

ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018



May 20, 2018

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH
801 East Washington Street
South Bend, Indiana 46617

Board of Trustees 2017-18

Susan Siemers, *President*
Chuck Leone, *Vice President*
Melanie Smith-Guillaume, *Secretary*
Elena Wake, *Treasurer*

Janet Bogar, *Trustee*
Wendy Lohman, *Trustee*
Florence Klecka, *Trustee*
Eli Williams, *Trustee*

Church Staff

Minister: Rev. Chip Roush
Director of Youth Religious Education: Dan Holm

Office Manager: Meadow Smith
Bookkeeper: Finda Kamanda
Pianist: Ian Bunker
Nursery Care Provider: Diana Mendelsohn

Committee Chairs

Adult RE	Gail deSomer
Aesthetics	Melanie Smith-Guillaume
Building	Roger Birdsell & Jean DeWinter
Care	Mary Hagen & Lois Holm
Committee on Ministry	Jessica Collett
Building Use	Gary Metzler
Endowment	Joseph Gress
Events	Kathy Platt
Finance	Elena Wake
Grounds	Barb Carmichael & Susan Van Fleit
Marketing	Becky Lindstrom
Membership	Gail deSomer
Peace & Justice	Kay Azar & Anne Mannix
Social	Kathy Platt
Stewardship	Chuck Leone
Worship Arts	Florence Klečka
Youth RE	Dan Holm

**Annual Report
2017-2018
First Unitarian Church**

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Draft Congregational Meeting Minutes

First Unitarian Church, South Bend

Annual Congregational Meeting

21 May 2017

The meeting was called to order by Gary Metzler, board president, at 12.05pm.

It was determined that a quorum was present. (40 members were signed in, plus four proxy forms)

Approval of congregational meeting minutes.

- Florence Klecka moved, and Rich Wallace seconded, that the minutes of the 22 May 2016 annual congregational meeting be approved as read. Motion carried.
- David Mayfield moved, and Pat Taplick seconded, that the minutes of the 30 October 2016 special congregational meeting be approved as read. Motion carried.

Reports. Minister's and president's reports, printed in annual report.

2017-18 operating budget. Roger Birdsell moved, and Mary Alice Hardy seconded, that the operating budget be approved.

- Roger Birdsell: Have pledges been received yet from the 18 pledging units that had not pledged by May 10. Susan Siemers said that the Stewardship Committee is getting in contact with them.
- Chuck Leone, treasurer, commented on the budget. It is a deficit budget. Mortgage payments are now included as an expense/use of funds. The projected excess of income this fiscal year should cover next year's deficit.

Motion carried.

Endowment disbursement. One request, the \$4400 for an intern minister, has been withdrawn. Roger Birdsell moved, and Kay Azar seconded, that the remaining four proposals be approved. As listed in the annual report, these are:

- \$1500 to the Marketing Committee to increase the strength of the wireless network in the church building.
- \$3500 for an archivist and supplies for sorting/organizing church history records and materials.
- \$3900 (\$1300) per delegate to subsidize sending incoming board president and up to two other delegates to the 2017 General Assembly in New Orleans.
- \$1550 for development and building of a Mobile Ecology Education Center on Wheels.

Discussion:

- Tamara Ciszczon asked if funds will also be available next year. Chuck Leone explained the guidelines for endowment fund disbursements.
- Tamara Ciszczon asked how the endowment fund is invested. Chuck explained the UUA investment fund.
- Susan Siemers asked when member access to the new Icon church software will be available. Chuck answered that it is available now but protocols have not yet been established.

- Tamara Ciszczon asked what this year's rate of return on the endowment fund has been. Chuck said it has been about 10%.
- Susan Siemers asked if there was a likely candidate for the archivist work. Chip Roush answered Carla, our office manager. Dale Gibson noted that Carla has done some work with the materials but is reaching the limits of her knowledge of the church and that we will need to find someone else.

Motion carried.

Elections.

Dale Gibson moved, and Kay Azar seconded, that the slate of Board of Trustees officers and trustees as listed in the annual report be approved.

Vice President	Chuck Leone
Treasurer	Elena Wake
Trustee, 2-year term	Jim Ward
Trustee, 2-year term	Wendy Lohman

Motion carried.

Roger Birdsell moved, and Susan Siemers seconded, that the slate of candidates for the Endowment Committee and the Nominating Committee as listed in the annual report be approved.

Endowment Committee

Suzanne Waller, to complete the term of Jim Ward

Joseph Gress, three-year term

Nominating Committee

Chair—Gary Metzler, outgoing board president, one-year term

Current member—Susan Van Fleit (2nd year of two-year term)

New member—Becky Lindstrom (1st year of two-year term)

Alternate—Lois Holm

Tamara Ciszczon asked how long Suzanne's term on the Endowment Committee will be. Gary Metzler answered, one year. Motion carried.

Strategic Planning Task Force Report. In addition to the written report in the Annual Report, Willow Crisovan provided an update, explaining that the results of the recent surveys will be publicized soon and that the task force will be discussing with committees what needs to be done, based on these surveys.

Peace and Justice Focuses for 2018. Greg Young reported on the recent informal poll for the congregational focuses for 2017-18. The top four were climate change and environment, education challenges (truth in science), feminism, and immigration. In order to narrow the four down to two, a poll of those present was taken. The two receiving the most votes were climate change and environment, and education challenges (truth in science).

Volunteer of the Year Award. Gary Metzler presented this to Marilyn Shaul.

Lifetime Achievement Award. Gary Metzler presented this to Dale Gibson.

Recognition of 2016-17 Board of Trustees. Gary thanked all for their service: Susan Siemers, vice-president; Melanie Smith-Guillaume, secretary; Chuck Leone, treasurer; Janet Bogar, trustee; Tama Crisovan, trustee; Florence Klecka, trustee; Eli Williams, trustee.

Other Business. Chuck Leone presented, for informational purposes, two initiatives that the board has discussed which will cost some money but are not in the budget.

- AED (automatic external defibrillator), about \$2000
- Intergenerational choir, including a part-time choir director, about \$5-6,000.

