would have gone for future interest payments that can now be used for programs going forward. While worth celebrating, it is important to remember that we still owe \$112,000 (at 3.5% interest) to our note-holder members and \$575,000 (at no interest) to the Endowment Trust (see second set of tables).

### **Financial Status Summary as of March 31, 2019**

Below are tabular summaries describing our financial position three-quarters of the way through our fiscal year.

First, is a table that summarizes our income and expenses, so far this FY. Notable here is that over 85% of our income comes from contributions and 57% of our expenses are for personnel. Another 27% of our expenses (Building & Capital Reserve budget lines) are used for building maintenance. The table also shows that at the end of March, we have a net income (income after expenses) of over \$35,000. This, of course, will change as we conclude the FY. Nevertheless, it is an indication that we are currently doing well, in terms of cash flow.

<b>Summary of Actual Income and Expense for Budgeted Accounts</b>		
<b>As of March 31, 2019 (75% of FY 2018-9)</b>		
(Totals may deviate from sums due to rounding.)		
<b>Budgeted Account</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>% of Category</b>
<b><i>Budgeted Income</i></b>		
Contribution Income	\$ 375,752	86%
Other Income (rentals & interest)	\$ 32,197	7%
Program Income (FUN/D raisers & RE registrations)	\$ 29,844	7%
<b>Total Budgeted Income</b>	<b>\$ 437,793</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b><i>Budgeted Expense</i></b>		
Non-Ministerial Salary, Benefits & Insurance	\$ 138,032	34%
Administration & Office Operations	\$ 20,132	5%
Building Maintenance & Operation	\$ 100,863	25%
Church & Community	\$ 13,790	3%
Denominational Affairs	\$ 21,207	5%
Minister's Expenses	\$ 91,792	23%
Other Expenses (FUN/D Raisers & Contingency)	\$ 2,172	1%
RE Expenses (adult & child)	\$ 3,092	1%
Social Responsibilities	\$ 2,391	1%
<b>Total Budgeted Expense</b>	<b>\$ 393,471</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b><i>Planned Transfers</i></b>		
Sabbatical Fund	\$ -	0%
Capital Reserve Contribution	\$ 9,047	2%
Ministerial Intern Fund	\$ -	0%
<b>Total 9000 · Planned Transfers</b>	<b>\$ 9,047</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Total Budgeted Expense &amp; Planned Transfers</b>	<b>\$ 402,518</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Net Budgeted Income</b>	<b>\$ 35,275</b>	

The second set of tables displays all our assets not under the control of the Endowment Trust (see that separate annual report) as well as our indebtedness. The table to the left shows assets held in a checking account and three money market (MM) accounts earmarked for: Operations; Capital Reserve; and Other Designated Funds (DFs). The table to the right shows how these

same assets are functionally allocated. For example, we had over \$179,000 in DF MM accounts, but needed under \$156,000 to meet these obligations. The difference between our cash accounts and our current allocation needs are shown as Cash Reserve Funds. These are periodically redistributed between accounts as allocation needs change.

<b>FUUSA Cash Accounts as of March 31, 2019</b>				
<b>Location</b>			<b>Current Allocation</b>	
<b>Account</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Checking	Operations	\$ 30,047.82	Net Income	\$ 35,275.42
Money Market		\$ 51,916.28	Cash Reserve	\$ 70,302.27
Subtotal		\$ 81,964.10		
Money Market	Capital Reserve	\$ 82,037.88	All Designated Funds	\$ 155,795.39
Money Market	Other DF	\$ 97,371.10		
Subtotal	All DFs	\$ 179,408.98	<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>\$261,373.08</b>
<b>Total Cash</b>		<b>\$261,373.08</b>		

<b>FUUSA Indebtedness as of March 31, 2019</b>		
	<b>Loan</b>	<b>Balance</b>
	Endowment Trust Loan 0%	\$ 575,000.00
	Albany UU Notes 3.5%	\$ 112,000.00
	<b>Total Indebtedness</b>	<b>\$687,000.00</b>

### **Conclusion**

Overall, we can be proud that through your continued support our community enjoys good financial health. This allows us to envision the future we want with reasonable assurance that we will have the financial resources to achieve it.

## **Endowment Trust Annual Report for the Calendar Year 2018**

**Trust Purpose:** The purpose of the Endowment Trust is to invest and manage gifts and bequests made to the Society by its members and other individuals or entities. We work to assure donors that their bequests will be honored and administered so that income from gifts will always be available to assist the Society in furthering its purposes through special projects.

**Trust Status:** In addition to the Endowment Trust created by the Society over twenty-five years ago, the ET committee also manages two separate funds: the Stott family fund and the Nigel Wright Peace Fund. At the beginning of 2018, the Endowment Trust had a value of \$979,831 exclusive of the Stott and Wright funds. During 2018, gifts to the Trust were made in the amount of \$2,155 and the Trust distributed \$7,700 in grants. At the end of 2018, the Trust had a value of \$968,750. The largest part of the Endowment investment is in Albany UU. In 2006 the Endowment lent the congregation \$575,000 interest-free in order to turn the dream of our building expansion into a reality. Additionally, in March 2017, the Endowment lent Albany UU \$90,000 during the mortgage refinancing.

The Trust holds funds earmarked for the maintenance of the Stott Lounge. With the support of the Stott family, \$22,000 of that amount was contributed to the Looking Forward campaign. This amount was then applied to the Endowment Trust loan, leaving a loan value of \$68,000 at an annual rate of 3.5%. Of that total \$43,200 has been repaid. The remainder of the endowment is invested in mutual funds, and in bonds with the Community Loan Fund and the Honest Weight Food Coop. The majority of the fund is in mutual funds managed by the UU Common Endowment, a fund managed for the UUA that makes socially-responsible investments for member UU societies.

During 2018, the Trust funded \$7500 in capital improvements to the entrance lobby and the Community Hall corridor to make them more welcoming. This was an initiative of the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary Environmental Committee. The Trust also granted \$200 for the for a youth choir pilot project.

**Gifts Received:** During 2018, a total of \$2,155 in gifts was added to the Trust. These gifts honored Jan Satin, Nancy Bell, Sue Berzinis, Bob Blank, the Mannings' Anniversary, Stephen Dolben, and Matt Odell.

The Trust Board takes this opportunity to publicly thank its 2018 contributors: Sara Palko, Eric Beeche, Wayne Perregaux, Beverly Vener, Lois Thomson, Barbara Robinson, Applebee Funeral Home, Fred Graf, Madeline Hall, Linda Hunt, Peter Schiff, Terry Way, Jean Blank, Martha Schroeder, Maureen Corrigan, Nikki, John and Lindsay Piechnik, Jerilynn Ann and Robert Teliska, Bruce and Christine Sutphin, Elizabeth Shanley, William and Patricia Betjemann, Susan and Charles Owens, Marie Chochos, Lois Thomson, Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Muhlich, Don Odell, Gail S. Moon, Patricia Patrick

Your contributions to the Trust are greatly appreciated and will be invested carefully to support the mission of Albany UU.

**John Cross Legacy Society:** The John Cross Legacy Society was established in 2017 to recognize members of Albany UU who have included the Society in their estate plans and to encourage others to do so. Current JCLS members are: Martha Schroeder, Steven & Paula Moskowitz, Mary Applegate, Jon and Sigrin Newell, Elizabeth Berberian, Chuck & Barbara Manning, John & Peggy Sherman, John Cooley, Al DeSalvo, Susan Thompson, Sharon Babala, Jan McCracken, Patricia Bailey, Kathy Harris, Randy Rosette & Chris Jensen, Nancy Willie-Schiff, Dave & Ann Brandon

**Nigel Wright Peace Fund:** The Nigel Wright Peace Fund is held and accounted for separately by the Trust. That fund was established in 2015 with two gifts totaling \$12,000. \$8,118 remains available to support the goals of that fund – to support programs that educate and engage our congregation in activities that create peace within ourselves and the larger community and develop awareness of obstacles to peace.

**Our Impact:** The Endowment Trust has an impact on our community in several ways. The trustees hold the trust of those who contributed by learning about and applying investment practices that honor gifts as well as promoting giving and granting opportunities. Members of Albany UU use the Trust to create a legacy, whereby their values can continue into the future through their gifts to the Trust. And members of Albany UU who have ideas for supporting the mission of our society can look to the Trust for financial support. As Trustees, we look forward to continuing to grow the Trust and responding to the needs of our congregation.

Thank you for your continued support, Tom Mercer, Endowment Trust Chair, Jon Newell, Jeff English, Jan McCracken, John Cooley, Reese Satin, Treasurer (Ex-officio)

### **Stewardship Committee and Donor Report**

**Chairperson:** Patti Jo Newell

**Members:** A successful campaign requires the assistance of many. We used volunteers for a session of envelop stuffing, four Sundays of packet distribution, plus a couple more staffing the stewardship table in Channing Hall after the service, four testimonials during as many several services, and follow-up calls and emails. We distributed these tasks broadly, resulting in limited overlap among volunteers. And we had excellent support from the office staff.

**Purpose:** The Stewardship Team plans and implements the stewardship campaign each year. A successful fundraising effort is essential to keep our congregation healthy and growing. We must pay our minister and staff, heat, cool, and pay for our building, support the causes and programs we embrace, and pay for our building.

Albany UU exists because we all support it with our time, talents, and treasure. The campaign also represents an opportunity for members and friends to consider what Albany UU means to them and to determine how they want to support it financially.

**Accomplishments:** The theme this year was “Growing Our CENT\$ of Community”. This year we continued with the substantive changes made last year to the stewardship campaign format. We wanted to make the stewardship process less daunting, less labor-intensive and time-consuming and more attractive as a way of service to the congregation. With an eye toward succession planning we streamlined the approach and compartmentalized tasks to make participation in the campaign less onerous.

We also continued with the incentive for returning pledges within a shortened timeframe. The names of those who returned their pledge by April 1 were entered into a drawing that was conducted at the Annual Fellowship Dinner. First prize was \$100 UU Bucks and second and third prizes were \$50 UU Bucks each. UU Bucks can be redeemed for goods and services at any Albany UU event.

Our campaign goal is \$465,000, a 3% increase over last year, in keeping with our goal to strengthen our financial security and programmatic capacity as we continue our discernment over what it means to be a good neighbor.

Albany UU uses a modified version of the Unitarian Universalist Association recommended giving guide that accounts for different income levels. The guide recognizes four levels of giving – Supporter, Sustainer, Visionary, and “10-Percenter”. We encourage donors with higher incomes to give a greater percentage than those with lower incomes. By following the guide, all of us have the opportunity to be visionaries, regardless of income. For example, a retiree on a fixed income, a dual income family, or a college student could all be visionaries.

**Plans for next year:** We plan to continue with this format and explore other ways to make the process more efficient, accessible and successful.

A listing of donors by category is provided below:

**Ten Percenter**

Sam Trumbore and Philomena Moriarty

Tom and Tanya Hotalen

Chris Jensen and Randy Rosette

Karen Kaufmann

**Visionary**

7 Anonymous

Chuck and Barbara Manning

Mary Applegate

Jan McCracken

Dave and Ann Brandon

Peter and Donna Meixner

Peter and Debbie Brown

Dave and Barb Metz

Tom Chulak

Don Odell

Dick and Dawn Dana

Maria Phillips and Bradford Workman

Albert DeSalvo and Susan Thompson

Phil Rich

Diane Dunston

Darnell Rohrbaugh

Frederick Eames

John and Margaret Sherman

Rodger Fink

David and Sandy Stone

Lawrence Gambino and Linda Hunt

Jennifer and Todd Thomas

Lois Griffin

Nancy Wagner

Eileen Hoffman and David Munro

Lucy Wrightington

Don Holmes and Kathy Lloyd

**Sustainer**

4 Anonymous  
Patricia Bailey  
Elizabeth Berberian  
Laurie Beberwyck  
Barb Cooley  
John Cooley  
Ben and Linda English  
Jeff and Lorraine English  
Paul Fisk  
Virginia Hammer  
Judy Hanson  
Cindee Herrick  
Amy Jesaitis  
Rudy Johnson  
Meredith and Tom Mercer  
Steve and Paula Moskowitz  
Colleen and Sean Murphy  
Jon and Sigrin Newell  
Patti Jo Newell and Bruce Rodgers  
Jill Peckenpaugh  
Annika Pfluger

**Supporter**

5 Anonymous  
Liliana and Mark Abendroth  
Fred Barker  
Pam Crane and Charles Poltenson  
Mark and Molly Daniels  
Brian Frank  
Deborah and Jesse Hoffman  
Jaye Holly  
Lucas Johnson and Julie Maresco  
Elissa Kane and Lynne Lekakis  
Mike Myers and Anne Savage  
Marshall Miller and Dorian Solot  
Regina O'Brien  
Mary Phillips  
Andrea Ricard  
Barb Sekellick  
Kristen Tibbitts  
Deborah Vogel

