

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



*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.*

May 15, 2022

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH

801 East Washington Street
South Bend, Indiana 46617

office@firstunitarian.us

574-234-6588

firstunitarian.us

Facebook: [FirstUnitarianSB](https://www.facebook.com/FirstUnitarianSB)

Board of Trustees 2021-2022

Anne Mannix, *President*
Ken Chambers, *Vice President*
Kay Azar, *Secretary*
Catherine Lundergan, *Treasurer*
Gail deSomer, *Trustee*
Becky Lindstrom, *Trustee*

CHURCH STAFF

Minister: Rev. Chip Roush
Coordinators of Religious Education: Becky Lindstrom & Gail deSomer
Office Co-Managers: Pat Davis and Peg Faulmann
Bookkeeper: Finda Kamanda
Pianists: Dylan Bajo & Ian Bunker
Nursery Care Provider: Diana Mendelsohn

Committee Chairs

Adult Religious Education	Gail deSomer
Aesthetics	Melanie Smith-Guillaume
Arts	Kay Azar, Dan & Lois Holm, and Kathy Platt
Building	
Care	Mary Hagan & Lois Holm
Committee on Ministry	Lynn McDonald
Building Use	Gary Metzler & Kathy Platt
Endowment	Chuck Leone
Events	Kathy Platt
Finance	Catherine Lundergan
Grounds	Barb Carmichael & Susan Van Fleit
Membership	Gail deSomer
Peace & Justice	Dan & Lois Holm
Social	Kathy Platt
Stewardship	Ken Chambers
Worship Arts	Florence Klecka
Youth Religious Education	Becky Lindstrom & Gail deSomer
Covid Task Force	Becky Lindstrom
Technology Committee	Ken Chambers

Table of Contents

	Page
Agenda	1
Draft Congregational Meeting Minutes	2
Minister's Report	5
President's Report	6
Treasurer's Report and Finance Documents	7
Nominations	14
Children's Religious Education Program Report	15
Special Report	
Covid 19- Task Force	17
Committee Reports	
Adult Religious Education	19
Aesthetics	20
Care	21
Committee on Ministry	22
Endowment	24
Events	25
Grounds	26
Membership	27
Social	28
Stewardship	28
Worship Arts	29

First Unitarian Church, South Bend
Annual Congregational Meeting
May 15, 2022

Agenda

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Call to Order | Anne Mannix |
| 2. Verification of Quorum | Kay Azar |
| 3. Opening Words | Rev. Chip Roush |
| 4. Approval of 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes | Anne Mannix |
| 5. Minister's Report | Rev. Chip Roush |
| 6. President's Report | Anne Mannix |
| 7. Treasurer's Report & Operating Budget | Catherine Lundergan |
| 8. Endowment Grants | Chuck Leone |
| 9. Elections | Anne Mannix |
| ▪ Melanie Smith-Guillaume presents
slate from Nominating Committee | |
| ▪ Treasurer position | |
| ▪ Other nominations from the floor | |
| 10. Review of Committee Reports | Anne Mannix |
| 11. Volunteer of the Year Award | Anne Mannix |
| 12. Other Business | |
| 13. Adjournment | |

DRAFT Congregational Meeting Minutes

First Unitarian Church, South Bend Annual Congregational Meeting May 16, 2021

1. Meeting called to order by President, Melanie Smith-Guillaume at 11:40 a.m.
2. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM and SIGN-UP FOR COTTAGE CONVERSATIONS FOR COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY
 - a. The secretary verifies that a quorum is present with over 45 members in attendance.
 - b. A discussion of the Cottage Conversations held to evaluate the ministries of the congregation is led by Joseph Gress.
3. OPENING: Rev. Chip Roush lights the chalice.
4. APPROVAL OF CONGREGATIONAL MINUTES:
Motion to approve the minutes made by Gail DeSomer, seconded by Alan Hamlet.
Discussion opened and vote taken. Approved with one abstention.
5. REPORTS:
 - a. MINISTER: A bizarre year with many folks stepping up to keep church active and functioning.
 - b. PRESIDENT: Impressed by the number of people keeping us together as a congregation.
 - c. COVID Task Force: No recommendation as to opening for services yet, and waiting for equipment recommendations from Tech Committee. Have made decision to allow small church groups to request using the church building and agree to follow the Task Force COVID guidelines. Peg Faulmann, administrative assistant, has uploaded the forms to the website.
 - d. Tech Report: How do we upload things to the internet? « Dark fiber » allows us to upload more quickly and will cost us \$1000 to connect and \$3500 annually to subscribe. Looking to be able to include everyone in church services.
6. PROPOSED 2021-2022 OPERATING BUDGET
 - a. Treasurer Elena Wake presents chronological history of the budget including past surplus and cost savings from closed building. This past year's budget projected a deficit. Currently deficit is less than \$2000 due mostly to building being closed. We started online giving and service auction online raised more funds.
 - b. \$150,000 pledges currently for 2021-22 fiscal year based on assumption building will open in July. There are increased costs for salaries in order to bring wages up to UUA standards for size and location of our congregation.

- c. Barbara Williams asks about sabbatical fund, line 920 being so small. Money (\$100) was put in at the end of last year. And, how much does a sabbatical cost. Elena will explore. Expenses go to paying for service presenters per Chuck Leone. Minister does not get extra funds beyond their salary and benefits remain unchanged.
- d. Dan Holms asks what is included in Minister's Expenses. Rev. Chip responds.
- e. Susan VanFleit asks about Line 240, which should be Building, and NO grounds.

