

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020



First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

405 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12206

[www.AlbanyUU.org](http://www.AlbanyUU.org) | 518.463.7135

*A Welcoming Congregation*

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**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**of the**  
**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany**  
**Sunday, May 17, 2020**  
**Agenda**

**Call to Order and Words for Gathering**

**Appointments**

Parliamentarian  
Timekeeper  
Quorum/Vote Counters

**Approval of Agenda**

**Adoption/Rules of Procedure**

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

**Zoom Procedure Review**

**Nominating Committee Report**

**Update on Stewardship Campaign**

UU Bucks Drawing

**President's Report to the Congregation**

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

**New Business**

**Adjournment**

# **First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany**

## **Policy on Congregational Meetings**

### *Modified for Meeting Conducted Virtually*

#### **I. Rules of Procedures on Debate**

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

Next, the Agenda shall be submitted for approval.

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

##### **A. Rules of Procedures for Presentation**

1. The person or committee that prepared a resolution or motion on the agenda for congregational vote shall make a supporting presentation limited to 10 minutes.
2. If there is a minority or dissenting opinion, the spokesperson for the opposition shall make a presentation, also limited to 10 minutes.
- 3.

##### **B. Rules of Procedures for Discussion**

1. Those wishing to speak shall use the “raise hand” feature online or press \*9 on their phone to be placed in line to speak.
2. The chair will recognize the speaker who is next up in line.
3. No person may speak for more than 3 minutes on any one item.
4. No person may speak more than once on an item as long as anyone else is ahead in the line.
5. When there are no speakers, the debate may be closed.
6. After initial presentation, debate time for each item requiring a vote shall be 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, a motion shall automatically be put, "Shall debate be extended for fifteen minutes?"

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

#### **II. Pre-Meeting Educational Efforts**

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

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

## **Rationale for, and Features of, the Board-Recommended Budget for 2020-21**

Reese Satin, Treasurer, May 1, 2020

The uncertainties in the wider world leads the Board to present a budget based on the tentative assumption that AUU will continue to do what we are doing now and that our building will not open before January. We do not consider this a “worst case” budget, rather a conservative “best guess” of what coming months will bring. If, as the year progresses, it turns out we have been either overly optimistic or pessimistic in our estimate of anticipated income, the Finance Committee will be asked to develop another budget to present to the Board consistent with unanticipated circumstances. If these changes alter the budget by more than 5% of the total budget, Board-approved changes will be submitted to the Congregation for ratification.

The attached budget table compares amounts in the proposed budget with the original budget for 2019-20. We have included the original budget requests for 20-21 which, even with an early estimate of greater income, resulted in a deficit of almost \$25,000. The differences between the *Request* and *Board Recommendation* columns represent the effort of the Finance Committee, the Ministry and Operations Team and the Board to minimize the impact of reduced expense allocations, in order to balance the budget given our likely circumstances.

We anticipate circumstances will *decrease* income in the following ways:

- *Other Income* from loss of a half year of building rentals and declining interest rates.
- *Program Income* due to loss of several fund-raisers and reduced RE enrollment;
- *Contribution Income* due to possible job losses, diminished salaries, decreased value of securities and absence of a tangible collection plate.

We estimate that these factors will result in FY 20-21 income being about 11% less than the current FY. To mitigate the effects of this possibility, AUU applied and has been approved for a forgivable loan of \$52,000 under the Federal Payroll Protection Program (PPP). In order to qualify for loan forgiveness the loan must be used for salaries and other qualified expenses in the eight weeks following receipt of this money.

Due to loss of income this year from no rentals after March 15 and no Goods and Services Auction, we have trimmed the unexpended portion of this year’s budget (covering the period through June 30). You have continued to fulfill your pledges, so it looks like we will have enough to meet our obligations until June. We are fortunate to have the PPP loan because it will allow us to mitigate any unanticipated decreases in income in FY 20-21.

Given these circumstances, we make the following recommendations:

- A year-over-year reduction of about 6% in *Non-Ministerial Salary and Benefits* which includes:  
Retention of all currently employed regular staff at the salary recommended by the Personnel Committee.  
The absence of a Music Director until at least January and a music program continuing under the paid leadership of Randy Rosette and Chris Jensen.

Elimination of Sunday Nursery Care while the building is closed.

Eliminating or substantially reducing professional development lines for all staff.

- Reducing all *Administration* lines except for postage, resulting in an overall decrease of about 16%.
- Reducing all *Building Maintenance* lines except for janitorial services, supplies and insurance. The biggest reduction in this category results from the decision to limit our debt service line to the minimum amount required to pay our Note holders. This results in a year-over-year reduction of about 31%.
- Eliminating or reducing most *Church and Community* allocations. Attempting to respond to anticipated circumstances, Caring Network and Publicity lines are increased and the new Community Breakfast line is partially funded. This results in a 15% year-over-year reduction in this category.
- In *Denominational Affairs*, our UUA and Unirondack contributions are maintained, but funding for the Denominational Affairs Committee and Partner Church are reduced, resulting in a category decrease of almost 4%.
- In *Ministerial Expenses*, the major reduction is in Professional Expenses, resulting in a category decrease of about 3%.
- The *Other Expenses* category has an added Contingency line equal to the amount we expect to receive if the PPP loan is forgiven. The Board chose to use this line to hold money that might be necessary in the FY 2020-21 to continue paying staff salaries or other expenses should income projections fail to be realized. As we progress through the coming FY, it may become possible to reconsider the need for this reserve. If we are fortunate enough not to need the funds for salaries and other currently budgeted expenses, the Board will hold a congregational conversation to gather input as to how these funds should be used. The only other change in this category is that Fund Raiser expenses have been cut roughly in half from last year.
- The almost 37% decrease in *Religious Education* reflects the absence of on-site Sunday School and trips during the year.
- In *Social Responsibilities*, the only decrease from last year is the elimination of our contribution to Interfaith Impact because the organization is disbanding. This produced a 12% decrease in this category.
- Finally, all *Planned Transfers* were reduced or eliminated except for maintaining the Sabbatical Fund and returning the Capital Reserve allocation to its traditional level. The reduced amount allocated for an Intern is based on a decision to have an intern once every three (rather than two) years. Aside from PPP funds, *Planned Transfers* is the only category which increased (about 5%) compared to last year.

In conclusion, this year's budget construction has been a particularly difficult task given all the uncertainties in our environment. We realize there is no "right" answer. This is the most appropriate and flexible plan we could develop, given our current knowledge.

Thankfully, we have experienced continued support of our members and friends following building closure. We are hopeful that this will continue and make future positive revisions of this budget possible.

**Board of Trustees Recommended Budget for FY 20-21 (assuming building reopens on 1/1/21)**

Account #	2019-20 Original Budget	2020-21 Budget			NOTES
		Request	Board Recommended	% Change from 19-20	
<b>Ordinary Income and Expense</b>					
<u>Income</u>					
<b>Contribution Income 4100</b>					
Back Pledges 4110	\$11,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	9.1%	
Collection Plate 4120	\$8,200	\$8,000	\$6,000	-26.8%	
Current Year Pledges 4130	\$448,800	\$471,456	\$426,800	-4.9%	Est. pledges of \$444,000-5% shrinkage+\$5,000 newcomer pledges.
Other Contributions 4150	\$9,000	\$2,700	\$2,000	-77.8%	Corrected reassignment of contributions
<b>Total Contribution Income 4100</b>	<b>\$477,000</b>	<b>\$494,156</b>	<b>\$446,800</b>	<b>-6.3%</b>	
<b>Other Income 4200</b>					
Building Rentals 4215	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$20,000	-52.4%	
Interest Income 4220	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	-66.7%	
Funds made available by PPP 4290	X	X	\$52,003		Anticipated forgivable loan
<b>Total Other Income 4200</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$43,000</b>	<b>\$73,003</b>	<b>62.2%</b>	
<b>Program Income 4300</b>					
FUN/D Raisers 4320	\$27,000	\$24,000	\$20,000	-25.9%	Auction is planned for 3/21
RE Income Children & Youth 4340	\$1,800	\$2,000	\$1,500	-16.7%	
<b>Total Program Income 4300</b>	<b>\$28,800</b>	<b>\$26,000</b>	<b>\$21,500</b>	<b>-25.3%</b>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$550,800</b>	<b>\$563,156</b>	<b>\$541,303</b>	<b>-1.7%</b>	
<u>Expense</u>					
<b>Non-Ministerial Sal. &amp; Ben. 5000</b>					
Music Director Salary 5010	\$17,925	\$26,325	\$18,938	5.7%	increase from 16 to 20 hours (52 wks); start after Jan.
Church Administrator Salary 5015	\$46,141	\$49,900	\$49,900	8.1%	50% of salary band
Administrative Assistant Salary 5016	\$16,380	\$16,640	\$16,640	1.6%	50% of salary band
Sexton Salary 5027	\$8,099	\$8,100	\$8,100	0.0%	
Hourly Custodian 5028	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	0.0%	
RE Director Salary 5030	\$52,428	\$35,250	\$35,250	-32.8%	decrease from 30 to 20 hours
RE Coordinator 5031	X	\$15,330	\$15,330		42 weeks @ 20 hours, replaces RE Assistant
RE Assistant 5032	\$9,891	X	X		
Youth Advisor 5033	\$6,200	\$6,300	\$6,300	1.6%	50% of salary band
Sunday Nursery Care 5035	\$2,500	\$3,747	\$2,000	-20.0%	
Staff Benefits - Health 5042	\$2,450	\$2,450	\$2,450	0.0%	
Staff Benefits - Retirement 5043	\$11,495	\$14,345	\$10,180	-11.4%	
Music Director Prof. Dev. 5050	\$500	\$1,500	\$0	-100.0%	
Church Admin. Prof. Dev. 5051	\$500	\$2,000	\$200	-60.0%	Professional association dues
RE Director Prof. Dev. 5053	\$2,360	\$2,360	\$213	-91.0%	Professional association dues
RE Coord. Prof. Dev. 5055	X	\$1,200	\$0		

Account #	Ordinary Income and Expense	2019-20		2020-21 Budget			NOTES
		Original Budget	Request	Board Recommended	% Change from 19-20		
5080	Employer Payroll Taxes	\$13,017	\$12,358	\$12,358	-5.1%	decrease - no intern FICA	
5090	Workers Comp.	\$2,843	\$2,900	\$2,500	-12.1%		
5091	NYS Disability & Family Leave	\$844	\$2,000	\$2,000	137.0%		
<b>5000</b>	<b>Total Non-Ministerial Sal. &amp; Ben.</b>	<b>\$195,073</b>	<b>\$204,205</b>	<b>\$183,859</b>	<b>-5.7%</b>		
<b>5100</b>	<b>Administration</b>						
5140	Audit, Banking & Payroll Services	\$4,700	\$4,500	\$3,500	-25.5%		
5141	Credit/Debit Charges	\$1,300	\$1,300	\$1,200	-7.7%		
5150	Office Equipment & Copier	\$6,200	\$5,700	\$4,700	-24.2%		
5160	Office Supplies	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,500	-16.7%		
5170	Postage	\$800	\$800	\$1,000	25.0%	increased use of mail	
5280	Telecommunications	\$4,932	\$5,784	\$4,784	-3.0%		
5287	Rental Costs	\$400	\$300	\$150	-62.5%		
<b>5100</b>	<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>\$20,132</b>	<b>\$20,184</b>	<b>\$16,834</b>	<b>-16.4%</b>		
<b>5200</b>	<b>Building Maintenance</b>						
5210	Buildings & Grounds	\$20,000	\$26,000	\$19,796	-1.0%		
5230	Janitorial Supplies	\$1,000	\$800	\$800	-20.0%		
5235	Janitorial Services	\$16,000	\$16,100	\$16,100	0.6%		
5240	Loan Principal and Interest	\$50,000	\$55,000	\$16,000	-68.0%		
5270	Utilities - Gas, Electric & Water	\$15,400	\$15,400	\$13,200	-14.3%	closed building	
5470	Insurance	\$7,700	\$8,400	\$8,400	9.1%		
<b>5200</b>	<b>Total Building Maintenance</b>	<b>\$110,100</b>	<b>\$121,700</b>	<b>\$74,296</b>	<b>-32.5%</b>		
<b>5300</b>	<b>Church &amp; Community</b>						
	Community Breakfast	X	\$1,000	\$400		New	
5310	Board of Trustees	\$200	\$200	\$0	-100.0%		
5315	Annual Dinner Subsidy	\$500	\$500	\$0	-100.0%		
5320	Stewardship Committee	\$600	\$600	\$0	-100.0%		
5325	Board Training & Development	\$500	\$500	\$0	-100.0%		
5335	Receptions/Appreciations	\$50	\$50	\$100	100.0%		
5340	Child Care (General)	\$150	\$150	\$0	-100.0%		
5350	Membership Committee	\$980	\$1,040	\$800	-18.4%		
5355	Kitchen & Coffee	\$1,000	\$1,140	\$500	-50.0%		
5357	Caring Network	\$100	\$175	\$175	75.0%		
5361	Joy Library	\$400	\$400	\$0	-100.0%		
5365	Religious Services Committee	\$7,464	\$7,682	\$7,600	1.8%	Increase due to Zoom use	
5370	Publicity Committee	\$250	\$980	\$750	200.0%		
5375	Music	\$4,700	\$4,870	\$4,500	-4.3%		
5385	Archives Committee	\$50	\$50	\$50	0.0%		
5388	Inclusivity Team	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,015	-43.6%		

Ordinary Income and Expense	Account #	2019-20		2020-21 Budget			NOTES
		Original Budget	Request	Board Recommended	% Change from 19-20		
<b>Total Church &amp; Community</b>	<b>5300</b>	<b>\$18,744</b>	<b>\$21,137</b>	<b>\$15,890</b>	<b>-15.2%</b>		
<b>Denominational Affairs</b>	<b>5400</b>						
Partner Church Council	5410	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$700	-30.0%		
UUA/CER Dues	5420	\$26,766	\$29,263	\$29,263	9.3%		
Denominational Affairs Committee	5440	\$4,660	\$5,000	\$1,200	-74.2%	Promote economic diversity among GA delegates	
Unirondack Dues	5450	\$150	\$150	\$150	0.0%		
<b>Total Denominational Affairs</b>	<b>5400</b>	<b>\$32,576</b>	<b>\$35,913</b>	<b>\$31,313</b>	<b>-3.9%</b>		
<b>Ministerial Expenses</b>	<b>5500</b>						
Minister's Salary/Housing	5550	\$100,777	\$101,787	\$101,787	1.0%	50% of salary band	
Minister's Insurance	5560	\$9,653	\$10,406	\$9,441	-2.2%		
Minister's Retirement	5565	\$10,077	\$10,179	\$10,180	1.0%		
Professional Expenses	5566	\$6,050	\$6,700	\$1,000	-83.5%	Professional association dues	
<b>Total Ministerial Expenses</b>	<b>5500</b>	<b>\$126,557</b>	<b>\$129,072</b>	<b>\$122,408</b>	<b>-3.3%</b>		
<b>Other Expenses</b>	<b>5700</b>						
Contingency	5720	X	X	\$52,003		Anticipated allocations other than to fulfill salary obligations will be discussed in a congregational conversation during the 20-21 FY.	
FUN/D Raiser Expenses	5790	\$1,125	\$1,300	\$500	-55.6%		
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>		<b>\$1,125</b>	<b>\$1,300</b>	<b>\$52,503</b>	<b>4566.9%</b>		
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>5800</b>						
Adult Ed Exp	5810	\$900	\$850	\$850	-5.6%		
Child RE Exp	5820	\$6,750	\$7,708	\$4,000	-40.7%		
<b>Total Religious Education</b>	<b>5800</b>	<b>\$7,650</b>	<b>\$8,558</b>	<b>\$4,850</b>	<b>-36.6%</b>		
<b>Social Responsibilities</b>	<b>5900</b>						
Social Responsibilities Council	5901	\$3,200	\$3,750	\$3,200	0.0%	net figure -\$500 in fundraising	
Sheridan Prep	5905	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	0.0%		
Interfaith Impact	5910	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	-100.0%		
<b>Total Social Responsibilities</b>	<b>5900</b>	<b>\$8,200</b>	<b>\$8,750</b>	<b>\$7,200</b>	<b>-12.2%</b>		
<b>Planned Transfers</b>							
HMUU Subsidy	5415	\$500	\$500	\$0	-100.0%		
Sabbatical Fund	5570	\$750	\$750	\$750	0.0%		
Capital Reserve Contribution	9010	\$18,393	\$25,000	\$25,000	35.9%	restoration of traditional contribution	
Ministerial Intern Reserve Fund	9020	\$9,000	\$9,500	\$6,400	-28.9%	Intern every 3 years	
Management Review/Audit	9030	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	-100.0%		
<b>Total Planned Transfers</b>	<b>9000</b>	<b>\$30,643</b>	<b>\$37,250</b>	<b>\$32,150</b>	<b>4.9%</b>		
<b>Total Budgeted Expense</b>		<b>\$550,800</b>	<b>\$588,069</b>	<b>\$541,303</b>	<b>-1.7%</b>		
<b>Net Budgeted Income</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$24,913)</b>	<b>\$0</b>			

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

**1. Call to Order and Words for Gathering**

**2. President Dick Dana called the meeting to order at 11:45 AM.**

Despite a power failure which made hearing and seeing difficult in Community Hall, there was a quorum of the members. Article II., Section 2., Of the Bylaws (adopted January 10, 2016) provides that persons are eligible to vote and hold office thirty days after signing the book and becoming active members.

Reverend Sam Trumbore opened with gathering words “Invocation of the Annual Meeting” by Heather Daniels.

**3. Appointments**

Parliamentarian – Mike Myers

Timekeeper – Matt Lesniak

Quorum/Vote Counters – Dawn Dana and Fred Eames

Floor Managers – Meredith Andrews Andrews (con) and Molly Daniels (pro)

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Dick Dana made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion to approve the agenda passed unanimously.