**Other** (*This category includes anyone who did not indicate a giving level on their pledge form.*)

37 Anonymous  
Kristen and Geoff Abbas  
Leah Akins and Matthew Schlesinger  
George and Jane Allen  
Meredith and Ray Andrews  
Cassie and Vic Artale  
Muriel Asbornsen  
Jean Bolgatz  
Richard and Paula Brewer  
Loren Broc  
Chris and Maria Bystroff  
Laura Cayford  
Chris Chapple and Carol Young  
Nancy Croce  
Zach Cunningham and Kelly Smith  
Toni Daniel  
Ann and Mike D'Attilio  
Gerard Deighan  
Deborah Dewey and Winston Hagborg  
Seth Edelman  
Judith Gallagher  
Arlene Gilbert  
Kathy Harris  
Alison Hart  
Thayer Heath  
Suzanne Hicks  
Kathy Hodges  
Michael Hornsby  
Amie Jamieson and Rick Piet  
Judith Karis  
Roger and Barbara Kessel  
Sally Knapp  
Ann Lapinski  
Amy Lent  
David MacLeod and Debbie Reep MacLeod  
Meghan Marohn  
Mary Maynes  
Beverly and William Morrison  
Linda Munro  
Lee and Heidi Newberg  
Anita Patka  
Patsy Patrick  
Astrid Pettersen and Neil Rice

Jean Poppei  
Jonathan and Marion Radin  
Tina and Joe Raggio  
Luba Reep  
Ruth Russell  
Ruth Salter  
Reese Satin  
Peter Schiff and Nancy Willie-Schiff  
Martha Schroeder  
Jeffrey Sedam  
Julie Shaw  
Susan Standfast and Ted Wright

Abby Sugarman  
Saurabh Tendulkar  
Jeannie Thompson  
Lois Thomson  
Erik and Todd VonHausen  
John Walko  
Barbara Warner  
Arlen Westbrook  
Lois Webb  
Carol Lynn Youtz  
Patricia Zima

## **Music Director's Report**

Richard Porterfield, *Music Director*

Sigrin Newell, *Librarian*; Randy Rosette and Chris Jensen, *Music Associates*

Adult Choir:

Mark Abendroth	Dean Howard	Sigrin Newell
Mike Babala	Kathy Harris	Threasa Pasquale
Lois Bailey	Tanya Hotalen	Astrid Pettersen
Patricia Bailey	Tom Hotalen	Neil Rice
Ann Brandon	Linda Hunt	Sherry Roberts
Peter Brown	Chris Jensen	Deborah Rodriguez
Chris Bystroff	Julie Lomoe	Randy Rosette
Dorry Campano	David MacLeod	Ruth Russell
Dick Dana	Debbie Reep MacLeod	Lea N'ko Ryman
Cindy Dean	Kayla Mancini	Barbara Spink
Rodger Fink	Julie Maresco	Nancy Wagner
Tina Haq	Barb Metz	Betsy Wright
Dean Howard	Dave Metz	Trish Zima
Nancy Wagner		

Youth Choir: Anna Baldes, Nadia Coleman-Ibrahim, Julia Davis, Terran Drake, Colton Hickman, Katie Myers, Nadia Tell

**Purpose:** I have proposed three purposes for music ministry at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany:

1. to add depth and delight to services (see UU Sources 1 – 6);
2. to honor and give voice to creative, prophetic, and agitating traditions of various peoples, places, and times (see UU Principles and Sources generally); and
3. to build community through congregational participation, through the work of volunteer choirs and soloists, and through professional excellence as a wise use of communal resources (see especially UU Principles 1, 3, and 6).



**Accomplishments:** The music program at Albany UU continues to grow in achievement in my second season as Music Director. The congregation enjoys a program of remarkably varied repertoire presented by our choirs, by volunteer music associates Randy Rosette and Chris Jensen, by guest artists, and by me as pianist, organist, conductor, vocal soloist, composer/arranger, and accompanist.

In August 2018, budgeted funds for my professional development paid travel expenses for me to attend the annual meeting and convention of the UU Musicians' Network (UUMN). During that meeting, the membership voted to take the new name of Association for UU Music Ministries (AUUMM), and to revise its mission statement and membership structure to recognize the contributions of those for whom music ministry is a calling but not a livelihood.

This was my first time attending this convention, which I found informative and inspiring. I returned to Albany with a broader perspective on UU practices, a renewed sense of mission, and a sheaf of new music to consider for the following season.

The convention also inspired me to offer official recognition as Music Associates to Randy Rosette and Chris Jensen for their continuing efforts on behalf of music at Albany UU, and to provide for their membership in AUUMM out of my own professional-development budget.

I continue to meet weekly with Rev. Sam Trumbore and Leah Purcell (now on sabbatical) to plan services so that the music is closely coordinated with the daily theme, with UU principles, and with the mission of the Society. Congregational hymns and songs are generally proposed by the service leader and agreed upon in committee; the Music Director is responsible for leading those hymns, and for choosing, rehearsing, and directing choir music, for performing vocal and instrumental solos and small-ensemble performances, and for recruiting, supervising, and (often) accompanying guest artists.

During the program year, our choir of adult volunteers rehearses most every Wednesday evening, and performs two or (more often) three featured pieces at the 10 am service just about every other Sunday. Choir membership is open to all who come regularly to rehearsals and services. Several new choir members have joined since I started as Music Director, some of whom have gone on to become pledging members of the congregation; the majority of choir members have attended for five years or longer. We have 25 to 30 choir members on a typical Sunday.

In October 2018, I obtained joint funding from the RE Council and the Endowment Trust for a Youth Choir pilot program: with that funding I organized, prepared for, and led four 45-minute rehearsals of Youth Choir which took place after Sunday services, along with a 45-minute warm-up rehearsal with the Youth and Adult Choirs before the October 28 service. Seven middle-school-age children participated in this project, which won generous applause and many comments of appreciation. This pilot program demonstrated that we have great potential in this area: we have families, children, and youth who are interested in participating; we have support

among the members of Adult Choir and in the congregation generally, and we have a Music Director who is capable of, and interested in, developing it.

I proposed to the Rev. Sam Trumbore in December 2018 a plan for the 2019 fiscal year which would add weekly rehearsals with choirs of children and youth to my regular schedule, and which would remedy what I have long perceived and presented to him as differences between an equitable contract and what has up to now been supported. A serious response has been offered only recently after a series of delays; it shows a marked unwillingness to reconsider budget allocations decided upon long ago, even if this results in cuts to programming or the loss of me as Music Director.

**Goals:** I propose that it should be the goal of the Music program at Albany UU to continue to provide a program of high-quality performances of varied musical repertoire, and to do so in a way that is equitable to the professionals it engages, educational and enjoyable to the adults, children, and youth of its choirs and congregation, inviting and attractive to the Capital-Region community, and sustainable for the Society in the long-term. I hazard that a narrow focus on balancing the yearly budget is not conducive to building a music program that helps lead the congregation's growth and development over decades.

(For a list of what music has been performed this church year, visit our website: <http://albanyuu.org/get-involved/> and scroll down to choir.)

## **Church Administrator's Report**

Tammy Hathaway

### **Staff**

Minister: Rev. Sam Trumbore

Director of Religious Education: Leah Purcell

Church Administrator: Tammy Hathaway

Music Director: Richard Porterfield

Administrative Assistant: Sapphire Correa

RE Assistant: Elizabeth Baldes

Lead Youth Advisor: Tracey Hickey

Sexton: Izzy Wright

Childcare Staff: Anna Carbone-Harms, Aaliah Francis

Summer Services Coordinator: Randy Rosette

2018-19 Snow Removal Tech: Quintain Murray

**Change:** We bade a very fond and fun farewell to Church Administrator, Amy Lent, after sending her off with a retirement party worthy of her 16 years of service. A big thank you to Meredith Mercer, Jan McCracken and Bobbi Place for their work in planning that event.

We welcomed Sapphire Correa as our Administrative Assistant and my right hand. Sapphire works part-time, 20 hours per week and handles rentals, the order of service and many other administrative tasks.

We welcomed Religious Education Assistant, Elizabeth Baldes, who, among other tasks, has been filling some of the gaps while Leah Purcell is on sabbatical.

We welcomed Lead Youth Adviser, Tracey Hickey, who has worked closely with our youth to develop their program further.

The RE Assistant and Lead Youth Adviser positions are new to Albany UU.

Randy Rosette is returning to serve again as Summer Services Coordinator.

We look forward to welcoming a new intern minister, Dan Miyake, in August 2019.

**Communications** is another area of change this year. We combined the monthly Windows newsletter with the weekly Preview email to provide a weekly email newsletter lovingly called, Windows Weekly. Copies are also printed and in the lobby each week for visitors or anyone who would like to pick one up. This change has received mainly positive reviews. We worked with the Caring Network to make sure that folks without access to email still receive their news. This has been working well in some ways and not so well in others. Todd Thomas, Caring Network Chair, and I are working on some changes to how this is will continue in the future.

Rev. Sam and I, with the invaluable help of Peggy Sherman worked on giving our website a new look. This work will continue during the summer and if we can avoid the web-gremlins, we will have an even more comprehensive web-presence come fall. Website maintenance is an ongoing project that I'm happy to keep enhancing.

The office has purchased a social media package from Soul Matters that includes memes with our logo, Spotify song lists, meditations and holiday posts, etc, all relevant to the service theme of the month. Soul Matters is the program that also provides material for Meaning Matters Small Groups that Rev. Sam holds for adults, and that Leah uses for providing continuity for children and youth in Religious Education and Family Ministries. This, in combination with our service announcements, Windows Weekly and other posts has added greatly to Albany UU's social media presence.

There is no longer a Publicity Committee at Albany UU. Patti Jo Newell, Jan Smith, Rev. Sam and I met in December to brainstorm the best way to ensure that we have an avenue for publicity in the future. We outlined the start of a plan and some good ideas that will continue to be pursued.

**Building Use and Maintenance:** Our building continues to be cleaned by J & D Cleaning. They are wonderful to work with and do a fine job. They also do all of our large setups and resets for rentals. They do not, however, have the capacity to move snow so we hired Quintain Murray to do that for us this season. He is very capable and did a great job. Quintain is graduating from UAlbany this May so time will tell if he will be available for us next season.

I do not handle most of our rentals. That duty has been given to our capable Administrative Assistant, Sapphire Correa. Our rentals provide important revenue for Albany UU and we all do

our best to keep our renters happy and fill our halls with as many different events, classes, church services, weddings, and on and on, as much as we can.

On Mondays (or another day during the week), Izzy continues to do a lot of picking up and putting back after Sunday's activities. He also is charged with minor repairs, specific cleaning projects, reporting larger repairs that need attention, and he mows the grass and trims the hedges.

For building and maintenance oversight we still depend on Dave Metz—he's done this for years and he's great at putting together problems and solutions. I don't know how much longer he's going to want this volunteer role (chair of Building and Grounds) but if you get a chance, please tell him you appreciate his work. Dave's got a crew of volunteers he can call on for various tasks, and we thank them, too. The Gardening Committee under the guidance of Donna Meixner is doing fabulous work keeping our gardens lovely. On spring cleanup day a few weeks ago over 20 people showed up and the work was done in no time. Thank you all, too.

**Office:** Thank you to all who have pitched in to help with office activities this year—from counting money and making deposits to delivering the Windows Weekly and various other assorted tasks. Some of our 'regulars' were, Don Odell, Linda Way, Seth Edelman and Reese Satin. And then there are the mystery plant caretakers: Thank you to Ann D'Attilio for watering the plants in Community Hall, and thank you to the Mannings for caring for the jades in the Sanctuary.

As my first full year as your Church Administrator comes to a close, I have one word: gratitude. Gratitude for all of you who gave me support, encouragement and patience throughout this year; gratitude for our leadership and staff for providing opportunities and challenges that make us all do better; and gratitude for the opportunity to continue to do what I love here at Albany UU. Thank you.

## **Wheel of Life**

### **Joined**

Anne de Noronha, Carlos de Noronha, Judy Gallagher, Debbie Hoffman, Jesse Hoffman, Lucas Johnson, Julie Maresco, Regina O'Brien, Alice Sage, Mark Schiesser, Jeffery Sedam, Saurabh Tendulkar, Jeannie Thompson, Kristen Tibbitts, Erik VonHausen, Todd VonHausen

### **Died**

Mary Reich, Ed Ryman

### **Births**

William Lyndon Papps to Sean and Crystal Papps ;Patricia "Patsy" Schaeffing to Peter and Ali Schaeffing; Malcolm Wilson to Daniel and Kaitlin Wilson;

### **Marriages**

Isaac "Izzy" and Amanda Wright; Charles Poltenson and Pamela Crane

## **COUNCILS**

### **Program Coordinating Council**

**Chairperson:** Patti Jo Newell (Vice President, Board of Trustees)

**Members:** The Program Coordinating Council is made up of Albany UU's lay leaders and consists of all chairs of its committees and councils, leaders of affiliated groups, the Church Administrator Tammy Hathaway, and the Director of Religious Education Leah Purcell.

**Purpose:** Our task is to oversee and coordinate the lay ministry of Albany UU. This involves coordinating a calendar of all major church events; taking up issues for discussion as identified by the Board of Trustees; and serving as a point of contact for committees and groups needing to communicate with or get feedback from the diversity of lay ministries as represented by PCC. PCC is also a resource for the minister and religious services committee in the provision of announcers for Sunday services. PCC has traditionally been a resource for the Board of Trustees regarding coordination and recruitment for church events and initiatives, and for troubleshooting in the event of glitches along the way.

**Accomplishments:** In addition to the above, PCC provided key feedback to the Governance Working Group and was a conduit for coordination of the Get Connected Activity Fair.

**Plans for next year:** The pending governance changes will shift these tasks and processes to the Program Team. As the time frame for these changes is not fixed, PCC will continue to serve in the above-mentioned ways as long as it remains germane to do so.