Motion is made by David Groff to adopt proposed budget. Motion to accept the proposed budget. Budget passes.

7. ENDOWMENT FUND DISBURSEMENTS: Chuck Leone recommends that all requests be approved.

a.	Grounds Committee	\$4,200
b.	Tech Task Force	\$7,000
c.	Finance Committee — mortgage	<u>\$5,000</u>
		\$16,200

A motion is made by Barbara Boyd and seconded by Alice Bentley to accept the recommendations and approve the endowment recommendations. Discussion follows. Motion passes with one abstention.

8. ELECTIONS

a. OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

OFFICERS:

Vice-President

Ken Chambers

Treasurer

Catherine Lundergan

TRUSTEES:

Darlene Catello

two-year term

Ruth Regan

two-year term

Motion to approve slate made by Rich Wallace and seconded by Lynn McDonald. Motion passes with one abstention.

b. ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jerry Brooks

three-year term

Motion made to accept slate by Barbara Boyd and seconded by Byrd Tetzlaff. Motion passes with one abstention.

c. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Melanie Smith-Guillaume

New Member

Susan Van Fleit. Two-year term

Motion to approve the slate is made by Rich Wallace and seconded by Alan Hamlet. Motion passes with one abstention

d. NOMINATING COMMITTEE ALTERNATE — From the floor:
Rich Wallace moves to accept Gary Metzler as Alternate, Barbara Boyd seconds motion.
Motion passes with one abstention.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

10. VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: Care Committee with Mary Hagen and Lois Holm as co-chairs.

11. RECOGNITION OF THE BOARD: Melanie and Rev. Chip thanked the Board for all their work to help the congregation thrive. Thanks to Peg Faulmann for all her support to the congregation.

12. OTHER BUSINESS: None stated.

13. ADJOURNMENT: Extinguish the chalice and adjourn motion by Rich Wallace and seconded by Gail DeSomer. Motion passes and meeting adjourned at 12:58.

Respectfully submitted
Kay Azar
Secretary, Board of Trustees

Minister's Report, Rev. Chip Roush

“We will not march back to what was but move to what shall be, a country that is bruised but whole, benevolent but bold, fierce and free...[W]e step out of the shade aflame and unafraid...for there is always light if only we're brave enough to see it, if only we're brave enough to be it.”

— Amanda Gorman

Last year we coped and pivoted, and kept our congregational community alive and well. This year, we built on that foundation and explored ways to adapt even further, so we might thrive in a post-pandemic / endemic world with online and at least some in-person gatherings.

2021-2022 was a year of change and re-visioning. We got a new phone system and hired a new Co-Office Manager. We experimented with an outdoor worship service, and with a single-month Sabbatical. We discussed how our shared ministry might evolve, to best meet the goals of the congregation—and we planned for a congregational mission / vision process, to help discern and clarify those goals. We merged our services into multi-platform events, with many participating online (as First Zuumitarian) and at least some attending in our beautiful sanctuary. We adapted, and revised, and re-adapted how we present worship, to help everyone hear and see and feel connected to each other, even though half of us are there virtually. Our Board and Committee on Ministry spent a great deal of time wrestling with how best to steer our congregation into the future. Perhaps most exciting of all, we sought input from families and came up with a plan to offer not just “Sunday School,” but a wider, deeper support for our families with young children.

Details on some of these things may be in other reports. I do want to welcome Pat Davis, our new Co-Office Manager, and to thank Peg Faulmann for her grace and flexibility and willingness to work remotely from Illinois, while Pat grows into the position.

Several dozen people have gone above and beyond, to help our congregation grow and thrive. I cannot mention them all here, but I do want to express gratitude to Becky Lindstrom and Gail DeSomer for their work on our Religious Education program; the entire Board for engaging with COVID safety and shifting standards; all the folks who have trained and been trained on the evolving sound and Zoom volunteer positions; and the Committee on Ministry for their steadfast service supporting the health of all the ministries of our congregation.

With Spirit,
Rev. Chip

President's Report

Anne Mannix

Well, this has been a year to remember. Our church has made some progress. We now have a written COVID policy and have the capacity for hybrid services. These will likely continue for those that prefer to attend church from home. The Religious Education Program is regenerating from the ashes of COVID. We can now have church social events and have a robust auction coming up on May 21st. Social justice is continuing the food collections and our participation in Faith in St. Joseph County has helped us to influence big picture social justice issues.

As always, many church members have pulled through to do what needs to be done. We have some wonderful people in the church and it has been my pleasure to get to know them better in my role as president.

There has been discussion about the mission and vision of the church and the best ways to use our resources to implement this vision. While this discussion is just starting, I look forward to hearing new ideas and to working with others to help the church meet the spiritual needs of the members.

Treasurer's Report and Finance Documents

Treasurer's Report, Catherine Lundergan

With two months left in FY 2021-22 it looks like the church will show a slight surplus for the year. However, the picture for FY 2022-23 is not very optimistic. Pledges are down greatly from last year, but expenses have gone back up due to meeting in the building again after the long hiatus during the Covid pandemic this year. Historical records show that the amount of pledge money received is never as much as the amount pledged, this lower pledge number is very worrisome. We anticipate a deficit of more than \$20,000 for the year (see Table 1 below for the proposed FY 2022-23 Budget).

The church has had budgets with a deficit anticipated and has always somehow managed to pay our bills. We have nearly \$35,000 in savings if we find ourselves in dire circumstances. We appreciate the generosity of our members and friends for financial and service contributions.

Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair: Catherine Lundergan

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

Finance Documents Compiled by: Finda Kamanda, Bookkeeper

❖ Proposed 2022-23 Operating Budget

At its May 11th meeting, the Board of Trustees agreed on the *Proposed 2022-2023 Operating Budget*, as shown in Table 1 below, for the Congregation's approval.

**Table 1: Fiscal Year Operating Budgets: Final Prior Year (2020-21),
Current Year (2021-22) Status as of 4-30-2022, and Proposed 2022-23 Budget**

Line Item	Final 2020-21		2021-22 YTD		Proposed 2022-23	Notes
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Thru 4-30		
<u>Income/Revenue Sources</u>						
110 - Pledges	146,000	131,540	150,000	130,411	130,000	
115 - Pledges – Additional	500	1,500	1,000	800	0	
120 - Loose Offering	3,000	1,169	3,000	1,522	3,000	
130 - Building Use Fees	700	0	0	0	0	
140 - Fundraisers						
142 - Holiday Bazaar	1,000	0	1,000	395	1,000	
143 - Service Auction	11,000	7,397	11,000	6265	11,000	
144 - Concerts	50	0	0	0	0	
145 - Other Fundraisers	200	0	0	0	100	
150 - Other Contributions	1,000	2,528	2,000	100	1,000	
199 - Misc/Other Revenue	1,500	529	1,000	258	1,000	
Total Other Financial Sources		412				
Total Income/Revenue	164,950	145,075	169,000	139,751	147,100	
<u>Expenditures</u>						

**Table 1: Fiscal Year Operating Budgets: Final Prior Year (2020-21),
Current Year (2021-22) Status as of 4-30-2022, and Proposed 2022-23 Budget**

Line Item	Final 2020-21		2021-22 YTD		Proposed 2022-23	Notes
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Thru 4-30		
205 - Mortgage Payments	17,117	17,117	15,117	11,765	15,112	1
210 - Church Insurance	5,000	5,637	5,800	6,051	5,800	
220 - Cleaning Services	2,500	120	2,000	0	0	
230 - Building Supplies	700	0	700	0	700	
240 - Building	3,000	0	2,000	160	0	
242 - HVAC Preventive	400	0	400	0.00	400	
243 - HVAC Repairs	400	0	400	0.00	200	
250 - Grounds	1,300	1,300	1,000	750	1,500	
300 - Utilities						
310 - Gas	2,000	1,592	1,700	2,002	2,000	
320 - Electric	2,400	747	2,000	783	2,000	
330 - Telephone	1,100	1,121	1,100	925	0	2
340 - Water & Trash	1,500	1,642	1,600	1,524	1,500	
351 - Endowment Repayment	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0	
355 - Snow Removal	300	140	300	800	300	
360 - Security	400	384	400	534	400	
365 - Alarm Fees	0	0	0	0	0	
370 - Elevator & Sprinkler	1,750	1,591	1,200	955	1,200	
410 - Admin & Office (Non-payroll)	3,000	1,876	2,500	4,534	2,500	2,3
415 - Copier	1,000	1,397	400	1,152	1,000	
420 - Postage	150	112	150	57	150	
430 - Payroll Taxes & Expenses	1,500	1,497	1,530	1,106	1,530	
435 - Payroll Processing	1,250	1,279	1,300	1,099	1,300	
500 - Sunday Service						
510 - Sunday Service Committee	100	650	650	315	700	
511 - Sunday Service Supplies	50	0	50	0	50	
520 - Music	3,800	0	3,000	1,285	3,000	
620 - Service Charges	200	170	200	164	400	4
700 - Committee Expenses						
710 - Membership Committee	400	0	200	0	200	
720 - Social Committee	100	0	50	0	50	
725 - Coffee & Tea	200	0	200	0	200	
730 - Events Committee	150	0	100	0	100	
735 - Aesthetics Committee	100	0	50	0	50	
740 - Care Committee	200	82	200	57	200	

**Table 1: Fiscal Year Operating Budgets: Final Prior Year (2020-21),
Current Year (2021-22) Status as of 4-30-2022, and Proposed 2022-23 Budget**

Line Item	Final 2020-21		2021-22 YTD		Proposed 2022-23	Notes
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Thru 4-30		
744 - Committee on Ministry	50	400	50	0	50	
745 - Peace and Justice Com	50	0	50	0	50	
746 - Marketing Committee	100	0	50	0	50	
747 - Finance Committee	100	207	200	219	0	4
748 - Endowment Committee	50	0		0	0	
749 - Inter-generational Choir	1,200	0	500	0	100	
750 - Denominational Dues	10,102	10,102	10,116	7,625	10,116	
760 - Fundraising Expense						
761 - Stewardship Campaign	300	0	200	0	200	
765 - Holiday Bazaar	100	0	50	0	50	
766 - Service Auction	750	0	750	50	750	
767 – Concerts	0	0	0	0	0	
769 - Other Fundraisers	100	0	100	0	100	
770 – Leadership Development	1,500	0	0	0	0	
800 - Religious Education						
808 - DRE Professional Exp.	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	
809 - DRE Salary	12,500	3,393	12,500	314	10,000	5
810 - Religious Ed supplies	500	136	350	0	200	
812 - Background Checks	50	0	50	0	50	
814 - Adult RE	100	0	50	0	50	
815 - Child Care	1,500	0	1,500	0	1,500	
900 - Ministerial Expenses						
910 - M's Salary & Housing	57,324	56,130	58,470	48,725	58,470	
915 - in lieu of FICA	4,386	4,294	4,473	3,727	4,473	
920 - Sabbatical Funding	100	100	100	0	100	
930 - Minister's Expense	5,732	5,318	5,847	5,512	5,847	
940 - Minister's Pension	5,732	5,613	5,847	4,873	5,847	
945 - Minister's Insurance	14,000	14,049	15,750	13,356	15,750	
950 - Office Personnel						
960 - Office Salaries	17,500	14,717	18,350	13,778	18,360	
965 – Office Pensions	0	0	0	0	0	
999 - Miscellaneous Expense	300	557	300	400	300	
Total Expenses:	188,193	154,471	183,950	134,597	174,955	
Surplus/Deficit:	-23,243	-9,396	-14,950	5,154	-27,855	

See Notes on the following page.