**5. Adoption/Rules of Procedure**

Governed by Albany UU’s Policy on Congregational Meetings

Dick made a motion to adopt the rules on Albany UU’s Congregational meetings on page 5 of the meeting materials. The motion was seconded by Jon Newell. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. Nominating Committee Report and Election**

Nominating Committee Chair, Bob Franklin, presented the Nominating Committee Report. The Nominating Committee presented a full slate of good candidates. Bob thanked the Nominating Committee members for their successful efforts. He specifically thanked Kathy Hodges, who has completed her term on the Nominating Committee. Bob also has completed his term and service as Chair of the Nominating Committee. Bob then announced the names of the candidates for the uncontested elections.

Dick made a motion, seconded by Dave Metz, to approve the uncontested ballot for candidates to hold UNCONTESTED POSITIONS for 2019-2020. The Motion passed unanimously.

**a. Uncontested Candidates**

OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED • (1-year terms)	
PRESIDENT	Patti Jo Newell
VICE-PRESIDENT	David MacLeod
SECRETARY	Molly Daniels
CO-TREASURER	Reese Satin
CO-TREASURER	Seth Edelman
ASSISTANT TREASURER	Kathy Harris
* RELIGIOUS ED. COUNCIL CHAIR (Ex officio Board Member)*	Leah Akins
* SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES CHAIR (Ex Officio Board Member) *	Matt Lesniak

Councils	
Religious Ed Council (REC) (3 to be elected to 3-year terms)	Social Responsibilities (SRC) (2 to be elected to 3-year terms)
Winston Hagborg Jim Hutchins Darnell Rohrbaugh	Mark Abendroth Crystal Taylor Papps

**b. Contested Elections for the Nominating Committee, Board of Trustees, and Endowment Trust**

Bob Franklin explained the procedure for the contested elections for the positions available on the Nominating Committee, the Board of Trustees and the Endowment Trust. Ballots were distributed and members instructed to rank candidates in order of preference, with 1 being the highest preference. Members were instructed to place a number next to every candidate’s name, and that ballots marked in any other way would not be counted. After the ballots were distributed and collected, the Nominating Committee retired to count ballots.

Nominating Committee	Board of Trustees	Endowment Trust
(Top 2 vote-getters elected to 3-year terms)	(Top 2 vote-getters elected for 3-year terms; third place vote-getter elected to 1-year term)	(Top vote getter elected to 5-year term; second place vote getter elected to 2-year term)
Mike Babala Kelly Smith Randy Rosette	Zack Cunningham Amie Jamieson Jan McCracken	Paula Moskowitz Peter Schaeffing

**c. Incumbents Continuing in Their Positions**

Nominating Committee	Board of Trustees	Religious Education Council	Social Responsibilities Council	Endowment Trust
Mary Applegate Sharon Babala Pat Bailey Al DeSalvo	Meredith Andrews Fred Eames Nancy Shay	Paula Brewer Michele Desrosiers Liz Halvorson Ela Kessel Mike Myers	Michael Braunstein Karen Kaufman Jean Poppei Ann Von Linden	Jeff English Tom Mercer Jon Newell

**7. Update on Stewardship Campaign**

Stewardship Chair, Patti Jo Newell reported that we have reached 91% of our campaign goal to raise \$465,000 for the 2019-20 fiscal year. This is a 3% increase over last year, in keeping with our goal to strengthen our financial security and programmatic capacity as we continue our discernment over what it means to be a good neighbor. Volunteers are in the process of contacting members who have not pledged yet. However, it will be a tight budget as far as reaching the goal we set for the canvass. We hope to wrap up the Stewardship Campaign within the next few weeks.

**8. Update on Growth Through Service Program**

Jaye Holly described the Growth Through Service (GTS) program and process. GTS is primarily all about helping people with their personal growth. GTS is based on the premise that a key part of being a UU is that it’s by serving others that one grows as a person. She said, “We are not us without you.” About 150 Albany UU members have had their GTS conversations. The GTS Team will hold a brunch and conversations on June 2. Jaye invited members to let the Team know if they would like to be a conversation leader. There were no questions.

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

Treasurer, Reese Satin, presented the 2019-2020 budget. Reese stated that the budget is calculated by comparing the income anticipated to be received from pledges with the estimated expenditures from existing obligations and requests for funds, which are submitted to the Finance Committee each January. The Stewardship and Finance Committees recommended the proposed budget to the Board during March and April. The Board adopted the budget in April to be presented at the May 19 Annual Meeting. Reese said, “Budgets are how we spin our gold into values.”

Reese advised that this is the first time in many years when Albany UU has lower income than expenses and identified various cultural changes that likely contributed to this result. This year we received nearly \$38,000 more in funding requests than the amount of estimated income. The proposed budget includes paying the Sexton, RE Assistant and

Youth Advisor positions at the requested amounts by borrowing from Capital Reserves to cover the budget deficit of approximately \$16,000. Sandy Stone made a motion to adopt the 2019-2020 budget. The motion was seconded by Peggy Sherman.

Questions and comments during the discussion concerned opposition to and use of Capital Reserve Funds to cover the operating budget deficit. It was recognized that the appropriate use of Capital Reserves and finding ways to pay for operating costs such as staff, in a climate of reduced pledges requires further careful conversation, planning, and consideration by the congregation and our leaders. The discussion was closed, and *the Motion passed with six abstentions and two opposed.*

## **10. President's Report to the Congregation**

Dick transitioned from the budget discussion by saying that we have \$82,000 in Capital Reserves. We expect to have enough Capital Reserve funds to meet our known needs this year, such as repairing the pillars in front of Albany UU. We will continue our efforts to adequately sustain and grow this account.

Dick then described this year's accomplishments:

### **a. Governance Work Group (GWG)**

The Governance Work Group (GWG) has completed its work. Dick described the new governance structure briefly. The proposed governance structure includes: a smaller Board with strategic focus; a new Program Team to lead and coordinate ministry; and a simpler organizational structure and bylaws. The Board of Trustees is retaining direct supervision and oversight over the Finance, Personnel, Stewardship, and Buildings and Grounds committees. There will no longer be separately elected Religious Education and Social Responsibility Councils; instead, these important functions will be carried out through volunteer teams. The Endowment Trust will continue to be elected as it is now, and the Nominating Committee will continue to be chosen by the congregation through contested elections. Most positions will be held for two-year renewable terms. Members of the interim Program Team are Matt Lesniak, Dave Monroe, Jon Newell and Barbara Manning. The Board will transition from day-to-day decision making to "visioning," namely, big-picture planning and goal setting.

### **b. Wall Hanging**

Dick requested that the members give their Applause for the wall hanging developed by Annie Lapinski for the 10th anniversary of Community Hall.

### **c. 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Albany UU**

Dick noted the enhancements made by George Shear and his Aesthetic and Environmental Team to the front hall, including the new ceiling panels and new lighting, along with a new sound system donated by Al Berzinis, in memory of his wife Sue Berzinis, for this significant anniversary.

d. “Big Question” – ‘What would it look like for Albany UU to be a good neighbor?’ The Board chose the two most popular ideas. The first project is the “Albany UU Housing Rehab Project”. The Team is working with the City of Albany and other partners to renovate housing near Albany UU. The second project proposed by Carol Butt, with support from the Congregation, is a monthly free breakfast for our neighbors on a Saturday morning. Board will ask open questions periodically.

e. Thank-You’s – to Outgoing Board Members

Dick thanked Annika Pfluger for being our voice of conscience. Dick thanked Lee Newberg for his creative mind that has led us to decisions that were better and where we might not expect. Dick said that Linda Hunt persuaded the Board to allow her to record meetings as a reasonable accommodation so she could take accurate notes while also participating in discussions. Dick said that Linda challenged the Board’s underlying assumptions of how we look at things.

Incoming President, Patti Jo Newell, expressed appreciative words about outgoing President, Dick Dana. Among other comments, Patti Jo said that Dick leads by example.

Dick completed his report by announcing anticipated future enhancements to Albany UU, including continuing improvements to the sound system, a LED projection screen and cameras for streaming Sunday services and other events.

**11. Contested Election Results**

Bob Franklin returned to announce the contested election results for church year July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. The contested election results for the Board of Trustees, SRC, REC, Endowment Trust, and Nominating Committee are as follows:

Board of Trustees	Social Responsibilities Council (SRC)	Religious Ed Council (REC)	Endowment Trust	Nominating Committee
Jan McCracken (1-year) Zack Cunningham (3-years) Amie Jamieson (3-years)	Mark Abendroth (3-years) Crystal Taylor Papps (3-years)	Winston Hagborg (3-years) Jim Hutchins (3-years) Darnell Rohrbaugh (3-years)	Paula Moskowitz (2-years) Peter Schaeffing (5-years)	Kelly Smith (3-years) Randy Rosette (3-years)

**12. New Business and Adjournment**

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned.

## **YEAR IN REVIEW**

### **Minister's Annual Report**

Rev. Sam Trumbore

#### **Overview**

This has been a year like no other in my ministry. The Coronavirus/covid-19 pandemic brought our use of our building to a halt March 13. Our last service in Community Hall happened March 8<sup>th</sup>. Building use stopped but much of our organizational life shifted online with our first Zoom service on March 15<sup>th</sup>. We've been online ever since continuing to improve our ability to do everything we say in the chalice lighting each Sunday as we welcome free seekers, excite the human spirit, inspire its growth and development, respond morally and ethically to a troubled world and sustain a vital and nurturing religious community.

We don't know how long we will be sheltering in our homes. For many of us it will be until the virus is gone or a vaccine is developed and widely available. I expect we will continue to do a lot of things using online meetings to save fossil fuels and enjoy the convenience of meeting together in our homes. But a day will come, hopefully sooner rather than later when we will be back in Community Hall on Sunday morning.

#### **Music Director Resignation**

I returned back to work at the end of July last summer when I heard from our last Music Director, Rick Porterfield, that he had accepted a job in New York City as the music director for his former church. This created a crisis as plans for the fall had to be made immediately. There was no time for a search process for a replacement. Randy Rosette, Chris Jensen and Ann Brandon agreed to reprise their fall fill-in work as they did when Matt Edwards left. During the fall, a subcommittee of the Board reflected on the state of our music program and made recommendations to the board that we expand the music director position from 16 to 20 hours with recommendations for programmatic changes. The Board accepted the recommendations but decided not to act on them until after we had a sense of whether people would give more money to invest in our music program. Then the virus hit in the middle of March. Searching for a new music director when income was so uncertain seemed unwise. Thankfully Randy and Chris continued to provide music and support for Zoom on Sunday morning with the addition of the accompanist Elena Karpoff to replace Ann Brandon. All of this will be revisited in the fall when we have more clarity about the virus and whether we can open in September or January.

#### **COVID-19, Building Shutdown, Quarantine**

The appearance COVID-19, had a dramatic impact on our congregational life. With the decision by Governor Cuomo to shut down the state and public gatherings, we ended doing our services in our building and started doing them online using Zoom March 15<sup>th</sup>. We quickly closed the building for all uses, stopping even the AA groups from meeting. Our staff has been working

from home. Thankfully, we are all healthy and no one has gotten the virus from attending an event in our congregation. As of this writing all our meetings continue to be online using Zoom and we expect to continue to do that for the foreseeable future. Without a vaccine in sight or an effective treatment, it would be irresponsible for us to begin using our building again. The only exception at this point would be to use our building for recording music but even that is questionable.

### **Dan Miyake's Internship**

It has been a joy to have Dan Miyake as our intern this year. His services on Sunday morning have been greatly appreciated by the congregation. He is working with the Inclusivity team on its commitment to renew our Welcoming Congregation status. As part of the renewal process, Dan and I led a class called "Transforming Hearts: Transgender Inclusion in Congregations." Dan has also led a Wellspring group successfully. Dan saw the Ministerial Fellowship Committee in March and was granted Preliminary Fellowship. He has also been able to secure employment beginning in August as a minister. I am grateful to have worked with him and helped him get launched in Unitarian Universalist ministry.

### **Religious Services**

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

With the building shutdown and home quarantine, we were forced to move our service online. Fortunately, I have been doing television and video production since high school, so our services have worked out very well. There are challenges doing services in this format, but most folks appreciate the continuity of parts of the service like Community Greeting and Joys and Sorrows. Overall, we are holding together well.

Here is a sampling of the Sunday services this year:

### **Sunday Service Highlights**

- **"Stop Human Extinction,"** September 15
- **"Across Impossible Divides,"** September 22
- **"Rosh Hashanah and the Stinky Kishke,"** September 29 (Dan Miyake)
- **"Having The Conversation,"** November 3 (with Dave Munro)
- **"Cost of Homelessness,"** November 10
- **"Transgender Day of Remembrance,"** November 17 (Dan Miyake)
- **"Thanksgiving and the Platinum Rule,"** November 24 (with Dan Miyake)
- **"Graceful Delight,"** December 8
- **"Blue Christmas,"** December 15 (with Dan Miyake)

- **“Reflecting Backward, Planning Forward,”** January 5
- **“Beloved Community,”** January 12
- **“An Emerging Vision Through the Lens of Governance and Ministry,”** March 1 (with Patti Jo Newell)
- **“Valuing Truth More Than Power,”** March 8
- **“Scriptural Wisdom,”** March 29

If you missed one of these sermons or would like to read it, you’ll find most of them archived here:

<http://members.albanyuu.org/wp/services/sermons/>

### **Community Hall Sound System: Continuing Improvements**

Unfortunately, the sound improvements made last year have created more dissatisfaction than the old system did. And people were not happy with the old one either. Through a vendor reference, I was able to find a professional sound engineer who worked with the Community Speakers sound engineers to evaluate our space and figure out how to relocate our speakers to fix most of the sound problems we’ve had since their installation. That was done in the fall to good effect. Not that all the problems are completely gone – some linger. But overall the sound quality is finally coming close to what this semi-professional system can do. The problem remains that this is a complicated system that requires someone who has an ability to run a professional sound system. It can only be “dumbed down” so much – until something is off and needs to be fixed. I find myself in the unhappy place of being the one who understands it too well. I need a few more techies to back me up! This may need to be a staff position down the road when we need to integrate Zoom with live services to keep people included who don’t feel safe to attend our services once they restart.

### **Social Justice Work**

There are two highlights I’ll mention of my work this year.

Peggy Sherman approached me over the summer to discuss the future of Interfaith Impact. Both of us have been concerned that the organization was not living up to its name “interfaith.” Almost all the organizations that are contributing members are Unitarian Universalist. The creation of Reform Jewish Voice a few years ago and the existing state-wide Christian organization “Council of Churches” left us with little interfaith participation. This limited our ability to join UU Statewide Advocacy Networks on UU initiatives unless it overlapped with our Interfaith Impact work.

Peggy and I discussed our concerns with the Interfaith Impact Board at their summer retreat and the Board came to the conclusion it was time to transition from Interfaith Impact to a UU legislative ministry / statewide advocacy network. That work was to begin in earnest in March – which coincided with the beginning of the shutdown of the state and the spike of cases in New

York City that overloaded the hospitals and created great stress downstate. This work is temporarily on hold until the virus situation improves. Peggy applied for a New York State Convention of Universalists grant to get this work started which we hope will be awarded soon.

The second project was a partnership with Audrey Seidman, member of Congregation Ohav Shalom, to bring two leaders from an organization in the West Bank of Israel called “Roots.” Its director Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger, and young Palestinian Shadi Abu Awwad came as representatives to discuss the path to peace in the West Bank at several sites in the Capital Region including a welcome reception at Albany UU. The visit was a success and funds were raised for the organization and their good work fostering relationships and understanding between Israelis and Palestinians.

### **Hudson Mohawk UU Cluster**

The Cluster had two events this year. The fall event was a workshop with CB Beal to do a Transgender 101 class to help our members and friends learn, reflect on their attitudes and how we can be more welcoming in our congregation.

Our joint service became uncertain as our congregations were closed and the Doane Stuart School closed and rescinded their invitation to use their space. We worked with our guest, Paula Cole Jones, and worked out how we could do the service using Zoom. We pulled it off (with a lot of work by me) with solo music rather than our joint choir. Emma’s Revolution appeared live from California to perform two pieces. We had 377 participants at one point, one of the largest attendances we’ve had! After the presentation, Paula did a workshop on Community of Communities for us expanding on her presentation during the service. Both are available in edited form on Sam’s YouTube channel, “Sam Trumbore.”

### **Lifespan Religious Education**

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

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

The two classes I/we offered/co-facilitated were:

- **Transforming Hearts: Transgender Inclusion in Congregations Class** – Dan Miyake and I co-led this class together. It was a six-part video training from the Transforming Hearts Collective taught by Rev. Mykal Slack and Alex Kapitan. We used this course as part of our Welcoming Congregation Renewal program. The course is for individuals and groups who want to take their knowledge and skills to the next level in terms of trans identity and how to create congregations that are fully inclusive and affirming of the full breadth of gender diversity. We explored the intersection of trans identity, spirituality, and faith community, and gained the grounding, context, and skills to transform ourselves and our congregation. Over twenty members of our congregation participated in this class.
- **Developing Coping Strategies with Tara Brach** – This class was based on the teaching of Tara Brach, a widely respected mindfulness meditation teacher and psychologist who works out of the Washington DC metro area. She has developed a mindfulness tool called RAIN that helps people who are experiencing emotional distress deescalate out of emotional reactivity and into a coping/adaptive/responsive headspace. She describes it in detail in her 2019 book titled, “Radical Compassion.” The class worked with videos of Tara explaining RAIN and guided meditations by her as well as content from her book.

### **Passages**

Sadly, memorial services have dominated more of my time than usual this year. The ones I have done have been for **Linda Munro, Teddy Archer, Judy Gallagher, Terry Way, John Walko and George Allen**. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the services planned for **Peggy Slocum** and **Ruth Salter** have had to be postponed. We were not able to do one for **Diana Shear** either and George has moved to Virginia. They will have a family service down there. I was also able to attend **Bunni Vaughn’s** service put on by her son in a church in Averill Park. Her daughter who is a member of that church did not want a service at Albany UU.

