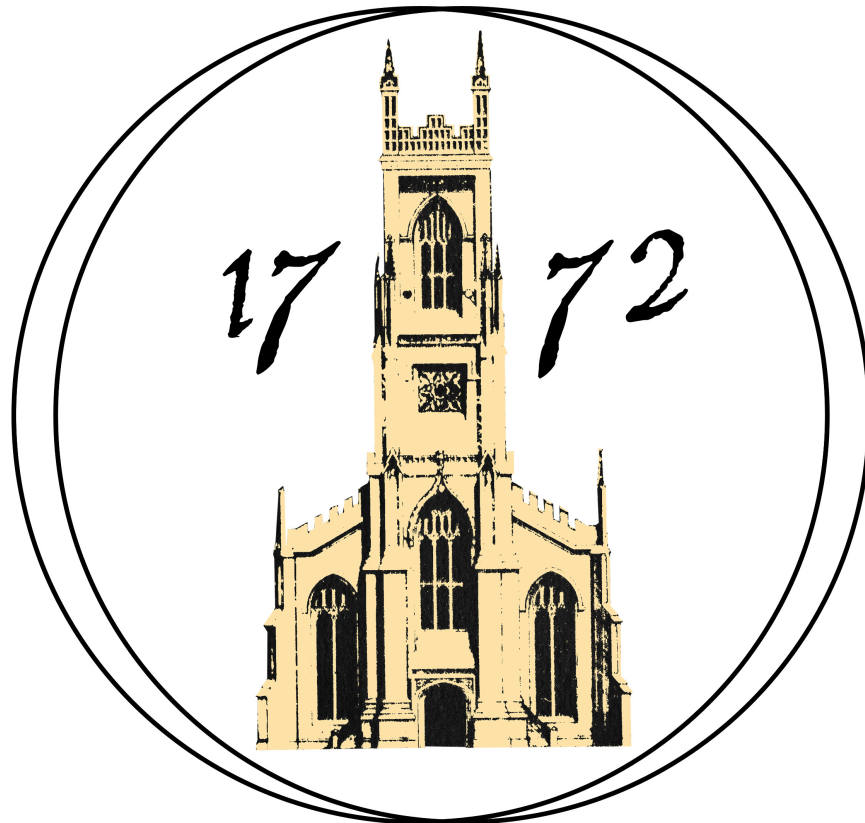


UNITARIAN CHURCH IN CHARLESTON
ANNUAL REPORT
2018-2019



The Unitarian Church in Charleston

“Building a welcoming home for spiritual freedom
that enriches our lives and serves our world”

The Unitarian Church in Charleston
Church Year 2018-19
Membership 408
Honorary Members 6
Friends 48

Vestry:

Gail Schiffer, Chair
 Priscilla Shumway, 1st Vice-Chair
 John Hyatt, 2nd Vice-Chair
 Diane Narkunas, Secretary
 Zachariah Conover, Treasurer
 Mary Ellen Giess
 Tommy Hughston
 Joe Krause
 Mark Madden

Staff:

Rev. Elaine Beth Peresluha, Minister
 Rev. Nancy Pellegrini, Assistant Minister
 Sandra Selvitelli, Executive Director
 Susan Conant, Music Director
 Danielle Lopez, Religious Education
 Administrator/Director
 Carol Oates, Membership Coordinator
 Regina Ruopoli, Communications Manager
 Debbie Kirby, Bookkeeper
 Joe McCormack, Sexton

Children's Staff:

Melissa Zahler, Annex Manager
 Deloris Crawford, Nursery
 Lauren Insinger and Nia Johnson,
 High School Youth Group Leaders

Vestry

Chair: Gail Schiffer

1st Vice-Chair: Priscilla Shumway

2nd Vice-Chair: John Hyatt

Secretary: Diane Narkunas

Treasurer: Zachariah Conover

Members: Mary Ellen Giess, Tommy Hughston, Joe Krause, and Mark Madden

Ex-Officio: Rev. Elaine Peresluha, Minister and Sandra Selvitelli, Executive Director

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Vestry is the Board of Directors for the Unitarian Church in Charleston. The Vestry is comprised of nine elected members including the Chair, two Vice-Chairs, a Secretary, and the Treasurer.

Covenant:

We, the members of the Vestry of the Unitarian Church in Charleston understanding that we work within the approved policies of the Vestry and the UC-CHS Constitution, covenant with each other to:

1. Be in service to the Congregation and its mission by performing our duties in a transparent manner, to the best of our abilities.
2. Respecting the confidentiality of information shared during Executive Session and other sensitive conversations held with other congregants and staff members.
3. Prioritize our commitments to the Congregation so that Vestry leadership is our primary focus.
4. Represent what is best for the Congregation as a whole, regardless of personal inclinations or loyalties.
5. Accept responsibility for making informed choices.
6. Actively and respectfully listen to others, assuming that they bring their best intentions to every discussion.
7. Respect others' commitments by:
 - a. Being on time
 - b. Committing only to tasks we feel we can comfortably complete
 - c. Responding to Vestry communications in a timely manner
 - d. Striving for equitable distribution of required tasks and responsibilities
8. Support Vestry decisions once they have been made, showing solidarity by presenting a unified message from the Vestry.
9. Strive to create spiritual, loving and purposeful community as a group, that we might reflect our hopes and goals for UC-CHS.

*Vestry Report (cont.)***Activities and Accomplishments:**

This was a challenging year for our Congregation and for the Vestry, beginning with the resignation of our minister, Reverend Danny Reed. During the ensuing year, we discovered the truth of our theme, “We Are the Church,” as our Sunday attendance continued to be high (thanks to our stellar Worship Services Committee), our activities were many, and we raised a prodigious amount of money to resurface our beloved Sanctuary.

The Vestry and Church committees have worked on a number of issues and initiatives this year, largely designed to keep our Church functioning smoothly, to discover the needs and wishes of our members, and to improve our governance and staffing for the future.

Maintaining the strength of our Congregation, aware that there would be questions about Rev. Danny’s resignation, the Vestry moved quickly to address the concerns of congregants in a timely manner. A letter to members from the Vestry as well as a number of after-Church meetings during the summer and early fall were designed to answer most, but by no means all, of the concerns. Individual conversations continued throughout the year, and many questions were addressed by our Targeted Minister, Rev. Elaine Peresluha, at Cottage Meetings in the spring.

Cottage Meetings, held in both the fall and spring, were very useful in taking the pulse of the Congregation, giving feedback to the Vestry on which aspects of Church life were going well and which needed work. Many of these were addressed over time, especially the issue of transparency. The information was also used in putting together the application for our Interim Minister.

Working with the Southern Region of the UUA, the Vestry immediately began the process of finding an Interim Minister. When none were available for the current year, the UUA helped us find a Targeted Minister, one who is trained to work with Congregations who have just lost a minister and are searching for an Interim. We consider ourselves very fortunate that Rev. Elaine Peresluha responded to our call – she has a gift for helping Congregations begin to heal from trauma and for diagnosing where Congregations could use some guidance for improvement.

In addition, committees, individuals, and the Vestry arranged for a number of events, workshops, and discussion groups to keep our minds and spirits engaged at Church, including a film series, and book discussions.

Vestry Report (cont.)

Over the summer, it became evident that our beloved Sanctuary, also known as the Landmark because of its status as a National Landmark, was in desperate need of resurfacing – a lime wash. Thanks to the work of a number of dedicated people, the Congregation, at a very well attended Congregational Meeting, agreed to a short capital campaign to raise the funds. The “Lime Aid” campaign, led by Karen Abrams and her intrepid crew, fielded pledges totaling more than \$153,000 which, when added to reserves and monies from the Endowment, provided the funds needed to do the lime wash, purchase hurricane protection for the windows of Gage Hall and the Annex, and address a termite issue.

The Vestry is also addressing our Churchyard. The Eden Keepers have used the last of their funds to clear dangerous overgrowth, and monies for twice-a-year professional help in preventing such overgrowth is now in the budget. Meanwhile, two gifts from members have triggered thoughts about how we use our Churchyard, and the Vestry is investigating a master plan to ensure that the garden will continue to bring us pleasure and tend to those in our care for the foreseeable future.

In late August, our Director of Religious Education resigned, and when an appropriate candidate could not be found, the RE Committee and the Vestry designed a new temporary position, Religious Education Administrator, to keep the RE program running. Danielle Lopez took the position and was a breath of fresh air. After a national search was held, Danielle was offered and accepted the job of Director of Religious Education. We are providing her with time and funding to work on credentialing, and we are confident in her ability to provide warm and nurturing support for our RE families. Melissa Zahler also changed her role from RE Assistant to Annex Manager to ensure proper supervision of our youngest members and alleviate the DRE from having to manage many of these tasks.

We are pleased that Interim Music Director Susan Conant accepted the offer to become our permanent Music Director. She has brought energy, creativity, and diversity of music to our services and Candlelight Concerts, and has increasingly involved greater participation in music making within our Congregation. In addition, she has brought in two gifted musicians to accompany our services – Rick Stanton for traditional music and Richard White, Jr. for a more contemporary sound. Susan has also worked hard to make our sound system work, has brought in sound technicians to eliminate the serious problems we have had in the past, and is training volunteers to work the sound system as well.

Over the summer, the Vestry and others fine-tuned the job description for the position of Executive Director in order to make it workable. Our challenge has been educating

Vestry Report (cont.)

members of the Congregation to the responsibilities of the Executive Director. These duties encompass general oversight of our grounds, our building, our communications, our non-program staff, and our finances, and the ED is answerable to the Vestry. The Vestry is enormously grateful to Sandra Selvitelli, who has worked tirelessly over the past year – often seven days a week and evenings - to “keep the wheels on the bus.” When it became clear that there was more to do than one person could possibly handle, we authorized a new part-time position, Communication Manager. Regina Ruopoli has been a welcome addition in this position. When money becomes available in the future, we will also need someone to do basic clerical work.

It was with great sadness that the Vestry accepted the resignation of the Rev. Nancy Pellegrini, who is moving north this summer. Nancy has been our Assistant Minister and has become the bedrock of our pastoral care over the years. In addition, it has been a true pleasure to watch her grow into the role of preacher, and we will truly miss her presence.