Notes:

- 1) Six principal payments totaling \$5,000 are not shown on the Mortgage Line (205) for FY 2021-22 YTD because this amount was paid using the 2021-22 Mortgage Principal Endowment Grant.
- 2) The FY 2021-22 YTD balance for Admin & Office (line 410) exceeds the 2021-22 budget due to expenses related to the internet upgrade, as well as the fees associated with the new internet and phone service.
- 3) For the FY 2022-23 Budget, the telephone charges have been moved from the Telephone line (330) to the Admin & Office line (410), which already included the internet service charges.
- 4) For the FY 2022-23 Budget, fees for Vanco (auto-withdrawals and online credit card charges) have been moved from the Finance Committee (Line 747) to the Service Charges line (640).
- 5) The FY 2021-22 YTD reflects only one month of DRE Salary expenses (July 2021).

❖ Non-Operating Funds Reports

The following four tables document activity and balances in the Non-Operating Funds.

Table 2: Non-Operating Funds Balances and Activity: July 1, 2021 – April 30, 2022

First Unitarian Church, South Bend

Fund	Ending Balance 6-30-2021	Fiscal Year to Date 4-30-2022		Current Balance 4-30-2022	Notes
		In	Out		
Building Fund	781.47	165.00	781.47	165.00	1
Capital Campaign	5,005.05	140.00	319.53	4,825.52	1
Endowment Disbursements	3,387.95	16,200.00	15,343.45	4,244.50	2
Endowment Set-aside	1,863.17	0.00	1,863.17	0.00	
Invisible Church	5,264.75	0.00	0.00	5,264.75	
Ministerial Discretionary	1,657.70	21,000.00	6,127.60	16,530.10	
Prepaid Pledges	10,950.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3
Sabbatical Fund	528.95	0.00	0.00	528.95	
Special Collections	0.00	23,018.79	2,273.48	20,745.31	4
Special Projects	641.46	1,394.00	588.34	1,447.12	5
Teen Service Project	157.98	0.00	0.00	157.98	
Unrestricted Savings	35,686.05	0.00	0.00	35,686.05	6
Fund Totals	65,924.53	61,917.79	27,297.04	89,595.28	

Notes:

- 1) The expenditures from the Building & Capital Campaign funds (\$1101) were used to cover the additional cost of the new courtyard concrete patio, beyond that covered by the Grounds Improvement Endowment Grant (\$4200, See Table 4).
- 2) For details of Endowment Disbursements, see Table 4 below. The additional \$5 in the balance here compared to the Total in Table 4 is due to a \$5 residual balance in a 2017-18 grant completed in its first year and not shown in Table 4.
- 3) The \$10,950 in FY 2021-22 prepaid pledges was transferred to the General Fund on 7-1-2021.
- 4) The current total for the Special Collections fund includes: \$500 for the Crop Walk; \$215 for CASIE Stockings; and \$20,030.31 for Ambroise Niyongabo/the Niyongabo family.
- 5) For details of the Special Project funds, see Table 5 below.

6) On June 30, 2021, we transferred \$9,396 from Unrestricted Savings to the General Fund to cover the FY 2020-21 Operating Budget deficit (see Table 1). This transfer is reflected in the 6/30/2021 Unrestricted Savings balance.

Table 3: Endowment Fund* Balance and Activity, July 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022

First Unitarian Church, South Bend

Activity	Amount	Notes
Balance as of 6-30-2021	\$ 389,570.42	
Deposit (Loan Repayment & Contributions)	\$ 1,863.17	We made one deposit (in August) to our UUCEF account from the Endowment Set-Aside fund. This amount included the FY 2020-21 Endowment Repayment (\$1,000) paid out of the Operating Budget on 6-30-21, and \$863.17 from contributions received during FY 2020-21.
Withdrawal (for Disbursements)	\$ 16,200.00	Funds put in <i>Endowment Disbursements</i> for new grants (see Table 2 above and Table 4 below).
Market Gain (or Loss)	(\$ 20,499.95)	Fund loss during this nine-month period.
Balance 3-31-2022	\$ 354,733.64	

* All of these funds are held in the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF) and are professionally managed using approved socially-responsible investing guidelines. Some of this fund (\$75,000) is permanently restricted to prohibit principal use.

Principal Owed on Building Loan

As of May 5, 2022, the remaining principal owed on the building loan was **\$119,471.14**.