As for marriages, the ones I’ve got planned are in an uncertain status. We haven’t had any child dedications.

### **Trip to Australia and New Zealand**

Philomena began receiving Social Security a year ago. One of her bucket list trips she wanted to do was go to Australia and New Zealand. We started talking about doing this in the summer of 2019 and decided the time to do it would be in the January-February time frame. This is summertime down under. In the fall we started worrying about the fires in Australia and the drought in New Zealand. Thankfully, the rain came with the beginning of our trip in the middle of January.

We had a wonderful trip with many adventures and excursions. We were very fortunate to get this trip in before the pandemic got going and international travel got shut down. I plan a slide show of our trip, delayed due to the pandemic but maybe something I can do using Zoom. We’ll see. I’m thankful for our intern, Dan Miyake, here to cover for me in case of any pastoral emergencies.

Four weeks of vacation between January and February isn't in my contract ... so I'll be doing a service in July, two in August and working in August. Given the restrictions we are living under, I might as well be working!

### **Concluding Thoughts**

Days before Philomena and I left on our trip, Albany UU threw a party for me celebrating my 20 years of my ministry here. It was a great event. I was so pleased to hear people tell stories about how my ministry had made a difference in their lives. While we can't use some of the gifts I was given, we can't go to the Spectrum right now to watch a movie nor the New World Bistro, it will be something to look forward to someday. Thank you one and all for the great event.

We are living in challenging times we haven't seen before. So many of the ways we "do church" from Sunday morning to circle dinners to community gatherings to our RE program can't be done the way we've always done it. We might be limited in our ability to meet for months maybe even years to come. How do we stay connected and in community when we can't get closer than six feet and must wear a mask in each other's presence?

We have developed a format for Sunday services with Zoom that works. It isn't as good as being together in Community Hall – but in some ways it is more accessible. Especially for those whose mobility prevents them coming on Sunday. The breakout room during the service to greet your neighbor connects people who may not know each other. So far people can hear too!

We will continue to be creative and do the best we can to connect with each other. We will continue developing virtual ways to experience community. We will continue to make meaning together, lift up our values, and provide opportunities to grow and develop.

What we are going through will not last forever. We will touch and hug each other again. Until that day comes, let us continue building community together as best we can, learning new ways to bring love into the world, heal the brokenness we find, and seek a wholeness that extends beyond us.

Rev. Sam

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

Patti Jo Newell

### **Officers:**

Patti Jo Newell, president  
David MacLeod, vice president  
Reese Satin, treasurer  
Molly Daniels, secretary

### **Trustees:**

Meredith Andrews  
Zach Cunningham  
Amie Jamison  
Jan McCracken  
Nancy Shay  
Fred Eames

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

Leah Akins, Religious Education Council Chair  
Jean Poppei, Social Responsibilities Council Co-chair

Ex-Officio non-voting member:

Rev. Sam Trumbore, Minister

### ***Albany UU Board Covenant, revised August 2019***

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

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

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

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

*Deal with conflict responsibly and respectfully;*

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

*Be faithful to the Albany UU mission*

## **Governance Transitions for the Board**

The new Board got started with a retreat on the new governance structure we have been imagining, designing and implementing over the past several years. We invited the Rev. David Pyle to guide us in team building activities and an in-depth review of the "Five Strategic Tasks of

a Policy Board”. This and the book *Governance and Ministry* by Dan Hotchkiss generally constitute the framework of our governance shift at Albany UU. The five strategic tasks are:

1. Congregational Mission-Vision Discernment
2. Fiduciary Responsibility and Oversight
3. Policy Development and Promulgation
4. Congregational Assessment
5. Strategic and Long-Range Planning

Among the challenges of engaging this process is “staying out of the weeds” and referring programmatic and implementation questions/issues to the Ministries and Operation Team. We have steadily gotten better at meeting this challenge and keeping our discernment at a policy level. And we continue to learn how to better implement these fundamental changes.

### **Visioning Process**

This year the Board has undertaken the task of adopting a vision and drafting a vision statement. We’ve engaged in numerous discussions and posed Open Questions as a way to creatively elicit ideas from the Board. We determined to host a World Café for the purpose of eliciting ideas from the congregation.

### **World Café**

The Board hosted a World Café for the congregation to give their input to our vision process. The World Café methodology is a simple and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue. We were pleased to have 60 participants present for the conversations and appreciative of the breadth of contributions from participants. Questions included:

1. What is Albany UU’s greatest strength/challenge?
2. What keeps/motivates you at Albany UU?
3. What would you want more/less of at Albany UU?
4. What do you most love about Albany UU?
5. What values would you like to see embodied by Albany UU?
6. What is your dream for Albany UU? What would Albany UU look like if you woke up and found your dream came true?
7. Describe the ideal Albany Unitarian Universalist in one word:

Unsurprisingly, the dialogue prioritized social justice/action, inclusivity/diversity, community, learning/growth, and principles/values. We look forward to finalizing a vision statement for our ministry at Albany UU.

### **Building Assessment**

Also, as part of our governance implementation, the Board authorized a smaller team to conduct an assessment of our building and deliver a report to the Board. The report is intended to provide the Board with a factual basis for setting building policy and funding priorities. This team

consisted of Board members Fred Eames, Amie Jamieson, David MacLeod, and Reese Satin, with assistance from Tammy Hathaway, Dave Metz and the Building and Grounds Committee.

The summary includes: “At present, our building is meeting most of our needs very well. It is a serviceable, well-used and busy place...[A]t the same time, it, and the people and policies that maintain it, are showing their age... [I]nvestments in our building can directly increase our mission and foster our mission...The Building Assessment Team encourages the Board to keep in mind that there is a relationship between building appearance and member attachment, and community perception and rental income.”

### **Bylaws**

The ad hoc Bylaws Committee was charged at the end of the past congregational year to redraft the bylaws for the purpose of incorporating the governance changes, with an eye toward simplifying them and determining which issues are best suited for inclusion in the bylaws and which for policies. The Bylaws Committee and the Board have worked through a couple of iterations, and were set to finalize the process and put forward the draft for consideration by the congregation and for a vote at the 2020 Annual Meeting. However, given the challenges associated with conducting congregational conversations virtually, and the need to simplify our virtual Annual Meeting, we determined that we would wait to introduce the proposed revisions until we can meet together again.

### **A New Reality**

Despite the exciting and optimistic start to the New Year, 2020 instead ushered in the coronavirus pandemic. As with other communities and organizations, the threat of Covid-19 has wrought many challenges for Albany UU and the congregation of individuals and families that comprise it. The Board is proud and appreciative of the whole congregation coming together and working to ensure Albany UU continues to thrive and remain a vibrant presence in all of our lives.

### **Thank You**

We offer heartfelt thanks to Fred Eames, David MacLeod, and Nancy Shay as they step down from the board. We benefit from each individual trustee’s perspective and contribution, and value the diversity of opinions within our Board community. We especially appreciate the commitment of time and energy given to the activities and discernment associated with serving on the Albany UU Board of Trustees.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Respectfully submitted by Reese Satin on April 30, 2020

### **Background**

Because our Annual Meeting is held in May and our fiscal year (FY) ends in June, the timeframe for the Treasurer's report is somewhat problematic. Rather than report on the last complete FY which ended eleven months ago, the following report covers three quarters of our current FY from July 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

### **Highlights**

What a year this has been! The most consequential financial event of the FY so far, has been the closing of our building in the middle of March. This resulted in the loss of a substantial amount of rental income and the cancelling of our most important fundraising event — the Goods and Services Auction. As a consequence, the Board adopted an emergency "Rest of the Year Budget" which, while maintaining all employees at their current salaries, eliminated most discretionary unexpended allocations.

Prior to the epidemic, we had few financial worries. To reduce our interest costs, we accelerated our payments to members who loaned us \$140,000 at a reduced rate to pay off our bank mortgage. Going forward, we will need to allocate less money to interest payments on these notes which will have an outstanding principal of \$62,000 by the end of this FY.

As a consequence of the epidemic, we applied and have been approved for a \$52,000 forgivable 1% loan from the Federal Paycheck Protection Program. We will use these funds for salaries in the eight weeks following receipt of the money. This will make us eligible for loan forgiveness and we will use money originally allocated for salaries in the current budget as a hedge against unanticipated loss of income in the coming FY.

### **Financial Status Summary as of March 31, 2020**

Below is a summary of our financial position 75% of the way through our fiscal year.

First, is a pair of tables that show our bank accounts and how they were allocated. At the end of March we held \$347,000 in our checking account and three money market (MM) accounts (Operations, Designated Funds and Capital Reserve). The table to the right shows how these funds were allocated in our accounting system. The table shows that although we held almost \$136,000 in operations bank accounts, we had less than \$118,000 in outstanding budgeted expenses leaving us about \$18,000 in unallocated operations cash.

**FUUSA Cash Accounts as of March 31, 2020**

(Totals may not equal sums due to rounding)

<b>Bank Accounts</b>				<b>AUU Allocations</b>	
<b>Account</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Account Type</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Balance</b>
1000 - Checking	Operations	Checking *1970	\$ 28,448.60	Remaining Budgeted Expense	\$ 117,688.87
1001 - MM		MM *7264	\$ 107,378.45	Operations Cash on Hand	\$ 135,827.05
Subtotal		Subtotal	\$ 135,827.05	Unallocated Op. Cash	\$ 18,138.18
1030- MM	Capital Reserve	MM *8723	\$ 91,910.65	Capital Reserve DF	\$ 91,214.20
1040- MM	Other DFs	MM *9811	\$ 119,262.95	Other DFs	\$ 142,675.24
				All Designated Funds	\$ 233,889.44
Subtotal	Designated Fund Accounts		\$ 211,173.60	DF Cash on Hand	\$ 211,173.60
				Unallocated DF Cash	\$ (22,715.84)
<b>Total Cash</b>			<b>\$ 347,000.65</b>	<b>Allocated Cash</b>	<b>\$ 351,578.31</b>
				<b>Unallocated Cash</b>	<b>\$ (4,577.66)</b>

**FUUSA Indebtedness as of March 31, 2020**

<b>Loan</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Endowment Trust Original Loan 0%	\$ 575,000.00
Albany UU Notes 3.5%	\$ 66,500.00
<b>Total Indebtedness</b>	<b>\$ 641,500.00</b>

**Endowment Trust Holdings as of March 31, 2020**

<b>Asset</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>% of Holdings</b>
<b><u>UU Common Endowment Fund</u></b>		
Special Projects Trust	\$339,300.69	97.2%
Operations Trust	\$854.17	0.2%
Stott restricted gift	\$6,274.61	1.8%
Wright restricted gift	\$2,716.91	0.8%
<b>Total UU Common Endowment Fund</b>	<b>\$349,146.38</b>	<b>36.0%</b>
<i>(Total Return= 2.8%; Annualized Return= 0.9%) *</i>		
ET Building Loan (0%)	\$ 575,000.00	59.2%
Cash in Designated Fund	\$ 9,004.81	0.9%
Loan to Community Loan Fund (1.75%)	\$ 30,000.00	3.1%
Loan to Honest Weight Food Coop	\$ 7,900.00	0.8%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 971,051.19</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* As of 3/31/20

Similarly, we had about \$211,000 in Capital Reserve and other Designated Fund (DF) money market accounts, however, we had allocated almost \$234,000 to the Capital Reserve and other DFs. The table shows we have therefore allocated about \$23,000 more than we hold in our bank accounts for DFs. These overages and shortfalls are periodically rebalanced with an eye to keeping as much as possible in MM accounts where they draw significantly more interest.

Altogether, the table shows that we need about \$4,600 more income by June to end the year with balanced income and expenses.

The second table simply displays our indebtedness.

The last table shows all of the assets under the control of the Endowment Trust.

### **Conclusion**

It is problematic to attempt to predict how we will fare in these precarious times. We can, nevertheless, take pride that through our continued support, our community currently enjoys good financial health. We can still envision the future we want with reasonable assurance that we will have the financial resources to achieve it.

## **Endowment Trust Annual Report for the Calendar Year 2019**

### **Trust Purpose**

The purpose of the Endowment Trust is to invest and manage gifts and bequests made to the Society by its members and other individuals or entities. We work to assure donors that their bequests will be honored and administered so that income from gifts will always be available to assist the Society in furthering its purposes through special projects. This year we initiated a second Trust – the Operations Trust. The income from gifts made to this trust supports the annual budget.

### **Trust Status**

At the beginning of 2019, the Endowment Trust had a value of \$968,750 exclusive of the Stott and Wright funds. During 2019, gifts to the Trust were made in the amount of \$2,365 and the Trust Board authorized \$7737 in grants from the Special Projects Trust. At the end of 2019, the Trust had a value of \$1,018,730. The largest part of the Endowment investment is in Albany UU. In 2006 the Endowment lent the congregation \$575,000 interest-free in order to turn the dream of our building expansion into a reality. Additionally, in March 2017, the Endowment lent Albany UU \$90,000 during the mortgage refinancing. That loan has been fully repaid – see below.

In addition to the Endowment Trust created by the Society over twenty-five years ago, and the Operations Trust created this year, the ET committee also manages two separate funds: the Stott family fund and the Nigel Wright Peace Fund.

### **Stott Lounge Maintenance Fund**

The Trust holds funds earmarked for the maintenance of the Stott Lounge. With the support of the Stott family, \$22,000 of that amount was contributed to the Looking Forward campaign. This amount was then applied to the Endowment Trust loan, leaving a loan value of \$68,000 at an annual rate of 3.5%. Of that total, all \$68,000 has been repaid. There were no disbursements of this fund this year and its balance is \$7,346.

### **Nigel Wright Peace Fund**

The Nigel Wright Peace Fund is held and accounted for separately by the Trust. That fund was established in 2015 with two gifts totaling \$12,000. At the end of 2019, \$3,759 remained available to support the goals of that fund – to support programs that educate and engage our congregation in activities that create peace within ourselves and the larger community and develop awareness of obstacles to peace.

During 2019, the Nigel Wright Peace Fund funded:

Young Peacemakers Week, and  
Two speakers from Roots/Shoresheim/Judur, a Zionist settler and a Palestinian activist, and,  
Books for Joy Library.

## **Investments**

Most of the endowment is invested in mutual funds managed by the UU Common Endowment Fund; a fund managed for the UUA that make socially responsible investments for member UU societies. The endowment has also loaned funds to the Community Loan Fund and the Honest Weight Food Coop.

## **Disbursements**

During 2019, the Special Projects Trust Board authorized:

A Music page on the Society's web site, and  
Playground equipment for the Sheridan Prep, and  
The start of the Community Breakfast program, and  
A Transgender Inclusion course, to be followed by a Sunday Service on the topic, and  
Funds to get the Operations Trust started, and  
A Celebration of Sam's 20th Anniversary at Albany UU.

During 2019, a total of \$2,365 in gifts was added to the Trust. These gifts honored:

Stephen Dolben  
Matt Odell  
Mary Reich  
Teddy Archer  
Sam E McCaffrey  
Judith Gallagher  
Terry Way

The Trust Board takes this opportunity to publicly thank its 2019 contributors:

John and Lindsay Piechnik	Gail S. Moon
Jerilynn Ann and Robert Teliska	Patricia Patrick
Bruce and Christine Sutphin	Marcia Schultz
Susan and Charles Owens	Meyer Wolin
Martha Schroeder	Michelle Legge
Maureen Corrigan	Ann Lapinski
Nikki Marie Chochos	Jack & Peggy Alvaro
Lois Thomson	Elizabeth Eckel Scola
Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Muhlich	Elizabeth Shanley William and Patricia
Don Odell	Betjemann

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

## **John Cross Legacy Society**

The John Cross Legacy Society was established in 2017 to recognize members of Albany UU who have included the Society in their estate plans and to encourage others to do so. Current JCLS members are:

Martha Schroeder	Jan McCracken
Steven & Paula Moskowitz	Patricia Bailey
Mary Applegate	Kathy Harris
Jon and Sigrin Newell	Randy Rosette & Chris Jensen
Elizabeth Berberian	Nancy Willie-Schiff
Chuck & Barbara Manning	Dave & Ann Brandon
John & Peggy Sherman	Tom & Meredith Mercer
John Cooley	David & Martha Musser
Al DeSalvo	Cindee Herrick
Susan Thompson	Todd Thomas
Sharon Babala	

## **Our Impact**

The Endowment Trust has an impact on our community in several ways. The trustees hold the trust of those who contributed by learning about and applying investment practices that honor gifts as well as promoting giving and granting opportunities. We invest in worthwhile local activities; in particular, the Honest Weight Food Coop, and the Community Loan Fund. Members of Albany UU use the Trust to create a legacy, whereby their values can continue into the future through their gifts to the Trust. And members of Albany UU who have ideas for supporting the mission of our society can look to the Trust for financial support. As Trustees, we look forward to continuing to grow the Trust and to respond to the needs of our congregation.

Thank you for your continued support,

Jon Newell, Endowment Trust Board Chair  
Jeff English  
Tom Mercer  
Paula Moskowitz  
Peter Schaeffing  
Reese Satin, Treasurer (non-voting ex-officio member)

## **Stewardship Committee and Donor Report**

**Chairperson:** Patti Jo Newell

### **Members**

A successful campaign requires the assistance of many. We used the Board of Trustees volunteers to staff four Sundays of packet distribution, and staff the stewardship table in Channing Hall after the service. We also had four testimonials during as many several services, some of which we conducted virtually. Speakers included Dave Metz, Jean Poppei, Zach Cunningham, and Dick Dana. The Board of Trustees and a handful of additional volunteers conducted follow-up calls and emails. And, as always, we had excellent support from the office staff and the very generous and talented Chuck Manning.

### **Purpose**

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

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

### **Accomplishments**

The theme this year was “Building Beloved Community: Let’s Get Growing!”. This year we continued with the substantive changes made in the past years to the stewardship campaign format. We wanted to keep the stewardship process less daunting, less labor-intensive and time-consuming and more attractive as a way of service to the congregation. With an eye toward succession planning we streamlined the approach and compartmentalized tasks to make participation in the campaign less onerous.