The Personnel Committee has worked with the Executive Director and Vestry to redo the Personnel Manual, to set up a plan to increase staff salaries to reach mid-level UUA standards for seasoned staff over the next three years, to increase the level of health insurance offered, and to pay long-term disability insurance. Not only are these moves in line with our values, we will need these to be in place to attract the top tier of qualified candidates for our Settled Minister.

A fundamental role of the Vestry is fiduciary and an essential part of that is finding opportunities to add revenue to our annual budget. Currently, our pledges provide 70% of our revenue. In a Church our size, best practices tell us that it should be closer to 50%, with other revenue streams completing the other 50%. The Vestry has taken the following steps:

- Increased rent on the apartment. We investigated converting it to a B&B, but there are too many safety issues to do this. We also looked at other alternatives for the space but ultimately decided that maintaining the apartment was the best option.
- Renegotiating the parking lease. Stuart Terry has been very helpful in investigating and negotiating our parking lease, bring the rates up to market value and thereby increasing income for the parking area substantially. This will, however, involve some restrictions to our use of the space.
- Raising rates for weddings and other uses of the Sanctuary.

Vestry Report (cont.)

- Considered hiring an event coordinator to bring and manage weddings and other events, but this proved to be too expensive.
- Joining the Chamber of Commerce in order to advertise for weddings.
- Negotiating on rates and use of the Churchyard for professional tours.
- In addition, the Planned Giving Committee publicized the matching Wake Now Our Vision campaign of the UUA, bringing in funds for our Endowment.

Our Finance Committee, Executive Director and Treasurer have been doing a thorough review of our accounting and budgeting activities, and as a result, we have a much better picture of our finances and a tighter budgeting process.

The Vestry added an Ad Hoc committee this year charged with examining the Constitution, the Policies and Procedure Manual, and the Personnel Manual and making suggestions for bringing them into alignment with one another. As a result, the Congregation will be voting on several minor changes to the Constitution in the fall and the Vestry will have the task of rewriting some of its policies.

At the recommendation of the Ad Hoc committee, Priscilla Shumway and the Program Council has been working with committees to clearly state their visions and goals, write policies as needed, and clarify which entities are committees and which are subcommittees. In addition, I have been working with the Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) to redefine its mission and role in the Congregation. This will continue next year with the leadership of the Interim Minister.

The Vestry approved the collection of funds to help flood victims in the Carolinas and fire victims in California. We also approved the Church adopting a refugee family, supporting the ERA, and seeking recertification as a Welcoming Congregation.

Vestry members also participated in two Forums during the year and sponsored two receptions.

*Vestry Report (cont.)***Chair's Reflection**

The past year has been one of growth for all of us – me, the staff and Vestry, and the Congregation. No, we didn't necessarily grow in numbers, but we have, I think, found ourselves amazed at the strength we can demonstrate when trouble comes out of the blue. This Annual Vestry Report provides the basics of what the Vestry has done over the past year, but it cannot document the many ways in which our members and staff have stepped up and given of their time, talent, and treasure to keep our Church moving successfully through almost a year without strong, established ministerial leadership. I have marveled at the creativity that has been unleashed – from the Phantasmagorical Concert to the Christmas Pageant to the myriad of ways in which we covered tasks usually done by a Minister or RE Director. Not one of us has been unaffected by the changes this year, yet we continue to fill the pews and show up at events.

We are not unscathed – we have lost some members, and our pledge drive has been a struggle this year – but we have also gained as some members returned, and we raised money for our beloved Sanctuary. There are valuable lessons to be learned from our experience. For example, when trouble comes, it helps to have a loyal and devoted staff, and we must remember to be just as loyal to them. We need to do better at reviewing our ministry on a regular basis and assessing the kinds of pressures that growth and change are putting on our Minister, our staff, and our committees. Our governance needs some reworking to clarify lines of responsibility, and we are badly understaffed for a Congregation of our size. This latter means finding more ways to make our property work for us as well as revamping our stewardship culture. We have also learned the value of our UUA membership, as UUA regional staff have been most helpful to us in a variety of ways, including providing us with thematic programming and with resources, such as specially trained Targeted and Interim Ministers.

In looking over the past year, I am proud of our Church! We have continued to practice our UU values and to embody our theme for the year – “We Are the Church.” Being on the Vestry of this amazing Congregation has been hard work, has kept me up many nights, but has also been among the most gratifying experiences of my life. It has truly been an honor to serve as your Vestry Chair, one I never expected but highly cherish. Thank you for your faith and trust in your Vestry this year. We promise always to do our best for the good of the Unitarian Church in Charleston.

Respectfully submitted by Gail Schiffer, Vestry Chair

Minister

My ministry with The Unitarian Church in Charleston began January 15, 2019 at 20 hours per week off-site. My initial priority was a well-informed entry into the system. I spent my 20 hours zooming (video conference calling) into staff meetings, reading the Church Constitution, budget, job descriptions and other documents that Sandra Selvitelli shared with me.

Upon my arrival in Charleston on February 8, I added worship preparation and direct face-to-face time with staff and members while continuing my review of documents. I was quickly able to appreciate the wide-range of responses to Danny Reed's ministry and his departure as well as possible organizational needs of the Congregation.

Over the next five months, as I received appreciative feedback for worship, presence in coffee hour, my staff interactions and office presence, I recognized the Church had been missing some very normal ministerial functions and I was able to develop a deeper appreciation of the culture, patterns of behavior and organizational needs of the Congregation.

Feedback from the four cottage meetings I led confirmed these observations and a more holistic assessment of the Unitarian Church in Charleston formed. The current membership number for the Congregation is in flux as we continue to reach out to those who have not fulfilled a pledge for the current fiscal year. Sandra Selvitelli and Carol Oates have concluded a membership range between 360 and 380. These members range in engagement levels from the peripheral "come to worship" once or twice a month with no other involvement to the community leaders who come to worship two to three times a month and are here two to three more times a week for meetings and other member programming. There is a core constituency of leaders of about thirty who are engaged in multiple leadership roles. Amongst all of these constituencies there is also a range in responses to Danny Reed's ministry. The range moves from those who loved his preaching and his personality, miss him and do not understand why his ministry had to end, to those who experienced his inadequacies and left the Church. In the middle of those extremes are those who began by appreciating him for his worship preparation and presence and then slowly came to recognize his inability to be a leader, an administrator or manager. These members understand the necessity of his departure. Those variances in opinion and engagement are core characteristics I believe you will need to work with during your interim, pulling a larger percentage of the membership towards the center from both edges of the continuums, engagement and understating of Danny's ministry.

Minister Report (cont.)

It is my conclusion after our 5 months together that Danny's ministry began at a pivotal moment of growth at the Church. That growth required strong vision and leadership to manage the institutional growth that stressed the governance system, the financial capacity and the staffing structure. Danny's skill set did not include the innovation or vision necessary to modify the institutional structures and staff ratios to adequately accommodate growth. A drifting sense of purpose, along with the growing inadequacy of the organizational structure required for growth resulted in most of everyone's attention and energy being focused on managing crises and maintaining day to day operations. A patchwork response attempted to manage the need with additional committees under the guidance of the Vestry which left the Vestry with both oversight and operational responsibilities without developing the authority and skill of the staff to manage operations and make day-to-day decisions. Those modification and adjustments to your organizational structure through a review of your governance model will also be part of your interim work.

That will include the Vestry learning to manage oversight with the staff managing operations. Staff will also need to understand the challenges to boundaries in maintaining Church membership while also taking on a staff role.

Financially, The Unitarian Church in Charleston is in a stable position with your efforts to structure more integrated oversight and planning in budgeting and fundraising. During your interim you will need to consider a sustainable income that diversifies your sources of revenue beyond pledges to meet the growing needs of programming and your campus.

I believe that The Unitarian Church in Charleston has the resources and the talent to meet the needs outlined here. With two years of direct attention to your organizational structure, governance and financial planning you will be prepared to call a Settled Minister to minister with you and inspire you into a vibrant future.

Respectfully Submitted by Reverend Elaine Beth Peresluha, Targeted Minister

Assistant Minister

I have been honored to serve as part-time Assistant Minister working with this wonderful Congregation. So many dedicated members have put in extra efforts to help meet the special challenges we faced this year when we were without a full-time Minister. I have also continued my job as the Chaplain at the Hollings Cancer Center at the Medical University of South Carolina providing support to patients undergoing cancer treatment as well as to the staff.

Preaching and leading worship are passions of mine. It was my privilege to lead the special Sunday worship services this fall and winter for Ingathering, Harvest Sunday, and Christmas Eve that are important traditions for our Congregation. The openness of the Congregation to different approaches in the pulpit and the spirited participation of the worship committee have been inspiring. I have enjoyed collaborating with Rev. Elaine on services since her welcome arrival.

I have continued my focus on pastoral care. As the staff liaison to the Caring Committee and the Pastoral Visitors Committee I am proud of their work to provide assistance to fellow Church members when needed and to maintain connections with those who cannot easily attend Church. I also made personal pastoral care visits and calls to Church members dealing with illness or loss. I conducted two memorial services, a child dedication service, and a wedding this year.

Our Church continues to be a leader for social justice. It was my privilege to work with the Social Justice Committee to plan Social Justice Sunday on electoral justice issues. I have also participated in Charleston Area Justice Ministry events, the MLK Day parade, and gun control rallies.

In the area of denominational affairs I was pleased to represent the Church by doing two interviews for Post and Courier about Church attendance and on greater religious diversity in Congress. I have continued to meet with Unitarian Universalist minister colleagues at conferences at The Mountain and clergy cluster meetings. I also serve as a mentor to a new minister in preliminary fellowship.

As has been announced, my husband and I will be moving to Hanover, NH this summer to take on new career pursuits. I am saddened to leave this Congregation but am looking forward to continuing my chaplaincy work and pursuing chaplaincy board certification. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity I have had to serve The Unitarian Church in Charleston and will hold all of you in my heart. I know you will continue to do great things.

Respectfully Submitted by Reverend Nancy Bird Pellegrini

Treasurer

Over the last two years the financial controls portion of the organization, along with the Vestry, have been hard at work. We have focused on three primary areas; Governance, Budgeting and Financial Stability.