### **Religious Education Council**

Religious Education Council – Religious Education Program for Children and Youth and work of the Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry

2018-2019

**Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry:** Leah Purcell

**Religious Education Council Chair:** Jim Hutchins

**Religious Education Council:** The REC sponsored 5 congregation- wide events this year: Holiday Tree Decorating; HUUGS – sending out packages of goodies and good wishes to our recently bridged young adults; 2 pot luck and game nights and Sundae Sunday – our special Coffee Hour to celebrate the multigenerational RE Sunday in June. The RE Council members were Amy Jesaitis, Elizabeth Baldes, Becky Edvalson, Tracie Tilgner, Sheila Gray, Michele Desrosiers, Paula Brewer, Liz Halvorsen, Leah Akins, Mike Myers and Ela Kessel. Sheila Gray resigned at the start of the church year. Jim Hutchins served as chair. The Council met with Leah each month Oct – May and also held a retreat in Aug and June. The REC members volunteered to serve as the RE Office Assistant on Sunday mornings and to be the Sunday Superintendent on Sundays Leah was away or had off.

**Restructured RE Staffing:** At Leah's request, her position went from full time to 30 hours a week this year. The congregation hired Elizabeth Baldes as the RE Program Assistant and Tracey Hickey as the Lead Youth Advisor. (More about Tracey's position in "**High School Youth Group**" below). In her ¾ hour position, Leah concentrated on overall planning of the program with the RE Council, providing material for faith development to families and direct support to families through informal pastoral care; congregational work; and mentoring Tracey Hickey. Elizabeth and Leah worked together to set up classrooms and run events like teacher development sessions. Elizabeth has also organized and cleaned up most of the RE spaces. Elizabeth has taken on some tasks that were previously covered by our office staff: RE registration; keeping attendance; and other record keeping. Elizabeth also contacts the teams of volunteers each week about the upcoming session and organizes materials for each group; she arranges for subs, if needed or serves as a sub herself. She makes a point of talking to new families on Sunday mornings, since it's hard for Leah to catch everyone. Once a month, Elizabeth takes on most of Leah's Sunday morning role so Leah can have those Sundays off. Elizabeth also keeps an eye on the bigger picture, for example, at suggestion, we are hosting an RE Open House in August geared in particular for younger families. Elizabeth also researches the theme each month and creates and puts up three interactive bulletin boards: two in the RE hallways and one in Channing Hall.

**From DRE to Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry:** Leah's vision of Family Ministry is building strong connections between families and the congregation; and supporting parents and caregivers in being their children's primary religious educators. Leah held a Parent/Caretaker Breakfast and Orientation to the RE Program Sept 30. She worked with Tracey Hickey to offer an Orientation to Youth Group for parents/caretakers for current and incoming families which was well attended. Leah continues to hold monthly Parent Support Group meetings which are well attended and which parent/caretakers appreciate. She offered a training on Family Circles in March which had to be postponed to June because of low enrollment. Elizabeth Baldes is a good "thought partner" for Leah on issues facing families and helps Leah plan what to offer families and what good time frames are. In September, Leah presented a workshop with a parent of an 8th grader, Marietta Angelotti on children's and youth's addiction to phones, online games and social media.

Elizabeth and Leah have discussed what our response in RE should be to support our Sunday school groups as caring communities to help children and youth understand events in the news in age-appropriate ways. Our children and youth need to know that yes, things are unfair out there AND it's important how we treat each other, starting in Sunday school. In her weekly newsletter, Leah offered some ways for parents and caretakers of middle and high school student to offer support at home. Children and youth this age need to learn coping strategies and to have opportunities to make small changes where they can.

**The Sunday School enrollment:** As of the end of March, the RE enrollment was 87; with 67 of those attending regularly. Average RE attendance on an individual Sunday is currently 40. At this time last year, the enrollment was 104 and number of children and youth attending regularly was 77.

**Volunteer Team Members for Sunday School (including guides, assistants, Our Whole Lives facilitators, and youth advisors):** Cindee Herrick, Elizabeth Berberian, Meredith Andrews, Amy Jesaitis, Christine Vanderlan, Jill Peckenpaugh, Mary Fellows, Brian Frank, Leah Akins, Sarah Stanwicks, Terry Way, Ann Von Linden, Darnell Rohrbaugh, Jim Hutchins, Eileen Roepe, Geoff Abbas, Laura Churchill, Marietta Angelotti, Robin Tell-Drake, Marshall Miller, Elisa Grimm, Deirdre Harwick, Becky Edvalson, Pam Crane, Charles Poltenson, Philomena Moriarty, Sam Harrigan, Heather Ingram, Tina Haq, Jim Chicoine. Of these 29 volunteers, 6 were new to volunteering this year, (though one decided volunteering in RE was not a good fit for him) and 14 were volunteers even though they do not currently have children in the program. About half the group leaders came to the development session on Sept 8th, which is a big improvement in attendance over past years. I think a big draw was having Tim Hathaway, Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse, NY come to present about signs of child abuse and how communities like Albany UU can support families.

**Paid childcare staff:** Aaliah Francis and Anna Carbone

**Curricula:** Our pre-school group continued a story-based curriculum Leah wrote. The children in Kindergarten through 6th grade used curricula from the Tapestry of Faith program. The 4th/5th grade group held Our Whole Lives, which is 10 sessions, in the spring. We created a group that included pre-schoolers to first graders because of low enrollment at those ages, and adapted the curriculum to meet this wide age range.

- Pre-k through 1<sup>st</sup> grade – UU Play (stories and play)
- 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grade – Moral Tales (Tapestry of Faith curriculum)
- 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade – Love Connects Us (Tapestry of Faith curriculum)/Our Whole Lives
- 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade – Crossing Paths (new world religions course, like Neighboring Faiths)
- 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> grade – Social Justice curriculum compiled by Leah Purcell and the group leaders; and the YSOP trip
- 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade – High School Youth Group - Highlights of the Youth Group activities included service: cooking for the overflow shelter, leading the Albany UU tree decorating event; packing “Neighborly Bags” for people on street corners asking for help; packing for HUUGS for our fledgling adults with support from the RED. Some youth also attended cons and trainings at other congregations with the Lead Youth Advisor, Tracey Hickey. Leah attended a day-long Restorative Practices training with Tracey Hickey, our paid youth advisor and 2 of our youth which was very beneficial

**High School Youth Group:** Under Tracey Hickey’s leadership, our youth group is already making progress in group building; having meaningful conversations; and brainstorming about

service projects. This was even though she was shaky the first session in balancing establishing ground rules with mentoring youth into leadership of the group. Tracey has, with mentoring from Leah and the other youth advisors, developed skills to make the sessions more engaging than last year and has built a rapport with the youth, even those who attend infrequently. Tracey has established a markedly more respectful and inclusive tone in the group. She has also led the group to establish a ban on cell phone use during meetings, with exceptions for expected urgent texts. This ban helps keep certain youth engaged in the meeting. Tracey also attended 2 cons this year with the same 3 youth at both. She also attended a day-long Restorative Practices training with me and 2 youth. Tracey and Leah planned and co-led an orientation to youth group for current and incoming parents/caretakers. With help from Rev. Deb Bennett, Tracey is helping the youth plan a service this year. Last year the group did not have the adult or youth leadership to put on a service. Tracey and Leah are looking at how the youth group creates and then lives into their covenant. From Leah's research in talking to UUA staff and other religious educators revealed that UU youth groups typically do a lot of work on creating covenants, but not on what it looks like when it's broken or what to do when it is broken. Tracey and Leah are committed to continuing this work after Leah's sabbatical. They are also looking ahead to hosting a con in 2019-20. Normally each of the larger congregations in upstate NY hosts a con every other year. Because we did not have a strong youth group in 2017-18, Leah helped the group host a mini-con with just the local youth groups. The mini con was not successful; most of our youth who attended avoided engaging in the workshops because the workshops did not seem appealing. Next year is a chance for our youth group to host and experience a full-on con. Our regional volunteer staff have suggested reaching out to the Schenectady youth group for help leading our con.

**YSOP:** This is an overnight trip to NYC through the Youth Services Opportunities Program (YSOP) run by the Friends for direct service and learning. It was offered to our 8th/9th graders through their Sunday school. Five youth and four adults (Marietta Angelotti, Geoff Abbas, Philomena Moriarty and Robin Tell-Drake) went on the trip. The group leaders are working with the 8th/9th graders who did not go on the group to summarize not only their trip, but what the group has done to learn and act on the issues of hunger and homelessness in our local area, and make a presentation to the congregation in the religious service April 14.

**Special Sundays in RE:** For the curricula for children in Pre-k through 6th grade was supplemented by two special types of Sunday school:

- **Family Chapel:** Family Chapel gives children and their parents/caretakers and younger siblings the opportunity to experience many elements of a regular service in a child-centered way. Leah planned and led Family Chapels Oct. through April and supported Rev. Kimberly Debus to run the May Family Chapel. They were based on the Soul Matters theme of the month. Each Family Chapel has follow-up activities, written or supported by Leah for the children instead of their regular Sunday school session.



- **UU's in Action:** Leah created activities and sessions for multi-age groups on holiday weekends for service projects or learning about social justice topics. There were 2 UU's in Action Sundays this year.
- **UU Jams – On the theme of Possibility:** Leah created special programming for the month of January this year for Pre-K through 3rd grade while the 4th/5th graders started their OWL program and the 6th/7th graders continued their Crossing Paths program. With this smaller grouping, UU Jams was able to use the 3 upstairs classrooms available and give the children a choice of workshops.
- **Special Programming for May:** At the time of the writing of this report, Leah worked with Elizabeth Baldes and Rev Kimberly Debus to create special programming for multi-age groups for children in Pre-K through 5th grade, including Family Chapel on the theme of Curiosity
- **Multi-age RE:** Elizabeth Baldes planned and led (or will lead at the time of this report was written) 2 sessions of multi-age RE, held in the upstairs classrooms. Children were able to use materials and games that we don't offer to each group every year. In December, some of the older children engaged in the activities expressing fond memories, and the younger children were thrilled to try new things with them.
- **Weather Related Closing:** We had good holiday celebrations and services in December and were in the swing of UU Jams and other RE offerings when bam! we were hit with a big storm. But there was no getting around closing. One parent who makes a point of coming most every Sunday shared that it was a nice break to have some relaxed family time. Hopefully it was the same for others too.

**Thematic RE:** Elizabeth used the Soul Matters theme of the month to create interactive bulletin boards, and Leah used the theme for her Newsletter column, spiritual practice for families, parent support group. Soul Matters is the program that also provides material for the Meaning Matters Small Groups the Rev Sam ran for adults. Using themes in RE, in adult offerings and in spaces around the building offers opportunities for children, youth and adults to engage in the same topics and help families discuss UU-sim and their UU values at home.

**Religious Services:** Leah and Rev. Sam created 4 multigenerational services: Ingathering, Wheel of Life, Winter Solstice; and Christmas. Leah presented two multigenerational services: one on the theme of Creativity for a summer service; and one on the theme of Sanctuary in October on UU Weekend at Silver Bay. Both were well attended, given the dates they were held, and they were well received for their interactive engagement.

**Planning for Special Programming for 2019-20:** At the time of this report, Leah is organizing the Rite of Passage Program for next year with orientations for prospective mentors and eligible youth and their parents/caretakers. The hope is that we'll have enough adult volunteers so that each youth can have a one-on-one mentor, instead of having small groups as we did in 2017-18. With a smaller pool of eligible youth and good turn out from prospective mentors, it looks like we can have one-on-one mentors as we have in the past. Plans are in the works to have 3 adults trained as Our Whole Lives facilitators for next year's 7th/8th grade group. Happily, three

qualified adults have stepped up to do the 24-hr training this summer and join the team for next year. We do have a cadre of trained facilitators, but 3 of our older facilitators are either involved in other leadership in the congregation or are not feeling the energy to lead OWL, (though they may come in rotation to add support as a third person in the room); another facilitator has a child in the class this year (guidelines are that you don't facilitate your own kid's group at this level of OWL); and two other facilitators have not been active in the congregation recently.

**Leah's Committee Work to Support the Congregation:** Leah served on the Safe Congregation Response Team; followed the work of the Governance Working Group and the Inclusivity Team; continued work on with Congregational Covenant Committee; and joined the Program Team when it started in February. Leah facilitated the building-wide evacuation drill which was held Oct. 9. Leah and Elizabeth hosted the Picnic in the Park Sept 23. Leah supported Rick Porterfield to start a youth choir.

**Leah's Support to the Denomination:** Leah continues to serve as a mentor in the UUA's Religious Educators Credentialing Program; an active member of the Seaway LREDA chapter (Liberal Religious Educators Association); and a member of Central East Region Advisory Council, which support our executive director, Rev. Megan Foley, our Regional Lead, in understanding how to support local congregations. At the time of this report, Leah had just accepted the offer to present the Gould Discourse at the Seaway gathering in the spring of 2020.

**Leah's Sabbatical:** To prepare for her sabbatical in April and May, Leah created a spreadsheet of her tasks; and she, the REC and Rev. Sam considered which ones were essential and which ones would be "let go". The REC, Leah and Rev. Sam found a volunteer to take on most of the essential tasks. Elizabeth has most of these tasks and will be working extra hours which will be covered by the DREFM sabbatical line in the 2018-19 budget. Rev. Kimberly Debus was hired to run May Family Chapel and follow up activities. Rev. Deb Bennet was hired to support Tracey Hickey in planning and presenting the youth service. The rest are covered by the REC and by Rev. Sam. For her sabbatical, Leah is interested in seeing other RE programs and worship in action. She is planning visits to a few other Religious Education programs and planning on attending 3 or 4 weekend retreats at the Kripalu Center in Stockbridge, MA.