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

Our campaign goal is \$460,000, a reduced figure from last year but representing our best estimate based on attrition and growth. We identified the following priorities for the campaign:

- Our cherished space as a gateway for building community
- Fulfilling our commitment to social justice and inclusivity

- Energizing our mission and ministry through music

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

A listing of donors by category is provided below:

**Ten Percenter**

Sam Trumbore and Philomena Moriarty  
Dave and Barb Metz

David and Sandy Stone  
Jennifer and Todd Thomas  
Lucy Wrightington

**Visionary**

4 Anonymous  
Mary Applegate  
Dave and Ann Brandon  
Peter and Debbie Brown  
Tom Chulak  
Dick and Dawn Dana  
Albert DeSalvo and Susan Thompson  
Diane Dunston  
Frederick Eames  
Rodger Fink  
Bob Franklin  
Lawrence Gambino and Linda Hunt  
Lois Griffin  
Judy Hanson  
Thayer Heath  
Eileen Hoffman and David Munro  
Tom and Tanya Hotalen  
Judith Karis  
Karen Kaufmann  
Kathy Lloyd  
Chuck and Barbara Manning  
Jan McCracken  
Peter and Donna Meixner  
Jon and Sigrin Newell  
Patti Jo Newell and Bruce Rodgers  
Don Odell  
Jean Poppei  
Bobbi Place  
Phil Rich  
Darnell Rohrbaugh  
John and Margaret Sherman

**Sustainer**

4 Anonymous  
Patricia Bailey  
Laurie Beberwyck  
Elizabeth Berberian  
Chris and Maria Bystroff  
John Cooley  
Zach Cunningham and Kelly Smith  
Ben and Linda English  
Jeff and Lorraine English  
Paul Fisk  
Bob Guerrin  
Zarko Levak  
Meredith and Tom Mercer  
Maria Phillips and Brad Workman  
Steve and Paula Moskowitz  
Barb Spink  
Kristen Tibbitts

**Supporter**

2 Anonymous  
Liliana and Mark Abendroth  
Marietta Angelotti  
Fred Barker  
Barb Cooley  
Mark and Molly Daniels  
Ann and Carlos deNoronha  
Don and Ann Eberle  
Brian Frank  
Peter Gerdine  
Cindee Herrick

Deborah and Jesse Hoffman  
Jaye Holly  
Martin Hotvet  
Hemwatie Jaipershad  
Elissa Kane and Lynne Lekakis  
Ashley Keegan  
Sally Knapp  
Mike Myers and Anne Savage  
Regina O'Brien  
Jill Peckenpaugh  
Andrea Ricard  
Lea N'ko Ryman  
Danielle Schaff  
Deborah Vogel  
Erik and Todd vonHausen  
Leigh Wedenoja

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

46 Anonymous  
Jane Allen  
Cassie and Vic Artale  
Muriel Asbornsen  
Paul and Melanie Axel-Lute  
Jon Bick  
Jean Bolgatz  
Fred Boreali  
Richard and Paula Brewer  
Loren Broc  
Laura Cayford  
Chris Chapple and Carol Young  
Nancy Croce  
Toni Daniel  
Ann and Mike D'Attilio  
Gerard Deighan  
Deborah Dewey and Winston Hagborg  
Christian Edwardson  
Arlene Gilbert  
Liz and Ken Halvorsen  
Virginia Hammer  
Kathy Harris  
Alison Hart and Elizabeth Richards Hart

Deirdre and John Harwick  
Kathy Hodges  
Amie Jamieson and Rick Piet  
Chris Jensen and Randy Rosette  
Ela and Tyler Kessel  
Roger and Barbara Kessel  
Sally Knapp  
Ann Lapinski  
Amy Lent  
Tom Levanduski and James Reed  
Ken MacDonald  
David MacLeod and Debbie Reep MacLeod  
Kayla Mancini  
Mary Maynes  
Marshall Miller and Dorian Solot  
Lee and Heidi Newberg  
Laura Paris  
Anita Patka  
Patsy Patrick  
Astrid Pettersen and Neil Rice  
Leah and Kevin Purcell  
Tina and Joe Raggio  
Deborah Rodriguez  
Ruth Russell  
Reese Satin  
Peter and Alison Schaeffing  
Peter Schiff and Nancy Willie-Schiff  
Martha Schroeder  
Barb Sekellick  
Susan Standfast and Ted Wright  
Sandy Steubing  
Abby Sugarman  
Saurabh Tendulkar  
Jeannie Thompson  
Lois Thomson  
Ann vonLinden  
Barbara Warner  
Lois Webb  
Kaitlin and Daniel Wilsom  
Patricia Zima  
Earl Zimmerman

**A Special Thank You:** We extend our heartfelt thanks to the congregation for supporting Albany UU through the stewardship campaign with so much uncertainty around us resulting from the Covid

19 pandemic. We also received over \$4000 in back pledges from the previous year to help us shore up our budget in the face of financial losses such as the immediate and total loss of rental income. We thank all of you in recognizing the importance of keeping Albany UU strong and committing your personal treasure to its support.

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

## **Music/Choir Report**

**Leadership Team:** Randy Rosette, Interim Music Coordinator, Chris Jensen, Interim Choir Conductor; Ann Brandon (Sep – Dec) and Elena Karpoff (Jan – Jun), Interim Accompanists

**Members:** Ann Brandon, Astrid Pettersen, Barbara Metz, Barbara Spink, Betsy Wright, Cathy DeMille, Chris Bystroff, Chris Jensen, Cindy Dean, Danielle Schaff, David MacLeod, Debbie Reep MacLeod, David Metz, Deborah Rodriguez, Dick Dana, Janet Smith, Jon Newell, Julie Maresco, Kate Pierce, Kathy Harris, Kayla Autery, Lea Ryman, Linda Hunt, Lois Bailey, Mark Abendroth, Mike Babala, Mike Crowell, Nancy Wagner, Neil Rice, Patricia Bailey, Trish Zima, Paula Brewer, Peter Brown, Ruth Samuels, Shannon Simpson, Sigrin Newell, Tanya Hotalen, Threasa Pasquale, Tom Hotalen, Tyler Nimz

**Purpose:** To complement and enhance Albany UU services and provide music inspiration to the Albany UU community.

**Accomplishments:** Since the departure of the previous Music Director at the end of May 2019, the music leadership team and music staff (named above) has been continuing the mission of the music ministry by:

- Working with the minister, RE Director and staff to plan the music in coordination with the service theme
- Selecting and ordering choir songs, creating and distributing learning tracks to choir members, conducting choir rehearsals, and leading choir performance in Sunday services
- Recruiting, selecting and encouraging vocal soloists and other musicians and/or ensembles for Sunday services and supporting guest artists

The choir rehearses most every Wednesday evening, and performs two or more featured pieces at the 10:00 AM service about two Sundays a month. Choir membership is open to all who come regularly to rehearsals and services. We have 25 to 30 choir members on a typical Sunday.

Choir highlights from the season from September to Christmas Eve include Hymn for the Homeless, Lean On Me/We Shall Overcome, Now Let Us Sing as a processional through the congregation, Candlelight Carol, African Noel. In addition, Chris as the Interim Choir Director spent regular time in rehearsals developing vocal craft and ensemble skills. The choir was honored and gratified to sing for long-term choir member Terry Way's memorial service.

As the transition to online services occurred in March, the music team quickly responded to the coronavirus pandemic, searching for ways to provide the Albany UU community with online musical opportunities and connections. This resulted in working with our music staff to record music prior to use in Sunday services. Randy and Chris are also hosting a weekly Albany UU Sings online "sing-a-long" event for interested Albany UU members and friends.

Sigrin Newell led a major project related to the Albany UU Music Library. While Sigrin did the lion's share of the work, Kathy Harris, Cathy DeMille, Randy and Chris assisted. All non-

copyrighted music was purged and a complete music directory updated. In addition, the music office space was rearranged and alphabetical binders were set up for easier access to music.

Music Program details:

Many musicians were featured from Albany UU staff, members and friends, as well as external guest artists. In order of appearance, these included:

Alan Thomson, piano	Alyssa Yeager, guitar and voice
Ann Brandon, piano and organ	Randy Rosette, vocals, flute, piano
Olivia Karis-Nix, voice	Debbie Reep MacLeod, flute and voice
Britany Orlebeke, violin	Chris Jensen, voice
Dick Dana, voice	Linda Hunt, voice
Kathy Harris, voice	Chris Bystroff, viola, ukelele, voice
Jora Cohen, violin	Helderberg Madrigals
Elena Karpoff, piano, voice, ukele	Joseph Benevento, upright bass and voice
Karen Wells, soprano	Matt Edwards, piano and vocals
David MacLeod, guitar and voice	Per-Olov Kindren, classical guitarist from Denmark

The list of musical genres covered is too numerous to list here. However, some highlights included Hebrew music during the Jewish High Holy Day period, blues Sunday, Mardi Gras Celebration, Rhythm (many choir members played varied percussion instruments), gospel Sunday, special Earth Day music, jazz service, several original compositions, and International music Sunday. In addition, many choir members and congregants participated in holiday caroling to our homebound members and friends. Unfortunately, a few more planned musical surprises will have to be postponed due to our inability to gather together in harmony, in person.

**Plans for next year:**

In anticipation of returning to the Albany UU building, we plan to continue providing high quality, varied musical programming that supports the congregation, its members and friends, featuring the choir, internal and external musical artists, and other ensembles.

## **Ministerial Intern Congregational Report**

### **Dan Miyake**

I have served as the ministerial intern during this church year, and am happy to report that it has been a resounding success! It has been a busy year, with many opportunities to practice the various aspects of ministry. Some of my accomplishments are below:

- Preached at least once a month, and preached at 4 other congregations in the region
- Performed a memorial service for a non-member
- Officiated 2 weddings for non-members
- Co-facilitated the Wellspring Sources group
- Led the Transgender Day of Remembrance
- Spearheaded obtaining, dedicating, and hanging of a Pride flag
- Co-lead the Transforming Hearts class “Transgender Inclusion in Congregations”
- Coordinated a follow-up Transgender inclusion workshop, led by Alex Kapitan
- Served as a Pastoral Care Associate, and helped with PCA training
- Offered pastoral care to several congregants
- Worked with the inclusivity Team on the Welcoming Congregation Renewal process
- Attended Board, MOT, SRC, RSC, and other committee meetings
- Offered virtual spiritual check-ins during the pandemic
- Attended several Interfaith Impact meetings, and travelled with Rev. Sam to NY City to an organizational meeting to create a New York state advocacy network
- Attended ministers’ retreats and collegial meetings
- Attended Sanctuary Team meetings
- Started a hand bell choir as a RE January Jams class that performed during Family Chapel
- Assisted DRE Leah Purcell with the Rite of Passage group
- Mentored a Rite of passage youth
- Taught RE classes in January
- Received weekly supervision from Rev. Sam
- Met weekly with Sam and Leah to plan worship services
- Participated in social events
- Studied for, and successfully passed my Ministerial Fellowship Committee interview, and was granted preliminary fellowship as a minister in the UUA
- Went through the Search process, and was made an offer to serve a congregation in the coming church year

Since I first arrived last August, the congregation has offered an enormous amount of support and care, and has consistently affirmed my call to ministry. The congregation's generosity, kindness, and willingness to see the minister in me, has been profoundly touching, and I am so very grateful to have had the opportunity to serve such a loving community. Thank you all for helping to make this the best possible internship year ever. I will carry you and your love with me always.

## **Church Administrator's Report**

Tammy Hathaway

### **Staff**

Minister: Rev. Sam Trumbore

Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry: Leah Purcell

Church Administrator: Tammy Hathaway

Music: Randy Rosette, Interim Music Coordinator, Chris Jensen, Interim Choir Conductor;  
Ann Brandon (Sep – Dec) and Elena Karpoff (Jan – Jun), Interim Accompanists

Administrative Assistant: Sapphire Correa

RE Assistant: Elizabeth Baldes

Lead Youth Advisor: Tracey Hickey

Sexton: Izzy Wright/Justin Wright/Cindee Herrick

Childcare Staff: Anna Carbone-Harms, Nell Guilbault

Summer Services Coordinator: Randy Rosette

2019-20 Snow Removal Tech: Justin Wright

### **Change**

We bade farewell to Music Director, Rick Porterfield last summer. Randy Rosette and Chris Jensen agreed to step in as Interim Music Coordinator and Interim Choir Conductor with Ann Brandon and Elena Karpoff as Interim Accompanists.

We also bade a fond farewell to Izzy Wright and Justin Wright, both in the Sexton position successively. Justin did stay on with us to move snow – and move snow he did! With the help of some wonderful volunteers, we had a lovely surprise party for Izzy on his last Sunday with us. Barb Manning brought the cake and made a large card. We hired Justin (Izzy's brother!) as Sexton and Snow Removal Tech but sadly, after a few months he was able to secure a job more aligned with his tech skills. It was hard to see him go, but we were happy for his success. Cindee Herrick stepped in to fill the Sexton role, initially until only after the holidays. Then the stars aligned and Cindee was able to fill that role more permanently.

We welcomed but will soon say goodbye to our intern minister, Dan Miyake.

Randy Rosette will return to serve again as Summer Services Coordinator.

### **Professional Development**

One of things that delighted me this year was the opportunity to lead a small group of UU Administrators and Membership Professionals in the *Transforming Hearts: Transgender Inclusion in Congregations Class*. While Dan Miyake and Rev. Sam co-led this class at Albany UU during the same timeframe, I led the same class online with UU professionals around the country. It was helpful to participate in this six-part video training from the Transforming Hearts Collective taught by Rev. Mykal Slack and Alex Kapitan, with professionals in service to congregations in the same or similar roles as myself. The discussion was rich and rewarding.

## **Communications**

Communications is an area that is continually being tweaked and improved. Dick Brewer developed a marketing strategy for Albany UU which will help guide our outreach and publicity. I am very grateful to Dick for his time and diligence in this area and look forward to working with this in the near future.

## **Then the pandemic hit**

It's difficult to continue with this report without inserting that here. Windows Weekly, our comprehensive online newsletter continues. After we closed our building on March 13 and began moving everything we could online for an undetermined amount of time, we needed a simple way to keep all of our members and friends connected. Hence, the Daily Reminders were born. These daily emails are not perfect, but they're a way to distill all the opportunities to stay connected each day in a simple and condensed format. Distanced but together.

The majority of the first part of the year went along as usual. Sam, Leah, Dan, Sapphire, and I were working in our offices, coordinating with Treasurer, Reese Satin and Assistant Treasurer, Kathy Harris. Elizabeth and Cindee would come in to do their work. Our cleaning contractors were in the building every weekday to clean or set up for rentals whenever needed. Dave Metz and his Building and Grounds crew or outside contractors would come and go as needed. Choir was rehearsing and our interim music team was leading our congregation in song on Sunday mornings.

Now, we are all working from home and some of our duties may have changed or evolved. There are no rentals to coordinate, so Sapphire helps coordinate all the Zoom meetings, keeps the calendar in Church DB up to date, puts our events on our Website and maintains our Facebook page using our media tool kit from Soul Matters. She also helps Sam produce and edit the slideshow for the Sunday services and continues to assist me with whatever tasks I pass along.

As we planned closing the building, we rerouted our mail and payroll delivery to Leah's house since she lives so close to the church. I'm very grateful to Leah for this. She processed the mail (when it came) and would put bags and folders outside for Reese, Kathy, me or others to pick up. The payroll piece transitioned flawlessly, but the mail, not so much. We decided to end the mail forwarder to Leah's and redirect it back to the church. I now go in to the church each Friday morning to process mail and get it where it needs to go for pick up. Reese takes the bills and Kathy takes the checks. All of our bill-paying, bank deposits and record-keeping still happens, just a bit differently.

Jim, owner of J&D Cleaners, our cleaning contractors who clean our building, are now there only three days per week to be sure everything stays clean and sanitized. They are also using this time to burnish and reseal the floors, clean the rugs and carpets and clean and reseal the concrete stairs, just to name a few things.

Cindee picks up where Jim leaves off. Since Izzy and then Justin moved on to other opportunities, Cindee stepped into the Sexton role to provide Sunday morning custodial support and one day of custodial support during the week. Since we stopped having services in Community Hall on Sundays, Cindee has been spending time cleaning and organizing cupboards and closets, the pantry and organ loft. She cleaned all the pews in the Sanctuary and keeps our kitchen clean and organized. At her request, Cindee will be coming in less at this point but she will continue to water the jades and other plants, plus help with yardwork. She will resume her regular duties in the fall, or a modification of those depending on our ability to hold service in the building.

Randy, Chris and Elena now record their music from home to continue to provide music for our Sunday services. Randy and Chris have even started a “UU Sings” Wednesday evening zoom group to keep the choir connected and anyone else who would like to sing in community. Distanced, but together.

Along with my other duties, I have taken on coordinating online security for our Sunday services, trying to stay ahead of and on the alert for the dreaded Zoombomber. I have trained Usher volunteers who help each Sunday and are a vital to this work. I am very grateful for my cadre of Ushers who stepped forward to take on this task: Kristen Abbas, Sharon Babala, Dawn Dana, Dick Dana, Fred Eames, Kathy Harris, Amie Jamieson, Chuck (and Barb, too!) Manning, Don Odell and Jean Poppei.

Along with Elizabeth’s other duties, she has agreed to keep Sunday attendance for the church. This has been vital in keeping track of visitors, determining trends, and helping membership and ushers in their roles.

Lastly, but certainly not least, Rev. Sam has adapted all of our services to online format via Zoom with the help of Chris Jensen, Randy Rosette, Leah Purcell, and Sapphire. I’m grateful that Sam has the technological skills to make this all happen!

It’s nothing short of amazing how we all – our whole church community – adapted, and quickly, to coordinate, secure, assist, reach out and stay involved in the many facets of our church life while our building remains closed and we continue with physical distancing to keep our congregation safe. I’m very proud to be a part of this. It gives me hope as we begin to imagine a new normal – with the challenges and opportunities that vision may bring – we can meet that future – together.

## **Wheel of Life**

### **Joined**

Alison Hart and Elizabeth Richards-Hart, Ari J. Kane-DeMaios, Zarko Levak and Leigh Wedenoja

### **Died**

George Allen, Judy Gallagher, Thelma Gerdine, Renee Howard, Linda Munro, Ruth Salter, Diana Shear, Peggy Slocum, Bunni Vaughn, John Walko and Terry Way

## COUNCILS

### **Religious Education Council**

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

**Religious Education Council Chair**, Leah Akins; **RE Staff**: Leah Purcell, Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry; Elizabeth Baldes, RE Program Assistant; Tracey Hickey, Lead Youth Advisor; Nell Guilbault and Anna Carbone-Harmes, Sunday morning childcare workers

**REC Members**: Jim Hutchins, Darnell Rohrbaugh, Winston Hagborg, Paula Brewer, Michele Desroisers, Liz Halvorsen, Mike Myers, Ela Kessel

**Sunday Morning RE Volunteers**: Cindee Herrick, Sharon Babala, Elizabeth Berberian, Sarah Stanwicks, Kristen Tibbets, Ben Karis-Nix, Olivia Karis-Nix, Karen Strong, Marietta Angelotti, Brian Frank, Jill Peckenpough, Mary Fellows, Sean Murphy, Darnell Rohrbaugh, Todd vonHausen, Terry Way, Tracie Tilgner, John Edvalson, Eileen Roepe, Valerie Plamondon, Ann Von Linden, Becky Edvalson, Winston Hagborg, Jeffrey Sedam, Michael Hornsby, Ashley Keegan, Laura Churchill, Jim Hutchins, Heather Ingram, Robin Tell-Drake

**Rite of Passage Mentors**: Ed Hancock, Paula Brewer, Michele Desroisers, Laura Churchill, Amy Jesaitis, Dick Dana, Dan Miyake

**Purpose: Mission Statement of the REC**: To instill Unitarian Universalist values by internalizing and practicing our seven principles; to promote stewardship through participation in and caring for our congregation, our denomination, our world community and institutions that promote Unitarian Universalist values; to offer opportunities to formulate and celebrate one's Unitarian Universalist identity and beliefs; to provide opportunities for spiritual, philosophical, ethical and faith development. **Family Ministry Mission** – to strengthen the home/church connection by supporting families in their role as their children's primary religious educators.

### **Accomplishments**

**Enrollment** this year was 75 children and youth, which is up from last year's enrollment of 64. Enrollment and attendance were high in the two oldest groups: youth group (20) and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade Our Whole Lives (OWL), (20) Enrollment and attendance was lower as the groups get younger. The Pre-k and K/1 groups each have about 7 enrolled; attendance was 2 – 4 in each group each week. Still, the energy in the RE community is positive and parents have expressed appreciation for the program. Rite of Passage had 7 youth and 7 mentors

Leah P. and Elizabeth held an **RE Open House** Aug 24 which attracted a few families.

**New hire for nursery/toddler room**: Nell Gibault. Nell is a competent childcare worker, and well-liked by children, parents and volunteers. She is a UU with a kindergartener in RE.

**UU Jams for January;** in this model, members of the congregation use their talents to present a workshop for the month and the regular RE guides assist them. This year's theme was Integrity and the workshops included recycling, yoga, weaving, hand bells, cartooning and free play. This was for grades pre-k through 6.

**Rite of Passage:** To meet the needs and desires of the youth, we changed our plans for the spring trip. We decided it would be much more valuable if we went to General Assembly see contemporary UU-ism in action, living our values of inclusion and service, (instead of our traditional UU heritage trip to Boston). After struggling with congregational support with its traditional fundraising events, the group held an Elegant Italian Dinner and raised almost \$900 that evening.

At the time of this meeting the group will attend General Assembly online. Their service will also be presented to our congregation online in May.

### **High School Youth**

Attendance of youth group is lightly higher than last year—and much higher than 2017, before Tracey Hickey started as our lead youth advisor. 10 youth volunteered with 2 adults to help prepare the Equinox Thanksgiving Dinner in November. 11 youth were on hand to help out with holiday crafts and tree decorating at Coffee Hour in Dec.

**Youth Con** - Our youth group is hosted 45 UU youth and youth advisors from Upstate New York to stay in our building for a weekend of UU Youth worship, workshops and fun. It went really well – for our youth in particular. They bonded with each other, met other UU youth, and learned about our wider UU community. And all the meals got 5-star ratings! All the chaperoning went smoothly.

With the help of UUA staff, Leah P. created a **youth group policy** regarding disruptive behavior; procedures to address it, including involving the youth's parents, and if need be, the circumstances which would require a youth to leave the group and how to communicate that with the youth and their parents.

The youth are currently working on their online Sunday service scheduled for May 31.

**Our Whole Lives** We ran two OWL programs this year. One was 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>, which is the comprehensive, year-long program. Three new OWL facilitators were trained for this group. The other was 8 session K/1 program. We attracted 3 new or lapsed families at this age level. Following the recommendations of the UUA OWL staff, no OWL programming was offered online when we were no longer able to meet in person because of the Corona virus.

**Addressing Changes in our Polity** Leah P served on the newly formed Ministries and Operations Team this year while the RE Council explored how to support the RE program within the congregation.

**REC Events:**

- Multigenerational Picnic, Sunday Sept 15
- Potluck Dinner and Game Night, Friday, Feb 7
- HUUGS – Huge UU Greetings – packages of Valentines, and snacks mailed to our fledging young adults who are generally away from home for the first time.

**Communication and Family Ministry:** Leah P. created a bi-fold flyer for people of all ages on the theme of the month called the [Monthly Messenger](#). It offered ways for families/households to link the sermon and story each week to spiritual practices at home. Leah purchased a Soulful Home subscription - a monthly guide for families with ideas and resources for with UU theme-based exploration at home.

**Working with our intern**

From Leah P: it was great getting to know and work with Dan Miyake. I greatly appreciated his fresh ideas in our weekly production meetings to plan the Sunday services. He helped out with the Rite of Passage by helping to plan the sessions, especially when Rev Sam was on sabbatical. He also lead a Family Chapel and a some RE sessions. He also created a youth handbell choir in the spring. Sadly, their performance in the service was cancelled when we went to online services and social distancing.

**Leah P presented the service Oct 20**

This was an opportunity for Leah to make a small test of the “2-hour” model, which Leah learned about on her sabbatical last year and gained interest in our congregation. The service was more interactive; young children went to childcare after the story and there was a time after the service to talk about the sermon. There was continued interest from newer members of the congregation in particular and concern about how committees would meet on Sunday morning.

**Leah’s professional accomplishments outside of Albany UU**

- Worked with Paula Cole-Jones the presenter of our cluster service April 5 to plan the service.

- Will present the Gould Discourse online to Upstate NY UU leaders in May. The title is Growing Souls in and Following the Time of the Pandemic
- Served as a mentor to two candidates in the UUA's credentialing program for religious educators.

### **Pivoting to Online Ministry During the Pandemic**

#### Leah P's Online Offerings to Families

- YoUUth group check in with Tracey on Thurs and Sunday evenings
- 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade check in on Sunday at noon with one of their OWL facilitators
- Story Time at 7:00pm M, T, Th and F – Tracey and I alternate reading chapter books
- Parent/Caretaker Support Group 8:30 pm on Wednesday
- Dance Party 5:30 pm on Fridays, with Elizabeth's support
- Zoom Family Chapel 10:00 – 10:20 am on Sundays, with Elizabeth's support

Elizabeth and Leah P posted resources for parents on our closed Albany UU Parent/Caretaker Support Group group. Leah P also continued her weekly email to families with resources. Leah P adapted her stories in the Sunday service to include props and illustrations.

#### **Plans for next year:**

##### What we proposed before the pandemic

- Offering Rite of Passage as part of the Sunday morning RE program to next year's 9<sup>th</sup> graders. This cohort has 13 children. Offer a social justice and service program to next year's 8<sup>th</sup> graders; this cohort has 6 youth; offer them Rite of Passage in 2021-22
- Changing hours and duties for Leah P. and Elizabeth. Leah would like to move to working 20 hours a week (from 30 currently) starting in 2020-21. Elizabeth has agreed to take on more hours and more responsibility. Elizabeth, Sam and Leah plan to meet to work out what tasks and initiatives would go to Elizabeth.

##### What we might offer this Summer:

- Continuing Zoom Family Chapel each week
- Offer online meetings for Jr and Senior High Youth
- Create hard copies packets of activities to foster our mission to be mailed to children in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and younger. That could be monthly, bi-weekly or weekly; we'll need to determine the interest level.

What we might offer starting in Sept, depends on what restrictions are in place and if families and RE volunteers are willing to meet in groups in person.

## **Social Responsibilities Council**

Matt Lesniak and Jean Poppei

### **Members:**

Mark Abendroth, Michael Braunstein, Carol Butt\*, Winston Hagborg\*, Ed Hancock\*, Karen Kaufman, Matt Lesniak, Crystal Papps, Jean Poppei, Ann von Linden (\*member by appointment)

### **Purpose:**

To aid the Albany UU community in social responsibility, both by providing social-responsibility related activities, and by vetting groups for donations and collaborations. From the Bylaws: “[SRC] shall guide and coordinate education and action in the realms of social matters of moral and ethical significance. It may issue statements of public support and endorsement ... The Council may initiate and promote activities consistent with these statements.”

### **Accomplishments:**

SRC made a dozen room donations to variety of groups ranging from the New York branch of the Poor Peoples Campaign to Mission Accomplished’s Friendsgiving, to the Capital District Border Watch send-off event and a USCRI staff meeting. It supported the Saturday morning Community Breakfast program as it got started, and administered regular FOCUS Food Pantry donations from the congregation (thanks Ann!). And SRC kept the Fair Trade table going in Channing Hall (thanks for the Daniels’ for running it!).

The Sanctuary task force, led by Jean Poppei, assembled a larger coalition of regional churches and established a joint bank account to allow them to take action (see separate report for more details).

The SRC supported planning for Gender Equity New York workshop. And it made a commitment to support Capital Roots by helping with the garden on West and doing some work at the Troy food hub.

As the leader of the Peace Team, Ed Hancock has been involved with Jewish Voices for Peace and with the Capital District Coalition against Islamophobia, and furthering Albany UU’s connections with Masjid as-Salam on Central Avenue.

### **Plans for next year:**

We plan to solicit more Sunday service give-away-the-plates (a way of donating Sunday’s plate collection to a worthy organization, and to learn about the organization from one of its representatives), divide the duties of Fair Trade table among more people, and have more regular representation on FOCUS Food Pantry advisory group. We also see the need to organize some Service Saturdays, and put together programs for the 2-hour-service model (the programs would be similar to fora or workshops) planned for early 2021.

## **Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC)**

Megan Marohn, chair; Chris Bystroff, Acting Chair as of 4/1/2020

### **Members:**

Barbara Spink, Recording Secretary

Sandy Steubing, Public Relations

Chris Bystroff, Forum Coordinator

David Musser/Barbara Spink, Webpage Administrators

Karen Kaufmann, Social Responsibilities Council Liaison

For all members, please refer to the GSC mailing lists.

### **Purpose**

Consistent with our 7<sup>th</sup> principal, our goal is to preserve the global environment on which all life depends by working to make the Earth sustainable and by addressing climate change.

### **Accomplishments**

David Musser worked closely with SHARE to successfully stop the proposed Sheridan Hollow fossil fuel power plant that would burn fracked gas to generate both electricity and heat for the Empire State Plaza.

Members lobbied for the environment and to successfully pass the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).

Sandy Steubing organized, and members helped with the Albany Climate Strike in September 2019.

Members worked closely with Capital Region Extinction Rebellion to protest environmental issues.

Members worked with People of Albany United for Safe Energy and Capital Region Interfaith Creation Care Coalition.

Several webpages were created for the Green Sanctuary Committee on the Albany UU website.

Members picked up trash along the Hudson River in Albany in Spring of 2019.

GSC conducted the Earth Day Service on 4/19/2020 with a virtual workshop on EnRoads.

Chris Bystroff gave the sermon during the 8/11/2019 Hudson-Mohawk UU Cluster Worship Service at Doane Stuart School.

Carol Butt conducted an Open House for her geothermal heat system and solar water heater.

GSC-sponsored Forums:

- January 30, 2020, forum on Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) presented by Louise Gava, CCA Project Leader For MEGA, the bulk electricity buying program for the cities of Albany, Schenectady, Troy, and others.

- January 19, 2020 Sunday Service followed by Forum: “Listen to the Earth: Perspectives on the Planetary Crisis.” Speakers at both the service and forum were Meghan Marohn, chair of Albany UU Green Sanctuary and active in Extinction Rebellion, and Keith Schue, electrical engineer and full-time environmental activist.
- December 6, 2019, intergenerational potluck dinner and forum, “Our Election Systems.” Chris Bystroff presented with special guest John Oliver via YouTube video.
- November 11, 2019, forum on Climate Change and Justice: Reimagining our Food Systems, with Panelists Bill Vitek, Kiani Conley-Wilson, Scott Kellogg, and Jan Storm.
- March 13, 2019, the movie, “Cowspiracy,” with Stop NY Fracked Gas Pipeline.
- March 1, 2019, [Zero Waste](#) Efforts, Tina Lieberman and Anasha Cummings, starting with potluck, followed by speakers.

### **Plans for next year**

Earth Day was kicked off with the GSC campaign to make Albany UU green. After completion of 3 surveys this year, Albany UU members will be encouraged to sign up for renewable energy for electricity, transportation, and home heating.

We will revisit the population issue, possibly have a Forum.

We will partner with PAUSE on their “Buy Local, Grow Local” initiative.

We will increase awareness of GSC activities inside our church and without.

We will advocate for increasing the capacity of the Green Island Hydro Power Plant through financing or legislation.

### **Black Lives Matter**

Ed Hancock, coordinator

Albany UU remains committed to the Black Lives Matter movement but operates in a supporting role to efforts arising from the black community by providing occasional meeting space, contributing to vigils and lending moral support. The subset of the BLM movement SURJ Capital District Showing Up for Racial Justice no longer meets at Albany UU but has moved its meetings to Troy YWCA. SURJ has both a Facebook page and a website.

<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org>

Interestingly SURJ has a signup sheet to organize neighborhood mutual aid groups to help during this time of COVID 19. People on a block who will look out for one another.

## **Peace Team Honoring Nigel Wright**

Ed Hancock coordinator

Albany UU is a UUA recognized peace congregation due largely to the efforts of Sybil Stock and supported Nigel Wright. A crisis began December 2015 when a pair of Muslim radicals shot and killed 14 people at their place of work in San Bernardino CA. Backlash against identifiable Muslims included teasing and taunting children in the Albany area. Albany UU is about one block from a local Mosque. People from Albany UU and the area met at the Mosque to show support for our neighbors. Following that the group Capital District Coalition Against Islamophobia was organized and members from Albany UU have been meeting monthly since then. Most recently an Imam from Masjid al Salam sought to buy an abandoned church in Watervliet for use as a mosque and school. The zoning board put up road blocks calling the change a change in use. CDCAI could not see a change from a Christian house of worship to a Muslim house of worship to be a legitimate change. Ed Hancock with others attended zoning hearings and the Muslims now have use of the building, organized as Faqh Institute and Dawah Center for America.

In August the 3rd annual Albany UU and Muslim community dinner was held in Channing Hall.

As a Peace Team initiative, regular monthly meetings with Jewish Voice for Peace JVP take place. JVP is made up of people of Jewish descent and non-Jewish supporters who want a just peace in the region.

Nigel and Sybil were strong supporters of this involvement with JVP. Speakers and discussion is hoped for but interrupted with the COVID 19 virus pandemic. In 2019 a well-attended Seder was held in Community Hall (an overflow from Channing) and another Seder was planned for April 2020 which COVID 19 cancelled.

On the plus side of the pandemic, crime seems to be down nationwide.

## **Task Force on End of Life Choice**

Nancy Willie-Schiff and Dave Munro, Co-Chairs

**Members:** As of April 2020, the Task Force had 46 members in an e-group.

**Purpose:** The Task Force welcomes everyone who wants to be informed about opportunities to advocate for New York's Medical Aid in Dying Act. The Act would permit terminally ill adults, with a prognosis of six month or less to live, to request medication for a peaceful death, so long as they were able to take the medication themselves. It would give New Yorkers the same end of life choice now available to residents of nine others states and the District of Columbia.

## **Accomplishments:**

- We maintained strong partnerships with *Compassion and Choices New York* (CCNY) and *Death with Dignity Albany* (DWDA).
- We continued email outreach to the NY UU Network for Medical Aid in Dying, founded by Rev. Dick Gilbert and Nancy Willie-Schiff, which includes at least 20 people in 13 UU congregations in New York State.
- We made regular announcements in Albany UU's WINDOWS and Orders of Service to promote advocacy and educational opportunities related to end of life choice.
- Many Albany UUs who are constituents of Assembly Member Jake Ashby met with him in his district office in July 2019.
- We sponsored a November 3, 2019 Sunday service on end of life choice that emphasized the importance of expressing our end of life wishes to our loved ones and caregivers. This was part of a national Conversation Sabbath event sponsored by the Boston-based Conversation Project.
- We convened a November 3, 2019 Conversation Workshop, in partnership with DWDA, attended by over 40 people, including some from the general public, to help participants have a conversation with their loved ones about their end of life wishes. Each workshop participant received a Starter Kit workbook to guide them through the process, available at <https://theconversationproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/ConversationProject-ConvoStarterKit-English.pdf>.
- We coordinated Albany UUs who did phone banking about the Medical Aid in Dying Act to constituents of key lawmakers in New York State's Assembly and Senate through the summer and fall of 2019, in partnership with CCNY.
- Many Albany UUs participated in a range of events at the State Capitol in January and February 2020 to emphasize the importance of passing the Medical Aid in Dying Act as soon as possible, in support of CCNY's intensive campaign.