Barbara Boyd asked if endowment disbursement money could be used for the AED. Gary Metzler explained the timeline for endowment disbursement requests. It was also noted that, though contributions may be requested for these initiatives, the board must first vote to allow such directed donations.

Adjournment. Dale Gibson moved, and Karen Dickson seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. It's not clear that a vote was actually taken; however, there were no objections when the meeting adjourned at 1pm.

Fern Hamlin
Acting meeting secretary

Minister's Report, Rev. Chip Roush

“Yes, it looks bleak. But you are still alive now. You are alive with all the others, in this present moment. And because the truth is speaking in the work, it unlocks the heart. And there’s such a feeling and experience of adventure. It’s like a trumpet call to a great adventure.” --Joanna Macy

Our congregation is rising to the challenges of our time. We have been busy, responding to the many national and international concerns, while also working to care for those in our own community. In ways both old and new, we are living into the struggles of the 21st century.

Many of us participated in the Vigil for Charlottesville Solidarity and the student-led March for Our Lives. Some of us showed up at Representative Walorski’s office, advocating for DACA and other humane legislation (a few of us were there multiple times, over the course of the year). DeShea Blunier and I were on early-morning television, speaking about changing “Columbus Day” to “Indigenous Peoples Day.” We were well-represented at the *People’s Inauguration 2: The State of Our Union* event.

We served as a South Bend ID mobile station, partnering with *La Casa de Amistad* to help people get city identification cards. We hosted a workshop on solar panels, which resulted in several families (members and strangers) putting solar panels on their own buildings.

As always, we presented some great concerts, from the UU-famous trio, *Brother Sun*, to local acts like *Lalo Cura* and *Babylon Sneakers*. We also showed a movie (*Wonder Woman*), a few nights prior to my sermon about it.

We explored the possibility of skipping the Sunday morning service, and instead doing some community service in the afternoon. Our first attempt was moderately successful, with 15 of us showing up to help *La Casa* do some spring cleaning and garden preparation. It was a fun and rewarding afternoon for the multigenerational crew who participated, and we discussed the event over pizza and potluck, back at the church. The consensus seemed supportive of similar events in the future—especially if we hold them more regularly (so they are more predictable). Some indicated they would prefer to do *both* church in the morning and work in the afternoon (or immediately after the morning service). One person did note we ought not skip a church service on the day when pledge cards were due...

Groups all over our nation are engaging in conversations about how religion / spirituality / congregational community will adapt to the needs to our 21st century world. When I return from Sabbatical (April – July; see you August 1!), we’ll continue our efforts, including an exploration of how to deepen our ministry to and with families.

With Spirit,
Rev. Chip

President's Report, Susan Siemers

It has been interesting to serve as president of the Board of Trustees for the past 11 months. (Yes, I'm counting; only one more month to go!) I have enjoyed working with everyone on the board, as well as touching base with committee chairs from time to time. Gary Metzler, the retiring president, gave me a pad of sticky notes entitled "Complaints." I didn't use all of them, so I will pass on the remainder to Chuck Leone, who will be moving into this position for the coming church year.

After pulling together a group of interested parties to talk about our grounds, the proposal from that meeting was to ask the board to split the Building and Grounds committee into two separate committees, given the breadth of the responsibilities for both the building and the grounds. The split was voted in at the next board meeting. Wow! There has been so much enthusiasm from both committees, and it shows in our surroundings. What is especially obvious is the installation of rain gardens around the church.

Thanks to Kathy Vetter for her work in trying to manage it all in the past few years. It was a monumental task. But remember the old adage, "Many hands make light work." I'm not sure the grounds committee would agree that it has been light work, but their enthusiasm shows, not only in the looks of the church, but also in getting so many people involved. Many thanks!

To paraphrase an old TV show that most of you don't remember, This Was The Year That Was. This church year we had to start making mortgage payments. Ouch! But so far, we are hanging in there. Our "Singe the Mortgage" program has been quite successful. It has allowed us to pay down the mortgage so that the monthly payment is more manageable.

We have a lot to be thankful for – especially for the generosity of our members with both time and money. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve in this position.

Susan Siemers, President
Board of Trustees
First Unitarian Church, South Bend

Treasurer's Report and Finance Documents

We continued to improve the church finances for the 2017-2018 year. Payment of mortgage was switched from Capital Campaign Fund to Operational Budget. A pledge campaign for principal payment to reduce mortgage was successful. Thanks to installed solar panels, the energy costs and the budget expenses were reduced.

In fiscal year 2017-2018, we received \$10,880 in prepaid pledges (*1) and a \$16,678.64 reconciled end of year balance from the 2016-2017 fiscal year (*1). For the current year, the Stewardship campaign received \$153,676 in pledges (*1). The drive this year is still underway. The new fiscal year 2018-2019 has received \$10,150 prepaid pledges so far (*2)

Other notes:

- The Church roof on the north side will be a challenge for us this coming year;
- The solar panels are contributing significantly to reduction in our cost of electricity;
- Our remaining mortgage has less than ten years to go (to January 2028);
- The Archives project is continuing forward sorting out church records.

*1. 1/31/2018 Non-operating Report

*2. 4/30/2018 Non-operating Report

We appreciate the generosity of our members and friends for financial and service contributions. Our finances are stabilizing and improving every year.

Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair: Elena Wake

Finance Committee Members: Fern Hamlin, Janet Bogar, Karen Dickson, Chuck Leone

❖ Proposed 2018-2019 Operating Budget

*Operating budget history, current year status, and proposed **2018-19 Budget** (next to last column) as approved by the Board of Trustees for submission to the Congregation.*

Item	2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-19	Notes
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	4/30	Proposed	
Income/Sources of Funds:								
110 – Pledges	\$148,000	\$146,785	\$140,000	\$134,726	\$150,000	\$125,952	\$153,000	1
115 - Pledges – Additional	\$4,000	\$3,865	\$3,000	\$3,790	\$3,000	\$905	\$2,000	
120 - Loose Offering	\$4,000	\$4,919	\$5,000	\$5,961	\$5,000	\$5,259	\$5,000	
130 - Building Use Fees	\$500	\$1,340	\$700	\$1,495	\$1,000	\$1,105	\$1,200	
140 – Fundraisers								
142 - Holiday Bazaar				\$38	\$1,500	\$1,678	\$1,500	
143 - Service Auction	\$11,000	\$11,556	\$11,000	\$13,861	\$12,000	\$12,038	\$12,000	
144 – Concerts				\$458	\$3,000	\$538	\$1,500	
145 - Other Fundraisers	\$2,500	\$3,744	\$3,500	\$4,867	\$700	\$960	\$700	
150 - Other Contributions				\$100	\$500	\$1,025	\$700	
190 - Intern minister support	\$0	\$1,730			\$0		0	
199 – Miscellaneous	\$0	\$2,633	\$1,000		\$500	\$150		
Total Income:	\$170,000	\$176,572	\$164,200	\$169,000	\$177,200	\$149,610	\$178,100	

Item	2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-19	Notes
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	4/30	Proposed	
Expenses/Uses of Funds:								
205 - Mortgage Payments					\$27,000	\$21,600	\$22,200	2
210 - Church Insurance	\$10,000	\$5,628	\$7,500	\$5,836	\$6,500	\$4,840	\$6,500	
220 - Cleaning Services	\$5,000	\$0	\$1,000		\$1,000	\$1,490	\$3,000	
230 - Building Supplies	\$700	\$236	\$800	\$144	\$500	\$46	\$500	
240 - Building & Grounds	\$3,000	\$1,656	\$3,000	\$1,174	\$3,000	\$872	\$2,500	
242 - HVAC Preventive	\$5,400	\$6,097	\$400	0	\$400	0	\$400	
243 - HVAC Repairs	\$2,000	\$3,294	\$100	0	\$100	0	\$100	
250 - Grounds							\$1,000	
300 - Utilities								
310 - Gas	\$4,000	\$2,703	\$3,500	\$2,147	\$2,500	\$1,929	\$2,300	
320 - Electric	\$8,000	\$6,497	\$4,000	\$2,768	\$2,500	\$1,833	\$2,100	3
330 - Telephone	\$1,000	\$1,031	\$1,050	\$1,053	\$1,050	\$911	\$1,000	
340 - Water & Trash	\$1,000	\$1,150	\$1,200	\$1,074	\$1,050	\$910	\$1,000	
351 - Endowment Repayment	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$100	\$100	\$1,000	0	\$1,000	
355 - Snow Removal	\$500	\$415	\$500	\$225	\$500	\$875	\$500	
360 - Security	\$400	\$384	\$500	\$384	\$500	\$384	\$400	
365 - Alarm Fees	\$200	\$0	\$100	0	\$100	0	\$100	
370 - Elevator & Sprinkler	\$1,300	\$1,958	\$1,300	\$1,477	\$1,200	\$1,900	\$2,000	
410 - Admin & Office Non-payroll	\$3,767	\$5,046	\$5,000	\$2,476	\$3,500	\$2,205	\$3,500	
415 - Copier	\$2,000	\$3,310	\$2,000	\$618	\$1,000	\$268	\$1,000	
420 - Postage	\$400	\$244	\$400	\$277	\$300	\$49	\$300	
430 - Payroll Taxes & Expenses	\$2,000	\$1,894	\$2,040	\$1,963	\$2,040	\$1,512	\$2,098	
435 - Payroll Processing			\$1,500	\$1,380	\$1,600	\$1,016	\$1,500	
500 - Sunday Service								
510 - Sunday Service Committee	\$600	\$400	600	\$500	\$600	0	\$600	
511 - Sunday Service Supplies	\$150	\$0	\$50	\$36	\$50	0	\$50	
520 - Music	\$4,500	\$4,200	\$4,300	\$3,600	\$4,300	\$3,450	\$4,300	
620 - Service Charges	\$0	\$101	\$0	0	\$0	\$10	0	
700 - Committee Expenses								
710 - Membership Committee	\$500	\$244	\$400	\$180	\$400	\$174	\$400	
720 - Social Committee	\$100	\$101	\$200	\$50	\$200	0	\$200	
725 - Coffee & Tea	\$500	\$50	\$100	\$18	\$100	\$146	\$200	
730 - Events Committee			\$500	\$587	\$500	\$231	\$500	
735 - Aesthetics Committee			\$400	\$164	\$400	0	\$400	
740 - Care Committee	\$100	\$105	\$100	\$92	\$150	0	\$150	
745 - Peace and Justice Comm.	\$200	\$0	\$200	\$100	\$200	0	\$200	
746 - Marketing Committee	\$500	\$0	\$500	100	\$500	0	\$500	
747 - Finance Committee	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$262	\$250	\$183	\$250	
748 - Endowment Committee					\$200	\$165	\$200	
749 - Inter-generational Choir							\$1,200	
750 - Denominational Dues	\$9,690	\$9,576	\$9,350	\$9,350	\$9,300	\$6,954	\$9,500	
760 - Fundraising Expense								