### **Social Responsibilities Council**

**Chair:** Matt Lesniak

**Members:** Michael Braunstein, Zach Cunningham, Matt Lesniak, Jean Poppei, Elena Reynolds, Ann von Linden. Appointees for 2018-2019: Carol Butt, Ed Hancock, Karen Kaufmann

**Purpose:** To aid the Albany UU community in social responsibility, both by providing social-responsibility related activities, and by vetting groups for donations and collaborations. From the Bylaws: "[SRC] shall guide and coordinate education and action in the realms of social matters

of moral and ethical significance. It may issue statements of public support and endorsement ... The Council may initiate and promote activities consistent with these statements.”

**Accomplishments:** Six room donations to a variety of local and regional organizations such as NYSCASA, Albany Cuba Solidarity, Mission Accomplished Transition Services, and Empire Justice Center. There were two room donations and one give-away-the-plate to Urban Grief, revolving around training community grief counselors in Albany and raising awareness of crime victims.

The SRC issued letters of support for the HALT bill in the New York State Legislature (seeking to reduce the use of solitary confinement in prison and jails), and signed on to a letter asking the Tucson, AZ district attorney not to charge No More Deaths / No Mas Muertes volunteers for leaving water in the desert for migrants.

The committee agreed to support Young Peacemakers camp this August, primarily institutional support by providing volunteers and campers from among the Albany UUers.

Thanks to the continued efforts of Jean Poppei and others, Albany UU has had a front seat view of some hard-won improvements to New York State’s Parole Board (its make up and its practices).

Jean is also to be credited with keeping forward momentum on the Sanctuary Task Force. As of this writing, three other Capital District congregations have joined with Albany UU in a covenant to support immigrants and refugees. Currently, the group is working on the nuts and bolts of a protocol to be used for vetting and prioritizing guests in sanctuary.

Ann von Linden has also made sure that each month’s collection for the FOCUS Food Pantry were anticipated, counted, and packaged up.

The SRC Fair Trade table was present after Sunday service nearly every weekend during the year, providing equitably sourced and sustainably grown coffee and chocolate, and, in the fall, crafts. Thank you Toni Daniels, and Mark and Juliana Abendroth!

**Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC):** Megan Marohn, chair

**Members:** The Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC) has about 20 active members in its Core group and approximately 50 members in its general group. The core consults by e-mail during the month; the general group receives monthly updates. Visitors and new members are welcome at our meetings at all times. Our meetings occur on the fourth Sunday of the month after the service. Our decisions are made primarily by consensus. Minutes of our meetings are placed in a notebook and can be found in the workroom.

**Officers:** Megan Marohn - chair; Sandy Steubing – corresponding secretary; Barb Spink – backup secretary.

**Purpose:** The GSC operates under the UU 7<sup>th</sup> principle, *respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part*. In the era of planetary crisis due to climate change, the GSC

seeks to provide a moral compass on environmental issues, and urges each person in the congregation to be active on an individual as well as a societal basis. We try to do this by providing education, encouragement, camaraderie and fun.

Accomplishments in 2018-2019 Year: Religious Education - Anne Marie Haber and Mitch Cohen maintain worm composting bins in most RE rooms and answer questions about them.

Recycling - The GSC collects items for recycling in the coatroom. Items such as jackets, hats, mittens are donated to the Interfaith Shelter or the refugee center.

Forums - *Latest Developments in Solar* with Dr. Richard Perez in December; *Zero Waste Efforts* with Tina Lieberman and Anasha Cummings in March; *Movie Cowspiracy* with Stop NY Fracked Gas Pipeline in March; *Extinction Rebellion* with Megan Marohn, Cerrone Cunningham, and Kristin Diotte in March

Community Involvement - The Green Sanctuary pages on albanyuu.org, begun in November, 2018 by Barbara Spink and David Musser, include a GSC main page and pages on GSC History, Solar Power, and Working with SHARE.

Non-violent Direct Action Protest with Extinction Rebellion, New York City Day of Action at City Hall, April

Earth Day Canal Clean-up, April

Working with SHARE (Sheridan Hollow Alliance for Renewable Energy) - A December Sunday service included a Give-Away-the-Plate for SHARE.

The state budget again included an \$88 million appropriation for an Empire State Plaza energy system, but activism by SHARE with the legislature and the governor helped to obtain wording more favorable to renewable energy and eliminating all mentions of fossil fuels.

SHARE co-sponsored an Environmental and Climate Justice forum on April 13, 2019.

A press conference was held at the Capitol by Skidmore College students who adopted the SHARE cause as the focus of their environmental project.

**Black Lives Matter:** Ed Hancock, coordinator

AlbanyUU remains committed to the Black Lives Matter movement but concedes a supporting role to efforts arising from the black community by providing occasional meeting space, contributing to vigils and lending moral support.

More locally a police shooting and paralyzing of Ellazar Williams in mid August. Video contradicts police reports, and vigils were held to protest the procedure. As Williams was not killed, the process for investigation by the State Attorney General of a killing by police, activated.

Recently an Albany police officer has been arrested and two others suspended without pay as a result a March 16 incident of entering a home without a warrant, and seriously beating a resident. Vigils and observation of City response is ongoing.

**Peace Team:** Ed Hancock, coordinator

Honoring Nigel Wright, the Albany UU Peace Team hosted, cosponsored and participated with many peace initiatives during 2018-19.

The Capital District Coalition Against Islamophobia (CDCAI) which had been meeting monthly at the Mosque on Central Avenue has met mostly at Albany UU do to renovations at the Mosque. As a member of the steering committee Ed Hancock along with Lynne Jackson hosts the steering committee meetings to plan for those monthly meetings. Through Peace team collaboration with CDCAI, on 4 August 2018, Albany UU hosted 14th Anniversary dinner of Yassin Aref's and Mohammed Mosharref Hossain's incarcerations. Following the dinner an original play was presented that showed the process by which a minor criminal can be coerced into framing or entrapping individuals targeted for arrest by the FBI. It appears that the convictions are sought to bolster conviction statistics and have no likelihood of protecting the public. It is difficult to accept the official conduct but the details are well researched and taken from trial transcripts. The play was repeated on February 2 to more members of Albany UU.

Moving on to the wider world, Afghanistan to North Korea, several peace activists came to town August 17 and Kathy Kelly made a presentation at Albany UU before embarking on a river cruise followed by the Kateri Peace Conference.

Collaboration with Albany chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace will lead to a speaker on the Israeli – Gaza situation and peace studies as well. In April a joint Albany UU – JVP Seder meal took place in Community Hall. While it might be debatable, it appears that the Israeli government has taken the position that full citizenship belongs only to the Jewish residents. With encouragement from the US administration, formal annexation of the West Bank territories and establishment of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel will fuel further conflict in the region and here in the US. The 2016 election has brought women of color and non-Christians into Congress and the American right is incensed. Head scarf wearing Muslim Congresswoman Ilhan Omar and 29 year old NY Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are receiving death threats. Various media steadily spread rumors and hate against these people especially. Of course some hate is still reserved for Senator Elizabeth Warren, Pocahontas as the president calls her and toward Senator Bernie Sanders, the Socialist and the liberals and Democrats who support them. This could become a very local issue at any time.

On a warmer note, Peace Team is pleased to co-sponsor a children's peace week program that will be held at the Albany Friends Meeting House in late August 2019. With the goal of giving children an experience in conflict resolution, non-competitive games, art and a sense of peace in their families and within themselves. Jan McCracken has coordinated this effort.

## STANDING COMMITTEES

### Finance Committee

Dick Brewer: Chair, Insurance, Personnel Committee Liaison

Reese Satin: Treasurer (elected)

Seth Edelman: Assistant Treasurer (elected)

Kathy Harris: Secretary

Chuck Manning: Stewardship

Steven Moskowitz: Budget

David Musser: Member at Large

Dave Metz: Buildings and Grounds, Mortgage Loan

**Purpose of group:** To sustain a vital and nurturing religious community by ensuring a solid financial foundation for the daily inspirational and aspirational activities of the Society.

**Accomplishments in 2018-19:** Produced and supervised a balanced budget that reflected real income versus actual expenses; maintained adequate and appropriate insurance coverage; produced monthly financial reports, prepared budget for 2019-20.

After careful deliberation regarding the church liquid assets the committee paid off the Berkshire Bank Community Hall mortgage as well as the Endowment Trust loan made at 3.5% annually. Current loans remain to Albany UU Note holders and the original \$575,000 non-interest loan from Endowment Trust.

Determined that funds will be available to repair/replace the columns on the front of the church.

Monitored ongoing financial activities and cash flow.

Worked with the Personnel Committee to develop a 2019-20 budget proposal that increases salaries to our employees commensurate with their years of service and expertise in their roles, balanced against anticipated future income.

**Plans for next year:** Continue to carefully monitor the financial health of Albany UU. Monitor cash flow and make adjustments to the budget as necessary.

We will also continue to work closely with the Board of Trustees, Personnel Committee and other groups to advance our mission in a fiscally-responsible way.

### Membership Committee

**Co-chairs:** Peter Brown and Barb Manning

**Members:** Elizabeth Berberian, Kathy Hodges, Don Odell, John Sherman, Peggy Sherman and Sam Trumbore

The good news is The Society's membership, as reported to the UUA, was the same in January of this year, 366, as in January of last year. The bad news is The Society's membership was the

same in January of this year, 366, as in January of last year. In addition we are well below our level of 390 achieved in 2011. This was despite major efforts to make connection with visitors to our Sunday services, and follow up with them later and on their next visit. A total of 15 people have joined the Society during our current fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2018), well below the numbers who joined in our better years of 2008-2014. Of course an equal number left for a variety of reasons.

One major effort the Membership Committee undertook this year was to develop a new Albany UU photo directory. We hired Lifetouch photographers, and they were at the church for 7 days of photography in the fall. A total of 161 families and 8 staff were photographed, and 20 families submitted photos for the new photo directory, which was distributed in February. This effort was coordinated by Peggy Sherman and Kathy Hodges.

The Committee has worked to assure visitors feel welcome when they come to church, and has tried to recruit the rest of the congregation to this effort. We continue to get positive feedback from new members and visitors that we are a very welcoming congregation. One of our challenges still is to get new members involved in the Albany UU community and to make meaningful long-term connections. We recommend this be a focus for the Committee and the Board next year.

**Welcome Team:** With our New Member Recognition Sunday services, we have recognized 15 new members for this fiscal year. At these services, we recognize the new members who have signed the Membership Book since the last New Member Recognition Sunday, and after the service we have had a reception in the back of Community Hall to honor the new members. We had two such services this year.

**The Welcome Team** has a core group of trained volunteers to be at the Welcome Table on Sunday mornings. Each volunteer works at the Welcome Table about once every four to six weeks. We also have a growing core group of volunteers who are Greeters on Sunday mornings. Barb Manning is in charge of these two groups, and is always looking for more volunteers willing to be a Greeter or “Welcomer” on Sunday morning.

**Getting to Know UU (GTKUU):** We offered 4 newcomer orientations (“Getting to Know UU”) on Saturday mornings. We welcomed 33 participants in all. Many of them have connected with and joined the congregation, or are planning to join in the near future. We are thankful for their contributions!

## **Nominating Committee**

**Chairperson:** Bob Franklin

**Members:** Mary Applegate, Pat Bailey, Sharon Babala, Al DeSalvo, Kathy Hodges,

**Purpose:** The Nominating Committee is responsible for the recruitment and selection of candidates for elective offices as follows:

- Officers: President; Vice President; Secretary; Treasurer; Assistant Treasurer
- Chairperson: Religious Education Council
- Chairperson: Social Responsibilities Council
- Board of Trustees members
- Religious Education Council members
- Social Responsibilities Council members
- Nominating Committee members
- Endowment Trust trustees

In recruiting candidates for elective offices, the Committee reaches out to the congregation in a variety of ways. Announcements of the openings are made during the service and notice is given to the congregation in a Windows Weekly article. Additionally, the Committee worked with Growth Through Service to identify the fit between the talents of Albany UU members and the available positions. The Committee successfully recruited both members who have joined recently and members who have not previously held leadership roles.

### **Accomplishments:**

At the time of publication of the Annual Report, 2018 elections have not been held. This year, there is one contested election; Nominating Committee (as per Bylaws) and Endowment Trust. The slate of candidates is as follows:

President:	Patti Jo Newell
Vice President:	David MacLeod
Secretary:	Molly Daniels
Co-Treasurers:	Reese Satin, Seth Edelman
Asst Treasurer:	Kathy Harris
REC Chair:	Jim Hutchins
SRC Chair:	Matt Lesniak
Board of Trustees:	Zach Cunningham, Jan McCracken, Amie Jamieson
REC:	Leah Akins, Ela Kessel, Mike Myers
SRC:	Mark Abendoth, Crystal Taylor-Papps
Nominating:	Randy Rosette, Kelly Smith, TBD
Endowment Trust:	Paula Moskowitz, Peter Schaeffing

Bob Franklin and Kathy Hodges have completed their terms on the Nominating Committee. The Committee wishes to thank them for their time, talent and dedication.