**Plans for next year:** We plan to continue as a strong advocacy partner with CCNY and DWDA by serving as a communications link to the Albany UU and wider New York State UU communities, and to bring events related to end of life choice to the Albany UU congregation when appropriate.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Finance Committee**

Dick Brewer: Chair, Insurance  
Toni Daniel, Member at Large  
Kathy Harris: Assistant Treasurer (elected), Secretary  
Chuck Manning: Stewardship  
Dave Metz: Buildings and Grounds  
Steven Moskowitz: Budget  
David Musser: Member at Large  
Maria Philips: Personnel Committee Liaison  
Reese Satin: Treasurer (elected)

#### **Purpose of the Finance Committee:**

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

#### **Accomplishments in 2019-20:**

- Maintained adequate and appropriate insurance coverage
- Performed oversight on the financial needs for replacement of the columns on the front of the church.
- Accelerated payments to note holders thereby reducing overall debt and interest expense.
- Monitored ongoing financial activities and cash flow.
- Produced and supervised a balanced budget that reflected real income versus actual expenses.
- Produced monthly financial reports.
- Worked with the personnel committee to develop a 2020-21 budget proposal that increases salaries to our employees commensurate with their years of service and expertise in their roles, balanced against anticipated future income.
- Prepared a revised budget for March – June 2020 due to loss of revenue due to the building closure.
- Prepared a budget in conjunction with the ministry and operations team (MOT) and the personnel committee for 2020-21 for Board approval.
- Held meetings with the MOT and Personnel Committee regarding possible revisions to the 2020-21 budget during the fiscal year depending on any significant changes in cash flow.

#### **Plans for next year:**

Continue to carefully monitor the financial health of Albany UU. Monitor cash flow and make adjustments to the budget as necessary.

We will continue to work closely with the Ministry and Operations Team, Board of Trustees, Personnel Committee and other stakeholders to advance our mission in a fiscally responsible way.

## **Membership Committee**

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

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

The Society's membership, as reported to the UUA, was 345, as of January 2020. This is a decrease from last year of 15 members. We lost a number of members this year to death, a few resigned and moved away. A total of 7 people joined the Society during year. We have several more people who have signed intent to join forms, but due to the COVID-19 virus and our State stay-at-home policy, these people have not had the opportunity to sign the Membership Book. We also have a category of membership called "Lifetime Members". This is a designation for elderly members who cannot get to church anymore and are not able to be active members, but still want to be part of our Albany UU community. We designated five people this year for this category.

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

### **Welcome Team:**

New Member Recognition Sunday services are an opportunity to recognize the new members who have signed the Membership Book since the last New Member Recognition Sunday, and after the service we have had a reception in the back of Community Hall to honor the new members. We schedule two of these per year – one in the Fall and one in the late Spring. Because Barb Manning, the organizer of these events, was ill, the Fall one was cancelled. We had another New Member Recognition Sunday service scheduled for Sunday, May 3. Because of the COVID-19 virus and the need for "physical distancing", this will be cancelled, too. Our next one is scheduled for November 1. At this point in time, we do not know whether or not this will be held because we don't know whether we will be able to gather in groups yet.

The Welcome Team has a core group of trained volunteers to be at the Welcome Table on Sunday mornings. Each volunteer works at the Welcome Table about once every four to six weeks. We also have a growing core group of volunteers who are Greeters on Sunday mornings. Barb Manning is in charge of these two groups, and is always looking for more volunteers willing to be a Greeter or "Welcomer" on Sunday morning. Since the Albany UU building has been closed because of the COVID-19 virus, we have not had any Greeters or Welcome Table volunteers since March 15 (our last service in our building). Tammy Hathaway (Church Administrator) has developed a way for "Zoom" visitors to our services to complete an online

version of our “Blue Card” which gathers contact info for each visitor. This was tried for the first time on April 12 and it worked. Follow up with visitors is now possible and we are doing that.

**Getting to Know UU (GTKUU):**

We have decided that it would be good to have a more formal way of participants evaluating our GTKUU sessions and we have been working on a one-page evaluation form for participants to complete at the end of each session. We anticipate testing this out starting in the fall.

We offered 2 newcomer orientations (“Getting to Know UU”) on Saturday mornings. Two additional ones were cancelled. One was cancelled due to extremely low signups and the other was cancelled because of the COVID-19. We welcomed 20 participants in the two sessions we did have. A number of them have become members and we have several who are ready to join once we can be back in our church building. We are thankful for their contributions!

## **Nominating Committee**

**Chair:** Sharon Babala

**Members:** Mary Applegate, Al DeSalvo, Randy Rosette, Pat Bailey, Kelly Smith and Sharon Babala.

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

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

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

### **Accomplishments:**

At the time of publication of the Annual Report, 2019 elections have not been held. This year, there is one contested election; Nominating Committee (as per Bylaws). The slate of candidates is as follows:

President:	Patti Jo Newell
Vice President:	Jan McCracken
Secretary:	Molly Daniels
Treasurer:	Reese Satin
Asst Treasurer:	Kathy Harris
REC Chair:	Tracie (Tilgner) <u>Brazinski</u>
SRC Chair:	Jean Poppei
Board of Trustees:	Geoff Abbas, Heidi Newberg, Kathy Lloyd
REC:	Alison Hart, Michael Hornsby, Ashley Keegan, Julie Maresco
SRC:	Tanya Hotalen
Nominating:	Elizabeth Berberian, Paul Reese, Todd Thomas
Endowment Trust:	Jeff English

## **Personnel Committee**

**Chair:** Karen Kaufmann

**Members:** Nancy Shay (Board liaison), Maria Phillips, Elizabeth Berberian. Richard Brewer attends as Finance Committee liaison during budget preparation. Rev. Sam attends all meetings.

**Purpose:** The Committee implements personnel policies of the Society, facilitates communication between members of the Society and staff members, oversees performance, salaries, benefits and working conditions of staff, and provides for annual performance evaluations.

**Accomplishments:** The Committee completed a much-needed overhaul of the Society's Personnel Manual that dated from 2007. This entailed research on benefits and personnel practices and consideration of input from Board members. In addition, at the request of the President, the Committee drafted a new proposed Minister's Agreement, based on a model from the UUA and much more comprehensive than the short letter agreement that the Society made with Rev. Sam 21 years ago. As in every year, substantial time and energy was spent on the budget proposal for staff salaries and benefits. As the church building was closed due to the pandemic, the Committee considered the effect on staff and determined that staff should be continued on the payroll and that proposed salary increases and COLAs should go into effect as proposed in the 20-21 budget.

**Plans for next year:** This Committee hopes to be more "hands-on" in the details of next year's budget process, some of which we only learned about as we went through this year's process. We also hope to be more involved in the staff evaluation process, and will consider the state of letter agreements with individual staff members and consider whether they should be done annually. We will also be involved in the hiring of a new Music Director.

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **Bylaws Team**

**Chair:** Peggy Sherman

**Members:** Bob Franklin, Amy Jamieson, Karen Kaufmann

**Purpose:** The Board of Trustees appointed this team to draft bylaws that incorporate the new congregational governance framework proposed by the Governance Work Group in March 2019.

**Accomplishments:** The Team was appointed by the Board in May 2019. We began our work with a review of the Governance Work Group's recommendations as well as the current Albany UU bylaws. As we drafted new provisions for Albany UU, we also looked at sample bylaws from the UUA as well as bylaws of UU congregations in Buffalo, Schenectady, Athens GA and Ventura CA.

Jon Newell and Paul Axel-Lute provided critical eyes and helpful comments on our rough draft, which was revised and presented to the Board in September. The Board responded with a number of thoughtful questions and suggestions for the Team's consideration. In March 2020, we provided the Board with a second draft of the proposed bylaws for their review.

**Plans for next year:** The Bylaws Task Force will provide any needed support to the Board of Trustees as new bylaws are reviewed, refined, approved and implemented.

## **Congregational Covenant Team**

**Chair:** Dick Dana

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

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

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

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

This year the Team completed a proposed covenant, which was presented to the Board at their November 2019 meeting. The Board held off releasing it to the congregation for several months, because there were other issues that the Board wanted the congregation to focus on first.

At our service Sunday March 15, the covenant was introduced to the congregation, and appeared in the weekly windows the following Thursday. At that time the intent was to hold an up-or-down vote at the Annual Meeting in May. But due to the coronavirus, the covenant Team, in consultation with Board President Patti Jo Newell, decided to postpone any vote until fall 2020 at the earliest, for two reasons.

First, the severe restrictions the pandemic imposed on the ability of Albany UU members to interact with each other it was thought would make it difficult for them to discuss the proposed covenant informally among themselves, and difficult for any formal discussions to take place. Second, it was felt that the pandemic was imposing a level of stress on members such that even if ways to discuss the covenant could be devised, members might not be willing to engage. The Team felt that it was important the congregation spend time focusing on the concepts presented in the proposed covenant before they voted.

**Plans for next year:** Once the worst of the pandemic is behind us, the Congregational Covenant Team will resume outreach to the congregation. The plan is to have a display in coffee hour that will promote discussion, and to re-introduce the proposed covenant through articles in Windows Weekly. Whether there will be a special meeting of the congregation to vote on the covenant, or whether the vote will wait until our 2021 Annual Meeting, depends on how soon the restrictions imposed by the pandemic are lifted.

## **Growth Through Service**

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

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

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

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

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

A second goal of the GTS Team is to collect descriptions of every service opportunity at Albany UU, no matter how small, and to post that information on our Website for all to see. We have heard many new members use the term "overwhelming" to describe the process of learning how they might fit into our community and where the best opportunities are for them to contribute. Making these descriptions available to all should take some of the mystery out of who we are and what we do together as a congregation and will be especially useful for new members joining us on that journey.

**Accomplishments:** Early this year, we set ourselves the goal of 300 conversations, which with the coronavirus ending conversations for the year in March, was unattainable. To date, we have had 220 conversations. As soon as the pandemic is over such that we can again meet in person, we will resume conversations.

This year, we narrowed the needed Service Opportunity Descriptions down to 75. So far, 46 descriptions are complete.

**Plans for next year:** The Conversation Leaders will continue to hold conversations, with the goal of holding conversation with all willing members. It is expected that within the next year, we will be in a position to start having short, update conversations with those who had their conversations two years or more ago. The Conversation Leaders will continue to welcome new members with a conversation.

The remaining 29 Service Opportunity Descriptions are expected to be completed next year. As soon as they are complete, they will be posted on our website.

## **Inclusivity Team**

Lee Newberg, chair

**Members:** Anne Marie Haber, Ed Hancock, Joyce Hartwell, Tammy Hathaway, Debbie Hoffman, Jaye Holly, Michael Hornsby, Linda Hunt, Karen Kaufmann, Cheryl McChesney-Matthews, Dan Miyake, Lee Newberg, Patti Jo Newell, Annika Pfluger, Jean Poppei, Leah Purcell, Kate Steere, Sam Trumbore, Deborah Vogel, Leigh Wedenoja, Jacquelyn Williams

**Purpose:** To build a diverse, multicultural beloved community and dismantle racism and other oppressions in our congregation and community.

**Accomplishments:** Through the Inclusivity Recommends section of Albany UU Windows Weekly, our billboard in Channing Hall, blog posts, service announcements, etc., we kept the congregation apprised of multiple local events such as anti-racism and multicultural speakers and workshops, and we contributed space and publicity resources in several cases. We reviewed and recommended articles, short essays, and books for reading, and films and online resources for viewing. We taught a multiweek Transforming Hearts class, and we brought in its author, Zr. Alex Kapitan, to deliver a Sunday service and teach a workshop in February. But for COVID-19, we would have hosted a public performance of *Whitewashed: The Racism Project* at Albany UU in March and a Gender Equity New York (GENY) workshop in April.

We embarked upon and have nearly completed the Welcoming Congregation Renewal Program and its Five Practices of Welcome Renewal. Although we are already officially a welcoming congregation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and non-binary individuals (LGBTQ / TGQNB), this program from the UUA guides us in renewing and expanding that designation. Activities include Sunday services dedicated to welcoming, celebration of national observance days, a module/course on welcoming, and financial support of welcoming efforts. We encouraged congregants to indicate their pronouns on their name badges.

**Plans for next year:** The price of inclusivity is eternal vigilance, and we will be continuing most of the above-mentioned efforts into the coming year(s). Additionally, we will host *Whitewashed: The Racism Project* and the Gender Equity New York (GENY) workshop. We will complete and disseminate individual and team assessment tools to guide the dismantling of racism and other oppressions within our personal and congregational processes.

Dismantling racism and other oppressions within ourselves, our congregation, and our community requires ongoing self-examination, listening, dialog, and action -- please consider joining our team!

## **Ministerial Intern Committee**

Submitted by Jean E. Poppei, Chair

Ministerial intern for 2019-2020: **Daniel J. Miyake**

**Members:** Winston Hagborg; Jessie Hoffman; Linda Hunt; Bobbi Place; Jean Poppei

**Purpose:** To work with the ministerial intern across the church year to provide feedback and support for their learning experiences, both during the good times and the more challenging ones.

**Meetings:** We met with Dan on a monthly basis, generally on the first Wednesday of the month, beginning in October (we got off to a slightly late start but were able to get caught up quickly).

### **Activities:**

*Learning and Service Agreement* (8/19/19 to 6/19/20). This document is completed by the intern and then, once approved by the Committee and signed by the Committee Chair, is sent off to the MCD (Ministerial Credentialing Director). It begins with the intern listing the “resources I bring,” “my special interests,” “my learning needs,” along with a Plan for Learning that identifies a Learning Goal, and Learning Objectives. These are further broken down into required areas: Worship and Rites of Passage, Pastoral Care and Presence, Spiritual Development for Self and Others, Social Justice in the Public Square, Administration, Serves the Larger UU Faith, Leads the Faith into the Future, and Other (special areas of interest to the intern). The Committee was impressed with Dan’s Agreement, after pushing a little to make sure it wasn’t too ambitious for the time allotted.

*Weekly Reports* Dan supplied the Committee each week with a list of what had been completed during that week and what was on his agenda for the following week. We found these very helpful and informed our monthly meetings with Dan.

*Midterm Evaluation* The midterm evaluation is generally an internal document to provide the intern with feedback before moving into the second half of the church year. However, Dan got word from the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) that he could meet with them in March rather than waiting until next year. This meant that the evaluation became very important and was now an external document to be sent posthaste to the MFC in January. This was accomplished and now the monthly meetings of February and March became very focused on preparing for the MFC. Covid19 changed things dramatically and Dan was forced to meet virtually with the MFC—which added special challenges and stress. He did very well, receiving the highest score and thus became eligible to enter the second round of *Congregational Search*. We couldn’t be happier or prouder as a committee!

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn’t communicate this Committee’s deep distress at the limited stipend paid our interns. We hope that there can be an opportunity for candid and open discussion before we accept the next intern.

## **Ministry and Operations Team**

**Members:** Rev. Sam Trumbore Minister(convener), Tammy Hathaway Administrator, Leah Purcell DRE&FM, Jon Newell, Barbara Manning, Dave Munro, Matt Lesniak

The Ministry and Operations Team (initially called the Program Team/Council) is part of the governance restructuring of Albany UU. In the effort to allow the Board of Trustees to be more focused on the future vision and direction of the congregation, the lay ministry and volunteer operations of the congregation is delegated to the Ministry and Operations Team. Currently it is a subcommittee of the Board. Here is its charge and organization passed by the Board, April 25, 2019:

### **Ministry and Operations Team Charge:**

1. **Role and Composition of the Ministry and Operations Team.** The Ministry and Operations Team consists of the Minister, the Congregation Administrator, the Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry and four lay leaders appointed by the Board with overlapping two-year terms.

The Ministry and Operations Team exercises authority and responsibility, as delegated to it by the Board, over congregational operations and programs to achieve the congregation's goals, vision and mission, within the limitations and expectations of governing policy as set by the Board and is accountable to the Board for its work.

**Ministry and Operations Team Expectations and Accountability.** The Board expects the Ministry and Operations Team individually and jointly:

- a. To lead and unify the volunteer and paid staff in directing their efforts toward the fulfillment of the congregation's goals, vision and mission.
  - b. To ensure compliance with the bylaws, Board policies, and applicable laws and regulations.
  - c. To uphold a high standard of ethical conduct, consistent with Unitarian Universalist values and principles.
  - d. To implement the Board's Vision of Ministry by developing and accomplishing annual goals for its work as a team/council.
2. **Four Board-Appointed Lay Leaders.** The Board will appoint four members for two year overlapping terms who are to be experienced lay leaders of the congregation, jointly nominated by the Board President and Minister. The Nominating Committee will forward nominees to the Board for consideration and appointment. They may not simultaneously serve on the Board.

This year the MOT has done organizational work thinking about what its role is following this charge and how we will work together. We put together a covenant that makes commitments to each other about how we will work together.

Integral to the work of the MOT is implementing a Board vision that organizes and directs our work. This has been challenging for us as we were formed before the Board had articulated a clear and compelling vision for us to work on. That is coming into shape and will be completed at the May Board meeting.

The resignation of our Music Director, Rick Porterfield, happened just as the MOT was getting started and has been an important focus. The MOT made a recommendation to the Board to ask Randy Rosette, Chris Jensen, and Ann Brandon to reprise what they did for us when Matt Edwards resigned. The MOT also asked for a vision of music ministry to guide organizing a search team and selection of a new music director. The Board did that work and produced a vision but asked the MOT to wait in the search process until we see if people would support our new vision with pledges. And then the pandemic hit. We are still on hold not feeling we can search for a new music director with so much fiscal and programmatic uncertainty.

Another project Rev. Sam and Leah were working on and presented to the MOT was the idea of having a two hour model for Sunday services that combined multigenerational worship in the first hour with education for all ages in the second hour. This is a model we learned about from the UU congregation in Marietta, Georgia. This is another great idea on hold with the pandemic.

Yet another concern was front door security. Sometimes people who we don't know who appear to be threatening show up at our front door. A staff member asked for a way to visually screen people at the front door before going out to meet them. This request did go to the Board and was approved. This too is on hold until the staff is back in the building again.