Governance:

Two years ago, the Vestry recognized that the financial management model we were employing no longer aligned well to our Congregation given the growth that we had experienced over the previous decade. In addition, the documentation that provided guidance to the team did not align to either reality on the ground or the desired organization. To that end we modified our documentation over the past year, including a change to our Constitution last year which shifted the Treasurer position to be a member of the Vestry.

The roles today are:

- Treasurer: Responsible for oversight of all Church finances. The “finance specialist” on the Vestry focused on analyzing our financial position and working between the Vestry and the rest of the finance team.
- Finance Committee: Focused on budgeting and monitoring ongoing financial performance throughout the year.
- Endowment Committee: Focused on managing the endowment.
- Executive Director: Responsible for managing operations within the approved budget.
- Bookkeeper: Responsible for maintaining accurate financial records.

Budgeting:

Historically our budgeting process has been focused on a twelve month window and we have not been as accurate as we could have been. The end result of our previous process has been a buildup of a \$50k “carry over.” The “carry over” can be thought of as the remaining funds after all expenses are subtracted from the income during the year. This year we are projecting that we will be within \$1,400 of our projected ending balance.

As part of our budgeting process we have also begun creating financial models and forecasting for known or expected expenses. The upcoming budget includes forecast amounts for the Maintenance Reserve, Operating Reserve, IT Refresh and Apartment Maintenance.

*Treasurer Report (cont.)***Financial Stability:**

I am happy to report that we are in a financially stable position. However, we have challenges that lie ahead. This year is the first year in a long time that we significantly missed our target for annual giving. Fortunately we managed our operations within the budget and that allowed the “carry over” to roll into next fiscal year. Coupled with the work from the Vestry and Operations that have increased other sources of revenue we have been able to develop a budget moving forward that moves us towards recognizing our values. In addition, we were able to raise a significant amount of money to pay for the maintenance of our historic Church.

Why do I continue to feel confident? Our Church demonstrated what it is capable of raising this past year. While our annual pledge drive missed the mark this year, if you were to add the annual pledge with the Lime Aid pledge we would have exceeded our goals for the year. As we move forward with the Fair Share model I am confident that our Congregation will be able to meet our financial commitments to our Church in the future.

Respectfully Submitted by Zachariah Conover, Treasurer/Vestry

Executive Director

This year has predictably not been short of challenges after the departure of Rev. Danny last spring. Yet it has also been full of wonderful creativity, initiative, camaraderie, new friendships, learning, healing and adventure. I feel fortunate to have been a part of the journey.

From a staffing side, for 10 months I was the only full time staff member which meant juggling quite a few roles, sometimes feeling like a comedian balancing a hat on a cane while riding a unicycle. Luckily, I tend to find humor in such things!

Rev. Elaine joined us in January remotely and in person in February. She recently asked what our best day was this year and I said when Danielle Lopez told me in the Annex one day that she was interested in the Religious Education Administrator role. As I felt she would be, she has excelled with grace under pressure and everyone has loved her enthusiasm, humor and kindness. I served as an ex-officio member on the search committee for the Director of Religious Education led by Mary Ellen Giess and after a national search we are thrilled to say that Danielle will be starting as the DRE next month.

Executive Director Report (cont.)

Equally thrilling for me was the hiring of Regina Ruopoli as our Communications Manager. Regina reports to me and has been tasked with creating our weekly Orders of Service, monthly Gateway newsletters and event updates on the website. She has done a wonderful job. I think the amount of coordination this takes would surprise everyone and she always does it with an upbeat attitude and optimistic outlook which are a joy to be around! We hope to expand her role to include the weekly e-mail updates and eventually work with social media as her hours increase.

I also started managing our Membership Coordinator, Carol Oates this year. Carol and I have worked together extraordinarily well through the years to update and maintain our database. We have healthy processes in place and feel good about the direction of the program, it's timeline in the Church year with committees like stewardship. Carol has taken new member classes, mentors, anniversaries, check-in calls, etc. and made the new member process as well as existing member health something we should all be proud of!

Joe McCormack continues to be a valued member of the team. He is often pulled in many directions and, thankfully, his humor and good will still makes us smile. This year one of our new members, Tyler Roberts, has stepped in to volunteer his time to help Joe a good bit on Sundays and sometimes other days during the week. Just as with all of our volunteers, we are grateful to Tyler – no more so than Joe! Joe and I also work closely with Buildings and Grounds and we are ever so grateful to the leadership of Judy Manning and her team for being willing to jump in and assist with the multiple and, frankly, never ending amount of tasks that need to get done around our campus.

I work with all of the committees in one way or another but I want to take a moment to mention a few that I have worked the most closely with this year.

Personnel, under the leadership of co-chairs Al Finch and Floy Work have worked exceptionally hard at defining the role of Personnel versus Vestry at a pivotal time in our history. We spent a lot of time this year honing our Personnel Manual. It is a testament to the members of the committee that the often dry and tedious tasks of Human Resource work were such a pleasure to take a part in.

I worked closely with the Finance Committee in regards to procedures to prepare for an internal and eventually an external audit. Richard Hayes was, as always, helpful and Fe Houston went above and beyond to explain certain procedures from her point of view as the CFO of a local nonprofit. For those who don't know, we employ an outside bookkeeper, Debbie Kirby, who does a wonderful job and also provided helpful insight for

Executive Director Report (cont.)

our procedures and auditing inquest. Additionally, Terry Walsh, member of the Finance Committee and former Treasurer is always available to answer my questions and I am ever so appreciative. Lastly, I want to thank Zach Conover. He has done a tremendous job as our Treasurer. Together, we have drilled down into the budget and really brought a new understanding of the budget and the outlook of the Church's finances to the Vestry and hopefully the Congregation at large. Zach's leadership will set a strong path for future Treasurers that I am thankful for.

Also in the realm of finances, I had the pleasure of working closely with the Stewardship team. It was a tough year to be on the committee and yet they did a tremendous job, introducing a visiting steward model, videos of members being interviewed about what means the most to them about the Church, increasing average pledges – all in a year primarily without a Minister and after a successful mini-capital campaign. They have so much to be proud of!

I also have the pleasure of working closely with the Ministers and Vestry. As such, I would like to give my warmest regards to Rev. Nancy Pellegrini. She is truly a kind and wonderful person and we will miss her greatly.

Rev. Elaine Peresluha has been a wonderful gift to us and to me personally. She has been able to hold a mirror up to our organization so that we can see from an outside perspective what is going on – good, bad and otherwise. She has done this with high energy, humor, insight, and frankness. She has set us on a good path for our Interim Minister. I am very grateful but I will miss her and her sweet dog Gussie!

Our Vestry has been very strong under the leadership of Gail Schiffer and Priscilla Shumway. Beneath their aptitude and dedication is a depth of kindness that is truly meaningful. Everyone on the Vestry has done a great job navigating a challenging year and I think we are all closer because of it.

Lastly, I want to thank all of you for making this Church what it is. To Susan Conant, our official Music Director for her wonderful talents and the exceptional work of our Worship Services Committee who stepped up unbelievably well to give us almost a year of services. To Alex Hild for his play and for Kay Haun for directing it and all of you who acted and rapped the songs in it! For Susan Garrison's amazing decorating and organization of food events and Donna Reyburn and others at the Auction. For Karen Abrams and Priscilla Shumway's songs about the lime in the coconut. For Hillary Hutchinson for being able to spell Küküllódombó in the Annual Report and for Paul Garbarini's mazel tovs. For the

Executive Director Report (cont.)

very few souls who braved the very cold MLK Day parade and for John Hyatt and Kevin Eakes for starting our presence in the Pride Day Festival. For Carol Furtwangler thanking me for getting parking spaces back at Charleston Day School when it had truly been such a hassle for her that she should have been angry. For The Grahams for organizing Let's Do Lunch and the Alliance for their Rummage Sales. For Nancy Simpson's famous brunch blessing and for Janet Watts' jumping in to teach OWL classes. For the safety volunteers, ushers, greeters, chalice lighters and others who give their time every Sunday. For the multitude of potlucks and CAJM meetings. For outside events like Transgender Memorial Day, World AIDS Day and joyous musicals from the Day School. For everyone who gives their time, talent and love. We really **are** the Church. And it is because of you!

Respectfully Submitted by Sandra Selvitelli, Executive Director

Music Director

2018-2019 was a year of changes and blossoming for the music team at the Unitarian Church in Charleston. It is a special blessing to work with our bountiful, enthusiastic and talented group of musicians. And it is a treat to share these musical gifts with our supportive, loving Congregation.

We restructured the accompanist position changing it from an hourly staff position to a fee for service position. This enabled us to utilize a rotation of two talented accompanists: Richard White, Jr as jazz/contemporary pianist and Rick Stanton as our classical pianist and organist. Our accompanists are now scheduled year-round on an as-needed basis (prior to 2018, we did not have the capability of professional coverage during the summer months).

An enthusiastic host of member and guest musicians and sound technicians provided depth to our music team. They proved themselves ready and able to adapt to a wide range of musical genres enabling us to address the specific worship themes for service.

We were also fortunate to have the support of two professional and two volunteer sound technicians. This group worked diligently to make us sound our best and to keep the system properly maintained. We have initiated a process for recording the services and expect to be regularly posting material on a Church YouTube channel.

Music Director (cont.)

This year's guest musicians included Alva Anderson (jazz vocals and viola), Gino Castillo (Latin percussion), Kiya Heartwood (singer/songwriter), John Holenko (mandolin), Hazel Ketchum (guitar), Johanna Evenson (voice and organ), Karin McQuade, (voice and fiddle),

Jake Holwegner (bass), Dave Patterson (drums), Daniel Scruggs (world percussion), Natalia Khoma (cello), Sophia Zimmermann (voice) and a full string quartet. A large number of our members participated in the music making by joining our 15 -20 member adult choir, providing vocal and instrumental solos, participating in a band or chamber ensemble, forming a small vocal ensemble, participating in the children's music or joining the teen music making.