## **Personnel Committee**

**Chairperson:** Jacqui Williams

Report not received

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **175th Anniversary Environmental Committee**

**Facilitator:** George Shear

**Purpose:** Develop a plan to improve the welcoming nature of our building from Washington Avenue, and our entrance while also re-evaluating and recommending improvements to the environment of our lobby and the corridors that lead to our Community Hall Sunday services.

**Members:** Lisa Barron, John Cooley, Janet Hunter, Britta Kuo, Amy Lent, Dave Metz, Patti Jo Newell, George Shear-facilitator, Diana Shear, Dave Stone.

**Accomplishments:** Plan outline presented to the congregation at the April 8<sup>th</sup> Sunday Service, - presented to Dick Dana and the Board, - and a congregational conversation was held to explain the projects recommended. **New ceiling tile and lighting was installed in the corridor leading to Community Hall.**

**Plans for next year:** Serving the church administration as aesthetics advisors and implementing some of the suggested projects.

### **Congregational Covenant Team**

**Chair:** Dick Dana

**Members:** Brian Frank, Jan McCracken, Patti Jo Newell, Leah Purcell, Kelly Smith, Jacqui Williams, Rev. Sam Trumbore

**Purpose:** In April, 2017 the Board charged this newly created Team with “gathering input from the congregation and creating a congregational covenant for Board Approval and, ultimately, an up-or-down vote at the 2018 annual Meeting.”

**Accomplishments:** The team was an outgrowth of the original Covenant Planning Team, which had spent 8 months educating the congregation through congregational conversations, presentations in services and even an original skit. During that time, Rev. Sam did several sermons on the topic. Ultimately, the conclusion was that the congregation was ready for, and interested in, working towards creating a congregational covenant.

Since the current Team was created in April 2017, they have researched covenants, spent many hours in discussion, and held three congregational conversations to gather input from the congregation. An interactive display was employed to solicit ideas about what is important to the congregation. In addition, the results of a detailed written survey were used to narrow down the

basic concepts that members would like to see in a covenant. The Team is now in the writing stage.

**Plans for next year:** The original intent of the Board - that there would be a congregational vote in May of 2018 - was an ambitious goal that early on the Team realized was unrealistic. The goal now is to provide the congregation with a proposed congregational covenant sometime in late fall 2019, which, if it receives a good reception from Albany UU members, would then be formally presented to the congregation for an up-or-down vote in early 2020.

## **Governance Working Group**

**Members:** Molly Daniels, Jon Newell, Peggy Sherman, Rev. Sam Trumbore

**Purpose:** In 2017, the Board of Trustees appointed the Governance Working Group (GWG) with a charge “to work with the Dan Hotchkiss model of governance, adapt it to our congregation’s needs and aspirations, and propose to the Board changes to Albany UU’s governance structure.” In the spring of 2018, the Board affirmed the GWG’s proposed governance structure and vision and charged the GWG with developing a plan for implementation.

**Accomplishments:** The GWG delivered its final report to the Board of Trustees on March 28, 2019. At that meeting, the Board adopted the following resolution:

- The Board accepts the final report of the Governance Working Group and thanks them for their work, and
- The Board will appoint 4 Interim members of a Program Team, to begin work soon, and
- The Board will appoint a second team to write new by-laws consistent with the Albany UU Governance structure proposed by the Governance Working Group.

The proposed governance structure developed by the GWG includes:

- A smaller Board with strategic focus
- A new Program Team to lead and coordinate ministry, and
- A simpler organizational structure and bylaws.

If implemented, there would no longer be separately elected Religious Education and Social Responsibility Councils; instead, these important functions would be carried out through volunteer teams.

The Endowment Trust would continue to be elected as it is now, and the Nominating Committee would continue to be chosen by the congregation through contested elections. Most positions would be held for two-year renewable terms.

In the fall and winter preceding its final report, the GWG discussed the proposed framework with the Board, the Religious Education Council, the Nominating Committee and the Finance Committee. The GWG led one congregational conversation in December and two more in

January. The GWG used feedback from these meetings to refine and clarify the proposed governance framework.

The GWG also benefited from the work of the Program Development Team appointed by the Board. Initially, it was anticipated that this group would pilot the Program Team concept, but that turned out to be too ambitious given the existing responsibilities of volunteer leaders. Instead, the Program Development Team provided guidance on the future role and operation of the Program Team. The Program Development Team included Vice President Patti Jo Newell, Rev. Sam Trumbore, Jim Hutchins (chair of REC), Matt Lesniak (chair of SRC) and Barb Manning (Membership Committee).

Finally, over the past year the GWG was able to draw on outside expertise. In May 2018, Rev. David Pyle of the Central East Region of the UUA presented a workshop in Albany titled “How to Be a Strategic Board.” He described an Executive Team model of governance that is consistent with the GWG’s proposed Program Team. In conjunction with the Program Development Group, the GWG also held two conference calls with the minister and lay leaders of the UU congregation in Athens, Georgia. The Athens congregation’s shared ministry and leadership development were featured in the winter 2018 issue of UU World. Its Ministry Council closely resembles the proposed Program Team.

**Plans for next year:** The GWG recommended to the Board a congregational vote on the new bylaws before the May 2020 annual meeting and election. Before then, the team or teams that are drafting bylaws and policies should work closely with the Board in an iterative process of drafts, discussion and refinement.

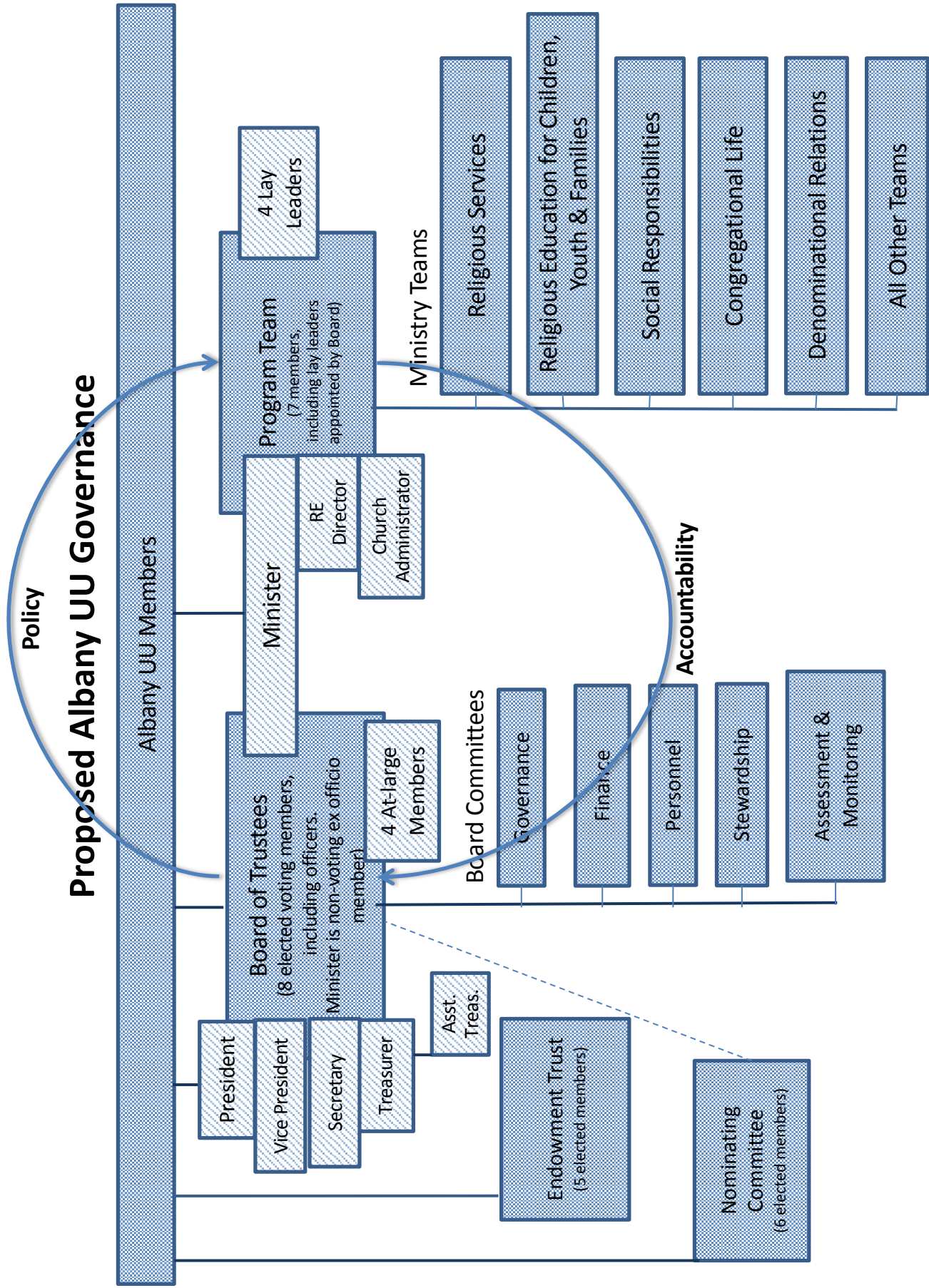
The GWG also recommended that the Board appoint 4 interim lay members to the Program Team, so that the Program Team can begin its work in the 2019-20 church year. Below is the charge drafted and reviewed by the Program Development Team and the GWG.

#### Draft Board Delegation to the Program Team/Council

1. **Role and Composition of the Program Team/Council.** The Program Team/Council consists of the Minister, the Congregation Administrator, the Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry and four lay leaders appointed by the Board with overlapping two-year terms. The Program Team/Council exercises authority and responsibility, as delegated to it by the Board, over congregational operations and programs to achieve the congregation’s goals, vision and mission, within the limitations and expectations of governing policy as set by the Board and is accountable to the Board for its work.
2. **Program Team/Council Expectations and Accountability.** The Board expects the Program Team/Council, individually and jointly:
  - To lead and unify the volunteer and paid staff in directing their efforts toward the fulfillment of the congregation’s goals, vision and mission.

- To ensure compliance with the bylaws, Board policies, and applicable laws and regulations.
  - To uphold a high standard of ethical conduct, consistent with Unitarian Universalist values and principles.
  - To implement the Board's Vision of Ministry by developing and accomplishing annual goals for its work as a team/council.
3. Four Board-Appointed Lay Leaders. The Board will appoint four members for two year overlapping terms who are to be experienced lay leaders of the congregation, jointly nominated by the Board President and the Minister. They may not simultaneously serve on the Board.

# Proposed Albany UU Governance



## **Growth Through Service**

**Co-chairs:** Dick Dana and Jaye Holly

**Conversation Leaders:** Amy Jamieson, Lois Bailey, Laura Churchill, Dick Dana, Jaye Holly, Linda Hunt, Betsey Kuzia, Maria Phillips, Ali Schaeffing, and Peggy Sherman.

**Purpose:** The Growth Through Service (GTS) program is designed to connect congregation members with opportunities that foster personal growth, new friendships, and greater connection with the-church community. GTS is also about creating connections among members of our congregation through serving a higher purpose, something greater than our own individual needs. A key premise of the program is that part of being UU is serving others and each other, and that by serving, one grows as a person.

**Source of the GTS Program:** Four members of our congregation attended a presentation at the June 2014 General Assembly by Jody Malloy and Laurie Cooke, two women from the UU Congregation in Media, Pennsylvania, who created the GTS program for their own congregation. The four members were so impressed by its potential, they brought it back here. Rev. Sam Trumbore came on board with the GTS concepts, and shortly after that, the Board of Trustees voted to explore its possibilities here at Albany UU.

With the Board's approval, Dick Dana began leading the process of bringing GTS to life.

Forums were held to inform the congregation and to determine the interest level in the congregation for pursuing the program. A sense of excitement began to build for the possibilities that GTS presented. Workshops were conducted early in 2015 with one of the GTS program's creators, Jody Malloy, and an Albany UU GTS team was formed.

**Goals:** The primary goal is to hold a conversation with each member of the congregation. The goal of these conversations is to talk about the person's aspirations, to explore what opportunities here at Albany UU might best fulfill those aspirations, and to discuss how they might take advantage of the opportunities here to participate in the life of the congregation.

For some, that might include volunteering and connecting to others through service. For others, it might mean doing things like taking a Lifespan Learning course, joining a Meaning Matters or Wellspring group, or attending Circle Dinners. And some people find connection simply by attending the service once a week, but may be interested in exploring other opportunities in the future. Wherever you are in your journey, the Conversation Leaders want to hear about it.

For those members who are already very involved, the conversation focuses on what they are already doing. Questions that are explored include: are you still finding your volunteer work rewarding; and are there things that you might want to try next when you decide to move on from your current volunteer activities?

A second goal of the GTS team is to collect descriptions of every service opportunity at Albany UU, no matter how small, and to post that information on our Website for all to see. We have heard many newer members use the term "overwhelming" to describe the process of learning

how they might fit into our community and where the best opportunities are for them to contribute. Making these descriptions available to all in a searchable format should take some of the mystery out of who we are and what we do together as a congregation, and will be especially useful for those just joining us on this journey.

**Accomplishments:** So far, our Conversation Leaders have held conversations with more than 165 members. Of the 117 Service Opportunities identified at Albany UU, 50 Service Opportunity Descriptions have been created and will shortly be put up on our Website.