Another project Rev. Sam has been pushing is adding more upgrades to Community Hall visual technology to allow images to be used in the service either for the order of service, hymn lyrics, videos, and other ways to enhance the Sunday morning experience. Jon Newell did some investigation on this project and was evaluating putting up some screens in Community Hall for visual projection. This got stopped in its tracks by the pandemic too.

Where the MOT has been particularly helpful this year is meeting with the Finance Committee in the construction of the 20-21 budget. When decisions about program priorities and evaluation of a budget request were needed, the MOT has been a valuable partner working with the Finance Committee to guide allocation of resources to expenses in the budgeting process in line with the Board's expressed priorities.

Below is an initial plan for restructuring the many different activities in our congregation into different ministries of our congregation that can be monitored and supported by individual MOT members.

## **Plan for Albany UU Ministry Team Organization:**

### **Sunday Service Ministry**

- **Religious Services Team**
  - Sunday Services, Summer Services
  - Rites of Passage (Weddings, Memorial Services, etc)
- **A/V Team**
  - Sunday service sound monitoring, Projection of Power Point & video, Lights, Live streaming, Equipment maintenance/enhancement
- **Flower Team**
  - Sunday flower display, Memorial service flowers
- **Music Team**
  - Sunday Service musical performance, Choir support, Special Performances

### **Faith/Growth Development Ministry**

#### **Children and Youth**

- Sunday Religious Education Program
  - Parent Support Group, Family Ministry
- Programming specifically for Children & Youth
  - OWL, Rite of Passage, Senior High

#### **Adult**

##### **Small Group Learning**

- Meaning Matters, Small Group Ministry, Wellspring / Sources

##### **Small Group Discussion**

- Philosophy Group, UU Humanists, All Sides Considered, Walker Book Group

##### **Class oriented learning**

- Anti-racism, anti-oppression, multicultural programming , Moral Development
- Religious Studies / Sacred text study / World Religions /etc., UU History

#### **History & Archives Team**

#### **Joy Library Team**

## **Social Responsibilities Ministry**

### **Direct Service**

- FOCUS / Food Pantry / Shelter Meals, Sheridan Prep Tutoring, Neighborhood Support, Give away the plate / Albany UU room donations

### **Advocacy Work**

- Green Sanctuary Team, Peace Team, Inclusivity Team, Liaisons, Interfaith Impact, Capital District Against Islamophobia (CDAI)
- Capital Area Against Mass Incarceration (CAAMI)
- Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) and Beyond Racism

### **Education**

- Teach-ins / Forums

## **Denominational Relations Ministry**

- Hudson Mohawk UU, Central East Region / UUA, UUSC liaison (Guest), Partner Church Team, Leadership development resources / trainings

## **Congregational Life Ministry**

### **Welcome Team**

- Membership
  - Welcome Desk, Getting To Know UU (GTKUU), Intent to Join Process, Greeters
- Sunday volunteers [office currently]
  - Greeters, ushers, hospitality / coffee hour

### **Member Engagement & Integration**

- Growth Through Service, Service Matching Process, Stewardship Team, Continuing Connections

### **Member Support**

- Caring Network, Pastoral Care Associates [minister], Support Groups, Men's Groups
- Memorial Receptions

### **Safe Congregation Response Team**

### **Social Events**

- Regular:
  - Circle Dinners, First Friday potlucks, P's & Q's, Bridge, Walker Book Club
- Special Events:
  - Auction, Holiday Bazaar, Wine & Cheese, Annual Dinner

## **Administration Ministry**

### **Communications**

- Publications, Social Media, Public Relations, Publicity / Marketing Team

### **Building**

- Custodial work, Building Rental, Facilities management, Repairs (contract out or do)
- Gardening Team, Improvement projects
- Art and Aesthetics Team (art show in Channing)

### **Financial Operations**

- Income deposit & entry in database, Stock transfers and sale, Check writing & entry in accounting software, Reports on giving to members, Account reconciliation & reporting
- Financial account management, Budgeting

### **Clerical work**

## Sanctuary Task Force

submitted by Jean E. Poppei, facilitator

At the annual meeting in May, 2018, the following **resolution** was adopted:

WHEREAS, we live in a time of heightened risk for immigrants, documented and undocumented, and we consider the deportation of undocumented individuals to be inhumane in many circumstances and fundamentally in conflict with our values; and

WHEREAS, we affirm the time-honored traditions of faith communities that recognized houses of worship as a refuge for fugitive enslaved people, conscientious objectors, and Central American refugees fleeing the civil wars of the 1980s; and

WHEREAS, in 1984 our congregation entered into a covenant with the Albany Friends Meeting (Quakers), declaring both congregations as a sanctuary for those seeking to escape violence in Central America. Our congregation adopted a resolution stating as follows:

*“[FUSA] fully cognizant that this resolution may propose an act of civil disobedience, does declare FUUSA a sanctuary. In solidarity with many faiths throughout the United States, and as a symbolic act, FUUSA will invite refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala to accept temporary sanctuary with us”*

and in fact, both the Quakers and our congregation did provide physical sanctuary to refugees; and

WHEREAS, we are mindful of our UU principles that call us to acknowledge the inherent worth and dignity of every person with justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all; and

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) for decades has been actively involved in efforts to change federal immigration policy, and to aid and support sanctuary work for refugees and immigrants; and

WHEREAS, in February 2017 the UUA and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee together issued a Declaration of Conscience stating in part that “We will oppose any and all unjust government actions to deport, register, discriminate or despoil. As people of conscience, we declare our commitment to translate our values into action as we stand on the side of love with the most vulnerable among us;” and

WHEREAS, a church that declares itself a Sanctuary Congregation is one willing to engage on a spectrum of solidarity actions, including welcoming undocumented people, advocating to help stop deportations, defending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival Program (DACA), opposing unjust policies that enlist local police to engage in immigration enforcement, and in cases of extreme need physically sheltering individuals in danger of immediate deportation; and

WHEREAS, we have engaged in a process of discernment led by our Social Responsibilities Council (SRC), which has provided information and facilitated congregational conversations about becoming a Sanctuary Congregation; and

WHEREAS, the Albany Friends Meeting has once again voted to become a sanctuary congregation, and it is preparing space within its building to offer temporary housing in certain instances to undocumented individuals.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that we, the members of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, publicly declare that we are a Sanctuary Congregation. Specifically, we will:

**Educate** ourselves about the issues of immigration reform and immigrant rights;

**Speak out** against discrimination toward any and all marginalized people;

**Build partnerships** with immigrant groups, other faith institutions and all others advocating for just treatment of undocumented immigrants and refugees;

**Offer immigrants material support** (food, clothing, childcare, transportation, etc.) where there is need and desire for such assistance;

**Extend physical sanctuary.** We will support the Albany Friends Meeting and other faith institutions serving as physical sanctuary sites for undocumented immigrants. Further, cognizant that we may be engaging in civil disobedience, in cases of extreme need, upon the recommendation of the SRC and with the approval of the President, we will offer any available temporary shelter to immigrant(s) facing unjust deportation, while they pursue a legal appeal. UU Albany's minister, its board of trustees and the SRC will work collaboratively to address the eligibility and logistical aspects of providing any such temporary shelter; and

**Actively publicize** our status as a Sanctuary Congregation.

The Social Responsibilities Council will work with the congregation to implement this Resolution and will report to the Board of Trustees and the congregation at large on a regular basis.

And here we are, almost two years later. I am happy to report that we have grown from a simple partnership with Albany Friends Meeting to a Coalition made up of *seven* Capital District congregations. They are (in alphabetical order): Albany Friends Meeting; Community Congregational Church of Clinton Heights, First Presbyterian Church of Albany; Trinity United Methodist Church; Unitarian Universalist Church of Glens Falls; Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany; and Unity Church of Albany.

Only Albany Friends Meeting is prepared to take in a guest (that is, offer physical sanctuary) but the rest of us will then organize ourselves to offer assistance: food, child care, clothing, medical care, legal assistance—to name some of what might be needed—as well as the very important assignment of shifts so that the guest is never left alone (for their protection). I am still hoping to add more to our coalition because supporting an immigrant guest for an extended period of time will take a tremendous amount of time, energy, and funds.

We have a small Sanctuary designated fund which has been used to provide some support for a local Dreamer with some school-associated expenses and to print up plasticized “rack cards” which provide important information for those who are undocumented and seeking help. These cards were distributed to the member congregations in the Coalition.

Because of Covid19, ICE deportations seem to be on hold in this area but we must remain ever vigilant. Writing this report has reminded me to use the time to set up a quick response phone contact for the representatives of the seven congregations.

Finally, I want to mention that Peggy Kaufmann, the representative from Unity Church (and wife of Albany UU's Karen Kaufmann) was part of the Capital District Border Watch delegation which went to witness at the border near Brownsville Texas. She and other members of the delegation presented their findings and impressions at a Border Watch meeting; it was both inspiring and emotionally wrought as we heard first hand, and viewed pictures, of what they experienced there. I'll end with these words from Catholic Worker Dorothy Day: "No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There's too much work to do."

## **VOLUNTEER POSITIONS**

### **Childcare Coordinator**

Paula Brewer

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

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

**Accomplishments in 2019-20:** Albany UU committees/groups, such as Getting to Know UU, with own budget are responsible for funding their own childcare needs.

There has been an overall decrease in the number of events where childcare is needed/provided.

**Plans for next year:** Continue to provide for Albany UU congregational events

Continue the childcare hourly rate of \$15 per hour.

Revise childcare guidelines as needed when concerns arise, such as allowing children to access any refreshments provided at events.

#### **Challenges:**

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

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

**Liaison:** Don Odell

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

**Structure:** Interfaith Impact of NYS (IINYS) consists of two organizations. The advocacy arm is a 501(c)(4) type that focuses on legislative and executive branch advocacy. Donations to this organization are not tax deductible.

The educational arm is the Interfaith Impact of NYS Foundation, Inc., (IINYS Foundation) which is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that accepts tax-deductible donations.

**Purpose:** IINYS has been the NY Legislative and Executive Chamber advocate for shared Unitarian Universalist, Reform Jewish and liberal Protestant values for a quarter century. Members of Albany UU have strongly contributed to its success. With all our original objectives accomplished, with the exception of universal health care insurance, and many new goals met as well, (*see* “Accomplishments,” below) we believe it is a time for change.

IINYS will be winding down its operation and leave room for the UU congregations in New York to develop their own UU State Advocacy Network without competition from IINYS. We are no longer soliciting donations to either IINYS organization.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 is having a traumatic impact on UU congregations across New York, which makes energy less available for organizing a new legislative advocacy network at this time. We firmly intend to shut down IINYS advocacy operations as soon as possible, by July 1, 2020 at the latest, and later close the IINYS Foundation as well; however, in light of the emergency, we will maintain a presence for UU values in the Legislature and Executive chamber for as long as necessary while a UU State Advocacy Network takes shape.

**Accomplishments:** IINYS has been active for a quarter of a century. Most of the issues we started with (moving Roe v. Wade protections from the criminal law to the public health law, numerous GLBT rights laws, elimination of the death penalty, etc.) either passed or were handled by the courts or administratively. In 2018, the State Senate was taken over by progressive Democrats who passed a long list of new laws, ranging from abortion rights and cash bail reform to Nation-leading climate change legislation. With those changes, IINYS as originally conceived, succeeded in accomplishing its mission.

A final report on IINYS activities will be published later this year.

**Plans for the future** We believe that UU values count in the public arena and that we need to maintain a UU presence in public debate. There are issues still in play, including quality universal health care insurance, equitable state education funding, comprehensive, age-appropriate sexuality education K-12, redistricting.

We note that legislative advocacy has moved onto the internet, and we are prepared to hold ZOOM meetings for both educational programming and direct advocacy with elected officials as determined by the IINYS board. We expect that UU values will be even more effectively promoted to the Legislature and Executive Chamber once the UU State Advocacy Network is born.

## **Receptions**

Barb Manning, Sandy Stone, Coordinators

**Volunteers:** Sharon Babala, Eileen Hoffman, Barb Manning, Donna Meixner, Barb Metz, Paula Moskowitz, Michaela Pochily, Sandy Stone, Jennifer Thomas

Sandy Stone and Barb Manning have shared the role of Reception Coordinator. For each memorial reception needed this year, Sandy Stone or Barb Manning was the “Lead Coordinator” to be the contact between Rev. Sam, the church office (Tammy Hathaway) and the family. We met with Rev. Sam and the family to discuss what the family wanted for their reception. This seems to be working well as it allows for much better communication with the family, office and the Reception Committee. Our other reception volunteers helped with providing some of the food, set up, clean up and prepping food donations brought by the rest of our church community.

Unfortunately, this past year we had the honor of hosting five memorial service receptions for members who died. We provided a memorial service reception for Teddy Archer, John Walko, Linda Munro, Terry Way and George Allen. Services were planned for Peggy Slocum and Ruth Salter, but these have been postponed because of the COVID-19 virus pandemic. Services and receptions will be planned for each of them after the lift of the Governor’s stay-at-home policy.

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

In December we used the same format for the Christmas Eve cookie reception that we tried last year. Tables were set up by our custodian and people attending the services brought cookies to share in a pot-luck fashion. Amie Jamieson and Rick Piet coordinated the effort and we thank them for that. By not serving any beverages, the work was minimized.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **Building & Grounds**

**Chairperson:** Dave Metz

**Active members:** Reese Satin, Dave Stone, Mike Babala, Seth Edelman, Al DeSalvo, Bob Franklin

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

#### **Accomplishments in 2019-20, using outside contractors and committee members.**

- Completed repair to external and internal sections of western wall of Community Hall
- Implemented changes to lighting and ceiling tiles in the lobby and hallway per design developed by the Aesthetic Committee
- Replaced locks on external doors per recommendations from fire department. Now all external doors use the same key.
- Replaced lights on the handicap ramp on Washington Avenue.
- Replaced leaking toilet in family restroom in RE Building
- Specified and ordered replacement columns for the Robin Street side of the sanctuary, contracted for installation. Installation was originally delayed when the completed columns were destroyed in a fire prior to being shipped. Now the delay is a function of COVID-19 constraints.
- Replaced most of the blue 'rocker' chairs with new (to us) chairs in classrooms and other locations.
- Replaced light bulbs in the Sanctuary with LEDs.
- Many minor repairs as needed.

#### **Plans for next year:**

- Complete installation of the columns.
- Implement recommendations from building inspector.
- Repair the stairs at the West Street entry.
- Minor repairs as needed.

## **Caring Network**

**Coordinator:** Todd Thomas

**Members:** Mike Babala\*, Sharon Babala, Elizabeth Berberian, Laura Cayford, Bob Champagne, Ellen Chernoff, Pamela Crane, Toni Daniel\*, Anne de Noronha, Arlene Gilbert, Deb Grier, Judy Hanson, Kathy Harris, Tammy Hathaway, Thayer Heath, Kathy Hodges, Eileen Hoffman, Tonya Hotalen, Judy Karis, Betsey Kuzia, Anny Lapinski, Amy Lent, Kathy Lloyd, Barbara Manning, Jan McCracken, Barbara Metz, Dan Miyake\*, Bill Morrison, Sigrin Newell, Kate Pierce\*, Carole Pink, Bobbi Place, Michaela Pochily, Leah Purcell, Mary Ann Randall, Andrea Ricard, Bruce Rodgers\*, Randy Rosette (PCA), Brian Silva, Kim Silva, Sandy Stone, Jennifer Thomas, Todd Thomas, Sam Trumbore, Dee Van Riper (PCA), Erik vonHausen (PCA), Deborah Vogel, Barbara Warner, Linda Way, Leigh Wedenoja\*, Betsy Wright, Trish Zima

Those listed with an asterisk are members who joined this year. PCA denotes Pastoral Care Associates who monitor the email group.

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

**Accomplishments:** As of this writing, we remain cloistered in our homes in order to thwart the spread of Covid-19. Far from limiting the activities of the Caring Network, it has increased them. During this crisis, CN members have checked in regularly with vulnerable members of our congregation providing moral support, Zoom instruction and shopping assistance. We have been greatly helped in this effort by youth and younger families in our congregation who, under the direction of Elizabeth Baldes, have assisted with grocery shopping.

The Caring Network continues to maintain a database of assistive devices available to lend, thanks to Andrea Ricard. We delivered treats and warm wishes over Christmas and sent greeting cards for Valentine’s day to members who are no longer able to regularly attend services. Regrettably, our plan for spring visits is on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions in place.

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

## **Flower Committee**

**Chairperson:** Sandy Stone

**Flower Arrangers:** Debbie Brown, Ellen Chernoff, Lorraine English, Cindee Herrick, Barb Manning, Barb Metz, Sigrin Newell, Deborah Vogel, Trish Zima, Sandy Stone.

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

Because of the COVID-19 restrictions and the virtual church services for the past month or two, we have missed out on the beautiful flowers that several of our members have offered. Rest assured that you will get first “dibs” on dates once we are scheduled to reopen.

It was an honor this year to supply flowers at the Memorial Services for five of our FUUSA members who passed away. There will be two more memorials once this social distancing is over.

If you have an interest in flower arranging, or just love flowers, we welcome any new members to this committee.

Again, this summer, we look forward to having less formal floral arrangements, perhaps from our own gardens.

## **Fun(d)raising**

### **Holiday Bazaar–2019**

**Chairperson:** Sigrin Newell

**Members:** Dorry Campano, Kathy Harris, Karen Kaufmann, Randy Rosette, Sandy Stone, Donna Meixner, plus a large number of crafters, cooks, and others who helped with selling.

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

### **Accomplishments:**

The 2019 Bazaar consisted of three parts: Crafts, Soups, and Pies

- **Crafts:** Many people helped with the craft section. Some contributed their handiwork, others helped set up, sell, and then clean up. The crafters made items such as hats and scarves, catnip mice, jewelry, holiday decorations, jams, and other gift items. In addition to crafts donated by volunteers, vendors were recruited to set up tables to sell their own work. Vendors paid 10% of what they earned and some donated more. Crafts were sold on Dec 8 and 15
- **Soups:** Donors made thirty!! types of soup which accommodated dietary needs of all kinds. These were sold on two Sundays plus a few left-overs for a final Sunday sale.
- **Pies:** Lots of people came on Election Day to peel apples and assemble pies. To get ready for this, Sandy Stone and Dorry Campano and a few volunteers made crusts for more than 80 pies. We froze the assembled pies to be ready to sell with the soups. Buyers took these delicious pies home to bake when they wished.

**Publicity:** The publicity coordinator is essential to the success of the Bazaar. Short paragraphs promoting participation in the Bazaar and buying on the sale are put in Windows and in the Order of Service starting in October. The publicity coordinator in 2019 was Donna Meixner.

The organizing committee is grateful to all who helped make crafts, soups, or pies, as well as all those who helped to sell, set up and clean up. This fund raising activity would not be successful without willing workers.

Plans for next year: Maria Phillips and Anny Lapinsky have agreed to be co-chairs. We will decide what to do in December after the Covid-19 crisis settles down.

Crafts and Vendors:	total	\$1096
Soups:	total	\$1656
Pies:	total	\$1317
<b>Grand Total:</b>		<b>\$4069</b>

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

**Chairperson:** John Sherman and Al DeSalvo

**Wineaux:** Marc and Toni Daniel, Al DeSalvo, Kathy Harris and Don Odell, Amie Jamieson and Rick Piet, Peggy and John Sherman, Saurabh Tendulkar, Tracie Tilgner, Deborah Vogel, Rick Whitebread

**Accomplishments:** The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Wine and Cheese Tasting held on March 7, 2020 was a great success. This year's theme was to present the Wineaux' favorite wines and pair them with cheeses and accompaniments. In a series of challenging meetings, the Wineaux narrowed the selection down from two dozen great wines to seven finalists. Although vacation plans and a competing event kept several of the usual suspects from attending, we nevertheless attracted 59 attendees and with the proceeds from two raffles managed to clear \$1,005.04 to contribute to the Church. Special thanks to Mary Rizzo of the Cheese Traveler for presenting the wonderful selection of cheeses, to the Honest Weight Food Coop for contributing most of the accompaniments, and to Cindee Herrick for her tireless efforts.

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

**Planning Committee:** Bob and Trish Zima, Randy Rosette, Chris Jensen, Linda Hunt, Kathy Harris, Barb and Dave Metz, Reese Satin, Pat Bailey, Elizabeth Berberian, Paula and Steve Moskowitz, David MacLeod and Debbie Reep MacLeod, Kathy Lloyd, Lois Bailey, Kate Pierce, and Lea Ryman. In addition, several others offered to help at the event by checking attendees in, tallying fixed price items, recording bids and more.

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

**Accomplishments:** The annual Albany UU Goods and Services Auction was to be held on the evening of March 23, 2020 with a theme of Spring in the Rain. There were over 120 total items up for bid as live, fixed price, and silent auction. These were donated by 68 households, including 12 new donor households! Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic occurred causing restrictions in social gatherings. As a result, the live auction could not be held as planned. Prepaid attendees donated their attendance fee and many donors placed their offerings on hold for a possible modified, fixed price and silent auction to be held in the fall as the pandemic resolves.

**Plans for next year:** The next auction will be held on March 21, 2020. We welcome newcomers to the Committee. Don't hesitate to contact one of the committee members or the chair, Randy Rosette 518-630-6930 at [rosette\\_jensen@juno.com](mailto:rosette_jensen@juno.com).

## **Gardening**

**Coordinator:** Donna Meixner

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

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

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

**Plans for next year:** Garden maintenance will be more difficult this year due to the need for social distancing and the inaccessibility of the building and restrooms. The garden mulching planned for this year will be put off until Spring 2021.

## **History & Archives**

**Chair:** Patricia Bailey

**Goals:** Continuing to keep the archives in good order, to preserve our history and to make records accessible to all FUUSA members as well as with organizing, systematizing and updating the archives as needed. We continue to work on adding new items donated by members while striving to maintain only one copy of most materials. We have an alpha list of the files along with a list of the location of items of interest and value. The cost and value of putting all cassette tapes (over 600) of services and other events on CD's for better preservation is probably an unrealistic goal.

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

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

## **Charles R. Joy Library**

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

**Members:** Melanie Axel-Lute, Cassie Artale, Lucy Wrightington, Sally Knapp, Todd VonHausen.

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

**Accomplishments:** During fiscal year 2019-20, we purchased 24 new books, at a total cost of \$403.95. In addition, in May 2019, the Nigel Wright Peace Fund purchased 14 books for the Joy Library at a cost of \$327.87, and from June 2019 through January 2020 we added 18 books received as gifts. We rearranged and inventoried the antiquarian collection (102 titles, in 126 volumes) and posted the inventory on the Joy Library webpage. We also inventoried the Frank Curtis Reed Memorial Art Collection (46 books and 6 journal issues), rearranged it by title, and put a printed copy of the inventory with that collection. As of April 2020, the Joy Library catalog, covering the circulating collection, contained 1,718 entries, including 129 for the Ed Ryman Collection on Buddhism and Taoism. The library also contained about a dozen uncatalogued reference works, and almost a hundred journal issues (of eight journals). The number of books borrowed is not known exactly, but was at least 38 from April 2019 through February 2020. One committee member resigned during the year, leaving six.

**Plans for next year:** Besides continuing to acquire new books, we hope to participate in the next Get Connected Activity Fair, experiment with topical lists of books, recruit one or more new members to the committee, and increase the number of books borrowed.

## **Lifespan Learning**

### **All Sides Considered**

**Chairperson:** Jim Schlembach

**Members:** Ad hoc. Typically 8 to 12 participants

**Purpose:** Discuss current social and political events. Share knowledge, context, and implications

**Accomplishments:** Increased knowledge, build community among participants

**Plans:** Continue. No changes anticipated.

### **Small Group Ministry**

**Conveners:** Christy Mabry and Don Odell

**Members:** Christy Mabry Ferlito, Don Odell, Bill Newman, Kathy Hodges, Marian Tischler, John Sherman, and Sally Knapp. The group continues to remain constant in size and is limited in order to provide what a small group can provide.

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

**Accomplishments:** The group members' intentions together are to provide a welcoming and supportive place to talk about their personal lives and about issues and ideas that add to their understanding of themselves, one another and, sometimes, of the world in general! With the coronavirus pandemic, and the self isolation, like many other groups and activities, we now meet weekly online via Albany UU zoom.

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

### **UU Wellspring Sources**

Dan Miyake

Ashley Keegan and I co-facilitated the Wellspring Sources group this year. We, along with Kelly Smith, Marty Hotvet, Alice Sage, and Ed Hancock have explored together how to integrate our six UU Sources into our lives and spirituality. According to the UUA website, we live out our Principles “within a “living tradition” of wisdom and spirituality, drawn from sources as diverse as science, poetry, scripture, and personal experience.”

These are the six sources our congregations affirm and promote:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Each session consisted of a chalice lighting, deep check-in, sharing of personal spiritual practices, and discussion about the readings and videos on the topic of the session. We reflected on what spiritual meaning and growth could be gained through integrating each of the six Sources in our lives. Each session ended in sharing what we were grateful for.

The group found the materials to be engaging and relevant, and substantial enough to foster significant spiritual growth. However, I think everyone in the group would agree that the best part of the experience was the deep bonds that were formed over the course of the year. The intimacy, vulnerability, and deep sharing that occurred each session created a safe, space in which all could be their authentic selves. And, there was a lot of laughter, too. We had fun. We shed tears. We supported each other through good times and bad. This is small group ministry at its finest, and I could not recommend it enough. It has been an honor and a privilege to co-facilitate this group.

## **Partner Church Committee**

**Chairperson:** Dave Metz

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

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

**Accomplishments:** The relationship with our partner has been relatively quiet in the shadow of the very successful visit there in the previous year. Roger Bertschausen, Executive Director of the UU Partner Church Council based in St. Louis, has expresses a desire to visit Albany UU to work with the committee to examine our relationship with Szökefalva. We had hoped to have him in Albany for an on-site planning meeting with the committee, but this has been postponed by the COVID confinement. He will give the sermon remotely at the church service on May 3. When we finally meet on site, or perhaps remotely if necessary, Roger work with the Committee to work through a number of issues.

Consistent with the past few years, part of the minister's salary will be supported by the Partner Church budget. The current austerity budget may limit that for this year.

## **Religious Services Committee**

**Chairperson:** Dawn Dana

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

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

**Service Themes:** Rev. Sam Trumbore, Ministerial Intern Dan Miyake, RE Director Leah Purcell, and Music Coordinator Randy Rosette have worked together to establish and implement broad themes for the church year, tied to Meaning Matters curricula. These have included Belonging, Awe, Integrity, Resilience, Wisdom, Liberation, and Play. The themes offer a framework for selecting readings, stories, music and other service elements that provide an integrated flow to the service.

**Service Logistics:** RSC has continued to monitor audibility concerns in Community Hall and onsite sound system management and troubleshooting for Sunday services. We are encouraged by the fact that audibility complaints are fewer in number.

RSC continues to promote and monitor our Sunday Service Comments Logbook. Members and friends can record criticism, praise, or suggestions about the service. RSC regularly reviews comments, and responds as appropriate. The Logbook is displayed on the table in the Community Hall lobby, to ensure visibility and access. When services are onsite, comments are often recorded, and we have received much useful feedback.

With the advent of livestreamed services on Zoom during the Covid-19 pandemic, RSC's duties related to announcers, ushers, and service associates are moot. Services are expected to remain in this format at least through our Homecoming service in September. Whether we will have onsite services again starting in the fall is TBD at the time of this writing.

### **Pulpit Guests and Special Services**

Pulpit guests this year have included Rev. David Weissbard and Alex Kapitan of the Transforming Hearts Collective. Rev. Roger Bertschausen of the UUA Partner Church Council will be our pulpit guest in May. Dan Miyake has offered a variety of excellent services during

his internship and has also supported Family Chapel services. Dan did a pulpit exchange in February with Rev. Lynn Gardner, co-minister at Schenectady UU. Services offered by congregants have included a Death with Dignity-focused service in November, Green Sanctuary service in February with a guest from the Xtinction Rebellion group, and Green Sanctuary assistance with an Earth Day service in April. Leah Purcell, our Director of Religious Education and Family Ministry, offered a service in October. Well-loved traditions include our Homecoming service in September, the Wheel of Life service in October, the Christmas pageant and Christmas Eve candlelight services, the Senior High service, and the Bridging and Flower Communion services in June. Our Rite of Passage group plans to offer a service in May. Our joint Hudson Mohawk UU service was livestreamed on April 5, with Paula Cole-Jones as keynote speaker.

A perennially well-received service at Albany UU is “This I Believe.” This year’s TIB service will be livestreamed on May 17. Presenters will include Al DeSalvo and Luchia Hornsby . The committee greatly appreciates the willingness of members of the congregation to participate in this service and share their journeys.

### **Service Volunteer Coordination**

All instructions and scripts for service roles are available on the website, on the Sign-Up volunteer site, in pulpit binders, and other locations as appropriate. Scripts are available on the web site in Word format, allowing easy customization.

### **Summer Services**

RSC was pleased with response to and attendance at our twelve summer services in 2019. Average weekly attendance was 67, slightly lower than in recent years, but attendance was more even over the twelve weeks. Peak attendance at 85 people was at our first summer service, with Rev. Chris Antal. Randy Rosette served successfully as our Summer Services Coordinator for a third year.

RSC has been working since early in this calendar year to plan a full schedule of 2020 summer services, running from June 21 through September 6. Randy Rosette will again bring her multi-faceted skills to the Summer Services Coordinator role. We have decided that prudence requires planning our summer services to be livestreamed only. We will communicate with our planned presenters and work to facilitate any necessary adjustments in plans. Musical plans for our summer services will also accommodate this service format. We plan to publish a summer service insert in the June Windows. We are delighted to have Rev. Sam offering 3 summer services. Summer pulpit guests will include Reverends Chris Antal, Tom Chulak, and Dick Gilbert, among others.

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

**Members:** Meredith Andrews, Liz Halversen, Lee Newberg, Jean Poppei, Leah Purcell, Sam Trumbore

**Purpose:** As Unitarian Universalists, our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person and in justice, equity, and compassion in human relations inspires us to promote and support right relations among members, friends of, and visitors to our congregation.

We embrace the challenges inherent in sustaining a religious community, offering support and compassion in the face of the inevitable shortcomings of individuals in our congregation and in our community as a whole. Among those shortcomings, behavior that is deemed inappropriate, disruptive or harmful may also occur.

The Safe Congregation Response Team oversees Albany UU's Safe Congregation Policy and our approach to both preventing and responding to such behaviors, especially as they are directed toward children, youth and vulnerable adults.

**Accomplishments:** No concerns were raised this year and the team did not meet.

**Plans for next year:** Address any concerns that are raised. Be proactive in finding ways to promote healthy behaviors, discourage harmful behaviors, and protect the vulnerable.

## **UU Connections Team**

**Chairperson:** Peggy Sherman

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

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

**Accomplishments:** In June 2019, Dawn Dana, Kathy Harris, Tammy Hathaway, Amy Lent, Jan McCracken, Jean Poppei, John Sherman, and Peggy Sherman represented our congregation as onsite delegates to General Assembly in Spokane, Washington. As minister, Rev. Sam Trumbore also served as a delegate.

We publicized General Assembly 2020 in Providence, Rhode Island with an announcement during the Sunday service, in many issues of Windows Weekly, and by staffing an information table during three coffee hours. We also emailed reminders and applications to Board members, past GA participants and those who expressed interest at coffee hour. We hoped to broaden our congregation's participation by supporting young adults and emerging congregational leaders with travel stipends; the Endowment Trust generously extended a grant timeframe for that purpose. However, with the pandemic, the UUA Board of Trustees decided this year's General Assembly would be 100% virtual, so our delegates will participate online from Albany. The Board of Trustees appointed Sharon Babala, Elizabeth Berberian, Ari Kane, Karen Kaufmann, Jan McCracken, Lee Newberg, Jean Poppei and Betsy Wright as delegates

The annual Seaway Gathering of upstate New York congregations, originally scheduled for April 24, was cancelled.

**Plans for next year:** The 2021 General Assembly was scheduled for Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We will recruit delegates to represent Albany UU, whether they travel to Wisconsin or participate virtually from home.

## **PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Albany UU Humanists**

**Convener:** Don Odell

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

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

**Accomplishments:** We met three times during the 2019-2020 Albany UU year, with each meeting resulting in a lively exchange of views. The focus has been on the individual perspectives of humanism.

**Plans for next year:** We hope to reconvene in the coming church year to continue discussions about Humanism, and to learn from each other and other sources. There is no set agenda at the meetings. The group at each meeting tends to find its own voice and provides ideas for future meeting agendas. Other activities may be determined by those present.

## **Circle Dinners**

**Chairpersons:** John and Peggy Sherman

**Hosts:**

Paula and Richard Brewer  
Sharon and Mike Babala  
Linda Hunt and Larry Gambino  
Kathy Harris and Don Odell  
Maria Phillips and Brad Workman  
Chris and Maria Bystroff  
Peggy and John Sherman

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

**Accomplishments:** We facilitated 3 successful Circle Dinners during the 2019-20 church year, with 28-32 members participating each time. The final April dinner was cancelled due to the pandemic. Special thanks to our hosts.

**Plans for next year:** We plan to have 5 Circle Dinners during the coming year beginning in October.

## **Pastoral Care Associates**

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

## **Philosophy Discussion Group**

Report prepared by Rodger Fink and Don Odell

**Members:** There is no formal membership. Anyone is welcome on Tuesdays at 10:00 AM.

**Purpose:** The purpose to conduct civil discussions on a wide variety of topics recommended by attendees.

**Accomplishments:** The Philosophy Group recently discussed politics, the practice and the philosophy; the power and discretion of the American Prosecutor; Is capitalism compatible with environmentalism; the Power and Discretion of the American Prosecutor; Understanding the Filibuster; the Role Social Media Sites Play in Delivering the News; on moral responsibilities and conscious thought; how do we evaluate inequality; and other topics.

**Plans for next year:** The plan is to continue to provide a topic each week based on the interests and submissions of volunteers.

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

**Reporter:** Barb Manning

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

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

Tea and chocolate are provided by the group.

Our current project is a large quilt that is being made in memory of Jan Satin, long-time member of P's & Q's and an excellent quilter. We are calling it "Jan's Quilt". We worked on it all year, making the individual squares. Just prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic we had completed almost all of the squares for the quilt. Once we can gather again, we will lay out the quilt squares and begin sewing the squares together. We hope to be able to start the hand quilting within 2 months of whenever we are able to start gathering again.

We welcome any new members and, if you like to sew, we can teach you how to quilt. Contact Barb Manning (518-439-4226 or [BarbaraCManning@hotmail.com](mailto:BarbaraCManning@hotmail.com)) for further information.

## **Walker Book Group**

**Reporter:** Marth Musser

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

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

Because in-person gatherings were prohibited during the coronavirus pandemic, the group chose to meet using Zoom, beginning in April. The two-hour Sunday-evening meetings include both socializing and discussion of the selected book.

The group read and discussed seven novels and one nonfiction book. We will select a group of short stories to read in June. Attendance averaged 12 to 14 persons throughout the year.

**Books discussed from September 2019 through June 2020:** *The Great Believers* by Rebecca Makkai, *Manhattan Beach* by Jennifer Egan, *A Woman Is No Man* by Etaf Rum, *A Friend* by Sigrid Nunez, *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin, *Chances Are...*, by Richard Russo, *Talking with Strangers* by Malcolm Gladwell, *The Nickle Boys* by Colson Whitehead, and *The Return of the Native* by Thomas Hardy.

**Accomplishments:** Despite competition from various other activities and busy schedules, the group continues to thrive and generate interest in reading and discussing literary works of fiction and nonfiction. We welcomed a number of new individuals during the year.

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