Some notable moments include the Pageant Band that formed for the annual Christmas pageant. This motley crew of recorders, cello, hammered dulcimer, trumpet, trombone, tuba and guitar accompanied our carol singing. Then there was the Earth Symphony II consisting of the entire Congregation playing shells, stones, paper, sticks, bird whistles and more to create a wonderful simulation of a rainstorm. February may have been our most musically diverse month: it began with Renaissance and Baroque music on recorders, then a Sunday of jazz, gospel and the choir singing our Bicentennial anthem. The third week focused on Latin American music with guest, Gino Castillo, accompanying the choir singing Brazilian and Cuban tunes. February ended with a Sunday of piano duets by Ravel.

The arrival of Rev. Elaine Peresluha brought new opportunities as she introduced us to some of her favorite songs and led three fun intergenerational services including a Sunday of music provided by our teen group. We kept some of our beloved traditions too including Jazz Sunday in January and the December Cantata celebrating the Winter Solstice.

In other roles as Music Director, I supported the Music Committee in their mission to produce three delightful Candlelight Concerts. Volunteers from this committee are assisting me in cataloguing music and keeping our music database current. Chair Diane Boyer, and I put together the first draft of the new job description for Music Director.

All of the music team and I are looking forward to another fun and adventurous year of music in 2019-2020. I am thrilled to continue guiding this group in my new role as permanent Music Director.

Respectfully Submitted by Susan Conant, Music Director

Religious Education Administrator/Director

I began working on a part time basis as the Religious Education Administrator in October 2018. I stepped into the role as a parent in our Congregation and former RE Committee member. I felt honored to be trusted in such an important role as our Church was in transition. With the support of Sandra Selvitelli, Carol Oates, Pricilla Shumway, and the RE Committee, I felt confident each Sunday as I navigated my new position.

While maintaining the RE program, I was incredibly grateful to the parents who volunteered their time to teach our children each Sunday. They were patient with me as I planned lessons and activities pertaining to our values as a Congregation. They offered wonderful advice and adapted each lesson to fit their group of students.

Working closely with my committee and Melissa Zahler, I was able to plan multiple holiday events this year. Halloween, the Christmas Program, and Easter came together perfectly with the help of parent volunteers, excited families, and staff. I have also worked closely with Susan Conant and Reverend Elaine to plan family-friendly intergenerational services.

Outside of the classroom and holiday events, I was overwhelmed with support from other members of our community. Each Sunday I looked forward to conversations with both new and familiar faces. Through those interactions I am beginning to foster relationships to help me grow in my new position as Director of Religious Education.

I am so grateful and excited to begin my new role as Director of Religious Education starting this summer. I look forward to growing in my leadership position. I plan on attending multiple events for RE Directors, as well as becoming accredited. I also look forward to exploring new curriculum to keep kids and teens engaged as they grow and learn in our religious community. I am also excited to cultivate a stronger community for our families within our Congregation.

Respectfully Submitted by Danielle Lopez, Director of Religious Education

Membership Coordinator

In my half-time employment as Membership Coordinator, I am grateful for the opportunities I have for welcoming those new to our church, guiding interested people through the membership process and helping people all along their journey with us to find their place of belonging in our Congregation. Toward these ends, I continue to collaborate directly with the Membership Committee, chaired this year by Anne Lewis and Susan White. I have also provided support for the revived Welcoming Congregation Committee, chaired by Neil Duffy and Jeffrey Fleming. I continue to work with the Ushers and Greeters and the Welcome Table to create a welcoming environment for all who attend worship services. Thanks to George Castaño and Kathleen Mulroy for scheduling the Ushers and Greeters and to Karen Ruef for scheduling the Welcome Table. There are about 25 members who actively participate in these welcoming ministries and there is room for more.

New to UU Charleston, formerly Pathfinders, is a session I hold for people new to our Church. Newcomers arrive at these sessions with varying degrees of familiarity with Unitarian Universalism. In any case, I love hearing newcomer's stories about what has brought them to explore our Church. This year I facilitated 6 classes for newcomers (July, September, November, January, March, April), with a total of 45 participants. I plan to continue a similar schedule of these classes in the coming year.

Pathways Classes are our 2-session classes for those interested in learning more about what it means to be a member of our Church. This year I facilitated three classes (Fall, Winter, Spring), with the support of the Membership Committee. 33 people participated in the classes. I am grateful to the Membership Committee for organizing and serving lunch and helping with facilities set-up and clean-up for these sessions. Mentors for the Pathways Classes are crucial to creating an environment that facilitates a welcoming and open atmosphere for participants. This year 7 people filled the role of Mentor. They were Tom Hartry, Hillary Hutchinson, Aliix Plaxco, Maureen Porter, Allison Sterrett-Krause, Susan White and Floy Work.

30 new Members have joined the Church during this fiscal year. New Member Sunday was celebrated 3 times this year, welcoming these new members. Thanks to the Membership Committee, the Vestry Chair and the Ministers for their role in facilitating the Ceremony during the Sunday Service. Also, many thanks to George Castaño for taking pictures of all participants in each New Member Sunday. Thanks also to Ren Manning and Kathleen Mulroy for writing the short biographies of new members that are sent out with the pictures to introduce new members to our Congregation. New this year was a New Member Potluck for those having joined during this fiscal year. Many thanks to Kathleen Mulroy and Anne Lewis, for planning this celebration and to Ren Manning for his contributions of beverages.

Membership Coordinator Report (cont.)

The year of Membership was capped by honoring significant membership anniversaries (10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, and 40+ years), as is our tradition on the first Sunday in May. Membership Sunday is always a fitting and poignant celebration as we sit in awe of those whose commitment to the life of this Congregation has spanned decades and our gratitude to so many who have become an integral part of our community of faith.

I have continued to work with our Connecting Circles program. New this year was introducing the small group ministry portion of Soul Matters (our theme-based ministry model for this year). I have visited groups and facilitated their sessions. It was inspiring to witness people making space for themselves and each other toward spiritual growth. I also led 3 sessions just for group facilitators. I am appreciative of their commitment to their leadership of and service to their Circles. There are currently 13 Connecting Circles, with 8 using the Soul Matters program.

During this year of transition in our Congregation, I have been especially appreciative of my fellow staff members. I have appreciated their commitment, hard work, mutual support and hopeful attitude as we find our way forward. I appreciate long-time members for their trust in the Church's leadership and the belief that together we can, as this Church always has, confidently chart a course that reflects our Unitarian Universalist values. I appreciate our newest members for their desire to join us as we seek to create the beloved community here in our Congregation. And I appreciate our lay leadership for their time and perseverance, especially during the months without a minister. As we remain steadfast in our commitment to and support of each other, I am hopeful that our future is one of positive transformation.

Respectfully Submitted by Carol Oates, Membership Coordinator

Communications Manager

As the Communications Manager I help to create clear and compelling publications and online content to share relevant, timely information with Church members and the community.

I was thrilled to begin working in the new position of Communications Manager in August, 2018. I felt very fortunate to have become a member of the office staff, and have enjoyed utilizing my time and talents in service to the Church. I quickly learned how competent, dedicated and enjoyable every member of our Church staff was, and felt welcome and right

Communications Manager Report (cont.)

at home with this fine team. This work has also allowed me to get to know many of our Church members and leaders better, which has certainly been an enjoyable fringe benefit!

After working closely with our wonderful Executive Director, Sandra Selvitelli, to train for the position, and produce the first publications, I eagerly dove into the tasks at hand, happy to help take some projects off of Sandra's plate, which was continuously overflowing as the only full time employee. With Sandra's wisdom and helpful guidance, I quickly felt comfortable in completing the tasks at hand.

I produced the weekly Orders of Service for all Sunday services, including special holiday services. This task takes a bit more coordination than one might imagine, and is somewhat like making a salad by traveling to many different farms to pick vegetables! I coordinated with the Worship Services Committee, Music Director, Director of Religious Education, Ministers/Speakers, as well as with various other sources for each element of the service, including the participants, calendar, announcements and the service itself. I also created the majority of the inserts for placing inside the Orders of Service, highlighting key special events and announcements.

I produced the monthly newsletter, *The Gateway*, published at the beginning of each month, and sent it to members via MailChimp, as well as printed and mailed hard copies to a select mailing list of Church members without email. I also provided hard copies for a small inventory at the Welcome Table, and uploaded a copy to our website for perpetuity. This work is also like making that salad by visiting many different farms to pick vegetables, only it is a much bigger salad! As with producing the Orders of Service, it includes being a compositor, editor, writer and graphic designer all at once. I have enjoyed it immensely, and it is nice knowing this publication is so helpful to Church members by providing them an easy "go to" for all the latest news and events.

Each month I also updated the Calendar of Events on our website with all of our upcoming services, forums, special events and other information that was gathered and published in the Orders of Service and *The Gateway* newsletter, as well as made other minor updates and edits as needed. I assisted with Sign-Up Genius account as needed, attended weekly staff meetings, and attended one Program Council Meeting to stay informed of pertinent information.

I worked with Sandra Selvitelli to continue building a consistent and cohesive Church brand, and carrying that through for all platforms and publications. This is an area that I hope we can continue to develop and improve upon.

Communications Manager Report (cont.)

It has been an incredible and productive learning year for me. I deeply appreciate all the support, patience, assistance and good humor I have so generously received from my fellow staff members and the committees and teams with which I have worked. I look forward to continuing and improving upon this work, taking on more communications tasks as needed and able, and further developing a solid communications program for our wonderful Church going forward.

Respectfully submitted by Regina Ruopoli, Communications Manager

Committee Reports

Archives

Chair: Rose-Marie Williams

Co-chair: Susan Robinson

Members: Randi Hoffman, Gail Schiffer, and Kate Timbers

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Archives Committee preserves the history of the Church and educates the Congregation and community about its heritage. We foster the institutional memory of the Unitarian Church in Charleston, collect and maintain documents and objects entrusted to our care. We assist those who wish to access files and materials for historical research.

Activities and Accomplishments:

In addition to filing and classifying Church records this past year, we displayed pertinent and important documents, pictures and objects relevant to our Bicentennial Celebration. We highlighted both Samuel and Caroline Gilman. Two shows were displayed in Gage Hall in conjunction with the Fine Arts Committee; one highlighting various architecture related to our Church, the other significant past ministers. Additionally, research visits were made to The South Carolina History Room at the Charleston County Library and the archives of the South Carolina Historical Society in an on-going effort to hone our research skills.