Item	2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-19	Notes
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	4/30	Proposed	
761 - Stewardship Campaign	\$400	\$201	\$400	\$156	\$500	\$11	\$400	
765 - Holiday Bazaar Expense					\$150	0	\$150	
766 - Service Auction Expense	\$500	\$446	\$500	\$377	\$500	\$519	\$500	
767 - Concert Expense				\$850	\$2,000	0	\$1,000	
769 - Other Fundraising Expense	\$250	\$1,354	\$500	0	\$300	0	\$300	
800 - Religious Education								
808 - DRE Professional Exp.	\$500	\$0	\$1,000	0	\$1,000	0	\$1,000	
809 - DRE Salary	\$7,355	\$7,210	\$7,502	\$7,335	\$7,646	\$6,372	\$7,799	4
810 - Religious Ed supplies	\$2,000	\$1,800	\$2,000	\$2,038	\$2,000	\$333	\$1,000	
812 - Background Checks	\$100	\$0	\$100	0	\$100	0	\$100	
814 - Adult RE			\$100	\$40	\$100	0	\$100	
815 - Child Care	\$800	\$1,159	\$1,000	\$853	\$1,000	\$830	\$1,000	
900 - Ministerial Expenses								
910 - Minister's Salary & Housing	\$54,060	\$54,060	\$55,141	\$55,141	\$56,200	\$46,833	\$57,324	4
911 - Intern Minister	\$0	\$2,724	\$0	0	\$0	0		
915 - in lieu of FICA	\$4,136	\$4,136	\$4,218	\$4,218	\$4,299	\$3,583	\$4,385	4
920 - Sabbatical Funding			\$100	0	\$100	0	\$100	
930 - Minister's Expense	\$5,406	\$5,253	\$5,718	\$5,175	\$5,828	\$5,099	\$5,732	4
940 - Minister's Pension	\$5,406	\$5,406	\$5,514	\$5,514	\$5,620	\$4,683	\$5,732	4
945 - Minister's Insurance	\$8,000	\$11,634	\$14,500	\$11,879	\$13,000	\$10,276	\$13,000	
950 Office Personnel								
960 - Office Salaries	\$12,480	\$13,473	\$15,600	\$18,330	\$15,600	\$13,104	\$16,000	
998 - Employee-caused loss	\$0	\$6,497						
999 - Miscellaneous Expense	\$0	\$2,228	\$1,000	\$2,281	\$1,000	0	\$500	
Total Expenses:	\$170,000	\$175,001	\$167,683	\$152,321	\$191,433	\$145,596	\$189,771	
Surplus/Deficit:	\$0	\$1,571	-\$3,483	\$16,679	-\$14,233	\$4,014	-\$11,671	

Notes:

1. This is an estimate of pledges expected.
2. Donations paid a part of principal, lowered monthly mortgage payments.
3. Power from solar panels reduce electricity cost.
4. Professional salary increases by 2%.

❖ **Funds Statement**

Change in Net Assets for Period: 07/01/2017 to 04/30/2018

Fund	Starting Balance 6-30-17	Receipts	Disburse- ments	Transfers	Liability Payments	Current Balance 4-30-18	Notes
Building Fund	8,032.51	745.00	0.00	0.00	4,519.77	4,257.74	
Capital Campaign	9,443.75	11,326.47	0.00	0.00	9,466.16	11,304.06	1
Capital Improvement Endowment	0.00	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,500.00	2
Disbursements Endowment Set-aside	-253.11	0.00	4,113.08	10,161.25	0.00	5,795.06	
General Fund	225.00	6,370.00	0.00	-6,495.00	0.00	100.00	
Inter-generational Choir	0.00	138,730.21	145,884.59	11,168.75	0.00	4,014.37	
Invisible Church Minister Discretionary Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Prepaid Pledges	108.59	792.43	200.00	0.00	0.00	701.02	
RE Capital Expense Fund	10,880.00	10,150.00	0.00	-10,880.00	0.00	10,150.00	
Sabbatical Fund	483.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	483.00	
Special Collections	682.00	46.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	728.95	
Teen Service Project	0.00	-	-	0.00	0.00	396.42	
Unrestricted Savings	1,987.05	0.00	1,829.07	0.00	0.00	157.98	
UUCEF Endowment	21,940.85	3,737.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	25,678.55	
Women's Group Fund	284,782.96	21,360.13	0.00	-3,955.00	0.00	302,188.09	3,4
	262.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	162.00	
Fund Totals	\$344,289.35	\$194,758.89	\$152,426.74	-----	\$13,985.93	\$373,031.99	
Total Receipts						\$ 195,185.89	
Total Disbursements						\$ 152,823.74	
Total Disbursements & Liability Payments						\$ 166,015.67	
Net Increase(Decrease) with Liability Payments						\$ 29,170.22	

Notes:

1. This fund received \$11,100 for the Singe Mortgage Collection.
2. All money in this fund is designated for the defibrillator.
3. The UUCEF balance listed is as of 3/31/2018, adjusted for market gains and losses.
4. \$75,000 of this fund is permanently restricted to prohibit use of principal.

Nominations

From the Nominating Committee:

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following slate of nominations for the 2018-19 Board of Trustees and Endowment Committee.

Board of Trustees

Officers

Vice President: Ron Robinson
Secretary: Melanie Smith-Guillaume

Trustees

Two-year Term: Anne Mannix
Two-year Term: Rich Wallace
One-year Term: Janet Bogar (Filling the last year of the term of Jim Ward)

Endowment Committee

Three-year Term: Allen deSomer

Respectfully submitted by Gary Metzler, Susan Van Fleit, and Lois Holm.

From the Board of Trustees:

The Board of Trustees is pleased to nominate the following members to serve on the 2018-19 Nominating Committee.

Nominating Committee

Chair Person: Susan Siemers (outgoing Board President, one-year term)
Current Member: Lois Holm (Activated as alternate this year, and will finish the two-year term.)
New Member: Wendy Lohman (two-year term)

Alternate: To be chosen at Annual Meeting

Children's Religious Education Program Report

The focus of the RE program has been on learning more about the seven UU principles. The classes have worked on various types of learning activities to not only understand the UU principles, but to also apply the principles in daily life. Some of the various projects that the students have engaged in to apply the principles are discussed here.

In October, the RE students decorated pumpkins. The students used paints and markers to create their own pumpkin works of art. The pumpkins were then displayed Sunday, October 29. Each pumpkin had a UNICEF box and the congregation voted with money for the pumpkins they enjoyed the most. This activity raised \$100 for UNICEF. It also provided a way for the students to help others in need through their art.

December was a busy month for the RE children. On December 3, under the organization and guidance of Mary Beth Dickey, the RE students filled over 120 stockings for the children at the CASIE Center. This stocking stuffing activity was a great opportunity for the RE students to live the UU value of helping others. It was gratifying to see the older students helping the younger students "learn the ropes" of this activity. Mary Ann McDowell, Susan Van Fleit, Karen Chambers, and Jean deWinter also helped make this a successful activity.