**Plans for next year:** The Conversation Leaders will continue to hold conversations. Though the process has been slower than anticipated, it is expected that within the next year, we will be in the position to start having update conversations with those who have already had a conversation. And the Conversation Leaders will continue to welcome new members with a conversation.

The GTS leadership plans to complete the remaining 67 Service Opportunity Descriptions by the end of the next church year and post all of them on our website.

## **Inclusivity Team**

**Co-chairs:** Annika Pfluger and Patti Jo Newell

**Members:** Anne Marie Haber, Linda Hunt, Karen Kaufmann, Lee Newberg, Jean Poppei, Deborah Vogel, Rev. Sam Trumbore, Jacqui Williams

**Purpose:** In January 2017, the Albany UU Board of Trustees suggested an Inclusivity Team, made up of members of the congregation and tasked the team with designing and implementing a two-pronged approach for addressing white supremacy culture at Albany UU, as well as to plan activities that will facilitate an exploration of white privilege, create opportunities to identify and challenge our assumptions, learn about the cumulative impact on People of Color of seemingly small offenses (micro-aggressions), and to identify and provide resources for our ongoing education and reflection.

The Inclusivity Team is a working group that meets in Room B-8 at 11:45am on the first Sunday of the month.

**Accomplishments:** The Inclusivity Team has engaged in a variety of activities over the past year:

**Resources:** We finalized the assessment tools we developed for use with committees, councils, the board, and lay leadership and by individuals.

**Educational Classes:** We hosted a Congregational Read series on racism and environmental justice.

**Educational & Outreach Materials:** We purchased over a dozen inclusivity-themed fiction and non-fiction books for adults, young adults and children for inclusion in Joy Library and the RE Library. We created several inclusivity-themed posters for display in the Wayside Pulpit.

**Sunday Services:** We conducted two inclusivity themed services, inviting Lisa Good of Urban Grief to speak to us about her work responding to community violence and hosting another which featured the introduction of the Individual Assessment tool.

**Inclusivity Messaging:** We've transitioned our Windows articles to the Windows weekly and continued to present thematic messaging with the Channing Hall bulletin board. We also printed several different inclusivity themed posters for alternate presentation in the Wayside Pulpit.

**Plans for next year:** We plan to continue with our work on anti-racism and white privilege, but we are launching a new initiative as well. The Inclusivity Team will participate in the UUA's Welcoming Congregation Renewal Recertification Program, which emphasizes transgender inclusion in congregations. Lee Newberg will be the new chair of the Inclusivity Team.

### **Program Design Committee**

**Chairperson:** Patti Jo Newell (vice-president Board of Trustees)

**Members:** Tammy Hathaway, Jim Hutchins, Matt Lesniak, Barb Manning, Leah Purcell, Rev. Sam Trumbore

**Purpose:** A key element of the proposed governance changes is the creation of a Program Team that would assume operational and programmatic authority and decision-making as delegated to it by the Board of Trustees. The function of the Program Design Committee was to discuss the purview of the future Program Team, and identify skill sets for its future lay leaders. The composition of the Program Design Committee was determined by including the staff members of the PCC, the minister, and the chairs of the Religious Education Council, Social Responsibilities Council, and Membership Committee.

**Accomplishments:** The Program Design Committee engaged in a process of discernment as a team and hosted two conference calls with the UU church in Athens, GA, which is a couple of years into a similar governance change. The Program Design Committee shared a distillation of all of these conversations with the Governance Working Group and the Board of Trustees.

**Plans for next year:** The Program Design Committee has served its purpose and is now retired.



## **VOLUNTEER POSITIONS**

### **Childcare Coordinator**

Paula Brewer

**Members:** Childcare Providers, Albany UU Youth aged 13+

**Purpose:** Provide childcare for Albany UU congregational events

**Accomplishments in 2018-19:** Increased hourly childcare rate to \$15 per hour per provider. Childcare provided for social and community building events such as the Auction and Wine and Cheese Tasting. For cost efficiency, a flat rate is paid to youth providing childcare for more than 3 hours: 4 hours of service - \$50, 5 to 6 hours of service - \$75

**Plans for next year:** Continue to provide for Albany UU congregational events. Continue the childcare hourly rate of \$15 per hour. Revise childcare guidelines as needed when concerns arise, such as allowing children to access any refreshments provided at events.

#### **Challenges:**

- Allowing the children to access any refreshments provided at UU events – childcare guidelines will be revised noting that it is the responsibility of the children’s parents to supervise their child’s partaking of these refreshments.
- Monitoring childcare provider’s adherence to guidelines regarding the providers’ responsibility to engage the children. Concern has been raised about provider’s use of cell phones when supervising children. For each event, a responsible adult in attendance is designated as the contact person for the childcare providers to report to; usually it is the person requesting the childcare. The childcare guidelines will be revised to include that this on-site responsible adult check on the children and childcare providers at least once/hour to ensure that the providers are actively engaging the children, and report any issues to the Childcare Coordinator. Non-compliance with the childcare guidelines by the provider(s) may result in a decrease in pay, up to 50% decrease, for their services and the possibility that they will not be hired to provide childcare in the future.
- There has been an overall decrease in the number of events where childcare is needed/provided.

### **Interfaith Impact of New York State (IINYS) Liaison**

**Liaison:** Don Odell

**Members:** Robb Smith is Executive Director, Don Odell is IINYS secretary. IINYS Board members include Rev. Sam Trumbore and Peggy Sherman

**Purpose:** On the upcoming Advocacy Day members of IINYS and participants will advocate for Compassion and Justice, focusing on the environment and clean energy (Climate & Community Protection Act), and Criminal Justice Reform (HALT Solitary Confinement Act), and Voting Reform (Early Voting Act and other needed changes).

**Accomplishments:** Interfaith Impact's most recent annual advocacy day was on May 7, 2018. The next annual advocacy day is May 6, 2019.

The State Legislature has passed several items long advocated by IINYS including the Reproductive Health Act, GENDA, Voting Reforms and cash bail reform.

On the upcoming Advocacy Day members of IINYS and participants advocate and focus on the environment and clean energy (Climate & Community Protection Act), and Criminal Justice Reform (HALT Solitary Confinement Act and Cash Bail Reform).

Conscience in Public Life forums continue in Rochester. In addition to the issues above, we continue to monitor activity and partner with other organizations in such areas as single payer health care, campaign finance reform, reproductive health, and more, as our resources permit.

**Plans for next year:** The IINYS Board plans a retreat during the summer months, at such time when the more specific directions for the upcoming IINYS year are discussed. Delete cash bail reform from the to-do list and add it to the list of bills passed and signed.

## **Receptions**

**Coordinators:** Eileen Hoffman, Barb Manning, Sandy Stone

We continued our new organizational format that we started last year, with three people sharing the role of Reception Coordinator. Currently these three are Eileen Hoffman, Barb Manning and Sandy Stone. For each memorial reception needed this year, Sandy Stone or Barb Manning was the "Lead Coordinator" to be the contact between Rev. Sam, the church office (Tammy Hathaway) and the family. We met with Rev. Sam and the family to discuss what the family wanted for their reception. This seems to be working well as it allows for much better communication with the family, office and the Reception Committee. Our other reception volunteers helped with providing some of the food, set up, clean up and prepping food donations brought by the rest of our church community. During this past year we provided a memorial service reception for Stephen Dolben, Mary Reich and Ed Ryman services.

We would be happy to have more people willing to be Lead Coordinators as well as volunteers to assist with receptions, so if you would like to join us in one of these roles, please reach out to any one of us or Tammy Hathaway in the office to learn more about what is involved. We have a good crew of volunteers who all work well together and have fun.

In December and with appreciation, Leah and Molly Purcell hosted the Cookie Reception between Christmas Eve services.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **Annual Fellowship Dinner Committee**

**Chair:** Bob Franklin

**Members:** Ann D'Attilio, Tammy Hathaway, Meredith Mercer, Randy Rosette, Linda Way

**Accomplishments:** The Annual Fellowship Dinner was held on April 5, 2019 at the Franklin Terrace in Troy, NY. One hundred ten Albany UUs and their guests were in attendance. A social hour was held, followed by dinner. The evening's MC was Jon Newell. Rev. Sam Trumbore welcomed everyone. Following dinner, Congregation President Dick Dana gave a few remarks...and some jokes. Stewardship Co-chair Patti Jo Newell gave an update on the canvass and presented the winners of the "UU Bucks". The traditional recognition of member anniversaries was given by Meredith Andrews. This year's skit honored Rev. Trumbore's 20th anniversary as minister at Albany UU. It was titled "The MU-USIC MAN!", and was first performed in 1999. Randy Rosette did a stellar job of providing musical accompaniment for both skit rehearsals and the performance. The skit cast consisted of : Chris Bystroff, Dick Dana, Al DeSalvo, Bob Franklin, Judy Hanson, Kathy Harris, Tanya Hotalen, Tom Hotalen, Chris Jensen, Julie Lomoe, David MacLeod, Barb Metz, Dave Metz, Sigrin Newell, Randy Rosette and Jeffrey Sedam.

### **Building & Grounds**

**Chairperson:** Dave Metz

**Members:** Reese Satin, Dave Stone, Mike Babala, Eric Beeche, Betsey Miller, Charles Poltenson, Seth Edelman, Al DeSalvo, Bob Franklin,

**Purpose:** To improve and maintain Albany UU's physical facilities, buildings and grounds.

#### **Accomplishments:**

- Completed project to repair external and internal surfaces of west side wall of the Community Hall.
- Worked with vendors and contractors to implement major changes to the lighting and ceiling tiles in the lobby and hallway, implementing the design created by the Aesthetic Committee.
- Replaced locks at all exterior doors to meet recommendations from fire department. Now they are all on the same key as the other doors.
- Routine maintenance tasks, some of which were formerly done by staff.
- Researched replacements for columns on the front of the Sanctuary.
- Many minor repairs as needed.

**Plans:** Basically, more of the same that we have been doing on an on-going basis for years. Replace the columns on the Robin Street side of the Sanctuary. Routine maintenance tasks, some of which were formerly done by staff. Many minor repairs as needed.

## **Caring Network**

**Coordinator:** Todd Thomas

**Members:** Sharon Babala, Elizabeth Berberian, Dorry Campano, Laura Cayford, Bob Champagne\*, Ellen Chernoff, Pamela Crane, Anne de Noronha\*, Arlene Gilbert, Deb Grier, Judy Hanson, Kathy Harris, Tammy Hathaway, Thayer Heath, Rebekah Hinckley, Kathy Hodges, Eileen Hoffman, Tonya Hotalen\*, Judy Karis\*, Betsey Kuzia, Anny Lapinski, Amy Lent, Kathy Lloyd, Barbara Manning, Jan McCracken, Barbara Metz, Bill Morrison\*, Sigrin Newell, Don Odell, Carole Pink, Bobbi Place, Michaela Pochily, Leah Purcell, Mary Ann Randall, Andrea Ricard, Brian Silva\*, Kim Silva\*, Sandy Stone, Jennifer Thomas, Todd Thomas, Rev. Sam Trumbore, Deborah Vogel, Barbara Warner, Linda Way, Betsy Wright, Trish Zima. Those listed with an asterisk are folks who joined the Caring Network this year.

**Purpose:** The Caring Network (CN) reflects the words of our chalice lighting- “to sustain a vital and nurturing religious community.” We provide encouragement and short term support to Albany UU members who, due to hospitalization, sickness, loss, or isolation, need assistance. Services typically include transportation to medical appointments, meals and shopping during recovery, and friendly visits and “check in’s” from Caring Network members. Cards are regularly sent on behalf of the Caring Network by Laura Cayford. Notifications are sent through an Albany UU email group and CN members assist in those ways that are best for them.

**Accomplishments:** As of the end of April, almost three dozen members of the Albany UU community were helped in some way by the Caring Network this church year. In addition, the Network has assisted in delivering monthly copies of Windows to members who cannot access the electronic version and/or would benefit from a friendly visit. We continue to maintain a database of assistive devices available to lend, thanks to Andrea Ricard, and delivered treats and warm wishes over Christmas and Valentine’s Day to members who are no longer able to regularly attend services.

While the Caring Network is a more formal way of helping members of our community, there are many people who are not Caring Network members who help out Albany UU members and friends. We honor their service and thank them for their contributions.

## **Flower Committee**

**Chairperson:** Sandy Stone

**Flower arrangers:** Debbie Brown, Dorry Campano, Ellen Chernoff, Lorraine English, Barb Manning, Barb Metz, Sigrin Newell, Trish Zima, Sandy Stone.

The Flower Committee provides flowers for the Sanctuary during Sunday service and for various other occasions during the year, such as memorials and receptions in Channing Hall. These arrangements are paid for by contributions from members of the congregation in celebration or commemoration. We also have had a number of donors do their own arrangements, which gives

us a wonderful variety of creativity. One of our favorite projects is “greening” the sanctuary for our Christmas services.

It was an honor this year to supply flowers at the Memorial Services for several of our members who passed away.

If you have an interest in flower arranging, or just love flowers, we welcome any new members to this committee. Look for the “Getting Connected Fair” in the fall or contact Sandy Stone directly. The process for signing up to arrange is incredibly easy with the help from Sapphire and Tammy in the office. Check out the flower donation sheet in Channing Hall and look for me at coffee hour to answer any questions you may have.

Again, this summer, we look forward to having less formal floral arrangements, perhaps from our own gardens. No sign up needed; just bring in things from your own garden. Vases are available for your use.