The work of the Committee for the Church year 2018-2019 is to turn over the Church's papers from 1990 through 1999, to the SC Historical Society, where they will be accessioned—that is, cataloged and assigned numbers and available to the researching

Archives Committee Report (cont.)

public. SCHS has an on-line catalog. In addition, once the papers have been accessioned, SCHS will provide us with finding aids which will be kept in the Church Archives and available to members.

The Archives Committee continues to requisition from all individual members and committees all records created by the committees, including minutes, reports, brochures, and programs. The Program Council meetings provide a valuable opportunity for Archives Committee members to meet with other committee members and impress upon them the importance of passing records on.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

Continue to identify and preserve relevant photos and documents. Restart oral history project. Prepare and transfer historical collection to year 2000 to The SC Historical Society for safe-keeping and future digitization.

Auction Committee

Co-chairs: Susan Garrison and Donna Reyburn

Members: Fran Ennis, Prudence Finn, Bob Graham, Mary Graham, Michael Griffith, Lisa Hajjar, Kay Haun, Abby Himmelein, Barbara Kelly, Judy Manning, Ren Manning, Kathleen Mulroy, David Ruef, Karen Ruef, Gail Schiffer, Ellie Setser, Nancy Simpson, Claudia Updike, Ron Updike, Terry Walsh, and Susan White

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Auction Committee strives to make as much money as we can on our two auctions, which are the first Sunday in November (silent) and the following Saturday night (live). Other than the annual stewardship campaign, the auction raises the highest amount of money for the Church's general fund. We look for ways to improve our advertisement and our actual auctions for maximum returns on our hard work.

Activities and Accomplishments:

We raised approximately \$30,000 during this year's auctions. We added a "sneak peek" to the silent auction, to raise interest and bidding. We also offered "sitter subsidy" or on sight child care to encourage younger couples with children to attend events.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

To conduct two very successful auctions and to have fun and enjoy fellowship with each other.

Buildings and Grounds

Chair: Judy Manning

Co-chairs: Ron Updike and Erica Hattings

Members: Barbara Goldberg, Tommy Hughston, Alan Moore, Richard Moss, James Selvitelli and Ray Setser

Advisor: Joe McCormack, Sexton

Ex-Officio: Sandra Selvitelli, Executive Director

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Buildings and Grounds Committee knows that the Sanctuary is not just a landmark, a beautiful old building, but a spirit-filled space that beckons us in where we find peace, history, inspiration, relationship. The entire campus functions as a beacon for free religious thought and social justice action for members and seekers and it is the mission of the Buildings and Grounds Committee to maintain the health and integrity of the structures on this campus.

Buildings and Grounds envisions using best practices to stabilize and fortify our buildings and hardscape for the future with advice from our Church architect, Glenn Keyes, and the experts he recommends to us. We espouse the 2017 stewardship theme, “200 years, just the beginning.”

Activities and Accomplishments:

This year has been a year of maintenance and evaluation. By the end of this Church year we will have accomplished most of the small maintenance tasks that the staff, sexton and committee have identified, such as replacing a toilet not suited for high usage, stabilizing the railing in Gage Hall leading up to the stage, replacing the broken latch on the gate from the parking lot, encasing our parking lot and grounds lighting in pvc to prevent further damage, repainting the highlight on the metal stairs to upper Gage Hall and stabilizing the stairs where rusted...

However, bringing our proposal for lime wash funding which includes termite damage repair and hurricane protection for Gage Hall and the Annex, to the Vestry and subsequently to the Congregation was the highlight of the year. The overwhelming response from the leadership and members of the Congregation in both vocal and financial support was bolstering to our sense of mission and importance.

The lime wash will not begin until March 2020 for two important reasons. The first is the number and timing of weddings already scheduled at the Church this spring. The scaffolding would not be particularly appealing to those who have already booked our Church and then, second, is weather considerations. Lime wash cannot be done in the heat

Buildings and Grounds Committee Report (cont.)

of the summer or cold of the winter. The fall presents its own problems with hurricanes lurking out in the Atlantic fully prepared to knock down scaffolding and damage freshly lime washed exteriors, so next spring it is! All monies already in hand will be invested in an interest bearing account by the Finance Committee and hopefully give us healthy seed money for recoating the metal Sanctuary roof.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

Buildings and Grounds has now evaluated the condition of the campus buildings, sought estimates and presented our findings to the Vestry for financial considerations. The Church will be looking into a grant that will allow us to stabilize our stained and painted glass windows, works of art all, for the next 100 years and cover them in permanent hurricane protection that will not yellow with age, allowing our windows to inspire all from inside and out.

We will, of course, continue to work with the staff to do small, ongoing maintenance as needed.

Caring Committee

Chair: Marcia Castaño

Co-chair: Sarah Arnold

Area Leaders:

Marcia Castaño and Barbara Johnson - James Island, Folly Beach, Johns Island

Karen Abrams and Mary Ann Hughston - Downtown

Sarah Arnold and Judy Bruce - Mt Pleasant, Daniel Island

Mela Khedouri and Ellie Setser - West Ashley

Aliix Plaxco - Summerville, North Charleston

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Caring Committee supports Church members and friends discreetly as they experience momentous and memorable events, stages and transitions in their lives.

Activities and Accomplishments:

The Caring Committee has provided support with meals, rides, cards, visits, telephone calls, help with pets & Church-wide cards most Sundays.

Caring Committee Report (cont.)

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

The Caring Committee plans to enlist the help of more volunteers and establish co-leaders for all areas.

Caring Committee Subcommittee: Pastoral Care Committee

Chair: Rev. Nancy Pellegrini

Committee Coordinator: Rotating Monthly

Pastoral Care Visitors: Linda Maxwell Allen, Kaye Finch, Joanna Innes, Barbara Kelly, John Kelley, and Jan Stanton

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Pastoral Care Committee is a ministry of presence and support with regular monthly visits to those who cannot attend Church or are chronically or seriously ill.

Activities and Accomplishments:

The Pastoral Care Committee was established in October of 2017 and determined characteristics to look for in a Pastoral Care Visitor, selected and trained lay members to act as visitors.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

The committee will continue to identify possible recipients of pastoral care and initiate contact with the person or family.

Churchyard Committee

Chair: Bob Jontos

Co-chair: Stan Boyer

Recording Secretary: Sarah Cothran

E-mail Correspondence Coordinator: Laura Moses

Newsletter Contributor: Fran Ennis

Members: Karen DelPorto, Krystina Deren, Tom Hartry Stan Hunton, Pat Jontos, Ed Stephens, and Thomas Wiedemann

*Columbarium representative from the Churchyard Committee is Bob Jontos.

Churchyard Committee Report (cont.)

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Churchyard Committee works to restore the Churchyard to a condition where the committee can effectively manage the gravesites, tombstones and plantings; to showcase the beauty and variety of seasonal plantings and the historical significance of the space.

Activities and Accomplishments:

- **Tombstones:** Only one crypt, damaged by vandals, remains to be repaired.
- **Columbarium Walkway:** The Churchyard Committee continues to work with the Columbarium team and Vestry on the finalization of the procedures, policies and administration of the walkway.
- **Annex Gate:** A new Iron Gate stop is being manufactured to replace the temporary gate stop.
- **Storage Shed:** The small tool shed is currently being reconstructed.
- **Churchyard Cleanup:** The services of an outside landscaper were retained to periodically assist with the removal of trees, invasive and aggressive plants and maintenance issues beyond the capacity of the Churchyard Committee. The first major cleanup of the Churchyard was accomplished this winter.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

- Obtain an annual budget line from the Vestry for the maintenance and management of the Churchyard.
- Encourage greater participation from the membership, both young and more mature, to assist with Churchyard maintenance and management.
- Continue with the development of the Churchyard management plan and photo index of “What’s Blooming in the Garden.”

Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM)

Chair: Stan Goldberg

Co-chair: Stan Boyer

Members: Judy Bruce, Alex Hild, and Maureen Porter

Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) Report (cont.)

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Committee on Shared Ministry helps to ensure that the ministries within our Church are in concert with and support the mission of our Church.

Activities and Accomplishments:

Conducted numerous “weather reports” which are calls made to a random selection of members to see how they feel things are going within the Church. The committee also provided support of the minister and dealt with behavioral issues of members.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

Change from a committee that has as the primary goal the support of the minister to a committee that helps to ensure that all of the committees within our Church support the mission of our Church.

Denominational Affairs

Purpose/Vision Statement: The Unitarian Church in Charleston’s Denominational Affairs Committee seeks to enrich congregational life at our church and promote the strength of Unitarian Universalism by promoting awareness of the larger Unitarian Universalist faith community by communicating to the Congregation the programs sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), the Southern Region, and the Southern Cluster of SED Unitarian Universalist Churches, encouraging and promoting our financial and member support to the UUA (including the Southern Region) – UC-CHS is striving to be a Fair Share Congregation, encouraging support of and participation in denominational activities and staying connected with the larger Unitarian Universalist faith community.

This year we ended our Romanian Church Partnership Program with the Unitarian Church in Küküllődombó, Romania. This program was originally designed to keep Unitarianism alive in a deeply repressive Communist country. This is no longer the case, and Romania is actually now a member of the EU.

Our Church participated through the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (UUPCC) from 2004 through 2018. The last three students we sponsored through their high school graduation were:

Balázs Bényi (graduated 2013)

Markos Andors (graduated 2016)

Anna Kiss (graduation 2018)

Docents

Chair: Abby Himmelein

Co-chair: Tom Hartry

Scheduling Coordinator: Susan Robinson

Steering Committee: Tom Hartry, Erica Hattings, and Abby Himmelein,

Media Consultant: John Preston

Docent Educator: Paul Garbarini

Building & Grounds Representative: Erica Hattings

Members: Linda Maxwell Allen, Sarah Arnold, Diane Boyer, Stan Boyer, Marcus Giddens, Kay Haun, Marilyn Henderson, Randi Hoffman, Mary Ann Hughston, Hillary Hutchinson, Alan Moore, Kathleen Mulroy, John Newell, Sally Newell, Gary Nichols, Aliix Plaxco, Maureen Porter, John Preston, Karen Ruef, Gail Schiffer, Darragh Simon, Mark Tessenier, Bill Thomas, Jan Tryssesoone, Lisa Tryssesoone, Timmy VanParys, and Floy Work

Steering Committee Purpose/Vision Statement:

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to investigate ways to increase visitors and donations to the Sanctuary.