On December 17, the RE students performed "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." The play was an adaptation of the Dr. Seuss story. The children really enjoyed performing for the congregation. Special thanks go to Willow and Autumn Crisovan and Forrest Wallace for their work in making props, developing the script, and directing the RE performers. Also, thanks to Wendy Lohman and Heather Hulse for their help with the scenery. This performance was truly a team effort.

Sunday February 11, the students in the RE classes met to work on Valentines. The children made Valentines for their own family members as well as for children in the pediatric sections of St. Joseph and Memorial hospitals. Gail deSomer brought the Valentines to hospital coordinators. She, also dropped off Valentine candy for the hospitalized children. This was a great way for the RE students to empathize with children who are having health issues.

There was an Easter Egg Hunt for all of the children on April 1. Susan Van Fleit helped to fill the eggs the children searched to find. There were 18 children hunting for eggs. Special thanks to Willow Crisovan, Forrest Wallace, and Autumn Crisovan, for hiding the eggs for the nursery children. This year, in addition to small toys in the eggs, the eggs also had tickets. The students were able to trade these tickets in for a large toy, such as a kite, stuffed animal, sidewalk chalk, or playdough. The children had a great time looking for the eggs and counting their tickets.

The rest of April has been working on preparing for the May 6 RE service. The students will be sharing things they have learned about ways to protect the environment.

The work of the teachers is greatly appreciated. The teachers for the K-2 class are Wendy Lohman and Heather Hulse. The teacher for the 3-5 class is John Bentley. The 6-9 class is taught by Susan Van Fleit and Byrd Tetzlaff. The teachers do an excellent job working with our RE students in engaging and thought provoking activities. The paid nursery worker is Diana Mendelsohn. Diana does a wonderful job working the young children with stories and games. She also focuses a lot of the program on learning about nature. In addition to the RE

teachers, I wish to thank the RE Committee members. The Committee members are: Karen Chambers, Susan VanFliet, and Jean deWinter.

Looking to the summer, there is a large group of members of the congregation who have volunteered to share a special hobby or interest with the RE students. This sharing of interests is a way to create intergenerational connections between the RE students and the congregation. Also, during the summer, the RE students will have their art displayed in the halls as our “artists in residence”

Respectfully Submitted,
Dan Holm, DRE

Report of the Strategic Planning Task Force

After eighteen months of work, in early May 2018, the Strategic Planning Task Force released its *Strategic Plan 2018-2023* document for congregational review and discussion. Included below is the overview from the report. For more details please see the complete document.

Strategic Recommendations Overview

What makes a Recommendation especially strategic? It uncovers a new perspective by challenging us to see a situation from a different point of view. Whether that means going deeper or stepping back to see the big picture, we hope these particular Recommendations will inspire us to new heights in the coming years. **So may we be.**

Peace and Justice

- Work on defining which projects would be appropriate for our congregation to undertake by diving beneath the surface of members' perceptions and expectations with regards to Peace and Justice Committee activities.

Religious Education for All

- Expand the focus of the Children's RE program to include meeting the needs of families, in addition to the weekly educational needs of children.

Financial Health

- As membership and programs grow, the Church should look continuously to other sources of revenue, and analyze which options make the most sense in terms of both time and energy required.

Worship

- Strengthen our connections to the greater South Bend area by bringing in new voices and sharing our personal stories with the broader community.

Membership & Leadership

- Increase the number of activists, seekers, "those that have given up on church," and young families that visit our Church. Set target of 10% net growth for 2018-2019 membership.

Internal & External Communication

- Start digging beneath member expectations to understand their deeper motivations and intentions.
- Develop a more cohesive branding strategy that encompasses a clear mission, vision, and story for the Church.

From: *Strategic Plan 2018-2023*, page 7

Committee Reports

❖ **Adult Religious Education Committee:** *Gail deSomer, Chair*

Rev. Chip offered a viewing of the movie "Wonder Women" with a discussion following it. He also offered "How to write a sermon" and provided resources for those unable to attend.

The Non-Violent Communication (NVC) group and the Group of Open Source Happiness (GOSH), started by Rev. Chip, continue to meet regularly.

Bryd Tetzlaff led a three part class on the 'Bible for UUs', in the spring and Becky Lindstrom offered two classes this spring, one on "Confessions of a Selfless Perfectionist" and the other called "Many Paths to Mindfulness",

Committee members - Rev. Chip Roush, Byrd Tetzlaff, Becky Lindstrom and Andrea Vollrath

❖ **Aesthetics Committee:** *Melanie Smith-Guillaume, Chair*

We have continued our updating of bulletin boards containing pictures of Board members and Committee chairs. Also, we have put up photos of activities in that same bulletin board space across the hall from Chip's office.

We added a lamp to the reading corner with couch and chair in the foyer.

We had bulletin boards re-installed for RE use on the north side of the north column in the foyer.

Susan Van Fleit waters the plants every week.

We have done some decluttering in the office workroom and some cleaning of the storage area in the basement. (These are ongoing projects!)

We have consulted on several projects: a stool for the Committee on Ministry's Listening area and where to place an expanded space for the Care Committee's equipment in the basement.

For next year, we will be looking into refinishing the ziggurat in the basement and into installing the wooden trim on the entry doors to the sanctuary which was recommended by the architect. We are also considering installation of a clock at the back of the sanctuary for use by speakers.

Committee Members: Barbara Carmichael, Gail DeSomer, Susan Van Fleit

❖ **Care Committee:** *Mary Hagen and Lois Holm, Co-chairs*

The Care Committee (CC) endeavors to support the members and friends of our community by providing connections between those who are going through life's transitions and those who can help.

Some of the ways we support one another is by offering soups, meals, visits, phone calls, sending cards, providing transportation, and making loans from our reorganized "loan Closet." The "Loan Closet" contains durable medical goods and baby/toddler furniture for visiting family, with a sign "out" and "in" clip board.

The CC and its helpers supported about 15 people through recoveries this past year. There are probably many more acts of kindness from members and friends that is not brought to the attention of the CC. Thank you.

The CC has now partnered with Pilgrimage Healing to provide energy support and comfort for those in times of need.

Plans are progressing with the CC's project to install and train for an AED (automated external defibrillator) placed in our gallery, for medical emergencies.