### **Fun(d)raising Committee**

**Chair:** Chris Jensen

#### **Holiday Bazaar–2018**

**Chairperson:** Sigrin Newell

**Members:** Dorry Campano, Kathy Harris, Karen Kaufmann, Randy Rosette, Sandy Stone, Deborah Vogel plus a large number of crafters and cooks.

**Purpose:** Provide a fun activity to honor the winter holidays and raise funds for Albany UU while sharing the products of our creativity and cooking skills.

**Accomplishments:** The 2018 bazaar consisted of three parts: Crafts, Soups, and Pies

**Crafts:** Thirty five people helped with the craft section. Some contributed their handiwork, others helped set up, sell, and then clean up. The crafters made items such as hats and scarves, catnip mice, jewelry, holiday decorations, jams, and other gift items. In addition to crafts donated by volunteers, vendors were recruited to set up tables to sell their own work. We targeted AUU members rather than trying to bring in outsiders. Vendors paid 10% of what they earned and some donated more.

**Soups:** Seventeen donors made twenty-seven!! types of soup which accommodated dietary needs of all kinds. These were sold on two Sundays plus a few left-overs for a final Sunday sale. Some soups were frozen to be eaten later, and others were sold fresh for an easy, nutritious after-church meal.

**Pies:** Lots of people came on Election Day to peel apples and assemble pies. To get ready for this, Sandy Stone and Dorry Campano made crusts for more than 80 pies, using the wonderful recipe created by Jan Satin. We boxed the assembled pies and froze them to be ready to sell. Buyers took these delicious pies home to bake when they wished.

Crafts were sold on Dec. 2 and 9. After the initial bazaar, we sold ‘leftovers’ the following Sunday. The organizing committee is grateful to all who helped make crafts, soups, or pies, as well as all those who helped to sell, set up and clean up. This fund raising activity would not be successful without willing workers.

**Plans for next year:** More of the same. Sigrin Newell will no longer be the overall coordinator – we need to recruit someone else.

### **Guided Wine & Cheese Tasting FUNdraiser**

**Chairperson:** John Sherman

**Members:** Principal Wineaux: Al DeSalvo, Ben English, Amie Jamieson, Peter Meixner, Donald Odell, Rick Piet, John Sherman, and Rick Whitebread; Enthusiastic assistants: Laurie Beberwyck, Kathy Harris, Kathy Hodges, Peggy Sherman, and Deborah Vogel

**Purpose:** FUNdraising event that traditionally feature 5-6 pairings of wine, cheese and condiments from an area of the world along with informative and entertaining background information.

**Accomplishments:** This year’s 14th Annual Wine and Cheese Tasting FUNdraiser was devoted to presenting our selection of certified organically grown wines and cheeses from organic and/or sustainable cheese makers. This year, the selected cheeses were procured and ably presented by Mary Rizzo, the new proprietor of The Cheese Traveler. Fifty-three people attended, slightly down from the previous years’ record-setting level, due to some of our regular participants neglecting to check their calendars before booking their vacation travel. All who could attend had a very good time and agreed that there are many excellent certified organically grown wines to be enjoyed. We thank The Honest Weight Food Coop for donating a \$100 gift certificate that paid for the accompaniments. We raised \$727.27 for Albany UU! Based on the enthusiasm and comments from attendees and the Wineaux’ continued dedication to this excuse for trying and sharing new wines and cheeses, we look forward to celebrating next year by exploring other facets of the world of wine and cheese.

**Plans for next year:** The 15th Annual Guided Wine & Cheese Tasting is scheduled for Saturday, March 7, 2020 from 7-9 PM. The theme will be determined by the Wineaux later this year, and we invite anyone interested to help in the research and preparations.

### **Albany UU Goods and Services Auction**

**Planning Committee:** Bob and Trish Zima, Randy Rosette, Chris Jensen, Linda Hunt, Kathy Harris, Barb and Dave Metz, Reese Satin, Pat Bailey, Elizabeth Berberian, Sharon Babala, Paula and Steve Moskowitz, Dave MacLeod and Debbie Reep MacLeod, Kathy Lloyd and Lois Bailey. In addition, several others helped at the event by checking attendees in, tallying fixed price items, and more.

**Purpose of group:** FUNdraising for Albany UU while sampling food, socializing, and sharing events and services among our community were the mission.

**Accomplishments:** The annual Albany UU Goods and Services Auction was held on the evening of March 16, 2019 with a theme of Cure Cabin Fever. There were 115 total items up for bid as live, fixed price, and silent auction. These were donated by 62 households, including 11 new donor households! About 98 people attended the live auction, and others participated by putting their slip in the fixed price envelopes beforehand. Over 100 people/households participated in bidding, with prices ranging from \$8 to \$500, with a total of over \$21,000 raised. Over the course of a year, the auction committee planned for this event through a series of committee and subcommittee meetings. We will enjoy our hard-earned success at a Celebration Dinner in June.

**Plans for next year:** The next auction will be held on March 21, 2020. We welcome newcomers to the Committee. Don't hesitate to contact one of the committee members or the chair, Randy Rosette 518-783-2637 or [rosette\\_jensen@juno.com](mailto:rosette_jensen@juno.com).

## **Gardening**

**Coordinator:** Donna Meixner

**Members:** Many Dedicated Volunteers that help out once or multiple times over the growing season.

**Purpose:** The Gardening Team tends the gardens surrounding our buildings and maintains the welcoming appearance of Albany UU. This provides a benefit for our members as well as our neighbors. We offer a combination of "one shot" and ongoing seasonal volunteer opportunities, allowing all experience levels to participate and work alongside other members and friends. Volunteering is easy as we use SignUp.com on the Albany UU web site to facilitate the process.

**Accomplishments:** Our five garden areas were well maintained and looked lovely this past season. We had a great turnout of gardeners for our spring and fall clean-ups, and we had good weekly coverage throughout the gardening season. The Gardening Team uses a gardening e-Group to share information about the gardens.

**Plans for next year:** We will continue to maintain the gardens. In addition, this season we will be enhancing the plantings in the Memorial Garden.

## **History & Archives**

**Chair:** Patricia Bailey

**Goals:** Continuing to keep the archives in good order, to preserve our history and to make records accessible to all Albany UU members as well as with organizing, systematizing and updating the archives as needed. We continue to work on adding new items donated by members while striving to maintain only one copy of most materials. We have an alpha list of the files along with a list of the location of items of interest and value. We continue to consider the cost

and value of putting all cassette tapes (over 600) of services and other events on CD's for better preservation.

**Responsibilities:** Maintaining the History & Archives of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany. The archives contain many records going back to the beginning of the Universalist Society in 1830's and continuing with the First Unitarian Church in 1940's to date. Some of these records are irreplaceable. The Archives also contain many items saved by members and later turned over to us for preservation. The originals of some of our records are stored in the New York State Library and the Trustees also keep microfilms in Stone Mountain Storage Inc. - as per Board approval. Copies of most of these documents are kept in the archives. Also, due to space we are only able to archive one of every valuable item, such as copies of Oriel, Windows, etc. It is our hope that we will be able to continue to store important records along with much interesting data in this manner and for long into the future. Continuing in 2019 we hope to, as much as possible, maintain the files for easier access to many documents and Albany UU related items. We gratefully accept archival items for safekeeping and we especially appreciate having dates, including the year and names (especially on photographs) of each item & photo and, if appropriate, the name of the person donating the items. We now protect valuable books with archival papers for better, safer storage.

Thank you to those who continue to help preserve our story.

## **Charles R. Joy Library**

**Co-Chairs:** Melanie & Paul Axel-Lute

**Members:** Cassie Artale, Lucy Wrightington, Sally Knapp, Mary Applegate, Todd von Hausen.

**Purpose:** The Joy Library supports the mission of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany by selectively collecting and facilitating access to information resources on Unitarian Universalism and other spiritual traditions, social and ethical issues, philosophy, theology, Bible study with a liberal religious perspective, and other issues of interest to our congregation.

**Accomplishments:** We used the Joy Library budget of \$400 to purchase 25 new books at a total cost of \$397.68. Nine other new books purchased by the Inclusivity Team were added to the library. In October 2018 we received from Ed Ryman his collection of books on Buddhism and Taoism, resulting in addition of 129 books to the library, housed in a dedicated bookcase also given by Ed. Five books donated by other individuals were added. We concluded the weeding project begun the previous year, removing 18 more books from the library.

On October 28, 2018 Joy Library was the committee focus in the announcements portion of the service, with the immediate result that we added two new members to the committee. The new bookcase purchased for the library from Stott funds was installed in November 2018, and we shifted the collection to utilize that additional shelving. In February 2019 we submitted to the Endowment Trustees a request for funding from the Nigel Wright Peace Fund for a list of peace-



related books; as of April we were in the process of revising that list in response to suggestions from the Trustees.

A total of 44 loans were recorded during the year, through April 2019. Three books borrowed in earlier years were determined to be lost in circulation. After all the year's additions and deletions, the total number of books in the circulating collection was 1,651.

**Plans for next year:** We plan to continue acquiring new books for the circulating collection, and we hope to compile and post an inventory of the antiquarian collection.

### **Lifespan Learning**

#### **All Sides Considered**

**Chairperson:** Jim Schlembach

**Members:** Varies. "Regulars" include Reese Satin, Kathy Harris, Ed Hancock, Sue Cypert, Linda Hunt and Larry Gambino, Don Holmes and Cathy Lloyd, Kathy Hodges, Kathy Harris, Lucy Wrightington, JP Podgorski, .....

**Purpose:** Discuss current social and political events.

**Accomplishments:** Share information, consider different points of view, try to predict effects of current events, etc.

**Plans for next year:** Continue to continue

### **Nonviolent Communication**

Jan McCracken, Philomena Moriarty (**Co-Chairs**)

In the 2018-2019 year there were two Nonviolent Communication trainings and an NVC practice group. These training gave both those at Albany UU and members of the community an introduction and opportunity to practice NVC. NVC consciousness and process promotes effective communication, empathy and models itself on the Nonviolent processes of Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi. These trainings and practice groups were attended by both members of Albany UU and the community and served as an introduction to the values and principles emblematic of Unitarian Universalism.

### **Small Group Ministry**

**Conveners:** Christy Mabry and Don Odell

**Members:** There are seven participants. The group continues to remain constant in size and is limited in order to provide what a small group can provide.

**Purpose:** To provide members and friends of Albany UU a place to participate in small group conversations important to their lives.

**Accomplishments:** The participants' intentions together are to provide a welcoming and supportive place to talk about their personal lives and about issues and ideas that add to their

understanding of themselves, one another and, sometimes, of the world in general. We meet on a twice a month schedule, except in the summer with participants taking turns in developing a discussion guide.

**Plans for next year:** The Small Group Ministry plans to continue on a similar trajectory as it seems to be working well at present. It is a valuable experience for group members and it would seem useful to expand to more groups for others to participate.

### **UU Wellspring**

This year the Wellspring Sources program has 7 participants led by facilitators Erik von Hausen and Betsy Miller. Jan McCracken and Sharon Babala are facilitating the Deep Questions program with 9 participants.

Wellspring at Albany UU provides a safe space for you to explore the sacred within; to understand how we UU's got to be who we are; to read, think and talk about life's big questions; and to reflect upon what we are called to do in the world. There are five interconnected components: commitment to a daily spiritual practice, monthly spiritual direction (self-reflection with a guide), small group meetings, readings; audio; video material, and putting our faith into action. Coming closer to your own purpose and meaning can enhance our community in countless ways. Wellspring participants express that their experience gives them deeper acceptance and understanding of the many paths that UU's take on their personal and spiritual journeys. This awareness contributes to sustaining the living mosaic of beliefs and practices that hold us together as a community.

### **Partner Church Committee**

**Chairperson:** Dave Metz

**Members:** Sharon Babala, Pat Bailey, Dick Brewer, Debbie Brown, Peter Brown, Dawn Dana, Dick Dana, Ben English, Judy Hanson, Chris Jensen, Barb Manning, Chuck Manning, Barb Metz, Dave Metz, Betsey Miller, Don Odell, Darnell Rohrbaugh, Randy Rosette, Rev. Sam Trumbore, Betsy Wright

**Purpose:** To maintain an active relationship with Albany UU's partner church in Szökefalva, Romania.

**Accomplishments:** Late last church year, after the Annual Meeting and our report, the group had a very successful visit to the Partner Church in Szökefalva. The first half of the visit included visits to many sites that are of historic importance in the development of Unitarianism in Romania as well as a chance to see the beauty of the country. This was followed by 5 days living in Szökefalva with families from the Unitarian congregation there.

Consistent with the past few years, part of the minister's salary will be supported by the Partner Church budget. In addition, we will contribute some funds for specific church projects as yet to be identified.

## **Religious Services Committee**

**Chairperson:** Dawn Dana

**Members:** Carol Butt, Peter Meixner, Jon Newell, Randy Rosette, Rev. Sam Trumbore

**Role:** The Religious Services Committee (RSC) helps plan Sunday services with pulpit guests, arranges for our annual This I Believe service, and coordinates services during the summer. We manage and orient the Service Associate and Lead Usher corps, and maintain and update instructions and scripts for all service roles. We recruit weekly Announcers and coordinate Committee Focus presentations with PCC. We assist pulpit guests in coordinating their service planning with the Service Associate, RE Director, Music Director, and Albany UU office staff. The RSC attends to service logistics, including ushering, Joys and Sorrows, Community Greeting, and the Offertory. We provide support to the minister in shaping our service year. A primary goal is to ensure that our services are of high quality and welcoming to all.