Table 4: Endowment Grants - Payments by Grant, July 1, 2021 – April 30, 2022
 First Unitarian Church, South Bend

	Approved Amount	Prior FY Balance* 6-30-2021	Total FY Payments thru 4-30-22	Balance Remaining	Notes
<u>2021-2022 Grants</u>					
Building Principal	\$5,000.00	-	5,000.00	0.00	
Tech Task Force	\$7,000.00	-	6,143.45	856.55	
Grounds Improvement	\$4,200.00	-	4,200.00	0.00	
<u>2019-2020 Grants</u>					
Mobile Ecology Center	\$282.00	33.00	0.00	33.00	
Natural Playground	\$2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	
<u>2017-2018 Grants</u>					
Mobile Ecology Center	\$1,550.00	243.78	0.00	243.78	
<u>2013-2014 Grant</u>					
Website Upgrade	\$3,000.00	1,105.97	0.00	1,105.97	
Totals		\$3,382.75	\$15,343.45	\$4,239.30	1

* Prior FY Balance: For grants from prior fiscal years (FY), the 6/30 balance is calculated based on the approved amount less expenditures in the prior FY(s). For new grants, because the funding begins at the start of the FY (7/1), the balance on 6/30, the end of the prior FY, is zero.

Note:

The Balance is \$5 less than Table 2 (*Endowment Disbursements*) due to a \$5.20 residual in a 2017-18 grant not shown.

Grants Completed this Year

Grounds Improvement (2021-22) – August 2021 Building Principal (2021-22) – January 2022

Table 5: Special Projects Fund* Activity by Project, July 1, 2021 – April 30, 2022
 First Unitarian Church, South Bend

Special Project	Prior FY Balance 6-30-2021	Year to Date (4-30-2022)		Balance 4-30-2022	Notes
		Totals			
		In	Out		
Memorial Garden	\$ 141.46	1,394.00	588.34	947.12	
UW COVID-19 Relief	\$ 500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	1
Totals	\$ 641.46	\$ 24,260.00	\$ 33,131.95	\$ 5,838.00	

Note:

Funds were received as a grant from the United Way of St. Joseph County in 2020.

Nominations

From the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following slate of nominations for the 2022-2023 Board of Trustees and Endowment Committee:

Board of Trustees

Officers

Vice President	Bill Stevens	2 years
Secretary	Florence Klécka	2 years

Trustees

Lynn Liston	2 years
Gail DeSomer	2 years
Becky Lindstrom	1 year
Karen Dickson	1 year

Endowment Committee

Janet Bogar 3 years

Nominations respectfully submitted by: Kathy Platt, Susan Van Fleit, and Melanie Smith-Guillaume

From the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is pleased to nominate the following members to serve on the 2022-2023 Nominating Committee:

Chair	Anne Mannix (outgoing Board President)	1-year
Member	Barbara Carmichael	2 years
Member	Jim Curlee (finishing Susan Van Fleit's term)	1 year

Children's Religious Education (RE) Program Report **Current Co-Directors of the DREAM Team:** **Becky Lindstrom and Gail deSomer**

Many thanks to Rich Wallace, the Director of Religious Education for Children, who retired from the position in 2020.

An Overview of the Year

After a difficult spring and a brief stint of normality over the summer, new variants emerged in the fall and parents expressed that while they weren't ready to return to indoor Sunday RE, they did want more chances to get together outside with other families from the church. Thus, the RE Outdoor Adventures idea emerged. In spite of multiple spikes in cases and the continued lack of vaccines available for children under the age of 5, we had a number of well-attended outdoor events for families.

Potowatomi Park Fall Festival: On October 31st, children and families gathered together for a baked potato and chili bar lunch, painting pumpkins, and playing on the playground. Parents and other church members were able to relax and socialize while volunteers kept an eye on all the kids.

Sledding Party at the Lake: In early February, children and families gathered together at the home of Lois and Dan Holm on Chain-O-Lakes for a sunny afternoon of sledding, snow painting, hot beverages, and warming up by the fire pit. Everyone enjoyed getting outside on a cold, snowy day and having new adventures like walking across the frozen lake.

Natural Playground Fun at St. Patrick's County Park: In mid-March, families took advantage of an unseasonably warm day to experience one of the newest, most unique playgrounds in the area. Kids enjoyed balancing on logs, playing with river rocks, and bouncing on the rope spider web. Parents got a chance to visit with each other and share their thoughts as the church contemplated a return to indoor services and children's RE. Parents stressed that their children needed more time to play outdoors with each other and less time learning lessons in the classroom.

Hiking at Galien River County Park: The first Sunday in May, families met at the trailhead to explore this adventurous park. Everyone enjoyed the canopy walk, wetland boardwalk, and hiking trails, and some of the group then took their kids to play at the township playground on the other side of the highway from the park.

The Future of Children's RE at First Unitarian

The RE Committee recognizes the world has changed and that our ministry to our families needs to adapt to that change. As a result of two years of isolated and frequently interrupted schooling, what our children need now is time to heal and grow and find joy again in community. To respond to this need, our RE program will provide a flexible class structure that includes less emphasis on formal "teaching" and more emphasis on mindfulness, movement, social-emotional learning, and cooperative play.

What exactly will this look like? We'll be in the process of figuring this out for the next few months, but what we *think* it could look like is this:

Children's RE Program Report...continued

1. Bringing all children ages 4+ together to learn with and from each other in a "one-room schoolhouse" setting (younger children would have the option of staying in the nursery until they feel ready to join the "big kids").
2. Having five minutes of circle time at the beginning of class with name introductions, a chalice lighting, and a short kid-friendly mindfulness practice.
3. Allowing the kids time to just be kids, both indoors and outside, by offering cooperative play experiences and crafts, encouraging older kids to lead fun games, and inviting guest teachers from our congregation to share their wisdom and passions.