Every October we encourage everyone to fill out the "Emergency Contact" form. We are also compiling a "Medical Procedure /Services Resource List" to help support your decision process.

There is a monthly Birthday Calendar in the south hallway. Please add your name when your month is visible. We are also celebrating those monthly birthdays with a cake after the second Sunday service of each month.

The CC members distribute poinsettias during the winter holiday to cheer those who appreciate some extra attention.

During the pleasant weather in our court yard on Sunday morning at 9:30, the CC leads a 30 minute moving meditation through TaiChi/QiGong for any who is interested.

The CC was privileged to help Rev. Chip with Bruce Williams' memorial service.

Our community appreciates all those members and friends who help one another. Please remember to notify Rev Chip or a member of the CC of a need for yourself or another.

Committee Members: Mary Hagen and Lois Holm (co-chairs), Dale Gibson, Barbara Boyd, Jim Curlee, Gail deSomer , Wendy Lohman

❖ **Endowment Committee:** *Joseph Gress, Chair*

This year, the endowment committee has focused on four areas: communications, service, process improvement and research. In the area of communications, we prepared and gave a presentation to the congregation and sent a mailing encouraging members and friends to include First Unitarian Church in their will or estate plan. We started a quarterly endowment statement to go in the order of service and newsletter. Finally we solicited, reviewed and made recommendations regarding endowment distributions for 2018. These recommendations are at the end of this report.

The endowment committee participated in several activities in service to our church. We participated in the resource review meeting to discuss options for paying our church mortgage. We are exploring ways to offer will and trust support to our members.

In the area of process improvement, we have created an electronic endowment ledger, created an endowment disbursement proposal form and proposed to add criteria for recommending endowment fund distributions to the Endowment Committee procedures document. We are working on creating a perpetual calendar.

In the area of research, using a one question survey, we identified 18 members and friends who have included or plan to include First Unitarian Church in their will or estate plan. We are now meeting one on one with these members to better understand how we can help them and others with their planning.

Annual Endowment Disbursement Recommendations:

The Endowment Committee considered 8 proposals totaling \$32,359 for endowment disbursements. This was challenging because we thought that all of the proposals had merit but we were authorized to recommend disbursements for only \$14, 081.

To help make our decision, each committee member ranked the proposals based on whatever criteria made sense to them and made notes about any questions, comments, or concerns that we had about individual proposals. Some of the criteria we used included improving infrastructure, visibility, greatest good for greatest number and impact on attracting new members. Each member also considered whether a partial award would make sense for each proposal. We then discussed the rationale for our individual rankings.

Based on the discussion, we came to an agreement on the proposals and amounts that we recommended for disbursements for 2018.

- **Principal paydown of building**= \$5000.
- **Technology for Sanctuary**= up to \$4000 (asking for itemized quote before May Board meeting). *Becky, Alan or Kevin Barry (Suzanne to reach out) to investigate and recommend exact cost of items for church and installation.
- **AED (Defibrillator)**- partial funding of \$1600 (committee would look favorably on the proposal next year for the balance if there are not grants or other funding available for the AED)
- **Mobile Ecology Center**- partial funding of \$1381
- **Grounds Committee**- partial funding of \$2000

Projects were proposed but not funded: Diana Mendelsohn- support John Sky Snyder student exchange trip, Barbara Williams- landscape architect for Memorial Garden, OWL training proposed by Rev. Chip.

Committee Members: Suzanne Waller, and Dan French

❖ **Events Committee:** *Kathy Platt*

The Event Committee has something special nearly every month. Most 'events' have different organizers and groups that work on them, and can always use more help.

- Dining for Women, or the Women's Sharing Circle, continues. It's a monthly women's Potluck with any donations contributed to different organizations that help women and children somewhere in the world. Alice Bentley, Barb Carmichael and Lois Holm coordinate.
- Our annual Halloween Party and Easter Egg Hunt were organized by the RE committee.
- Our 39th annual Service Auction in November, again with auctioneer Chuck Leone, raised almost \$12,000.
- The Holiday Bazaar in December, under Kathy Carr's leadership, set a record of over \$1,600 with the Cookie Walk and Gift Baskets.
- Jim Ward pulled off two fabulous concerts- Lalo Cura was a benefit for Casa de Amistad in October. Babylon Sneakers raised some money for us in February.
- Our church's 66th Anniversary was celebrated following the Service February 18 with stories of our history and how well we are doing now.
- Family Soup and Game Night was March 10.
- The Art Committee, consisting of Kay Azar and Dan & Lois Holm, has kept our walls covered with beautiful Art. This year we featured Francisco Avila, Alice Bentley, Ralph Radecki, Aaron Sandock, Joan Spohrer, and Willow Crisovan.
- Our third annual Trivia Night April 21 raised almost \$1,000 and was tons of fun. Thanks to Dale Gibson, Mary Alice Lundergan, Tom Platt, Byrd Tetzlaff and Rich Wallace for the challenging questions. Forest Wallace for an entertaining MC and Stuart Mayfield an excellent score keeper.

❖ **Grounds Committee:** *Barb Carmichael and Susan Van Fleit, co-chairs*

A new Grounds Committee held its first meeting in January, 2018. At this meeting, we discussed the need to create an overall vision for the aesthetics and environmental issues facing the church property. We listed numerous projects to be included in both short-range and long-range planning, such as:

- Installation of rain gardens
- Addressing water run-off on the west side of the building
- Installing a bike rack
- Creating a memorial garden
- Building an outside deck with access from the west RE classroom
- Fencing in the north back area from the shed to the building and removing unused posts
- General maintenance such as snow removal, lawn mowing, weeding, and tree trimming

We agreed that installation of rain gardens would be a priority due to the problems caused by water run-off from the building both on the south and west sides. A sub-committee was formed to deal with this specific project and we were able to obtain two grants for funding: one from the Bowman Creek Educational Ecosystem and another from the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District. Work began on the rain gardens in early May and we can expect the gardens to mature in two to three years, providing natural storm water management and a habitat for beneficial native birds and insects. With the installation of the rain gardens and major tree and bush trimming, we have begun the process of preparing an inviting landscape that is well-utilized and consistent with our environmental principles.