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Docent Committee works to share the history and beauty of our Church with visitors, members of the Church, and the Charleston community.

Activities and Accomplishments:

Since 2015 we have dramatically increased visitor attendance from 2,385 in 2014 to 10,040 in 2017. In the spring of 2018, we toured 6,186 visitors to the Church. Our participation in the Charleston community Spiritual Brunch brought 327 Charleston residents over a three hour period on Earth Day to tour our Church. We had six Docents available for tours. The previous year we toured 187 locals during the same three hours. To increase traffic flow from the Churchyard to the Sanctuary, we added all weather sign posts announcing our hours, as well a glass encased sign at the King Street entrance inviting visitors in.

In the fall of 2018 we lost 18 days of visitors to weather issues, rehearsals, funerals and weddings for a total of 8,794 visitors.

Our committee participated in the Bicentennial celebration by stationing Docents at different graves for comments, and tours of the graveyard.

Docents Report (cont.)

We also provided tours for Historical Architecture students in classes at College of Charleston and the Citadel, as well as private tours.

2017 Donations were \$4,212.88

2018 Donations were \$3,889.01

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

Finish our revision of the Docent Notebook and turn it over to Archives for documentation and additional information by June 30, 2019.

Fall and spring continuing education program: first lecture 11/17/2018

Participate in the Spirited Brunch on Earth Day 2019

Test additional visitor hours on Saturdays from 1 pm to 3 pm starting in October 2019 through April 2020

Endowment Investment Board

Members: William Finn (2017-2020), Richard Hayes (2017-2020), Frank Hardie (Vestry appointment ending 2019), Karen Abrams (2016-2019), Steve Wilson (2018-2021), Ellie Setser (2018-2021)

Ex Officio: Zach Conover, Treasurer/Vestry

Consultant: Terry Walsh (Statistics Analyst for the Board) and John Warren (Baird)

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Endowment Fund is formally recognized as the Fund which accepts gifts which are primarily to be used for the long-term vitality and financial health of the Church community.

Principal in the Endowment Fund will be protected on an inflation-adjusted basis according to the specifics laid out in its policy. Upon at least a majority of those voting at an officially-called meeting of the Congregation: Portions of the Endowment Fund (including up to 10% of the protected principal) can be committed as security for loans, and in extreme conditions threatening the survival of the Congregation, annually if more than 10% of the protected Principle or the entirety of the Endowment Fund (including protected principal) can be committed to help the Congregation recover by a written vote

Endowment Investment Board (EIB) Report (cont.)

of more than 50% of the corporate members. The Endowment Investment Board is formally established to oversee the investment of the Endowment Fund and to establish and maintain guidelines for acceptance of gifts.

Activities and Accomplishments:

- The EIB is tasked with overseeing the investment of the endowment funds using a formula that calculates the protected (inflation adjusted) principal so that the endowment funds will be maintained for generations to come.
- During 2018 the Endowment funds experienced an investment loss of 8.5% ending the calendar year with an ending balance of \$930,728.00. The loss and performance was consistent with the general declines in the stock markets but was consistent with our benchmarks.
- The Endowment board following its policy decided to make no additional distributions in addition to the previously committed and approved \$50,000 for the Lime wash Project.
- The Baird Company holds our Endowment funds and they are invested in the American General Group of Funds.
- The Endowment Board is considering the UUA guidelines for socially responsible investments for future funds received. The Endowment board met quarterly during 2018.

Finance

Chair: Richard Hayes

Members: Charles Everett, Fred Himmelein, Fe Houston, and Terry Walsh

Ex-Officio: Zachariah Conover, Treasurer/Vestry and Sandra Selvitelli, Executive Director

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Finance Committee supports the Vestry, Treasurer, and Executive Director in financial matters, and assure the Church Congregation that the Church has an accurate, auditable and accountable financial system.

Finance Committee Report (cont.)

Activities and Accomplishments:

- Executed the 2019 finance plan in the black.
- Redefined with the Vestry the duties of the Treasurer, Bookkeeper and Executive Director for Church financial management.
- Developed the 2020 Budget
- Worked with Personnel to get a proper budget for our paid staff.
- Developed a Balance Sheet as a required monthly document from the Treasurer, and required for Bank loans.
- Expanded financial accounts to include ones that get interest to better put the Church's cash to work.
- Laid the foundation for a bank loan that may be required for facilities upgrades.
- Initiated policies and procedures with the Executive Director for Finances required for an audit.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

- Ensure 2020 Budget execution goes according to plan, legally and with transparency.
- Develop the 2022 Budget in accordance with Vestry vision.
- Finalize procedures and execute an internal audit.

Fine Arts

Chair: Joanna Innes

Co-chair: Amy Ball

Members: Rachel Bradford, Susan Findlay, Jack Hurley, Lisa Lindahl, Cisco Lindsey, and Tobias Van Buren

Fine Arts Committee Report (cont.)

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Fine Arts Committee displays the art work of UU members and friends as well as others via invitation, knowing that fine art is an important cultural product of any community, which deserves to be viewed and to be purchased.

Activities and Accomplishments:

Conducted 9 art shows:

- John Meffert's Cuban Art Show
- Children's Halloween Art Show & Candlelight Concert
- Ken Russack's Solo Show
- Lee Westbrook's Poster Show
- UU Members' and Friends' Art Show
- Art Klein's Solo Show & Candlelight Concert
- Amy Major's Solo Show & Candlelight Concert
- The Cisco Lindsey and Jim Innes Duo Show
- Private Collection Show
- Gage Hall Mini-Gallery (back entrance) features works by Cisco Lindsey and Friends.
- The Fine Arts Committee worked cooperatively with the Music Committee to present benefit concerts/art shows that aid music programs in poverty-level schools in the area.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

The Fine Arts Committee is pleased to announce that Abby Himmelein has agreed to become our new Chair, beginning in the fall of 2019. She and Fred have a wonderful art collection of their own, and Abby will bring forth many new art shows for us, drawing on her expertise in the field.

Fine Arts Committee Report (cont.)

Cisco Lindsey has been the mainstay of our Fine Arts Committee, always ready, not only with his bag of tools to hang our shows, but also with his knowledge of art. Through his invitations, many of his artist contacts have shared their art with us.

It is with some reluctance but also with some pride that Amy Ball and I pass chair duties to Abby. Definitely, we've enjoyed this committee: it has actually been fun! We've made a worthy contribution to our Church community for the past ten years. And I have to add that I've been proud to walk into Gage Hall, always seeing **Art on our Walls!**

Membership

Co-chairs: Anne Lewis and Susan S. White

Members: Marcia Pate Castaño; George Castaño; Gabriel Gauthier, Ren Manning, Kathleen Mulroy, Aliix Plaxco, Karen Ruef, Priscilla Shumway, and Bernadette Wladyka

Ex-Officio: Carol Oates, Membership Coordinator

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Membership Committee strives to extend a warm welcome to visitors and to assure all new and existing members feel they are a vital, valued and welcomed part of our Congregation. We also want to support the efforts of our Membership Coordinator in supporting and expanding our membership.

Activities and Accomplishments:

The Committee has provided mentors and meals for the Pathways classes held during the year; provided ushers and greeters for all services; manned the Welcome Table and engaged with visitors and new members during coffee hour each week; coordinated and provided cake and other food for each New Member Sunday held during the year; recognized members on the anniversaries of their joining the Congregation; and have taken over more tasks in support of the Membership Coordinator, e.g. making congratulatory anniversary calls. We've also added new committee members.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

We plan to build upon our accomplishments and actions of this and prior years, and to expand our recognition and celebration of existing members with, e.g. quarterly coffee hours. We also plan to expand our support of Carol Oates' efforts/programs as needed with a goal of strengthening and increasing membership.

Music Committee

Chair: Diane Boyer

Co-chair: Elaine Hunter

Members: Sue Findlay, Barbara Goldberg, Kathy Guy, Joanna Innes, Claire Law, and Sally Newell

Ex-Officio: Susan Conant, Music Director

The Music Committee adopted these statements this year:

Purpose/Vision Statement:

To work with the Music Director to create and facilitate an excellent and diverse Music Program that uses the power of music to uplift our worship services, provide joy and enhance spirituality in our members, and to reflect Unitarian Universalist values within our Church and in the larger community.

Covenant:

In our work together, the members of the Music Committee agree to:

- Treat each other kindly and with respect;
- Do our fair share of the work of the committee;
- Be respectful of other committee members by being on time, responding to messages quickly, and completing work in a timely fashion.

Activities and Accomplishments:

- Produce three Candlelight Concerts and increase attendance. *Accomplished.*
- Use proceeds from Candlelight Concerts to give a mini-grant to a school or community organization to support music education for underserved children. *In process*—applications are being solicited for a \$1500 mini-grant expected to be awarded by July 1.
- Recruit new committee members who are not in the choir. *Accomplished and ongoing.*
- Award the Martha Welch Scholarship to a young person in our RE program who is studying music. *The committee is exploring ways to support the musical development of our RE students other than a competitive audition process.*
- Support and provide feedback to the Music Director. *Accomplished and ongoing.*

Music Committee Report (cont.)

- Recommend to the Vestry that a person or committee be appointed to be responsible for the sound systems in the Sanctuary and Gage Hall. *Accomplished.*
- Give input to the Vestry about requirements for the Music Director position and participate in the search process. *Accomplished. At the request of the Vestry, the position description for the Music Director position was extensively revised, and the committee unanimously recommended to the Vestry that Susan Conant be offered the position.*
- Develop a Policies and Procedures Manual for the committee. *Not accomplished. An outline has been developed, and a draft will be prepared over the summer for consideration in the fall.*

Nominating Committee

Chair: Allison Sterrett-Krause

Co-chair: Nina Fair

Members: Kathleen King, John Klintworth, and Nancy Simpson,

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Nominating Committee promotes leadership development for our Church. We support the functioning of the Vestry by identifying and nominating potential new Vestry members each year, in accordance with the Church Constitution. The Nominating Committee also nominates members of the Endowment Investment Board as needed.