Congregation members have been invited to consider the following opportunities to re-engage with our children and families as they return to the congregation:

1. Lead a class one time or even once a month. We're especially looking for individuals who want to lead art projects, movement classes (yoga, Tai Chi, etc.), nature-related activities, and other fun opportunities.
2. Be a chaperone for one of our RE Outdoor Adventures.
3. Become a member of the RE Committee.

The plan for the spring and summer is to hold RE outdoors if the weather allows and indoors with windows open in the classrooms, if the weather is bad. Activities will include planting flowers and vegetables, having guest instructors to teach everything from juggling to Tai Chi, and playing together using a variety of cooperative games and toy sets, which the RE Committee plans to put together and/or purchase.

The RE Committee will consider continuing the monthly RE Outdoor Adventures experiences until parents are more comfortable with indoor activities. The plan for the fall will evolve depending on vaccine availability for all ages and the spread of COVID within the local community.

When parents are ready for it, the RE Outdoor Adventures may switch to 3-4 events per year and then pilot a new monthly Friday Night Out program when parents can bring their kids to the church for snacks, movies, and games on a Friday evening and enjoy a night out as a couple or a group.

In light of our changed world, we feel it is appropriate to change up the leadership structure and intention behind the director's position for Children's RE. Rather than one DRE, we propose a DREAM Team - Directors of Religious Education & Mindfulness (not only teaching kids to learn how to practice mindfulness, but also being mindful as a congregation of what our families want and need).

Becky Lindstrom and Gail deSomer have agreed to work together to restart the program. They will be looking for 1-2 additional people to add to this team as the new RE program evolves.

Religious Education Committee: Becky Lindstrom and Gail deSomer, Co-Directors; and Members Megan Sulok, Eli and Katie Williams, and Rich Wallace (now retired)

COVID-19 Task Force, Becky Lindstron

The Board approved the following policy on May 11, 2022:

We will go with the CDC community metrics at this point. As case numbers become less and less reliable due to at-home testing and general apathy, hospital admissions are the best indicator of community spread. Unfortunately, they are also a lagging indicator by about 2 weeks, so case numbers will still play a role.

The CDC has two tiers now - less than 200 cases/100,000 and more than 200 cases/100,000. If you scroll down to look at the chart on their website, it explains these two levels very clearly. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>

We will go with their green, yellow, and orange levels, and then create our own red category to know when to shut down again, if necessary. For the red category, we will combine the over 200 cases/100,000 metric with the higher hospital admissions (+20/100,000) and in-patient beds occupied (+15%) metrics for the under 200 cases/100,000 tier of the chart. So, we would go back to all online if we have more than 200 cases/100,000 in the county, more than 20 new hospital admissions per day and more than 15% of hospital beds occupied by COVID patients.

Based on the CDC's new [community level metrics](#)

Green

- All restrictions lifted
- Vaccinations and boosters encouraged for all eligible congregants to promote herd immunity
- Those who are at greater risk may prefer to still wear a mask and socially distance

Yellow

- Vaccinations and boosters for all eligible congregants required for in-person activities
- Masking and social distancing required
- No singing permitted
- Distanced socializing permitted indoors for 20 minutes before and after Sunday services or meetings
- No food or drinks indoors
- Outdoor capacity limit: None
- Indoor Sunday service capacity limit: 60
- Indoor small group limit: 20

Orange

- Vaccinations and boosters for all eligible congregants required for in-person activities
- N95/KN95/KF94 masks and social distancing required
- No singing permitted
- No food or drinks indoors
- No socializing indoors
- Indoor Sunday service capacity limit: 30
- Indoor small group limit: 10 (take steps to improve ventilation)
- Outdoor capacity limit: 50

PLEASE NOTE: The board may vote to move Sunday services and small groups online if case numbers and hospitalizations start to increase exponentially. Ideally, 48 hours notice will be provided beforehand.

Red (200+ cases/100,000 AND 20+ hospital admissions/100,000 AND 15%+ in-patient beds are COVID)

- Sunday services held online only
- Outdoor capacity limit: 40
- No indoor meetings permitted
- Only people performing essential tasks should be in building and on grounds

PLEASE NOTE: The board may vote to return to in-person Sunday services and small groups at the Orange level if case numbers and hospitalizations start to decrease exponentially and hospitals are no longer over-stressed

Committee Reports

Adult Religious Education Committee Gail deSomer, Chair

Offerings in Adult Religious Education this year included:

- ❖ Sunday Evening discussions on politics and liberal theology led by Rev. Byrd Tetzlaff in June and July
- ❖ Discussion on the sermon "Ecology as Theology" by Rev. Michael Dowd facilitated by Rev. Dowd
- ❖ Book group discussion in several sessions led by Rev. Chip Roush on "Lincoln in the Bardo"
- ❖ Grief Group meeting monthly led by Rev. Chip Roush
- ❖ Several Games nights reaching out to adults facilitated by Rev. Chip.
- ❖ For 2022, Barbara Williams coordinated a 9 week "Great Decisions" course developed by the Foreign Policy Association. The Great Decisions program studies current issues (such as Chain Supply Issues, Climate Change, Demographics, Myanmar) facing our nation. In 2022, 12 participants (both church members and non church folk) read a briefing book article, watched a 30 minute video by an international expert, and then held a group discussion in the church conference room.
- ❖ "Spirituality and the Earth," a six week course taught by Bob Asplund in April and May with 15-16 participants.

Committee Members: Rev. Chip Roush, Rev. Byrd Tetzlaff, Barbara Williams

Aesthetics Committee
Melanie-Smith Guillaume, Chair

The Aesthetics Committee has been somewhat inactive during this last part of the pandemic. There are only two activities to note.