Committee Members: Alice Bentley, Dan Holm, Kathy Platt, Roger Foreman, Garry Roberson, Phil Dhom, Howard Berberick

Rain garden sub-committee: Howard Berberick, Garry Roberson, Alan Hamlet, Danielle Wood

❖ **Marketing Committee:** *Becky Lindstrom, Chair*

The Marketing Committee is comprised of Becky Lindstrom, Jim Ward and Florence Klecka. Becky, a small business owner, serves as the chair of the committee, bringing her skills in brand development, design and social media to the position. Florence has been a member of both the church and the committee for many years, and is able to provide insights into the history and evolution of various policies and procedures. Jim Ward has a passion for increasing the visibility of the church in the greater South Bend area and has a keen sense for how we can target our advertising to potential new members.

What's New? In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, the committee increased the visibility of the church through a new concert branding effort called soUUnds South Bend. This concept was established by Jim Ward through his passion for live music and promotion of local artists. It also ties into a larger ethos happening in this area around live music, with a wealth of talented, up-and-coming artists who play regularly around the area. The church has many advantages over other venues:

- We are family friendly, providing childcare for all soUUnds concerts.
- Concerts are held at 7pm on Friday, which is a more reasonable time for families, seniors, and morning people than the usual 9pm start time at other venues.
- Tickets cost \$10 on average, and are available for free to those in need.
- We have comfortable seating for up to 150 people, which is more than most smaller venues and less than the Civic Theater (300+). This makes it a great option for artists looking for a moderately-sized venue.
- The quality of sound in our sanctuary is excellent.
- Our church members love high-quality live music and provide a built-in, attentive audience, as well as an often untapped market segment for the performer

Under the soUUnds brand, Jim has planned and executed three well attended concerts:

- Frances Luke Accord with Brittany Lee Moffett
- Lalo Cura with guitarist Jamie Pawelski (a benefit concert for La Casa de Amistad)
- Babylon Sneakers with Kevin Joiner and the Hidden Chambers

The total attendance for these concerts was 390 people. The amount of money raised for the church was \$1300. The total donation to La Casa de Amistad was \$1100. soUUnds South Bend was also a sponsor of Myles Robertson's successful Homebody House Concert Series. Jim has also secured sponsorship for an upcoming Lalo Cura block party concert being hosted by La Casa de Amistad.

This exposure gets our church recognition in the greater community, integrates us into the local arts community, attracts potential new members, and creates a greater sense of community for our congregation. The Marketing Committee is eternally grateful to Jim for his vision and hard work regarding this new initiative.

Social Media Update: Facebook algorithms have changed dramatically over the past year, leading to a drastic reduction in organic traffic to our First Unitarian Church page. Organic reach is now around 2% and any additional reach must be purchased through the process of sponsoring our posts. A targeted \$4 boost typically reaches 600-1,000 people. The church would benefit from developing a more strategic Facebook posting strategy that includes a small budget for boosting certain events and posts. The site remains beneficial for marketing

events, because of our ability to invite people directly. The page now has 489 likes (up from 429 last year, and 356 the previous year). This averages out to one new “like” per week.

What’s Next? Over the summer, Becky will be coordinating the process of getting the sanctuary updated with new technology for recording videos (as well as adding a more user-friendly LCD projector and screen option). Looking to the future, the committee is in need of a new Chair, as Becky Lindstrom will be stepping down after three years in the role.

The Marketing Committee would benefit from finding a Chair who:

- Understands social media marketing and can execute a more cohesive strategy for the church.
- Knows how to create a YouTube channel to post sermons and promotional videos related to our church.
- Can create a Facebook paid promotional strategy for the church page and start a new Facebook church “group” page, which facilitates community and has much higher levels of organic engagement.
- Has a passion for branding and storytelling

The church would also benefit from having updates to the church website be done by the office administrator. This role already creates the newsletter and Chirp, and could keep the website updated on a more timely basis as new event details are submitted. Website updates would take, on average, about 30 minutes per week.

❖ **Membership Committee:** *Gail deSommer, Chair*

Greeters for each Sunday were coordinated by Alice and John Bently. Thank you to our greeters - Alice and John Bentley, Kyle Hulse, Lois Holm, Tom and Kathy Platt, Michael Coppedge, Karen and Ken Chambers, Joseph Gress and Ron Robinson, Ruth Regan and Jessica Collett.

A person wearing the "mint green scarf" was available to speak with newcomers each Sunday and anyone signing the visitor book received a welcome letter. There was an outdoor picnic in July for our new members and the board of trustees. During potluck, a table was reserved for newcomers to sit with Rev. Chip.

The "New UU Class" was offered in the fall and spring with an Ingathering following it. Thank you to Kathy Platt for her help with the lunch provided.

New Members - Fall 2017- DeShea Blunier, Richard Hunsberger and David Williams, Ambroise Niyongabo

New Member - Spring 2018 - Rose Fournier

Committee Members: Rev. Chip Roush, Kathy Platt, Wendy Lohman, Dale Gibson, Alice Bently, John Bently

❖ **Committee on Ministry:** *Jessica Collett, Chair*

Our committee-- Rich Wallace, and Jim Curlee--has met monthly since October.

Our most significant endeavor this year was creating, advertising, and staffing the listening table during potlucks and coffee hours. There has been a healthy response from the congregation and we have received both positive and negative comments from people visiting the table on everything from the services to RE to events. Thus far we have focused on engaging these in our monthly meetings and reaching out to others who may be able to help address some of the concerns. We are still working on refining our approach to determine how best to meet the church's needs.

We are currently working on the annual evaluation for Chip and expect to finish it at our May 8th meeting. Chip has asked that we send it to him so that he can reflect on it during sabbatical. The discussion between the committee and Chip about its contents and Chip's ideas for addressing any issues will occur after he returns from sabbatical.