Activities and Accomplishments:

- In the 2018-2019 church year we successfully identified three candidates for Vestry service: Al Finch, Jeffrey Fleming, and Ren Manning (candidate for Treasurer). We contacted multiple church members who expressed willingness to consider Vestry service in future years.
- We also identified two candidates for nomination to the Endowment Investment Board: Karen Abrams (for consecutive term 2) and Fred Himmelein (for new EIB position, in the event that constitutional change to EIB makeup, proposed by the Vestry in 2019, is approved at May 2019 Annual Meeting).

Nominating Committee Report (cont.)

- We planned a forum presentation on the Vestry's role and responsibilities, authored multiple announcements in the Gateway and Gateway update, and presented information about the Vestry's role during a Committee Spotlight in January.

Goals/action plan for next church year:

- Identify and nominate at least 3 potential new Vestry members for a 3-year rotating term.
 - Make early contact with people who told us in 2018-19 that they would consider vestry service in later years; invite them to volunteer for service
- Identify and nominate at least 2 candidates for the EIB
- Communicate with the congregation using multiple means about the role of the Nominating Committee and nominating process and the role, duties, and benefits of service on the Vestry

Personnel Committee

Co-chairs: Al Finch and Floy Work

Members: Karen Abrams, Tony Brown, and John Jamrogowicz

Ex-Officio: Sandra Selvitelli, Executive Director

Purpose/Vision Statement: The Personnel Committee assures the implementation of sound human resource policies and procedures that comply with the law, are competitive in the marketplace, and adhere to the principles of our Unitarian Universalist faith. The Personnel Committee, working with the Minister, Office Administrator and the Vestry, works to ensure that the policies and procedures as described in the Personnel Manual are followed.

Personnel Committee Report (cont.)

Activities and Accomplishments:

- Reviewed and Revised Personnel Manual
- Strongly recommended salaries of staff be brought in line with UU guidelines for Churches in our region that are our size. Vestry agreed to increased salaries and developed a plan to bring them in line.
- Recommended a change in the annual leave/sick leave policy. Recommended moving to a Personal Time Off policy. Approved by Vestry.
- Recommended moving to the mid-level health insurance policy offered by the UUA rather than the lowest level one. Approved by Vestry.
- Recommended offering the option for employees to purchase long-term disability insurance to employees. Approved by Vestry.
- Developed a set of hiring practices to be used in future recruitment.

Planned Giving Committee

Chair: Trip Banner

Co-chair: Hillary Hutchinson

Members: Judy Bruce, Prudence Finn, and Steve Wilson

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Planned Giving Committee of the Unitarian Church in Charleston enhances benefactor gifting through education of needs and options for gifting, reliable management of funds, and appropriate recognition of donors. By providing a platform and informative communications program to support the steps and process to establish a legacy giving plan for the Church, a significant percentage of congregants and friends identified as high potential benefactors will be recognized on the list posted in Gage Hall. This group's future legacy gifting to the Church will continue to make a strong contribution to sustain a healthy fiscal institution supporting our shared covenant (our seven Principles) for the free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Planned Giving Committee Report (cont.)

Activities and Accomplishments:

Created a list now posted in Gage Hall to recognize those who have already pledged a bequest to the Unitarian Church in Charleston. Provided standardized documentation to verify bequests, and expanded the number of pledged bequests. Introduced Wake Now Our Vision (WNOV) a matching fund from the UUA.

- Pledged bequests now total over \$1.25 million.
- 29 separate bequest representing 12% of our Church membership
- 8 pledges are over \$100,000 each for a total of \$1,085,000
- 11 pledges are for amounts from \$5,000 to \$60,000 for a total of \$261,000
- 10 pledges are percentages of wills, estates, IRAs or assets, and real estate. The amounts are not known and not tallied in the above
- Also not included in the above total is \$26,000, to be received in 2019 or 2020 dependent upon the UUA's distribution of the funds, that will come to the Church from the Wake Now Our Vision Campaign of the UUA, a matching gift funded by the Shelter Island UU Church in Manhasset, Long Island with the goal of energizing planned giving among Unitarian Universalists.
- Hosted a party for those benefactors already on the list.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

Continue to cultivate potential legacy benefactors, and recognize them through various means. Make sure that newly received bequests are memorialized on the Gilman Society Wall in the Church courtyard.

Religious Education (RE) Committee

Chair: Cindy Cooksey

Co-chair: James Selvitelli

Members: Kevin Eakes, Mary Ellen Giess, Margaret Grant, John Hyatt, Joe Krause, Kris Rife, Lisa Thomson Ross, and Regina Ruopoli

Ex-Officio: Danielle Lopez, Director of Religious Education

Religious Education Committee Report (cont.)

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The mission of the RE Committee is to provide a safe and nurturing environment in which children and youth may grow spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually, within the context and deliberate practice of the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism.

Activities and Accomplishments:

Working in partnership with the RE Administrator and the Executive Director:

- Hired Danielle Lopez and Director of Religious Education
- Established the 2018-2019 curriculum for all levels of RE
- Planned and executed special occasion events such as RE Celebration Party, Pride Festival Pre-Party, Halloween Party, Winter Holiday RE activities, Easter, Oyster Roast, youth trips to The Mountain
- OWL was conducted jointly this year with Circular, thereby maximizing resources
- Conducted RE registration
- Located RE teacher volunteers

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

- Recruit RE teacher volunteers (critical need)
- Evaluate ways to integrate RE curriculum with broader Church community via Soul Matters resources
- Integrate non-christian celebrations into RE program (e.g. Yule-Winter Solstice, Passover Seder, Ostara-Spring Equinox, etc.)
- Plan 2019-2020 curriculum for all levels of RE

Safety and Security Committee

Chair: Carol Tempel

Co-chair: David Ruef

Members: Lisa Hajjar, Richard Hayes, Judy Manning, Alan Moore, John Narkunas, and Sheila Scarborough

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Safety Committee works to ensure the Church prepares for, responds to, and recovers from emergency or disaster incidents and provides the safest environment possible for congregants, visitors and staff. The Committee supports all 7 Church Principles because without a basic level of safety, we cannot focus on the higher areas of belief.

Activities and Accomplishments:

- Assisted in preparation of hurricane preparedness planning and execution.
- Staffed Sunday services with Safety Team members including a volunteer incident coordinator.
- Implemented a successful evacuation drill of all facilities.
- Revised signage to reduce the daily hours the Churchyard is open to the public, to improve security.
- Presented to the Program Council about the importance of securing facility doors at evening events and meetings.
- Reviewed safety equipment to ensure effective operation and reviewed other safety considerations throughout the property, such as the kitchen.
- Added Executive Director and Sexton to our quarterly meeting to ensure coordination and input.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

- Continue to partner with staff and the Buildings and Grounds Committee to upgrade safety issues.
- Repair and obtain door push bars (two in Sanctuary and one upstairs in Gage Hall)
- Improve lighting and hurricane preparation

Safety and Security Committee Report (cont.)

- Continue to educate Congregation about safety issues – provide opportunity for CPR/AED review, hold annual evacuation drill.
- Expand membership of safety team.
- Continue to meet quarterly to consider improvements in executing our goals.
- Continue to review the pros and cons of obtaining the services of a professional for security and safety at Sunday services.
- Hold a committee spotlight on March 3 including a brief presentation at service to the Congregation, staffing a table during coffee hour and preparing a Gateway Update article.

Social Justice Committee

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Social Justice Committee serves as a coordinating group that supports human rights, equality and a safe environment. We participate in advocacy and action, community outreach, community outreach giving and Congregational in-reach based on our Unitarian principles. The varied Social Justice Activities supported by our subcommittees offer many opportunities for rewarding Church member involvement.

Activities and Accomplishments:

Below are a list of our current initiatives (alphabetical) which include several new initiatives from the 2018-19 Church year as indicated by an asterisk.

- **Al Gore Climate Reality Corps Training***

Libby Smith attended the Al Gore Climate Reality Corp training in Atlanta in March. For the first time ever, this training included a heavy emphasis on the environmental “injustice” of climate change. Our Charleston group included another UU member who was attending the training in connection with her job. She will be working with the SJ group to plan our approach to incorporating Environmental Justice into our program. We will begin with an educational series for the Congregation on these issues using the materials from the Climate Reality Corp training over the coming months.

Social Justice Committee Report (cont.)

- **Book Angels**
Book Angels is in the midst of picking up thousands of books that have been collected during spring book drives. Our volunteer Church members are sorting and boxing, all of which will peak this month but continue into early June.
- **Charleston Area Justice Ministry (CAJM)**
CAJM, as our Church's largest social justice activity, submits separate reports.
- **Coffeehouse Concert Fundraising/Mitchell School Programs**

Coffee House Contacts: Mark Farnham, Richard Hayes and Bill Morris
Mitchell Elementary School Contact: John Narkunas

Purpose/Vision Statement: To promote educational equity for children living in poverty in the Charleston Tri-County area. Funds generated through monthly Gage Hall Coffee House concerts are used for academic enrichment activities at the Mitchell Elementary School in Charleston. These activities include enhanced math and science programs as well as field trips for children in grades Pre-K-5.
- **Electoral Justice***
Amber Allen has resigned as our Electoral Justice chair. We are hoping to find a new home for this critical community involvement. The involvement will focus on supporting organization like LWV and Conservation Voters.
- **Endowment Fund**
A mini-grant in the amount of \$4,500.00 was awarded to Charleston Habitat for Humanity at our September Social Justice Sunday service in September. They received the highest score of eight applications submitted by organizations that were nominated by members of the Congregation (Kay Haun nominated this organization). The funds were to be used to support the construction of a home for a single mother with two daughters who were struggling to obtain affordable housing.
- **Environmental Justice***
The Social Justice Committee has voted to investigate building Congregational involvement in Environmental Justice.

Social Justice Committee Report (cont.)

- **Green Sanctuary**

The Green Sanctuary leads the Church's efforts to become more environmentally sustainable through capital improvements, education, and outreach. This falls under the seventh UUA principle: *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*

Members: Lindsay Brunhouse, Erin Demory, Nina Fair, Sue Glover, Mela Khedouri, Jonathan Lamb, Laura Moses, Richard Moss, Jill Norton, David Ruef, Preston Saks, Darragh Simon, and Sharon Strong.

History:

- Formed in January 2007 with Sharon Givens as chair



- Achieved accreditation from UUA as a Green Sanctuary Congregation in March 2009
- Meets monthly with a vegetarian potluck
- Serves as a resource to the Congregation for taking action on environmental issues
- Promotes environmental education with forum speakers on green topics (2007 – present)
- Publishes Gateway articles on topics of environmental interest (2007- present)
- Presents the Church's Earth Day Service (2008 – present)
- Helps implement and monitor our vestry policy of reusable or compostable utensils and plates, along with recycling and composting in Gage Hall for all events, including rentals
- Provides collection and recycling of printer cartridges, batteries and light bulbs in Gage Hall (2007 – present)
- Hosts an adult education discussion class in spring with readings from Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI) (2013 – 2018)

Social Justice Committee Report (cont.)

- Collaborates with local organizations, such as Circular Congregational and Charleston Vegetarians and Vegans, to present green films or speakers
- Encourages participation in volunteer events such as Beach Sweep – River Sweep
- Participates in the Charleston Green Business Challenge, a program for local organizations to promote health, sustainability and energy efficiency (2015-present).

Activities and Accomplishments:

- Green Forums: in 2018 included beekeeping by Nancy Simpson in March. In 2019, we have presentations on DHEC, Southern Environmental Law Center, Sustainable Nutrition and a talk by marine scientist Cindy Cooksey-Cole.
- Partner Events: Green Sanctuary and Eden Keepers are partnering to schedule a volunteer day at Fresh Future Farm for Saturday, April 20, 2019.
- Earth Day Service: Our guest speaker for 2018 was Heather Lyn Mann, a writer, mindfulness teacher, and environmental advocate. On April 14, 2019, our guest speaker will be Tony Bartelme, senior projects reporter and award-winning investigative journalist for environmental issues at the Post & Courier.
- **Higher Ground***
We had a productive 4-month Higher Ground “Stop, What Can We Do Now?” program led by Gary Smith and Libby Smith. We had about 10 regular participants and learned from each other and the Higher Ground materials how to reduce our personal carbon footprints. We also included a presentation from the Charleston Chairman of Al Gore’s Climate Reality Corp on Climate Change.

Social Justice Committee Report (cont.)

- **Racial Justice***

Diane Narkunas and Richard Hayes have spearheaded a significant new Racial Justice initiative. They have committed an energetic group working on this effort whose purpose will be to raise awareness and educate Church members and friends about racism to make our Church more welcoming to African American and other minorities, and to highlight racial justice issues in the Charleston-area leading to a plan of action to address racial injustice.

Members: Paul Garbarini, Michael Griffith, Richard Hayes, Simon Lewis, Diane Narkunas, and John Narkunas

Consultants: Rev. Elaine Peresluha and Treva Williams, Charleston Area Justice Ministry (CAJM)

Partners:

- Internal: Worship Committee, Forums, Membership Committee
- Proposed External: College of Charleston, Avery Research Center for African American Studies and Culture, YWCA, Circular Church, Mother Emanuel Church, Morris Brown Church and others.


Framework: Series of presentations and discussions through Dec. 2020.

Activities and Accomplishments:

- Our Racial Justice initiative was kicked off with a January 3, 2019, workshop to identify racial biases in ourselves and others.
- It was facilitated by Alma Busby-Williams; 30 members attended.
- March 21, Paul Garbarini facilitated a book group on *White Fragility* which focused on white privilege. The group met for 5 Thursdays. Over 25 people participated.
- On May 23, we have scheduled an evening forum to discuss the book, *We Are Charleston: Tragedy and Triumph at Mother Emanuel Church* (2016); Authors; Herb Frazier, Assoc. Professor Bernard Edward Powers, Jr. College of Charleston, Marjory Wentworth. “This book describes history of slavery, racism and the Emanuel Church in Charleston,” says reviewer.

Social Justice Committee Report (cont.)

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

- October, Avery Research Center Program
- January, Disparities Index related to Jobs, Health, and Education and Institutional Racism in Charleston and Beyond
- March, Institutional Racism in Education.
- Strive to have Coffee House Concerts artists/musicians more diverse.
- Present a series of Forums focusing on racial bias and racism in the Charleston area.
- **Refugee Support**
Nancy Hild and her team are working very hard with a new refugee. Anna is a mother with two children in this country and a third child still in Guatemala. They have secured a pro-bono immigration attorney and have stabilized Anna's situation. They continue to work on the challenges that come up regularly and are particularly working on helping with the 3rd child.
- **Welcoming Congregation** 
Neil Duffy has developed a plan and budget for re-energizing our LGBTQQI welcoming activities. He has created a brochure describing the Church's commitment to being a "welcoming Congregation." Working with Jeffrey Fleming and others we look forward to seeing the expansion of this important committee in the coming year.

Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:

- It was recommended that the Social Justice Committee develop a small steering committee and have a bi-annual planning meeting with all the subcommittee chairs. This will replace the 4-person steering committee that we currently have.
- Kris Rife is resigning from the SJ Committee effective the end of the Church's fiscal year.
- The Social Justice Committee will take a strong role in budget submission and tracking.

Social Justice Committee Report (cont.)

- The committee had voted to pursue an opt-in email list for Church members interested the community's social justice activities. A decision has been made to only communicate activities in which the Church is actively involved. We will work on a Social Justice Communication Plan which can include monthly write up with web links in the gateway update and a bulletin board in Gage Hall.

Stewardship Committee

Chair: Jack Hurley

Co-chair: Ren Manning

Members: Karen Abrams, John Narkunas, and Christine Magnarella Ray

Ex-Officio: Carol Oates, Membership Coordinator and Sandra Selvitelli, Executive Director

Purpose/Vision Statement:

The Stewardship Committee manages a successful pledge campaign to support the mission and work of the Unitarian Church in Charleston.

Activities and Accomplishments:

- Pledge campaign kicked off on March 17, 2019. Our theme was "We Are the Church."
- Launched a successful visiting steward model for the first time in many years.
- Our goal of \$454,000 was not reached but the average pledge was raised and with a successful mini-capital campaign in January and without having a Minister for 10 months prior to the campaign there is an overall feeling of success.
- Successfully implemented new technology with weekly videoed interviews of Church members sent to the Congregation.
- Partnered with Alex Hild for a highly successful play about the history and future of our Church followed by a champagne reception.

*Stewardship Committee Report (cont.)***Goals/Action Plan for Next Year:**

- Add new members to the committee.
- Create a visiting stewards task force.

Worship Services Committee**Chair:** Hillary Hutchinson**Co-chair:** Amy Hudock**Members:** Jen Bennett, Kevin Eakes, Mark Farnham, Jeffrey Fleming, Paul Garbarini, Richard Hayes, Allison Sterrett-Krause, and Priscilla Shumway

Purpose/Vision Statement: The Worship Services Committee strives to create meaningful worship services that enlighten and inspire our congregation. Mission: Throughout the year, members of the Worship Services committee act as a sounding board for the Ministers and plan lay-led services with speakers from the congregation and the community. WSC's services bring diversity of voices and perspectives into the pulpit to support our congregational mission of building a welcoming home for spiritual freedom. WSC welcomes feedback from the congregation on sermons and services.

Covenant:

As a committee, we covenant to engage in direct, respectful communications, to set and uphold healthy boundaries, and practice deep listening with each other in connection to understanding differing ideas of worship. We promise to care for on another, and practice mutual responsibility through shared ministry and leadership, and to honor and celebrate differences among us.

With respect to the Congregation, we covenant to create meaningful worship reflecting the seven Unitarian Universalist principles and illuminating ways to put these into practice for our congregants. To that end, our Church services will:

- Acknowledge the shared human journey, and value the commonalities between us over what separates and divides us.
- Recognize and celebrate the dignity, diversity and gifts of our congregants.
- Strive to envision better world by supporting and encouraging our individual and common efforts towards its attainment.

Worship Services Committee Report (cont.)

- Accept the mystery surrounding our ultimate destiny as a human race, our lives are worthy of praise, and will work to help each other engage the mystery with praise.
- Endeavor to cultivate and explore the religious response among us as a defining and enabling activity by acknowledging that religion is a human response to the mysterious otherness we encounter in our lives.

Worship Service Committee Responsibilities:

- Assist and support the Ministers in development of weekly church services for the Unitarian Church in Charleston.
- Serve as Worship Associates during Sunday services. Worship Associates typically oversee some logistical details and have a small speaking role in each service.
- Plan and implement worship services for the Church. WSC provides one service per month during the church year (September through May) and 10-12 services during the summer (June through August). WSC services usually are designed to complement the Ministers' services with varied spiritual and theological perspectives, service formats, and worship experiences.

Membership:

The Worship Services Committee invites inquiries about committee membership from any active church member with an affinity for the practice of worship in the Unitarian Universalist tradition. Most members of the WSC have been active members of the Church for at least one year, though we are also eager to hear from new Church members who have joined us following a period of membership in other UUA congregations.

Activities and Accomplishments:

- Handled all services during the summer of 2018; regular monthly services and then some until April 1, 2018 and then handled all services until arrival of Rev. Elaine Peresluha on February 10, 2019.
- Will handle all summer 2019 services and will return to one Sunday per month for regular committee run services in the fall of 2019.
- We have instituted monthly theme-based worship based on Soul Matters material, and that is working well.

Worship Services Committee Report (cont.)

- Worked with committee and church staff via Google documents for better shared communication.

Goals/Action plan for next church year:

- Anticipate working with Interim Minister beginning in August 2019.
- Amy Hudock will assume primary responsibility as Chair on July 1, 2019 for committee leadership, assisted by Paul Garbarini as Co-chair. He is not expected to become Chair; he has only agreed to one year in this position.
- Continue to recruit new members.
- Continue to seek congregants to handle small parts of the service such as readings to introduce them to committee's work.
- Continue handling once per month regular church year services in 2019-2020 and summer services in 2020.