**Service Themes:** Rev. Sam Trumbore, RE Director Leah Purcell, and Music Director Richard Porterfield have worked together to establish and implement broad themes for the church year, tied to Meaning Matters curricula. These have included Vision, Memory, Mystery, Possibility, Trust, Journey, and Wholeness. The themes offer a framework for selecting readings, stories, music and other service elements that provide an integrated flow to the service.

**Service Logistics:** We continue to strive for diversity in our pulpit roles. We have maintained the practice of having the Committee Focus aspect of our Announcer role be optional, so that the role is available to a broader spectrum of congregants beyond the small cadre of committee chairs.

RSC has continued to monitor audibility concerns in Community Hall and supports the organization of a team to provide onsite sound system management and troubleshooting for Sunday services. We are encouraged by the fact that complaints are fewer in number.

RSC continues to promote and monitor our Sunday Service Comments Logbook. Members and friends can record criticism, praise, or suggestions about the service. RSC regularly reviews comments, and responds as appropriate. The Logbook is displayed on the table in the Community Hall lobby, to increase visibility and access. The frequency of entries continues to grow, and we have received much useful feedback.

RSC surveyed the congregation during the fall to ascertain opinions on applause during the service. Although a range of opinions was expressed, we felt there was not strong support for further limiting or discouraging congregational applause. We have retained the statement in the Order of Service requesting no applause during Joys & Sorrows.

**Pulpit Guests and Special Services:** Pulpit guests this year have included Joe Paparone, Rev. David Weissbard, Matt Meyer, and Rev. Lynn Ashley. Services offered by congregants include two services by Sigrin Newell (on Thomas Starr King and the Spirituality of Flowers); a service by the Partner Church spring 2018 travelers to Transylvania; an “Open Question” service by the Board of Trustees, focusing on how Albany UU might be a good neighbor; and a service

presented by the Inclusivity Team with Lisa Good. Leah Purcell, our Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry, offered a service in October. Well-loved traditions include our Homecoming service in September, the Wheel of Life service in October, the Christmas pageant and Christmas Eve candlelight services, the Senior High service, and the Bridging and Flower Communion services in June. The Hudson Mohawk UU ministers and others led an inspiring joint service with the five congregations at Doane Stuart School on April 7.

A perennially well received service at Albany UU is “This I Believe.” This year’s TIB service is planned for May 19. Presenters will include Geoff Abbas, Jora Cohen, and Erik von Hausen. The committee greatly appreciates the willingness of members of the congregation to participate in this service and share their journeys.

**Service Volunteer Coordination:** All instructions and scripts for service roles have been updated and made available on the website, on the Sign-Up volunteer site, in pulpit binders, and other locations as appropriate. Scripts are available on the web site in Word format, allowing easy customization.

**Summer Services:** RSC was pleased with response to and attendance at our twelve summer services in 2018. Average weekly attendance was 71, which is in line with recent years. Peak attendance at 89 people was at our first summer service, with Rev. Chris Antal. Randy Rosette served successfully as our Summer Services Coordinator for a second year.

RSC has been working since early in this calendar year to plan a full schedule of 2019 summer services, running from June 16 through September 1. Randy Rosette will again bring her multi-faceted skills to the Summer Services Coordinator role. Music Director Rick Porterfield is working to fill summer service musician slots, and RSC will recruit summer Service Associates. A summer service insert will be published in the June Windows. Summer pulpit guests will include Reverends Chris Antal, Tom Chulak, Dick Gilbert, Amanda Poppei, and Rabbi Norman Mendel, among others. We are pleased to have such an interesting and diverse summer program taking shape.

### **Safe Congregation Response Team (SCRT)**

**Conveners:** Jean E. Poppei, Leah Purcell

**Members:** Meredith Andrews (Member at Large), Jean Poppei (Member at Large), Liz Halvorsen (Religious Education Council), Lee Newberg (Board of Trustees Representative), Leah Purcell (Director of Religious Education), Sam Trumbore (Minister of Albany UU)

**Purpose:** Ensure that any violations of the Albany UU Safe Congregation Policy are properly investigated and responded to. Monitor that those who are required to take the NEARI *Balancing Acts: Keeping Children Safe in Congregations* have certificates of completion on file with the DRE. Respond to questions/challenges about the Albany UU Safe Congregation Policy. Educate the congregation on the Albany UU Safe Congregation Policy.

**Update:** The SCRT met just once, in October 2018. At that meeting, Lee Newberg and Leah Purcell presented a number of items for discussion: a proposal for the development of an education program for the congregation on sexual misconduct with a view toward prevention; the inclusion of a new rule to ensure RE safety: avoid having 2 adults who are in a committed relationship signed up to lead an RE group; institute the use of <https://www.trustedemployees.com/> for screening RE volunteers; and continued examination of the Limited Access Agreement, making sure that parents and teachers are informed about the changes put in place that recognized excellent compliance and at the same time, continued vigilance.

## **UU Connections Team**

**Chairperson:** Peggy Sherman

**Members:** Linda Hunt, Don Odell, Jean Poppei, Leah Purcell, Jacqui Williams, with Dick Dana and Rev. Sam Trumbore ex officio

**Purpose:** Promote, support and coordinate Albany UU's active participation in the Unitarian Universalist Association, as well as its connections with UUA member congregations and affiliated organizations.

**Accomplishments:** We publicized opportunities for Albany UU members to represent our congregation at regional and national gatherings. We were successful in raising the Albany UU budget allocation for denominational affairs subsidies and extending an Endowment Trust grant in order to offer travel stipends. In particular, we hope to broaden our congregation's participation by supporting young adults and emerging congregational leaders in travel to the Unitarian Universalist Association's General Assembly.

In June 2018, Jean Poppei and Jacqui Williams represented our congregation as onsite delegates to General Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri, and Linda Hunt and Peggy Sherman served as off-site delegates. For the 2019 General Assembly, our congregation will be represented by a full slate of 8 delegates in Spokane, Washington.

Other activities that connect Albany UU to our larger denomination included:

- Our annual Hudson Mohawk UU service, held on Sunday, April 7 titled "Is It Too Late? Healing the Earth and Our Spirits." After worship in the Doane Stuart chapel, UUs from Albany, Glens Falls, Kingston, Saratoga and Schenectady shared a potluck lunch.
- Leah Purcell organized the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's Guest At Your Table initiative for our congregation.

Still to come is the 2019 Seaway Gathering, bringing together upstate New York congregations, to be held in Ithaca on May 3 and 4.

**Plans for next year:** We will start earlier to communicate the benefits of our congregation's affiliation with the UUA and the personal rewards that come from participation in denominational events. The 2020 General Assembly is slated for Providence, Rhode Island from

June 24-28. With ready accessibility, this will be a wonderful opportunity for more Albany UUs to experience GA.

## **PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Albany UU Humanists**

**Convener:** Don Odell

**Members:** There are no members per se. Any and all who are interested in learning about and promoting Humanism at Albany UU are welcome to come and participate. Attendance at monthly meetings has ranged from five to ten. Over fifty individuals are currently on the Albany UU Humanist eGroup list.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Albany UU Humanists is to give an identity to Humanists at Albany UU. It also provided interested persons the opportunity to discuss their interpretation of humanism with guidance of each other and the UU Humanists, an affiliate group of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

**Accomplishments:** We have met seven times during the current Albany UU year, with each one resulting in a lively exchange of views. The focus has been somewhat on the individual perspectives on humanism. We have also explored the role of ritual and symbolism in the Humanist tradition, reviewed the Albany UU hymnals for music appropriate to humanism; the Humanist perspectives in Paganism and religious naturalism among other items in the meetings.

**Plans for next year:** We hope to continue to meet monthly to continue discussions about Humanism, and to learn from each other and other sources. There is no set agenda as the group at each meeting tends to find its own voice, and to provide ideas as to future meeting agendas, and other activities as may be determined by those present.

### **Circle Dinners**

**Chairpersons:** John and Peggy Sherman

**Members:** Hosts: Michael Braunstein, Dick and Paula Brewer, Dawn and Dick Dana, Carol Butt and Ed Hancock, Jane Carol Glendinning, Cindee Herrick and Ken MacDonald, Barbara and Chuck Manning, David and Debbie MacLeod, Reese Satin, John and Peggy Sherman, Linda and Terry Way.

**Purpose:** Developing personal connections among Albany UUs and newcomers makes our church community strong. Circle Dinners are a great opportunity to socialize over a potluck dinner in a private home and get better acquainted with fellow members and friends. As well as giving members the opportunity to strengthen their connections with Albany UU and contribute to a vital, nurturing religious community, the dinners provide an extraordinary opportunity for newcomers to appreciate Albany UU.

**Accomplishments:** We have facilitated 4 very successful Circle Dinners during the 2018-19 church year. Several first time hosts have stepped forward and hosted very successful

dinners. Among the 115 participants we have seen many newcomers. The final dinner of the church year is scheduled for Saturday, May 4.

**Plans for next year:** We plan to have 4 Circle Dinners during the coming year beginning in November.

### **Pastoral Care Associates**

The Pastoral Care Associate (PCA) team offers supportive listening to members and friends of Albany UU. With Rev. Sam acting as Supervisor, the group meets monthly to hone skills and learn about potential areas of pastoral care need. Some areas of training have included loss and grief, anxiety, triad practice, and non-violent communication. Current PCAs include Sharon Babala, Lisa Barron, Chuck Manning, Donna Meixner, Phil Rich, Randy Rosette, Sandy Stone, and Dee Van Riper. Anyone requiring a compassionate “ear” is encouraged to reach out directly to one of the above PCAs for assistance, email [listeners@albany-uu.org](mailto:listeners@albany-uu.org), or contact Rev. Sam Trumbore or the Albany UU office at 518-463-7135.

### **Philosophy Discussion Group**

Report prepared by Rodger Fink and Don Odell

The person who suggests a topic presents it and leads discussion. There is no formal membership. Anyone is welcome on Tuesdays at 10:00 AM with a purpose to conduct civil discussions on a wide variety of topics recommended by attendees. The Philosophy Group recently discussed Dadaism, investment in early childhood, inequality, basic income, public anger, artificial intelligence and other topics.

### **Projects & Quilts (P's & Q's)**

**Reporter:** Barb Manning

**Members:** Fran Berg, Joan Byalin, Joan Ekengren, Virginia Hammer, Janet Hunter, Amy Lent, Michaela Pochily, Abby Sugarman, Nancy Wagner, Barb Manning and assorted visitors.

P's & Q's meets every Wednesday from 10 am until 12:30pm. We work on group quilt projects and individual knitting or other hand-work projects while sharing stories and solving the world's problems. At noon we eat our bag lunches that we each brought, drink tea and eat chocolate. Tea and chocolate are provided by the group.

This year we quilted a piece that Jan Satin had made but never got to finish before she died. We spent much of the late winter and spring planning our next large quilt. We have the design, the fabrics and are well along in cutting and preparing pieces to start hand quilting squares. This quilt will be done in memory of Jan Satin, long-time member of P's & Q's and an excellent quilter. We are calling it “Jan's Quilt”.

We were saddened this spring when another long-time member, Mary Reich, died. She was an excellent quilter and many people in the congregation are owners of one of her quilted works of art. We are also happy to have welcomed two new members this year – Amy Lent and Nancy Wagner. We welcome any new members and, if you like to sew, we can teach you how to quilt. Contact Barb Manning (518-439-4226 or [BarbaraCManning@hotmail.com](mailto:BarbaraCManning@hotmail.com)) for further information.

## **Walker Book Group**

**Reporter:** Marth Musser

The Walker Book Group meets in Channing Hall for a potluck and lively book discussion at 5:30 p.m. on the second Sunday of the month from September through June. The group is open to all Albany UU members and friends. Newcomers are always welcome. This informal book group has existed for many years and is named in memory of a treasured, deceased Albany UU member.

**Purpose:** Participants search for UU truth and meaning by reading and discussing a wide range of fiction and nonfiction literature. Members greatly expand their reading horizons and develop a deeper sense of community and stronger connections with other Albany UUs. Members select books for each month's discussion by group consensus. Suggested books must have been read recently and be available at low cost and/or be easily available from the public library.

The group read and discussed five novels, three nonfiction books, and three short stories. Bad weather forced cancellation of the January meeting. Traditionally, the group reads a "classic" book in May and short stories in June. Attendance averaged 12 to 14 persons.

**Books discussed from September 2018 through June 2019:** *Panchinko* by Min Jin Lee, *Revolution Song* by Russel Shorto, *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles, *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the F.B.I.* by David Grann, *Less* by Andrew Sean Greer, *Behold the Dreamers* by Imbolo Mbue, *The Fish that Ate the Whale* by Rich Cohen, *Ragtime* by E.L. Doctorow, and short stories by Susan Sontag, Saul Bellow, and Bernard MacLaverly.

**Accomplishments:** Despite competition from various other activities and busy schedules, the group continues to thrive and generate interest in reading and discussing literary works of fiction and nonfiction. A number of new individuals joined the group during the year. We participated in the Albany UU "Get Connected Fair" in October 2018.

**Plans for next year:** Members will continue to search for UU truth and meaning by reading and discussing various books.



**NOTES:**