Jim Curlee will be chair beginning in the fall, but the committee will need two new members, as Rich Wallace is rotating off as past chair and Jessica Collett is moving in July. It is possible that Susan van Fleit (who rotated off as past chair last fall) would be willing to come back and take Jessica's place for one year.

❖ **Peace & Justice Committee:** *Anne Mannix and Kay Azar, Co- Chairs*

The members of the Unitarian Church have a keen interest in peace and justice. Recent events have proved challenging for many as our country and the world seems to have a resurgence of bigotry and violence. So the church and its members are challenged to do more to change the world. On the other hand, we have a church with less than 100 active members who have busy lives. Some members do their peace and justice work through volunteering with other organizations. And there is work involved in maintaining the church and making it a vibrant organization. The work of the Peace and Justice Committee reflects this challenge of finding activities to build a more just world, while using our own limited resources and the limited resources of the church and its members.

2017 was a year of exploration with some dead ends and some success.

- We had a few meetings about a tutoring project in conjunction with Regina Williams Preston of Clay High School. About five church members volunteered to become tutors. This did not work out because of paperwork requirements of the school preparation and difficulties with getting parents to sign permission slips.
- We hosted the Rev. Forrest Gilmore, the Director of the Shalom Community Center in Bloomington, to speak on homelessness in a Sunday Service. Forrest also spoke with a few community homeless advocates. We received positive comments on the Sunday service and on the conversations with community advocates.
- We provided speakers from different organizations at the services on the second Sunday of the month.
- The Food Collection that is donated to the Northeast Center continues. The food is delivered by Dan Holm. Thanks Dan.

- We are now conducting a survey of church members to determine their interests and availability to participate in Peace and Justice activities. So far 44 members have responded to the survey and we hope to have it completed by the end of May. Thanks to Andrea Vollrath for putting the survey on Survey Monkey and Emily Weatherall for making phone calls.

Based on the outcome of the survey, we will develop a plan for next year's work. Possibilities include:

- Developing a theme for a quarter with Sunday Services, Share the Plate recipients and volunteer activities all based on a certain area of work.
- Having a major social justice themed speaker come to once a year. The speaker could make a community speech and speak at the Sunday service. The events could be cosponsored by a local university or non-profit organization. This would increase the public profile of the church and could benefit church members.
- Developing one large community volunteer project a year and asking a substantial number of church members to participate. The goal would be to have a project that made an impact on people's lives.
- Continue the food bank.
- Sponsoring forums for church members to share their thoughts on Peace and Justice work they are doing in the community.

Thanks to the Social Justice Committee members: Bert Dodds, Dale Gibson, Dan Holm, Lois Holm, Andrea Vollrath, Danielle Wood.

❖ **Social Committee:** *Kathy Platt, Chair*

We are mostly about providing food and beverages when people get together. However, the Feasters, a dinner group coordinated by Cathy Duncan, meets at a different restaurant each month.

Our big job is organizing Coffee / Social Hour each Sunday and the 1st Sunday Potlucks. We are always looking for volunteers to help throughout the year to make Coffee or to help set-up or clean-up for Potlucks. We also take care of the Reception following the Christmas Eve Service. And provide food for other occasions, such as congregational meetings.

Our annual Auction is planned and run mostly by this committee, although it now falls under the Event Committee. That requires many volunteers but is great fun! Please let me know if you'd like to help with the Auction or this committee in any way.

❖ **Stewardship Committee:** *Chuck Leone, Chair*

The Stewardship Committee expanded its activities during the 2017-18 church year to emphasize our continuing commitment to stewardship of the Church throughout the year, not just during the pledge drive in the spring, with the following activities:

- The Committee participated in organizing the Activity Fair in September, 2017, to introduce members and friends to the various activities of the Church which often happen through church groups and committees;

- We held a Thank You event in early December, 2017 in appreciation to all who helped the Church grow and flourish;
- The Committee organized a Resource Review meeting in January, 2018 to look at the challenge of the Church's ongoing obligation to pay its mortgage from the operating budget for the next ten years;
- The Committee conducted the annual pledge drive, beginning with the Pledge Brunch on March 4, 2018.

As a result of these activities, we are in the process of wrapping up a successful pledge drive and are able to estimate pledge income for the next fiscal year at \$153,000.00. Although this is not a significant increase from the current fiscal year, other initiatives will allow the reduction in operating expenses related to the ongoing payment of the mortgage.

The Committee announced the "Singe the Mortgage" campaign in March, 2018 and has been able to secure pledges of over \$75,000.00 to make a one-time payment to reduce the principal balance on the mortgage. The lower principal balance, paid over the same remaining term of the mortgage, until January, 2028, will reduce the total annual mortgage payments by about \$10,000.00 per year beginning in July, 2018 until the mortgage is paid off.

Thanks to all members and friends who have contributed time and treasure to make this church the place that it is, bringing to life the covenant we say at the end of service each week.

Members: Barbara Boyd, Janet Bogar, Gary Metzler, Eli Williams, and Susan Siemers.

❖ **Worship Arts Committee:** *Florence Klecka, Chair*

We are in the middle of Rev. Chip's mini-sabbatical until August, so there have been many lay-led services, by guests and congregants. These were performed with the help of so many congregants that it would take too much space to name them. Because Rev. Chip planned ahead and swapped pulpits, the outside guest ministers will not need to be paid. We are always on the lookout for other topics and speakers, both inside and outside the congregation, so feel free to suggest your ideas to us.

Alan Hamlet, Garry Roberson, David Mayfield, Neil Taylor and Kevin Barry took turns manning our sound system; and Allen DeSomer, Alan Hamlet, and Deb Carew rotated special music duties, with several guests in the lineup. This year, we welcomed Siwon Kim, who played the piano for most of the year. We also enjoyed the first performances of our intergenerational choir!

As always, we can't stress enough that almost everyone who contributes to the weekly services is a **volunteer**. The committee thanks you all for taking part, but remember that this is *your* church, this is *our* church, and we are *all* truly blessed to have each other.

Committee Members: Barb Carmichael, Deb Carew, Jessica Collette, Kay Azar, Rose Fournier



*Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its law.
To dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love,
and to help one another: this is our Covenant.*

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