Susan Van Fleit has faithfully watered our plants during all the time we have been out of the church. Thank you very much, Susan.

We have just learned that John Hagen has finished cleaning the ziggurat. For those who don't know the history, this approximately 4'x4' copper stepped « pyramid » was part of a water feature in what was the waiting room when we bought our building. We saved the ziggurat in the basement even though it was pretty gross looking and covered with scale. We were hoping to find someone who could clean it. John Hagen was our man! Many thanks to John. It is now bright and beautiful, and we are making plans to display it. More news will be evolving on this issue.

The wall in the church foyer displaying photos of church officers, board members and committee chairs is very much out of date. We plan to update it in July when our new officers begin their terms.

Committee Members: Gail deSomer, Barb Carmichael, and Susan Van Fleit

Care Committee:
Mary Hagan 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.

Along with the **Loan Closet** in the basement, we have a transport chair in the vestibule and a first aid kit in the kitchen for emergencies. If you have a need for boxes for moving, let us know.

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

Committee Members: Barbara Boyd, Jim Curlee, Gail deSomer, Wendy Lohman, and Karen Dickson

Committee on Ministry: Lynn McDonald, Chair

The Committee on Ministry has been busy since last year's Cottage Conversations. Some of the main takeaways from these conversations were a desire for more inspirational sermons, a desire for preserving the small group nature of the Zoom breakout groups once we started meeting in person and general concerns about the need for changes in how our church operates if we want to grow. Since then, the Committee on Ministry has taken several actions to address these concerns and desires.

Sermon Sounding Board and Sermon Evolution Group: The Sermon Sounding Board is a weekly meeting for participants to share suggestions about upcoming sermons. This started last August. The first Sermon Evolution Group is scheduled for May, in which the previous Sunday's service will be discussed with a focus on creating more meaningful, nourishing, and welcoming services. Group members will share how service elements landed with them and offer constructive feedback for improvement.

Small Groups: At the request of the Committee on Ministry, Chip did a service in December on the topic of Artisanal Small-Batch Congregating. Several small group opportunities were presented after being developed by the Committee on Ministry and Rev. Chip. Some of these groups have begun meeting or are planning to meet: a monthly Chalice Circle, an Activities group, an Anti-Racism book group, a Games group, and a Gardening group.

Engagement with Lisa Presley, the Congregational Life Consultant for the MidAmerican Region of the UUA: The Committee on Ministry, Rev. Chip, and representatives from the Board of Trustees met several times with Lisa Presley to create a process for addressing concerns that were raised during the Cottage Conversations and shared with the Board of Trustees. After receiving recommendations from Lisa, we continue to meet monthly without her to discuss how to address concerns effectively and to promote positive changes for our church.

Responding to feedback from church members & friends: The Committee on Ministry has responded to several members and/or friends who shared feedback this year. We also worked with the Board of Trustees to respond to feedback that was shared with them. As part of this work, we hired Mark Bernstein, a consultant with the Central East and MidAmerica Regions of the UUA, who helped the Board and Committee on Ministry with issues around conflict management and congregational leadership. The COM contacted several consultants who could support the congregation in further conflict engagement work; ultimately, it was decided this was not presently needed.

Committee on Ministry...continued

Mission Statement: The Board of Trustees, with support from the Committee on Ministry, is planning a church-wide mission retreat this year to help us determine where we want to focus our collective energy in the coming months and years. Part of our goal for this mission statement is to help our congregation be more cohesive with shared goals.

Creation of Covenants for Healthy Communication: An ad-hoc committee of members from the Board of Trustees and the Committee on Ministry is planning to develop some covenants around communication and conflict engagement that we can propose to the congregation. This is currently in its early stages.

Committee Members: Joseph Gress and Jim Ward

Endowment Committee Annual Report and Recommendations Chuck Leone, Chair

The Endowment Committee of the First Unitarian Church has received four requests for funding for the 2022-2023 church year as follows:

- A. A request from the Church Finance Committee for payment of a portion of the principal due on the church mortgage to 1st Source Bank in the amount of \$5,000.00.
- B. A request from the Church office staff for funding for a new office computer and software in the amount of \$2,000.00.
- C. A request from Florence Klecka for continued funding of the Church Archives Project for scanning and sorting of church records and for highlighting church history through one Sunday service and six bi-monthly displays of selected church history items on a church bulletin board. The request is for \$3,000.00.
- D. A request from Anne Mannix, Jim Ward, Kay Azar, Dan Holm, and Lois Holm for funding for a 70th Anniversary Celebration including sponsorship and/or support for events such as a public art show, a concert and a speaker event, or series focusing on a central social justice-related theme such as climate change, to bring people back to the church to raise awareness of the Church in the community. The request is for \$8,625.00.

Based on the criteria for Endowment Fund disbursements and the formula for funding of grants, all proposals submitted for funding are eligible and the total amount requested is within the total of \$18,909.00 available this year for funding.

The Endowment Committee recommends funding of all of the grant requests as presented with the caution that planning for speaker event(s) consider our capacities to coordinate and manage any event.

Committee Members: Marilyn Shaul and Jerry Brooks

Events Committee: Kathy Platt, Chair

With COVID, we've been unable to meet in-person most of the year. Therefore, there have been no Concerts or Art Openings until Lois and Dan Holm hung the art of Joan Tweedell for her show starting April 3.

Other events held or planned include:

- ❖ Jim Ward was able to finally book a Concert with Hiroya Tsukamoto and Chris DuPont for July 30 this year! Plan to be there and bring your friends- it's a great way to introduce people to our church.
- ❖ We did have our second Zoom Auction on Oct. 26. Jim Ward was our Auctioneer. Callahan Carr played the Irish fiddle again. Kathy Smeets told jokes. Florence, Gail & Allen kept track of the bids. Fun!
- ❖ Our annual Holiday Dessert Raffle was turned into a Silent/Online Auction on our new Auction website. Bids started December 1 and ended December 15. This and the Zoom Auction raised over \$7,000!
- ❖ We are finally having an in-person Auction, our 44th annual, on Saturday, May 21! Please check the website and plan to come: www.peoplecomingtogether.net
- ❖ Rev. Chip has held some Zoom game nights during the pandemic.
- ❖ We celebrated our church's 70th anniversary with a cake at one of our first Sundays back in our Sanctuary in February.
- ❖ We hope to have an Ice Cream Social again on National Ice Cream Day Sunday, July 17.
- ❖ We will have our annual Family Potluck Supper/Picnic in August.
- ❖ We plan to have an Activity Fair in September so people can learn of all our activities and committees. And sign up for those that interest them.

Anyone who wants to help plan Events is welcome on this committee!

Grounds Committee
Barb Carmichael and Susan Van Fleit, Co-Chairs

During this church year, July 2021 – June 2022, our committee accomplished the following:

- Organized a spring 2022 grounds cleanup with church volunteers
- Secured professional lawn maintenance monthly during the main growing season to augment volunteer help
- Secured professional organic fertilization services to improve the condition of our lawn
- Regularly watered lawn and gardens during the heat of the summer
- Purchased two benches for the Memorial Garden patio and commemorative plaques for each bench
- Installed a stamped concrete patio and walkway in the north yard to provide an inviting space for informal gatherings and outdoor ceremonies. Planted annuals and perennials in the area

We would like to give special recognition to Garry Roberson who regularly tends the rain gardens and other plants around the building.

Committee Members: Alice Bentley, Howard Berberick, Alan Hamlet, Kathy Platt, and Garry Roberson

Membership Committee: Gail deSomer, Chair

Once we began meeting in person again in March, greeters were: John and Alice Bentley, Mary Alice Lundergan, Kathy Platt, Ron Robinson, Gail deSomer, and Karen Chambers.

The new UU class was offered online in the winter, with an Ingathering in April. New Members - April 2021 were Ben Tovar, Vicki Stevens, and Kelly Faust.

Since May 2021, we mourned the passing of Tom Cook.

Thanks to Jim Ward for taking up making name badges again.

Committee Members: Rev. Chip Roush, Wendy Lohman, Kathy Platt, and Jim Ward

Social Committee: Kathy Platt, Chair

With COVID, we haven't had much to do until we finally were able to meet in person. We are mostly about providing food and beverages at the church when people get together. We also have the Women's Potluck, which is now meeting in different homes each month.

We don't have meetings! Our big job is organizing Coffee/Social Hour each Sunday and the 1st Sunday Potlucks. We are always looking for volunteers to help make coffee or to help set-up and clean-up for Potlucks. There is a sign-up sheet in the kitchen by the refrigerator.

We also take care of the Reception following the Christmas Eve Service and a light lunch for the Annual Meeting in May.

Special thanks go to super volunteers Sharon Barrett, Ilene Crutchfield, and the Bentleys.

Stewardship Committee: Ken Chambers, Chair

The 2022 Stewardship Committee consisted of Barbara Boyd, Ken Chambers, Anne Mannix, and Gary Metzler. Committee efforts included a virtual mailing to all church members, follow-up announcements from the pulpit, a drawing for a dinner for those who pledged by a certain date, and t-shirts for those who increased their pledges. Total pledges received were about \$130,000. Thanks to church members who made generous pledges, which will help us to meet our financial obligations and to thrive into the future.

Worship Arts Committee: Florence Klécka, Chair

As always, there were many lay-led services, by guests and congregants. 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.

The Easter service was the first major holiday celebrated in the sanctuary! Because of the pandemic, services have been presented via Zoom, as well as in the sanctuary in person, starting in the fall. We plan to continue doing both. It has been suggested that we try more services outside, due to the lingering COVID risk, but we're not hopeful as to the logistics (sound, video, etc.) making this practical.

Rev. Chip was tireless in finding sources for speakers, including several talks by Chicago area ministers whose pre-recorded sermons were available free of charge. During January, he again took a leave of absence, arranging for outside services to fill in the gaps, which made our job much easier.

Alan Hamlet, Jim Curlee, Ken Chambers, Lynn McDonald, Michael Coppedge, Joseph Gress, and David Mayfield have taken turns co-hosting, making sure that speakers are muted and unmuted, as well as forming breakout groups for chatting after the services.

As we are back in the sanctuary, we dusted off the sound board. David & Stuart Mayfield, Howard Berberick, Alan Hamlet, and Ken Chambers have taken turns staffing it. We hope to get a few others to learn what to do.

This year, we welcomed back Dylan Bajo as pianist in the fall, but he has left to pursue full-time work. Ian Bunker graciously filled in, and is willing to provide occasional music, with Allen deSomer and Alan Hamlet. We are on the lookout for other volunteers to provide music, and are waiting to hear back from an IUSB student about being the paid accompanist.

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.

In service,

Florence Klécka, Anne Mannix, Jim Ward, Mary Alice Lundergan, David Groff, Karen Chambers, Karen Dickson, and of course Rev. Chip Roush

Notes: