



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
COMMUNITY CHURCH
of Santa Monica



REPORT ON PROGRAMS

Fiscal Year

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

1260 Eighteenth Street
Santa Monica, CA 90404

Phone: 310-829-5436

Fax: 310-998-9181

E-mail: office@uusm.org

Web: www.uusm.org

Newsletter: news.uusm.org





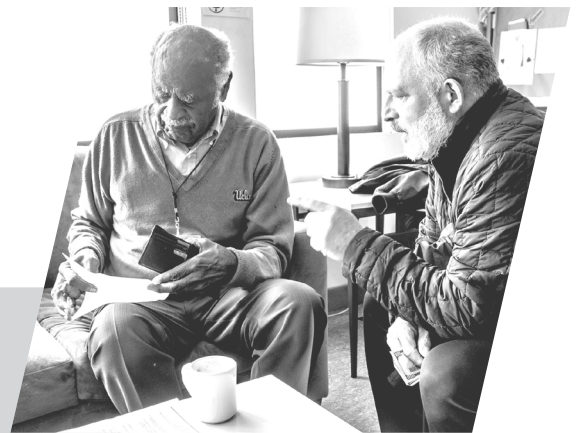
*Editor: Joyce Holmen
Designer: Carol Ring*

REPORT ON PROGRAMS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2018-19

Developmental Minister Rev. Greg Ward	5	Newsletter Team.....	21
President Jacki Weber	6	Nominating Committee.....	22
Treasurer Cheryl Sims & Finance Committee.....	6	Pastoral Care Program	23
Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) Kathleen R. Hogue.....	7	Peace & Social Justice Committee (PSJ).....	23
Director of Music Saunder Choi	7	Personnel Committee.....	24
Intern Minister Robin Stillwater.....	8	Right Relations Team.....	24
Church Administrator Nurit Gordon	9	Science Non-Fiction Book Group.....	25
AAHS (Agnostics, Atheists, Humanists, Secularists and Skeptics).....	10	Second Sunday Supper Committee.....	25
Camp de Benneville Pines Weekend.....	11	Stewardship Committee	26
Coffee Committee	11	Super Seniors.....	26
Communications Team	12	Worship Associates	26
Dining for Dollars (D4\$).....	12	Young Adults Group	27
Disability Support Group (DSG).....	12		
Facilities Development and Maintenance Committee (FDMC).....	12		
Faith In Action Commission (FIA).....	13		
Fiction Reading Group	13		
Garden of Eternity Committee	14		
Green Living Committee.....	14		
Hunger Task Force.....	14		
Investment Committee.....	14		
Lifespan Religious Exploration Committee (LRE).....	15		
Membership Committee	19		
Men's Discussion Group.....	20		
Ministerial Intern Committee	20		
Music Committee	21		



LEADERSHIP

2018-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEES

President Jacki Weber
 Vice President..... Beth Brownlie
 Secretary..... Norm Richey
 Treasurer Kim Andres, then Cheryl Sims
 Past President Ron Crane
 Member at Large Nina Emerson
 Member at Large..... Eileen McCormack
 Member at Large..... Ed Brand
 Member at Large..... Margot Page

2019-2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEES

President Jacki Weber
 Vice President..... Beth Brownlie
 Secretary..... Norm Richey
 Treasurer Vilma Ortiz
 Past President Ron Crane
 Member at Large Nina Emerson
 Member at Large..... Eileen McCormack
 Member at Large..... Abby Arnold
 Member at Large..... Barbara Andres

STAFF

Developmental Minister Rev. Greg Ward
 Minister Emerita Rev. Judith E. Meyer
 Minister Emeritus..... Rev. Ernest D. Pipes
 Director of Religious
 Exploration..... Kathleen R. Hogue
 Religious Exploration Staff Teri Lucas
 Director of Music.....Saunder Choi
 Accompanist.....Ryan Humphrey
 Choir Section Leaders..... Colleen Keene, Jyvonne
 Haskin, Gabriel Paredes, James Hayden
 Church AdministratorNurit Gordon
 Administrative and Financial
 AssistantNancy Thompson,
 then Cyndee Hayes
 Communications & Volunteers
 CoordinatorDiego Andres
 SextonsKevin Roller and Thomas Ahern

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

2018-2019

Linda van Ligten
 Liza Cranis
 Barbara Gibbs
 Nalani Santiago
 Pat Gomez
 Kikanza Nuri-Robins

2019-2020 NOMINEES

Pat Gomez
 Barbara Kernochan
 Alison Kendall
 Linda van Ligten
 Nalani Santiago
 Kikanza Nuri-Robins



MEMBERSHIP

To become a member of the Church a person shall:

- Sign a statement of intent to participate as a member in the community life of the Church.
- Reside within the Pacific Southwest District (PSWD) of the Unitarian Universalist Association.
- Be at least 16 years of age or have successfully completed the Church’s Coming of Age Program.
- Make a financial contribution of record, or a pledge to do so, to the Church.

Anyone who has been a member of the Church for 40 days is eligible to vote at church business meetings.

Written resignation, failure to make a financial contribution, or moving away from the PSWD area, causes membership to be discontinued.

A “Friend” plays an active role in our community, supports the Church financially, but has chosen not to assume official church membership.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION (UUA)

This church is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, a voluntary association of autonomous, self-governing local churches and fellowships, and of the Pacific Southwest District of that association. Information and contact with UUA offices and resources can be obtained at www.uua.org.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SANTA MONICA

Annual Report on Programs 2018-2019

DEVELOPMENTAL MINISTER REV. GREG WARD

With genuine love and appreciation, I provide this Developmental Minister's report of UUCSM's shared ministry during the 2018-19 church year.

It's important to say at the outset that the process of making my recent decision to end my ministry here at UUCSM, although the best choice for me, came with personal disappointment and grief. I would very much have liked the chance to do more and see many of the developmental tasks before the congregation completed. Not to mention, building closer connections to many of you and having had the chance to work with you toward preparing the church for an exciting future.

That said, it has been a particular privilege to work, this year, with an exceptional Board of Directors. This board ably identified some key targets and worked hard to make significant advancements. These following targets were identified:

I. FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL PROTOCOL (or, "Look! Everyone knows what they're doing!")

Committees who each understand their purpose, resources, and authority working creatively together where leadership is clear and sustainable.

II. CLARIFYING MISSION AND VISION (or, "Why we are here - moving from "I-Church" to "We-Church")

While honoring individual preferences, we organize around collective purpose. We overcome "Serial Silo-ing" in favor of shared ministry, and we emphasize service.

III. REDUCE CONFLICT, RAISE TRUST, CHANNELING ENERGY INTO SUCCESS (or, "You could feed a lot of homeless people with the resources we devote to conflict")

Leaders address necessary, redemptive conflict instead of unnecessary, unproductive conflict; work across differences in productive ways.

IV. MEMBERSHIP (or, "Wow! Suddenly UUCSM is where everyone wants to be")

Work toward making Membership meaningful, emphasizing rights/responsibilities of Membership and establishing a clear, consistent path to membership.

V. LEADERSHIP (or, "Changing Church and the world, one project at a time")

Prioritize Leadership Development as a cornerstone of personal/spiritual growth; work toward all groups focusing on leadership development.

VI. STEWARDSHIP (or, "Each of us for all of us; funding a shared vision, shared values, and shared future")

Develop personal outreach to connect individual and collective vision. Establish a cooperative budget-building process between all financial groups and the congregation.

VII. CONGREGATIONAL SAFETY (or, "Creating community where it's safe to be who we are")

Establishing safe policies to protect everyone. Anticipating problems before they happen, and planning for a rapid response when it is needed.



Each board member, and the board as a whole, worked extremely hard and deserves the congregation's earnest appreciation.

One of the adjunct tasks we were able to accomplish involved the formation of an IMG (Institutionalizing Ministries of Generosity) task force. The Team included myself, Kit Shaw, Gretchen Goetz, Sarah Robson, and Olga Felton. The goal of the team was to identify ways of incorporating generosity into the life of the congregation beyond financial support. This involves choosing generosity of time, of perspectives (being able to see things from someone else's point of view), of collaboration between groups, finding ways to be more thoughtful, cooperative, receptive, etc. The IMG team will provide a three-year brainstorming effort of the ways it has identified the congregation could consider incorporating institutional - relational generosity.

I'm particularly encouraged and excited by the work from our Right Relations Team as it has developed outstanding tools and resources as well as begun the work of outreach for the congregation's leaders to address conflict much more creatively, constructively, and relationally. Their materials will serve as an exemplary collection of resources for any Healthy Congregations Team in the Pacific Western Region.

The Communications Team also has brought exemplary creativity in providing examples of new modalities of sharing information that allow UUCSM to keep pace with the burgeoning communication technology around us. They have upgraded our communication platforms and work on a new website.

Our office staff underwent some significant change when Jackie Schwab ended her time with us so that she could move with her husband to Ohio to care for her aging parents. Bringing in Diego Andres - who has significant programming skills - has been helpful as it allowed us to change platform and delivery methods for sending out our regular Announcements and special news. After hard work and adjustment, our news production and delivery has been achieving the consistent accuracy and timeliness that our staff and volunteers appreciate. At the end of March, Nancy Thompson retired as our Administrative and Financial Assistant and Building Rental Coordinator. Nancy was beloved by many members as she interacted with so many volunteers over the years. Nurit and a hiring team reviewed and refined her job description, reviewed over 50 applications and selected Cyndee Hayes, who is doing a terrific job.

We were very happy for Dr. Zanaida Robles when she was made an offer at Neighborhood Church in Pasadena. It's a larger UU church, with more hours and closer to her home. But we were sad to see her go. We were able to find and hire Saunder Choi as our new Director of Music, and it seems our music program is flourishing stronger than ever.

One of the greatest and most beneficial surprises of the 2018-19 year was working with Robin Stillwater as our Intern Minister. Besides exceptional pulpit and pastoral gifts, Robin provided a strong spiritual and leadership presence in many areas of the church. She was a strong anti-oppression partner in our Men and Women MeToo classes; a consistent and compelling presence in resurrecting our young adult program to involve and include nearly 30 people; and she asked compelling questions in our efforts to redesign our stewardship and budget development process as well as call for donors for our Sustainability Funding. As someone who is blessed to work with many of the new talented people entering into our UU ministry, Robin is one of the very best. She will be missed but her influence will carry on.

This year we said goodbye to longtime member Elizabeth Adler. We will miss her and her esthetic sensibility. But it has been beautiful to watch Leonard survive and be embraced by

the community. Most recently, we were saddened by the loss of Stuart Moore – one of our rare life-long Unitarians who was a part of the RE program in Memphis and the Youth program in Champaign, IL before coming to Santa Monica in 1952. Our love goes out to Francine and their children and grandchildren. Although there were no other memorials for members, a number of people were heavily impacted by the deaths or illness of parents, partners, siblings or children. These include Vicky Foxworth, Bev Shoenberger, Audrey Lyness, Wendi Gladstone, Chela Metzger, and others. We keep them close in our hearts.

An extraordinary amount of focus and attention, this year, went toward looking at fiscal responsibility and what is needed to raise our level of commitment to the level of our ideas. Specifically, what is needed to move us to a sustainable place where the church operates without going into deficit budgeting and while paying fair share for both our staff and our denominational support. To be a vital and viable congregation that attracts the attention of the best Ministers in a search cycle, that is what will be needed.

We continued some important conversations with some visionary committed supporters, raising three-fourths of our four-year target goal of \$100,000 in the Sustainability Fund. Last year 75 people increased their pledge and qualified for over \$32,000 in matching funds. This year 80 people increased their pledge qualifying for over \$27,000 in matching funds. This is a phenomenal show of commitment. The unfortunate loss of some major pledges for health and financial reasons didn't allow this extraordinary generosity to make as big an impact as we might have expected – but it has succeeded in making the whole congregation significantly financially healthier.

All this generosity came through while contributing over \$11,000 to our partner agencies in the Generous Congregation Sunday collection program. This year, the congregation supported the fire relief – both up north and in our own backyard. You supported disaster relief for hurricanes, help with refugees, the homeless, the hungry, those in poverty and seeking educational or mental health services. You stepped up and were partners and difference-makers when people needed to know there was a community looking out for them.

This response was really impressive. And it will certainly catch the attention of Ministers in search. The congregation seems to be discovering – and re-discovering – something worth protecting, worth sharing, and worth being proud of.

I know that as I leave, I am proud of you. Two years was not nearly long enough to do everything I know is in you as a congregation to do. But it was more than long enough to see you clearly and appreciate the many gifts you have and the big hearts that you put into so much of what happens here.

There is still a lot to learn, to be sure. Many of these important truths – how to be welcoming and hospitable to people looking to enter this community; how to cultivate leadership; how to divide all the volunteer work that's needed strategically and fairly; how to let leaders lead and support their ideas (even when they seem

different from our own or from what's happened in the past); how to cultivate humility and curiosity, engage in open-hearted – even vulnerable – dialogue; how to show up for the greater good beyond any personal agenda... Such new approaches, if explored, will unleash new power. They might even reveal new strengths in trust and abilities to work through conflict. What would happen if comfort and convenience weren't the default priorities behind our approaches?

As I close, I lift up the same truth I shared with you last year: your best times are ahead of you, not behind you. If vitality, vision, service, learning, and growth are what you commit yourselves to, there is a lot of excitement ahead. I wish I could enjoy and discover them with you. But I will be practicing these same principles in the work I share with Lucy. Thank you for being a teacher and a blessing in my life.

See also: Pastoral Care Associates and Worship Associates.



PRESIDENT JACKI WEBER

I am filled with deep gratitude to everyone who has courageously leaned in to building a more vital UU Community Church of Santa Monica this past year! We have completed year two of developmental ministry - a kind of “personal training for congregations” where we become healthier and stronger. Just three to five more years to go!!

We are growing in understanding that we are interdependent. We are learning from fellow Unitarian Universalist congregations and connecting better to our larger Unitarian Universalist faith. We are welcoming new leaders. We are taking more responsibility together for our shared ministry.

To learn more, talk with any member of the Board of Directors, come to board and other meetings, check out articles in the Newsletter, news.uusm.org, try new activities, and seek leadership training. You're welcome to read a range of documents at uusm.org, such as the Governance tab and, in the Members Only section, the Board Documents tab.

What lies ahead for us as a congregation is the continued march from being a people who care deeply about hanging out in church with each other toward figuring out how we want to serve a world that needs us to put our principles into action.

How do we lift up the inherent dignity of every person and work for justice and equity for all? How do we encourage each other to spiritual growth and seek truth and meaning so we can be strong for that work? How will we decide together the ways in which we will walk the walk of our faith rather than simply talking the talk? And what exactly will our work look like?

For me, I commit to being more conscious of how my words can help or hurt others. I commit to more meditation, more work to feed hungry people, more connection with newcomers, more intergenerational service work, and more FUN.

As a leader, I commit to integrating our new Developmental Minister and Religious Education Director into this community and also to working with our Board of Directors to continue the work we've been undertaking. Let's keep growing. It'll be a good time. Thank you for letting me be of service!

TREASURER CHERYL SIMS; FINANCE COMMITTEE

As the interim Treasurer, I have been filling in on this role for the balance of the church year. The Treasurer participates in board meetings, prepares a monthly finance summary that is posted on



the church website, and also chairs the Finance Committee.

The committee is comprised of several volunteers from the church that meet monthly except during budget season. The committee discusses and reviews the financial statements and associated documents that have been provided by the Church Administrator each month. The committee also closely reviews and manages the expenses that the church incurs every month.

During budget formation, the committee meets more frequently to work on a draft budget along with the Church Administrator, church groups, and the Board of Directors. The board voted April 12 on a budget to recommend for congregational discussion and approval at the upcoming Annual Meeting May 19.

The Finance Committee currently consists of Vilma Ortiz, Steven DePaul, and Alicia MacLennan. We are joined by Kit Shaw and Gretchen Goetz from Stewardship and Steve White from Investment. Finance Committee meetings are generally open to all church members. Questions are always welcome!



DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION (DRE) KATHLEEN R. HOGUE

While some of the challenges of religious education programming, currently and going forward, involve the impending ministerial transition, others are just a reflection of the shift in the way that families “do church” – more sporadic attendance across the board (regularly attending families often come one or two times per month, rather than three or four times as once was typical) and reduced availability of volunteers to take on significant preparation and leadership roles. This year we offered only a multi-age class during the 11:00 am service; this meant that we needed fewer volunteer teachers, and it allowed for the teachers to experience more worship opportunities.

This year, 19 children and youth were registered; there were 80 attending, with an average attendance of 22 each Sunday. We are serving 40 families. We also held two age levels of Our Whole Lives (OWL) which included 15 participants. We currently have one staff member – RE Assistant Teri Lucas – and a paid (contracted) childcare provider, and various additional volunteer assistants and helpers.

My role in Sunday morning worship this year included collaboration with Rev. Greg Ward on intergenerational services for Day of the Dead, the Winter Pageant, and three Christmas Eve services – including a family-focused service that was largely attended by families from our local Santa Monica community. I provided an entire worship service on the topic of Racial Justice that was well received by the congregation. I regularly attended and participated in the monthly (second Sunday) Heart and Soul service as well. In May we’ll celebrate LRE Sunday with a special focus on Wholeness. The service will include the Bridging of our high school seniors, and recognition of all of the volunteers who

make our Lifespan Religious Exploration (LRE) programs possible.

I have enjoyed working with the various people in our congregation to improve our RE program for all ages and stages of life and to provide leadership in our community. This community has grown stronger through our shared work and love for one another. It is my deepest hope that this congregation continues to work together to create more love, more justice and more hope in the world.

As my final days at UCCSM approach, I want to say thank you. Thank you all for sharing your lives with me. Thank you for sharing your children and families with me. I appreciate the members and volunteers who so willingly and passionately give their time and energy in support of our Lifespan RE programs. This is a vibrant congregation and it has been a gift to serve as the Director of Religious Exploration here.

I leave you with the following lyrics from a song found in our hymnal. It is a sung expression of the Buddhist prayer known as the “metta sutta.” The word “metta” means loving kindness, and the prayer is an expression, a visualization, and an openness to loving kindness toward ourselves, toward another, and toward us all.

“May you be filled with loving kindness.
May you be well.
May you be peaceful and at ease.
May you be whole.”

See also: Lifespan Religious Exploration Committee (LRE).



DIRECTOR OF MUSIC SAUNDER CHOI

The Music Department provides and program music for Sunday services, as well as for special services and concerts. Music leadership is as follows:

- Ryan Humphrey, accompanist and organist
- James Hayden, bass section leader
- Jyvonne Haskin, alto section leader
- Colleen Keene, soprano section leader
- Gabriel Paredes, tenor section leader
- The Music Committee, which is responsible for the Music Fund, as well for providing support to the Music Program in terms of logistics, etc.

Goals and Accomplishments for 2018-19:

1. Transition between previous DOM and myself – A fairly smooth transition between Dr. Zanaida Robles and myself, aided by Rev. Greg and the Music Committee as well as the Church and Music Staff.
2. Grow Choir – Successfully able to invite a couple of new singers into the choir.
3. Present a Requiem Concert – Fairly successful despite the

emergency absence of one of the choir section leaders.

4. Christmas Eve Services – three of them!
5. Beatles Music Service – presented on March 10, and the Choir sang both at 9:00 and 11:00.
6. Music Fundraiser – “Leslie Beauvais and Friends” was presented on April 14, following the Second Sunday Supper.
7. Dining for Dollars Concert (Divas and Drag Queens) – coming soon, on Saturday, June 8.

Goals for 2019-20:

1. Early seeds of a Children’s Choir program in conjunction with RE.
 2. Requiem Concert focused on programming Will Todd’s *Passing of the Year* and Hubert Parry’s *Songs of Farewell*.
 3. Christmas Eve Service featuring Children’s Choir.
 4. Music Service based on either Carnatic or Hindustani classical music.
 5. Dining for Dollars Concert.
- See also: *Music Committee*.



INTERN MINISTER ROBIN STILLWATER

The role of the Intern Minister is a bit different from a Fellowshiped minister in that my main job is to learn. This year has certainly been filled with a variety of learning experiences. At the start of the year, I created a Learning/Service Agreement (LSA) with the assistance of my Ministerial Intern Committee and the Developmental Minister. Close to the end of the year, I can say that I have fulfilled almost all of the items on the LSA, along with many more besides.

WORSHIP

I preach at least one Sunday a month, and attend at least two other Sundays each month (with one Sunday off each month). Overall, the response to my preaching has been overwhelmingly positive. I have gotten better at using my sermon to tell a story throughout, and at saying true and hard things while still loving the congregation. I assess the sermon needing the most work to be *The Rope* (November), and the one needing the least work to be *Can I Get a Connection?* (January). It has been a joy to preach in this congregation.

WORSHIP ASSOCIATES

Partway through the year, I began creating agendas for and leading Worship Associate meetings. Facilitating was an area of a lot of growth and learning for me personally, and in my growth, the program also grew. We decided to try and move to doing as much business as possible online rather than in meetings, leaving meetings for more theory and discussion. This program is full of really dedicated, passionate, generous, hard-working people. It has been an honor to work with and learn from them.

HEART AND SOUL SERVICE

This lovely program was one of the first things I worked on. I developed a template for worship that was simple and contemplative, allowing it to be variable while holding a structure

that people could count on. The service happened once a month before Second Sunday Supper, and the Worship Associates began leading some truly incredible services in January. It is beloved by the congregation, however the Worship Associates quickly noticed that attendance had dwindled drastically. They determined that it was not the best place to put their time and effort at this point, and put it on hiatus until the Fall when they can do a poll of the church. The template remains in the church’s possession for use by anyone who would like it.

YOUNG ADULTS

The Young Adult program has mostly been a huge success. Their report is submitted separately, but they have 24 members and meet monthly, with four to 15 people attending brunch. They are a diverse, powerful, and intelligent group of people who have been open to new things and new communication systems. However, it has been difficult to find a communication system that will work for everyone and that people will reply to consistently. While it remains to be seen whether the program will be self-sustaining after the intern leaves, there is every hope that it will do just fine. And, I am working on contingency plans if the program determines that some more support would be necessary.

PASTORAL CARE

I have specifically met with someone for pastoral care on an average of once per week. There have been countless other little meetings occurring spontaneously, during and after worship, meetings, and other church events. Pastoral Care Associates has continually taught me invaluable pastoral care lessons, and has come back to me with feedback when appropriate and useful. Care Ring is helpful to get to know people in the congregation better and to hear how they are doing, and the support they offer congregants is ongoing and deep.

SPIRITUAL CARE

An area that has personally taken a hit this year, it has been difficult to maintain my prayer time and physical exercise while also working. I am slowly learning to balance doctor’s appointments and physical activity with getting work done. A hardship to my time, emotional energy, and wallet was a lack of dental insurance. The UCLA Dental school has been invaluable, but is time-consuming and painful. I say this not to complain (it has worked out fine and I’m overjoyed I got to meet my dental student), but to give feedback to the congregation that dental work is expensive and non-optional, and that future interns would likely appreciate dental insurance along with medical.

The year has seen me grow in my ability to model spiritual care for others. This occurs during formal Pastoral care, but also when taking the time to eat in a meeting rather than go hungry. A couple of times I did a brief workout at the church, when I wasn’t going to be able to make it home in time to do one. And I have prayed with theistic and atheistic language, reflecting that one need not believe a certain way to use inclusive language (which many sides are guilty of neglecting).

SOCIAL JUSTICE

I was proud to lead a FULL women’s Me Too Class in January. One of my favorite things I did all year, this group was life-giving and meaningful to me as well as to the participants. Their bravery in telling their stories awes and inspires me. I have contacted some to continue the classes, and going has been slow. If more classes happened, I’m fully convinced it would be a blessing to the church and the facilitators. Special thanks to Alice Koga for facilitating the Program with me.

There have been many other smaller social justice moments. I gave a social justice sermon in February that was mostly well received, with some pastoral care that happened afterwards. I have participated in Lunches for Bunches and FIA meetings. And there have been countless moments and conversations that

involve gently correcting sexism, racism, etc.

ADMINISTRATION

The Financial Mapping report (in online Board Documents or by request to me) has been one of the most interesting and useful things I have ever done. I learned so much about how money works in a church, about different roles and jobs, and about how emotional systems impact them. I entered church not knowing the difference in roles between the Treasurer and the Church Administrator. The growth I have experienced in this area has been exponential.

EMAIL

I did a lot of it.

REFLECTIONS AND HOPES

It certainly has been a year of growth, and I cannot offer what I will do with the next year as my last day is June 30th. However, I can offer what I would want to work on if I were to stay, and what I pray the church will take up in the absence of an Intern Minister.

It would be a priority to look at how church members speak to one another and to new people. While I understand why many people talk about the things that are going wrong in the church, I also see a vast amount of encouraging and joyful things that we don't seem to talk about. I would want to challenge myself (and any congregants who want to join me) to spend two weeks only saying good things about the church. Talk about the things that are going well, the things you are excited about, the things that feed you and bring you joy. This goes double when talking to newer folks.

It would also be a priority to look at different kinds of worship. People are thirsty for deep and meaningful worship. The struggle



seems to be finding a time that works, and someone who can lead it consistently. This could absolutely be done by lay leaders but it would need some fresh energy.

I have noticed that there are a TON of members I see infrequently or never. There are members that I have never actually met, yet are well-known to people that I see every week. Where are these friends, and why haven't I met them? Timing-wise it would be difficult, but I would love to call every member of the congregation in the next year, introducing myself if we haven't met and saying "Hi" if we have. Furthermore, I would love to encourage people to call their friends that they haven't seen in awhile, checking in and making sure they're okay.

Joy and fun. While Second Sunday Supper does a lot of good social work, one fun event a month is probably not enough to sustain us. Where are ya'll's birthday parties?! I would love to form and lead a group that put together celebrations for anniversaries, promotions, etc. Every church needs abundant fun, and it would be great to have more here.

FAREWELL

It has been a joyful and learning-filled year. Each person that has expressed gratitude for a sermon, offered me specific

feedback, or reached out to share with me how they are has brought me such joy and growth. I am a better person and minister because of you. Thank you.

See also: Ministerial Intern Committee and Young Adults.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR NURIT GORDON

2018-2019 was an eventful year with changes in personnel, communications, the pledge drive schedule, and the method we use to provide reports to the Board of Directors and the congregation.

My work includes routine and recurring tasks, daily, weekly, monthly, and seasonal. I handle and provide support in the areas of Finance, Facility, membership, communications, and Church Committees. I work with our vendors and handle payroll to staff and independent contractors. I supervise the Sextons, the Administrative and Financial Assistant, and the Communications Coordinator. I attend weekly meetings with the Minister and other staff members and other meetings as needed.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS PAST YEAR:

Finance and Pledges

In July 2018 we transferred \$32,178 from the Sustainability Fund itself to the Sustainability Fund income line, which left us with a balance of \$10,736 in the fund. Contributions keep coming into the Fund and our current balance, as of April 17, is \$21,720.

In July 2018 we received \$100,000 from Ralph Meyer's estate. In February 2019 we received \$30,000 from Ray Goodman's estate to start a new Minister Education Fund.

Tracking pledges was challenging this year due to the change from calendar to fiscal year. We are expecting additional work at the end of the fiscal year when I will need to reconcile the Sustainability matches with actual pledges paid.

I recorded all pledge data during the pledge drive and the weeks that followed. Changes are occurring every day as we get new and changed pledges, and the data is updated throughout the year.

I worked on the 2019-20 budget proposal from January to April, updating it as we got responses from the Treasurer, Committees, and Staff. The draft prepared was approved at the April board meeting and will be presented for Congregational approval at the Annual Meeting in May.

Facility Maintenance and Projects

We had a few minor projects this year in addition to the annual maintenance conducted each year.

The irrigation project approved by the board was completed in July, and all valves were replaced and the drip irrigation and corresponding controllers in the control box were mapped.

We purchased a portable air conditioner for the office, to use during the hot days in the summer when the temperature in the office reached the mid 80's and higher.

Ongoing maintenance includes window washing, carpet cleaning, sewer pipes' maintenance, tree trimming, and fire alarm sprinkler system inspections.

We purchased and installed a new tile rug for the cottage. The old rug was stained and dirty and we were not able to remove the stains even with deep cleaning. The Facilities Development Committee (FDC) – now called the Facilities Development and Maintenance Committee (FDMC) – and other volunteers installed the rug, and the space looks beautiful.

Our copier lease expired and we leased a new copier for a lower rate.

Our 17-year-old phone system is at the end of its life. We ordered a new phone system to replace it, to be installed soon.

Working with Staff and Committees

I have weekly meetings with the Minister and attend the weekly Staff Meeting.

I meet as needed with the staff members that I supervise. Once a year I meet with staff for the performance review; this year I had additional meetings for performance improvement for staff.

I have been working with FDMC, Communications, Stewardship, Faith In Action (FIA), Personnel, the Treasurer, other board members and church members, as needed.

Communications

This year we made a couple of changes.

We changed the way we provide information, and we changed our email from Vertical Response to Mail Chimp. With changes come adjustments and adaptation to new processes. We have been meeting with staff and other individuals to make sure we are all on the same page in our communications. Our goal is to bring accuracy and as much information as possible about the events and meetings we have at the church.

I have been working both with our Communications Coordinator and the Communications Team.

I sent the first request for the Annual Reports on Programs. The report should be ready prior to the Annual Congregational meeting in May with the help of our members Joyce Holmen and Carol Ring, who tirelessly work on editing and graphics as we receive the reports from committees and staff.

Personnel

This was a year quite a few of changes in Personnel. We hired Saunder Choi as our Director of Music, and we welcomed Robin Stillwater as our Intern Minister.

We also said goodbye to Nancy Thompson, our Administrative and Financial Assistant who has been with us for seven years, and to Jackie Schwab, our Communications and Volunteer Coordinator.

We welcomed Diego Andres and Cyndee Hayes to fill the vacant positions.

On-boarding staff and end of employment entail a careful process from start to finish – placing ads, sorting through resumes, interviewing, hiring, adding to payroll, benefits enrollments, and orientation, and some changes as people leave.

Facility Rentals

Rental rates are currently under review to correspond with any increases we have had in facility expenses and supplies, as well as staff pay. Rental groups will be notified of increases.

Nancy Thompson has been doing great work handling the rentals, providing space to new groups and showing the space to individuals interested in renting for special events. Cyndee is now following in her footsteps.

Staff

The staff I have been working with have been great throughout all the changes we have been experiencing at the Church, adjusting as needed and helping members in need of assistance.

Nancy has been a great asset to the church and to the admin office, and Cyndee Hayes is now taking over and progressing well after her training period.

When Diego Andres replaced Jackie Schwab, it was in the middle of transitions in our communications. We changed from Vertical Response to Mail Chimp, which affected the way we generate the weekly Announcements. We also changed the way the Announcements are posted, which was challenging since we had to inform and include everybody who wants to provide information to the membership. It took some time, but we are on the right track now.

Our Sextons, Tom Ahern and Kevin Roller, work hard to keep our facility looking good and presentable. I appreciate all they do here.



AAHS (AGNOSTICS, ATHEISTS, HUMANISTS, SECULARISTS AND SKEPTICS)

AAHS continues in its 8th year to be an active group that provides a welcoming space for non-theists along with intellectual/spiritual discussion. AAHS is also dedicated to exploring and keeping alive the flame of religious humanism and the 102-year-old Humanist legacy of our UU movement.

Our monthly Freethinker Forums, on the 4th Sunday of the month, are a place to grapple with bold ideas and big questions, and open to all. We focus on issues of interest to Humanism, atheism, and associated topics, but have expanded in the past year to include more discussions related to politics, culture, science, and history. We emphasize that a diversity of opinions is welcome and respected.

The forums regularly draw 15 to 30 people. We maintain a dedicated AAHS mailing list (now up to 215 people); we also have a **MEETUP.COM** group that currently has 718 members, which usually draws a few people every month. Having this added online presence serves to open our meeting to a wider local audience and also provides some outreach on behalf of our congregation.

TOPICS FROM THE PAST YEAR INCLUDED:

APRIL 2018: “Emergence, a Godless Universe, and You” — Emergence is a cross-disciplinary idea in science, philosophy, and art dealing with the phenomenon of increasingly complex systems of organization arising from simpler component parts in ways that science is still trying to describe. Emergence is fundamental in understanding why/how the universe is creative without the hand of a designer or divine creator.

JULY: “Why Is There a Universe and Why Does It Seem Fine-Tuned?” We asked two big questions: 1. Why is there anything at all, rather than nothing? 2. Why is it that the something that does exist seems to have just the right conditions and laws to allow complex structures like galaxies, planets, and humans to exist? Two great minds, philosopher Jim Holt and theoretical physicist Brian Greene, attempt to enlighten us.

SEPTEMBER: “What Is Consciousness?” Whence does it arise? Is it merely an illusion that results from the brain’s evolved way of balancing stimuli, as philosophical atheist luminaries such as Daniel Dennett has argued? Or could it be that it consciousness is somehow a fundamental component of the universe, as neuroscientists and cosmologists of the stature of David Chalmers and André Linde have pondered?

OCTOBER: “Humanism vs. Fascism in 2018” Racist/misogynist/homophobic street gangs brawl in liberal major American cities, authoritarianism seems to be on the rise around the world, and the government of our own country attacks the press, promotes conspiracy theories, and unabashedly violates human rights to promote fear and division. Democracy and liberty depend

upon truth and justice. Does Humanism, which has long been a movement toward more reason, empathy, and fairness in the world, provide effective resistance?

NOVEMBER: “Sexuality, Consent, and Humanist Values” This special forum event in the sanctuary focused on a humanist approach to the ethics of sexuality via universal human rights and the centrality of consent. With insights from OWL and featuring guest presenter Emmalinda MacLean of More Than Sex Ed and former UUSM Acting DRE.

DECEMBER: Successful completion of the project to add a Humanist banner to the sanctuary, an idea that originated with AAHS. News of this on social media quickly caught the attention of UUs across the country!

JANUARY: “Atheism in the Civil Rights Movement and the Radical Beliefs of MLK.” Secular influences on and within a movement that is understood to be largely religious. And Dr. King’s connections to Humanism and UUism.

FEBRUARY: “African American Humanism, Past and Present” Featuring the work of luminaries such as Frederick Douglass and Dr. Anthony Pinn.

MARCH 8TH: We hosted the West Coast premiere of “Humanitas: A Conscious Coloring of Kindness” with filmmaker Jé Hooper, a leader-in-training with the American Ethical Union. The film artfully dramatizes a meeting between Felix Adler and W.E.B. DuBois.

MARCH 29TH: “Untangling Our -isms” A lighthearted but informative dive into the (sometimes surprising) meaning of the words and terminology that often get thrown around in our communities and lives.

APRIL 28TH: “Journey of the Universe” A Special Earth Day screening of the remarkable, award-winning film with Brian Swimme that integrates arts and humanities into the 14 billion year epic of cosmic and biological evolution, offering wisdom for our perilous ecological situation on planet Earth today.



CAMP DE BENNEVILLE PINES WEEKEND

Camp de Benneville Pines is a full-service, year-round retreat center owned collectively by the 50+ UU congregations located in the Pacific Southwest District of the UUA. Year-round youth, family and adult camps foster multi-generational community, spiritual and personal growth, environmental stewardship, leadership development, and social justice education and action. The camp is located near Angelus Oaks, CA, in the San Bernardino Mountains, just 100 miles from our church home at 18th and Arizona. Camp de Benneville Pines (uucamp.org) has offerings for many UU-oriented interests, from Women’s Weekend to Social Justice Camp, Music in the Mountains, and Thanksgiving Camp, in which UUSM congregants participate regularly. Additionally, children and youth attend camps for elementary, middle, and high school youth, as well as young adults ages 18 to 35.

PLANNING OUR CHURCH CAMP WEEKEND:

In 2017-18, we developed a fresh organizing team, as Jacki Weber and Patrick Meighan stepped down from overseeing our Church Weekend after years of service. A new organizing team emerged, with Amy Brunell as Dean, Chela Metzger and Karl Lisovsky as Registrars, and a solid planning committee including Sunni Pavlovic, Joyce Holmen, Linda van Ligten, and Judith Martin-Straw. Other congregants participating in programming and activities included Abby Arnold, Kirk Attebury, Bill Blake, Karlton Bontrager, Beth Brownlie, Peter Capone-Newton, Jennifer Chen, Liza Cranis, Ellé Long, Kathleen Hogue, Lois Hutchinson, Lorenzo Pelayo, Haygo Saliban, Jennifer Styzens, Rick Teplitz, Jacki Weber, the Rev. Greg Ward, and Intern Minister Robin Stillwater.



This year, 2019, we will repeat last year’s success in filling the camp and allowing all who wanted to participate to indeed attend regardless of physical or financial ability. The same core organizing group (Amy, Chela, Karl, Sunni, Joyce, Linda, Judith) is currently planning September’s Camp. The same sorts of activities will undoubtedly take place: hiking, tie-dying, meditation, music, dance, writing, worship. Go-cart building and wine tasting were popular last year, and we expect to repeat these as well. What activity would you like to lead or help with?

This year, our Camp Weekend takes place on Friday to Sunday, September 13 to 15. Registration is open now. Contact Karl Lisovsky to reserve your place at this community-building weekend at our beautiful mountain retreat.

COFFEE COMMITTEE

Linda van Ligten, Coordinator

The Coffee Committee volunteers have continued to enjoy serving coffee, tea, and cookies to the congregation after each church service – that is, after two services during our regular session and after one service during our summer session, 52 weeks a year.

We are proud to continue being aware of our environment. We serve coffee and tea in ceramic cups. Coffee grounds are put into the compost barrel. We serve sugar from a container rather than in individually wrapped packages. We serve only fair-traded coffee. We use cloth tablecloths rather than paper. Our napkins are made of recycled paper.

As Coordinator, I would like express my appreciation for a great group of dedicated people on this committee. They are as follows: Kit Shaw, Alicia van Ooyen, Phyllis Kory, Pam Teplitz, Sylvia Young, Sheila Cummins, Kim and Barbara Andres, Deirdre Dietel, Eileen McCormack, Alice Hall, Hugo Contreras, Cathy Wolfson, Chela Metzger, Katie Malich, Amy Lacombe, and Rebecca Crawford.

Have you noticed our new coffee/tea pots? They were generously donated by our own Phyllis Kory. Our committee appreciates the numerous people who have donated cookies and

tea this past year. Girl Scout cookies donated by members and friends were especially appreciated. Healthy snacks have also been requested.

You are invited to join our volunteer group. It is an enjoyable way to be a gracious host, welcoming all as guests, whether they are visitors or church members.

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM (COMM TEAM)

Lois Hutchinson, Chair

The Communications Team continues to roll with the changes. Coordinating efforts across multiple communications channels and optimizing technology, Comm Team supports outreach to the congregation and to the community at large.

Comm Team members were busy all year working on the various channels: Newsletter, website, Thursday Announcements and Order of Service, social media, etc. The Thursday Announcements migrated to a new email platform. We saw a complete and super-fast overhaul of the church's Newsletter, as it converted from a paper format to an online format (check it out and subscribe at **NEWS.UUSM.ORG**). Plus, we began a major website renovation to be completed in 2019. Such changes in technology shift roles and responsibilities, which then demand updated policies and procedures – an ongoing process.

We worked with staff to improve how special events are planned, and helped refine how our new Communications Coordinator Diego Andres fits into the system. Staff continue to evolve the Thursday Announcements and ensure that **UUSM.ORG** has the most accurate, complete, and up-to-date events info. Volunteers and staff are expanding our presence on Instagram and NextDoor. We're all supporting the Membership Committee as it focuses on recruitment.

We welcome marketing- and media-savvy members to join us, taking on outreach projects large and small.

free event ticket to each of our new congregational members and young adults. The social value of D4\$ is equally important to our church as is the money raised for our general fund.

We are thrilled that 28 people worked together to make the D4\$ project happen. Our committee included Farrokh and Garland Allen (General Chairs), Melinda Ewen and Rebecca Crawford (Data Management), Carol Ring (Graphic Design), Cheryl Barnett, Barbara Gibbs, Emily Hero, Cathy Wolfson, and Resa Foreman (Solicitors). We also gathered a team of over 20 people on the final bidding day who chose the winners, did data entry to digitize the hand written data, and made us lunch. As the months unfold, Lucy Hahn is the "Reminder" who contacts hosts a short time before their event to make sure all goes smoothly.

We will kick off the 2020 season in November 2019 with a thank-you party for our committee and a getting-to-know-you opportunity for new volunteers. We are proud to support our church community!

DISABILITY SUPPORT GROUP (DSG)

The Disability Support Group promotes a dialogue on a selected topic at each of its meetings throughout the church year. There is a different theme for each month. We meet the fourth Sunday of each month at 12:30 pm in the Cottage. All church members interested in the topic are invited to attend. We hope these topics are of interest to you. For further information, contact Michael Young.

For 2018-19 the dates and topics are as follows:

- October 28 – Church Barriers to Persons with Disabilities
- November 25 – Dating Opportunities and Challenges
- December 23 – Positive Self Definition
- January 27 – Sports Activities and Opportunities
- February 24 – Governmental Programs
- March 24 – Seeking Employment
- April 28 – Interactions with Local, State, and Federal Government
- May 26 – Self Empowerment

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE (FDMC)

The Facilities Development and Maintenance Committee (FDMC) supports the vision and mission of UUSM. The objective is to create and maintain a healthy, safe, attractive, and accommodating campus for staff, members, and visitors. FDMC's role is to provide budget planning, direction, oversight, and coordination of all operations, maintenance, repair, and capital projects impacting the buildings, grounds, and furnishings. For further detail refer to the committee charter and current RACI chart.

Committee Members and Roles:

Co-Chairs: John Zinner and Brad Hutchinson
Board Liaison: Beth Brownlie
Staff Liaison: Church Administrator Nurit Gordon
Members: Bryan Oakes, Lois Hutchinson
Numerous other UUSM members assist with projects.

Current Fiscal Year Accomplishments:

- Developed RACI chart, including simplification of capital project purchasing categories; updated FDMC Charter; reviewed and suggested the updating of relevant UUSM Policies and Bylaws.
- Continued work on Sanctuary and Campus Lighting project; installed controls, additional lighting.
- Continued work on Forbes Hall Arizona Entrance Subsidence/



DINING FOR DOLLARS 2019 (D4\$)

Dining for Dollars (D4\$) is proud to report that our expected income for this year's bidding will be about \$30,000. On February 17 and 24 we held our annual silent auction of events generously provided by members and friends of our congregation. We had 64 diverse dining opportunities which included themed home-meals and several outings to interesting destinations in greater Los Angeles. In addition, we had nine "Goods and Services" offerings which included a custom sermon offered by our minister, professional counseling, and custom hand-knit art works. Just over 850 winning bids were accepted.

Our events span the calendar from February through November 2019. These gatherings build our community as members get to know one another one-on-one and in small groups. We were pleased to offer a discount coupon to first-time bidders as well as a



Structural project; conducted analysis.

- Completed scoping and design of Sanctuary Front Door and Side Windows Replacement project; this project will be funded by member Bonnie Brae.

- New phone and communication system installed.
- New carpeting installed in Warren Mathews Conference Room.

- New doors installed in minister's office.
- Improvements and repairs made to degraded plumbing systems.

- Updated HVAC controls.

Next Fiscal Year Objectives

- Complete Sanctuary and Campus Lighting third phase.
- Complete Sanctuary Front Door and Side Windows Replacement project.

- Finalize the scope and estimate the price for the Forbes Hall Arizona Entrance Subsidence/Structural project.

- Finalize the list of all durable equipment and facilities, including their projected life span, the best time to replace, and the expected replacement cost.

FAITH IN ACTION COMMISSION (FIA)

Sarah Mae Harper and James Witker, Co-Chairs

The Faith In Action Commission (FIA) is composed of five committees – Peace and Social Justice (PSJ), Green Living, Hunger Task Force, Interweave, and Disabilities Support Group. Individual committees have provided their reports separately, except that Interweave needs new leadership. In the interim, PSJ has taken responsibility for planning our congregation's annual involvement in LA Pride, coming up on June 9. The Hunger Task Force continues the Lunches for Bunches program, and we hope that committee will re-expand its work as well.

The FIA Commission represents all the programs and activities at UU Santa Monica focused on putting our UU principles, values, and commitments to love and justice into action in our local community and the wider world. We've been busy and feel that the work we do to advance causes of peace, justice, and sustainability are centrally important, and that the outreach and visibility that results from our work is advantageous and a credit to our congregation. FIA needs more participation and there are many opportunities for growth and leadership. As always, we invite you to get involved.

COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION: FIA has continued to seek more collaboration between its own committees and with other congregational interests. When more of us work together on issues of common interest, our projects can get bigger and more interesting/ambitious. For example: In October we partnered with Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance (KIWA) to present an information session on ICE and Wage Theft in the Workplace.

March's Second Sunday Supper was co-hosted by all the FIA subcommittees, and PSJ and the Green Committee co-hosted the Second Sunday Cinema showing of the film, "Cowspiracy." In April, FIA partnered with Sunrise Los Angeles, a diverse, youth and young adult-led movement that represents a new phase of activism for climate justice. We hosted 40 energetic young people along with some church members at UUSM to learn about and get hands-on training in anti-racism and intersectional environmental justice.

RALLIES AND MARCHES: FIA has also led UUSM's involvement in the Downtown LA Marches (Women's March, March for Science, March for Our Lives, etc.) which have become so numerous since the 2016 election. These outings are opportunities to meet and connect with other progressive, concerned citizens/humans, and they provide representation for UUs, too.

FICTION READING GROUP

Lucy Hahn and Melinda Ewen

The Fiction Reading Group, which meets on the Third Monday in Forbes Room 1, from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m., started out using the "Santa Monica Reads" list. This was mostly young adult fiction, which we loved. We now focus on adult fiction. Early on we read a couple of 800-page books, but now keep the selections mostly to 500 pages or less. This past winter we read six books from Obama's 2018 summer reading list.

Currently, we have a selection of authors from around the world. Over the five and one-half years our group has been meeting, we have found that having two leaders is handy, as one facilitator can travel while the other carries on. We usually have five to eight attendees, and have heard that a number of people, based on the announcement of the books we are reading, also read those books even if they don't come to the discussion. The Fiction Reading Group has insightful and varied participants, and good discussions.

In the past year we read:

- Manhattan Beach*, by Jennifer Egan
- Sarah's Key*, by Tatiana deRosnay
- Farewell to Manzanar*, by Jeanne and James Houston
- Lilac Girls*, by Martha Hall Kelly
- My Cousin Rachel*, by Daphne du Maurier
- New York 2140*, by Kim Stanley Robinson
- Island*, by Aldous Huxley
- Pachinko*, by Min Jin Lee
- Warlight*, by Michael Ondaatje
- An American Marriage*, by Tayari Jones
- Anything is Possible*, by Elizabeth Strout
- Exit West*, by Mohsin Hamid



GARDEN OF ETERNITY COMMITTEE

The committee's purposes are to plan Garden of Eternity Events, including Memorial Day and Day of the Dead celebrations, and to remind members and their families of the opportunity to remember loved ones with engraved bricks or memorial benches at our church.

Committee members are: Alison Kendall, Chair; Church Administrator Nurit Gordon, Helen Brown, and Minister Emeritus Ernie Pipes.

After strong participation in 2017 Day of the Dead celebration and 2018 Memorial Day service, we've had no new bricks in some time, despite the loss of several long-time members. Currently, there is a "promotion" in the Order of Service for memorial bricks, and we hope to increase awareness of this option for members to remember loved ones. To increase awareness of the Garden of Eternity, we suggest incorporating short memorial events in the garden after a Memorial Day "Tolling of the Bell" and Day of the Dead celebrations.

Our goals for the coming year are: work with the Developmental Minister and the board to promote awareness of the Garden of Eternity and to incorporate its use for Memorial and Sunday services; promote memorial benches and other donations towards needed facilities throughout the church campus; and consider a Care Ring Committee member/liaison for 2019 to raise awareness of memorial options.

GREEN LIVING COMMITTEE

The Green Living Committee's purposes are to promote Sustainability and environmental justice and combat climate change through member and community education, behavior change, and social justice actions; and to collaborate with others on improving sustainability of church campus and events.

Committee members' names and roles: Alison Kendall, Chair. Active members include Beth Brownlie, Rick Teplitz, Linda van Ligten, Greg Wood, Hildreth Simmons, Haygo Salibian, Sherman Neusom, Karen Patch, and Katie Malich.

The Green Living Committee continues to team with Peace and Social Justice (PSJ) on Second Sunday Supper and Cinema events, including for a Vegan/Vegetarian Supper with the film "Cowspiracy" in March 2019 and for other environmental justice films.

In Spring 2019, we discussed *Justice on Earth*, the UUA Common Read, in a program led by James Witker and Alison Kendall. Alison presented a number of community environmental education programs including some on UUSM Green Living Committee and Green Remodeling at the May 2018 Climate Fest, and on Net Zero Energy Homes in January 2019. In April 2019 we continued our



support of Community Services Unlimited (CSU) with Generous Congregation funds, and celebrated their completion in Fall 2018 of the Paul Robeson Community Wellness Center, which includes a cafe, produce market, catering kitchen, and community center.

For the coming year, we'll place continued emphasis on political activism at the regional, state, and national levels to address Climate Change and environmental injustice as environmental and health damage become increasingly widespread.

HUNGER TASK FORCE

Once a month in 2018-2019 (with the exception of December) the Hunger Taskforce has coordinated Lunches for Bunches... an action in which 100 sack lunches are prepared, assembly-line-style, and donated to nearby homeless service facilities run by The People Concern, a local organization formerly known as Ocean Park Community Center (OPCC).

Lunches for Bunches is operated completely by volunteers (typically 8 to 12 in any given month), and it's funded via targeted donations. It has no line-item in the church budget. The co-coordinators are Patrick Meighan and Dorothy Steinicke. Lunches for Bunches has been a UUCCSM tradition for many years. It's a simple and wonderful way for church members to roll up their sleeves (figuratively and literally) and make an immediate impact in the broader community. We look forward to continuing this tradition in the year to come. If you would like to get involved in helping to coordinate Lunches for Bunches, please contact Patrick Meighan.

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE (IC)

Steve White, Chair

PURPOSE: The Board of Directors re-established the Investment Committee (IC) in 2016, following the Congregational Resolutions on Money adopted February 14, 2016. It had been dissolved in 2008 when the congregation had no money to invest. In 2013 and 2014, the church received major bequests from long-time members, Drew Still (\$615k) and Judy Federick (\$259k), totaling about \$875,000, which created the need for an Investment Committee. \$200,000 was earmarked and spent for building improvements.

CHARTER: The April 2016 IC charter states that the IC will recommend both policies and specific investments directly to the board. These will be in accordance with the Church Bylaws, Congregational Resolutions, Board Policies, and IC Charter, which are the governing documents. The Chair of the Investment Committee serves as a voting ex-officio member of the Finance Committee in order to coordinate the work of the two committees.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Fiscal 2018-19 began with the IC's two remaining members and co-chairs from 2016, Steven DePaul and Joe Engelman, who continued to graciously serve beyond their two-year terms until the appointment of Steve White and Gar Allen in October 2018. Carl Hoppe was appointed in January 2019,

and that quorum then elected Steve White as chair. Steve has researched and documented the church's investments. Gar and Carl provide additional perspectives and counsel on investments and congregational concerns. The IC Chair regularly informs the Treasurer and reports to the board regarding investment options, plans, and the basis for the committee's recommendations.

2018-19 FOCUS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Based on past board and IC controversies regarding appropriate investment risk, the new IC members set forth to build a well-documented basis for its future recommendations. This will support better-understood investment decisions by the board. The IC reviewed the church's investment policies, current investments and investment performances.

The IC recommended that the church build a "ladder" of maturity dates for its CDs at Self-Help Federal Credit Union (SHFCU). This enabled us to buy longer-term CDs at higher, longer-term rates, while maintaining the availability of cash at maturity every three to six months. This increased our earnings significantly.

Given the church's ongoing operating losses, the IC recommended the short-term policy of channeling most investment earnings into Operating Income, rather than continue to reinvest them, as long as the financial crisis of the last 10 years continues. By the end of fiscal 2017-18, the congregation had withdrawn **\$300,000** to cover seven years of operating losses. As of this writing (April 29, 2019), the pending 2018-19 net operating loss is projected to be \$45k to \$60k, and the net operating loss for 2019-20 loss is budgeted at \$38k. By the end of 2019-20, the congregation will have liquidated about **\$400,000** of its legacy investments since 2010-11 to cover two more years of operating losses.

Steve researched the financial institutions which hold the church's investments. These are Merrill Lynch (51%), Self-Help Federal Credit Union (SHFCU) (29%), and UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF) (14%), plus 6% in Bank of America checking and savings accounts.

The Merrill Lynch funds are in market-traded bank CDs, with no money in any securities (stocks or bonds). The SHFCU funds are in CDs. This is a very conservative portfolio with little or no earnings above inflation. The SHFCU funds projects in underserved communities, including funding one of our church's Green Living Committee projects, partnering with the Veggie Bus Classroom of Community Services Unlimited (CSU) in South Los Angeles.

The IC developed an online resource (Dropbox) of Investment Committee documents to make them easily accessible to all interested members of the congregation. This Dropbox now contains 85 documents in 13 folders. It includes account statements for each institution, governing documents, recommendations and reports as well as information regarding each investment institution.

GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

The IC's goal for 2019-20 is to increase congregational and board familiarity with our investments and the process of balancing financial risk and reward in a prudent, documented manner.

The IC will have to consider how best to liquidate investments to provide funds for our ongoing expenses in excess of income –

our monthly net operating losses, budgeted at \$38,000 for 2019-20.

The church has \$888,655 in total liabilities (Reserves and Designated Funds). The IC plans to consider longer-term investments strategies for more of the Reserves.

\$601,000 is in Reserves designated as appropriate for long-term, market-based investments, but not yet that way. Longer-term investments would likely yield about 3% to 4% more than the current 2% yield, with perhaps \$20,000 additional earnings. This would come with an increased level of market risk. These include the Catastrophe Reserve (\$178,631), the Emergency Reserve (\$150,406), and the Minister Equity-Sharing Reserve (\$174,528), as well as the balance (\$97,586) of the Endowment Fund not yet invested in the UUCEF.

\$124,231 of the Endowment Fund (liability account) is already invested in the UUCEF. The new \$30,000 Goodman Minister Education Fund is already slated for the UUCEF. The remaining \$133,273 consists of several Reserves of \$30,000 or less, considered suitable for short-term investments, and the balances of several fundraising projects and programs.

The IC plans to both update the IC Charter and to work with the board to update their investment policy guidance. We hope to support the church in regaining its financial health.

Investment Committee: Gar Allen, Carl Hoppe, Steve White

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION COMMITTEE

Religious exploration is a lifelong learning process, and the Lifespan Religious Exploration committee oversees program offerings designed to appeal to UUSM members and visitors of all ages. Members of the LRE committee belong to one of three subcommittees (Children, Youth, and Adult). Under the direction and guidance of our Director of Religious Exploration, we meet once a month to brainstorm, plan, and organize programs in our subcommittees. We come together occasionally for various events throughout the year.

Our visibility in the church continues to be enhanced by the presence of a weekly table in Forbes Hall staffed by committee members who answer questions about our programs and help with registration for classes.

Notably this year was the Ice Cream Social RE Start Up Lunch. This was an opportunity for members to see and learn about all the programming that would be offered for the year for children, youth and adults. The RE Committee for Children and Youth once again provided a spectacular pancake breakfast for families that participated in our holiday pageant in December. We held a very successful committee joint retreat planning a retreat over the fall, (more of an advance) for the committees to come together and work on some ways to be more collaborative, clarify roles, create a charter and enhance spiritual practice in our daily lives.

The Adult subcommittee now known as the **ADULT PROGRAMS FOR PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION (APSE)** seeks out, approves and reviews programming to be offered each year by members of our congregation and people in the local community. This year they have created a process that makes this a much easier task than it has been in the past. This year the committee revised its mission statement and goals and provided the Board of Directors with a Charter for the committee.

More on the name change: As our committee created our Charter this year, we realized that it didn't feel right to continue to split UUSM adult programming into non-religious and religious categories, with the latter being under our oversight and being publicized separately. We asked ourselves – "What does it imply when we include some programs under Religious Exploration and



not others?" It felt utterly artificial to us. What feels like personal growth to one person may feel deeply spiritual to another, and vice versa. We are more than "minds" when we explore and grow as human beings – Exercise classes, collage, international folk dancing, deep discussions on humanism or a book on White Fragility, bringing people with common interests/challenges together for support and growth, or looking at living this year as though it were our last – these all can enrich and stimulate our growth as human beings. Everyone is welcome to participate – members and non-members, on a space available basis.

What follows are two sections that contain numerous activities and invitations for involvement, for questioning, for study, for celebration, for community-building:

1. RE Programming for Adults – both ongoing groups and special or limited-time groups;
2. Religious Exploration for Children and Youth.



RE PROGRAMMING FOR ADULTS (ADULT PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION)

Ongoing Offerings

MONDAY MEDITATION GROUP – An Enjoyable Dive into the Who and What We Are: This on-going, once a month class is presented to help participants master specific meditation skills. We endeavor to answer the questions Who am I? (attitudes and beliefs) and What am I? (Essence or True Nature). This class includes meditations which explore participants' spiritual goals. The monthly group meetings also focus on insights gained throughout the month. It is expected that participants have a regular meditation practice. First and Third Mondays (6 regularly attending) Facilitators: Bill Blake and David Watson

OPEN MEDITATION – We gathered twice a month to sit together quietly for 20 minutes, to walk with gentle awareness for seven minutes, and to explore the integration of meditation with ordinary life through reading and sharing. Anyone who senses they would benefit from 20 minutes of silent, non-guided sitting is welcome to join us. We have found that this time of quiet meditation and shared exploration can be deeply nourishing – a time of simply "being" amidst all the "doing" of our lives. Second and Fourth Mondays (4 to 12 participants average) Facilitators: Beverly Shoenberger and Carol Ring

HEART TO HEART – The goal for this small group ministry is to connect in a meaningful way with other members and friends of our church community. The spiritual and social connection, by which we measure our sense of belonging, is the purpose of Heart to Heart Circles. Topics follow themes from Soul Matters Sharing Circle and our monthly service topics. Each group meets once per month. Facilitators: Wendy Gladstone, Margot Page, Kathleen Hogue, Mark Berlin, Cheryl Sims

COLLAGE GROUP WITH STAN BEMIS – This class is for those who yearn to make an artistic statement and to express themselves creatively. Stan worked to bring joy and peace into people's lives through creating art. He has taught many who didn't realize they had creative talent, from all across the world - from California to Palestine/Israel. Began in November 2018 and met every other Saturday for two hours. (3 to 7 participants) Facilitator: Stan Bemis, with support from Sarah Robson

Special and Limited Time Offerings

EMERGENCE, A CREATIVE UNIVERSE, AND YOU – EMERGENCE (Emergent Properties) is a cross-disciplinary idea in science, philosophy, and art dealing with complex systems arising from -- and having properties not merely defined by -- their simpler component parts. Some examples include snowflakes, fractals, galaxies, and life itself. This presentation and discussion were adapted from an AAHS Freethinker Forum held in April, and offered again by request. Tuesday, July 24, 2018. Facilitator: James Witker

CONVERSATIONS AND CONNECTIONS – This ongoing program focuses on the church theme for each month. It offers the opportunity to engage in a unique and unparalleled experience that helps form and strengthen connections to other members of the congregation in a very deep and meaningful way. In pairs we take turns speaking and listening and then share in dialogue. Participants are very enthusiastic about the opportunity to develop deeper connections with others. Gatherings were held on the third Saturday of each month, starting in September 2018. (25 participants) Facilitators: Bettye Barclay and Sue Stoyanoff

A YEAR TO LIVE – This is a class for those who are tired of waiting around for their "real life" to start. It is a class that jump starts us out of our ruts, our avoidance, our fears, our unrealistic fantasies and propel us into more acceptance, more focus, more intentionality, more accountability and surround us with people who will love us into the people we've always wanted to be. The year-long class began in October on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8:30 and continues through June. (38 participants) Facilitators: Rev. Greg Ward and Beverly Shoenberger

WOMEN OVER 60 DISCUSSION GROUP – This group invited women over the age of 60 to enhance their lives and promote more personal and spiritual growth in a setting which included other women who relate to what they are going through. Meetings were 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 10 to 11:30 am, from July 2018 to February 2019. Facilitator: Sandra Beebe

COME DANCE WITH US! – This fun program invites participants to learn international folk dancing with the use of traditional music. At least a dozen participants met most of this year, but the group is on a break now. New dancers are welcome to this monthly group when it returns to Forbes Hall. Instructors: Sandy Helperin and Teri Hoffman. Facilitator: Ellen Levy

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP: "Humanist Voices in Unitarian Universalism" – The group put an emphasis on personal connections along our own journeys. "Humanist Voices in Unitarian Universalism" was the Skinner House book that we had a very successful group on from January through April 2018. Due to popular interest we resumed the group as "Humanist Voices" on an ongoing basis in the Fall of 2018, with the goal of continuing to read other writings by some of the same or similar authors, within or related to Unitarian Universalism. Selections included the following essays or addresses: "Unfinished with Christianity," by Doug Muder in September; "The Church of What We Know," by Peter Mayer (of "Blue Boat Home" fame) in October; "Why Teach Religion in an Age of Science?" by renowned religious education pioneer Sophia Lyon Fahs in November-December. In January and February, the group read and discussed Is God a White Racist? This



full-length book by the Rev. Dr. William R. Jones, is a theological/ethical analysis and critique. Humanist Voices will resume after pausing in March and April for our UUA Common Read group. Facilitator: James Witker

FINDING THE RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR INNER CRITIC

– Imagine the light that could come into our community and the world if we could live more fully, without being held back by self-criticism or self-doubt. This offering invited us to look directly at our Inner Critic and learn to discriminate it from our deepest inner truth. Three-hour and five-hour gatherings in August and September 2018 (10 participants each date) Facilitators: Beverly Shoenberger and Norman Richey

BALANCED BEHAVIORS – “It’s not just what you eat, it’s how.”

Participants were invited to discover, design and experiment with small steps on their own path to recalibrate and refresh their habits and choices. They explored how to best support and encourage themselves moving forward. Through education, mindfulness and support, they learned the ways to make lasting changes that are compatible with their lives and life styles. September 12, 2018 (4 participants) Facilitator: Teri Lucas

RECOGNIZING AND RESISTING RACIST REACTIONS: A Discussion

of Robert DiAngelo’s *White Fragility* – We came together to discuss the book and answer the questions: Have you, your friend, your family member, your co-worker or your co-religionist exhibited White Fragility? If you are a white person and someone points out that you have engaged in a micro-aggression against a person of color, do you protest that you have close friends of color? If, as a white person, you make a remark that offends a person of color, are you excused if you did not intend the effect? Is racism only by less-educated rural-dwelling elders? January 6, 2019 Facilitators: Audrey Lyness and Roberta Frye

“IS GOD A WHITE RACIST” BOOK GROUP – This book, *Is God*

a White Racist, by the Rev. William R. Jones, an African American UU minister, theologian, and professor, questions whether the foundation for black Christian theism – the belief in an omnibenevolent God who has dominion over human history – can provide an adequate theological foundation to effectively dismantle the economic, social, and political framework of oppression. Seeing divine benevolence as part of oppression’s mechanism of disguise, Jones argues that black liberation theologians must adopt a new theism that is informed by humanism and its principle of the functional ultimacy of wo/man, where human choice and action determine whether our condition is slavery or freedom. January 2019 (8 participants) Facilitator: James Witker

WRITING A MEMOIR: A JOURNEY TO UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

– UUSM member and former Secretary of the Board of Directors Leonard Cachola led a lecture and discussion of his self-published memoir about his journey to UUSM. March 3, 2019 (10 Participants) Facilitator: Leonard Cachola

EXPLORING THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT – Participants engaged in uplifting, positive, and practical discussion of the text that promoted learning from the perspective of others to bring a fresh awareness to these ancient words. Discussion included how the ideas speak to us (if at all), what the ideas might mean in practical application, and how they are or are not useful today. Feb. 25, Mar. 4, Mar. 11. (11 Participants) Facilitators: Laura Matthews and Abby Arnold

UU COMMON READ: “Justice on Earth” – At a time when racial justice, environmental justice, and economic justice are seen as issues competing for time, attention, and resources, *Justice on Earth* explores the ways in which the three are intertwined. The book asks us to recognize that our faith calls us to long-haul work for justice for our human kin, for the Earth and for all life. It invites us to look at our current challenges through a variety of different perspectives, offers tools to equip us for sustained engagement, and proposes multiple pathways for follow-up action. Three Sundays: March 31, April 7, April 14. Facilitators: James Witker and Alison Kendall

SEDER – Passover is the most commonly celebrated holiday among Jews, and lasts for eight days. It includes the Passover meal, the Seder in which there is a retelling of the “exodus story” (the Hebrews escaping from slavery in Egypt) This fits our 3rd principle of “We help each other learn by growing and exploring together.” and the 6th principle “We work for a peaceful world”. Many of the customs and traditions of the Seder were observed. We even had a Rabi! April 20, 2019 (52 participants) Facilitators: Resa Foreman, Teri Lucas, Rabi Rob, Kathleen Hogue

AWAKENING THE SAGE – This workshop offered participants the opportunity to explore “Sage-ing,” or conscious aging, a model for late life that can help us to live with more awareness, joy, and purpose. This inner work of aging opens the opportunity for seniors to become Elders-Awakening the Sage Within. Concepts explored were aging as a spiritual journey, our images/fears of



aging, harvesting wisdom from our life review, forgiveness to release the past, and facing our mortality. April 27 and 28. (31 participants) Facilitator: Connie Zweig, PhD

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP “How to Be Less Stupid about Race” – From the UUA website: Combining no-holds-barred social critique, humorous personal anecdotes, and analysis of the latest interdisciplinary scholarship on systemic racism, *How to Be Less Stupid About Race*, by sociologist Crystal M. Fleming, provides a fresh, accessible, and irreverent take on everything that’s wrong with our national conversation about race. Participants discussed how the ideas speak to us (if at all), what the ideas might mean in practical application, and how they are or are not useful in our fight against racism. Three Mondays: May 13, May 20, June 3 Facilitators: Audrey Lyness and Laura Matthews

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Religious Exploration (RE) programming for children and youth is made possible by more than 30 UUSM members who volunteer their time as teachers, assistants, event helpers, OWL Facilitators, committee members and more.

NURSERY/CHILDCARE – Our nursery has provided extremely high-quality care for infants, toddlers and young children up to age 3, thanks to the reliability and dedication of Mark Lattman, owner of the Baby Sitter’s Guild of Los Angeles. Mark also provided care for older children during church events and helped out in the classroom as needed. While in care, children are given the opportunity to explore, create, play, and make connections with other children. Mark is no longer an employee at UCCSM and we are searching for a replacement.

PRE- SCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN TO 2ND GRADE: “SPIRIT SEEKERS” – Curriculum written by UUSM member Sabina Mayo-Smith. Children engaged in sharing core stories of our faith, focusing this year on themes from our UUSM Covenant: Love, Service, Peace, Knowledge, Freedom and Building Community. Through stories and activities, children learned to make meaning of their lives, grow a strong UU identity, and create a spiritual community together that honors multiple learning styles and celebrates beauty in diversity.

3RD-5TH GRADE: “UU UNIVERSE” – This curriculum was written especially for active 2nd - 5th graders by Margot Page and Ian Dodd. The program offered engaging hands on sessions that allowed children to explore some of the big questions of life such as the existence of God, the origin of life, and what lies beyond.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: “INTERFAITH QUEST” – This is a two-year comparative religions course that takes participants outside of our own walls to learn about the world’s religions through building relationships and doing interfaith service work with youth from other religious traditions. Participants reflect on the unique and universal of religious experience, explore their own values as they relate to many other faith traditions, and increase their appreciation of religious diversity. It includes 44 lessons, plus 10 Social Night Scripts to teach our UU story with fun and engaging themes. This year was spent investigating Hinduism, Buddhism and Native American religious traditions. We visited some other churches that believed differently than we do. These trips to other faith homes help us to explore together what common elements and rituals we use, what values or principles we lift up, our beliefs about god as well as how we do worship and music.

YRUU: 9TH TO 12TH GRADE – Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU) empowers teens, with the guidance of adult advisors, to create their own vision and mission for their program. YRUU youth explore what it means to be young and UU, how our UU principles inform how we live our lives, and what power young UU’s have to change the world. YRUU also takes part in social justice projects, organizes social gatherings, and plans and leads a



Sunday worship service for the congregation. This year the focus of the program was art and creativity.

11:00 RE MULTI-AGE PROGRAM: “SOUL EXPLORERS” – For our 11 am All-Ages class we explored the monthly topics used in our congregation from UU materials in the “Soul Matters” program. Children explore the UUSM monthly ministry themes through story, craft, song, movement, and more. Each week began with the sharing of a story or wonder box activity to help us enter into our theme, and then kids engaged in a craft or art activity that was related to the theme. Each session strives to engage children in four fundamental spiritual experiences; what we call “the four S’s.”

The Four S’s of Nurturing the Soul:

- Silence: meditation, listening, mindfulness
- Service: leadership, helping others
- Sunshine: connection with nature and our bodies through outdoor activities or movement
- Silliness! (We will have fun)

“COMING OF AGE” – The Coming of Age program for 8th graders is offered every other year and provides opportunities for youth to learn who they are and where they are on their spiritual journey. They celebrate their gifts, learn about our church and how it works, and articulate their own personal beliefs within the context of our UU faith. The program culminates on Coming of Age Sunday. (The program was not offered this year.)

“FAITH IN ACTION SUNDAYS” – We offered four Faith in Action (FIA) Sundays this year, engaging children and youth in acts of service to the larger community. Projects included working on our UUSM Community Garden, making winter care kits for the homeless, making sandwiches for Turning Point Homeless Shelter, and sorting food at the Westside Food Bank.

“OUR WHOLE LIVES (OWL) PROGRAM” – OWL is an outstanding series of sexuality education curricula for these age groups: grades K-1, grades 5-6, grades 8-9, grades 10-12, young adults, and adults. Developed by and used in Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ congregations across North America, OWL helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture.

• This year we offered the **Grades 10-12 program**, facilitated by Kathy Cook, Dan Nannini, and Beth Rendeiro, plus the Junior High program, facilitated by Alan Brunell, Beth Rendeiro, Dan Nannini, Kathy Cook, Larry Weiner, Leon Henderson-MacLennan, and Nalani Santiago.

• We offer special thanks to the long-term dedication and organizational skills of Beth Rendeiro, who is stepping down this year as our OWL Coordinator but will continue as a class facilitator with children, youth, and adults.

See also: Director of Religious Exploration Kathleen R. Hogue

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Sarah Robson and Norm Richey, Co-Chairs

The Membership Committee works to ensure that all members, visitors, and friends have the best possible experience as they explore and participate in UU Congregational life. This includes:

- Welcome and reach out to newcomers to our UU Church Community
- Facilitate visitors and friends to become members
- Integrate new members into the life of the congregation
- Cherish, nurture and support existing members
- Actively seek out potential new members

A goal of the Membership Committee is to ensure that all members have the best possible experience as they explore and



participate in UU Congregational life. The Committee works closely with the Minister, Board of Directors, the office staff, and other committees in order to fulfill its mission.

GREETER TEAM: An important arm of the Membership Committee is the Greeter Team, and Visitor/New Member Welcoming table. Greeters make a commitment to serve for the half-hour preceding each Sunday morning worship service, one to two persons for each service. The following are assigned to serve at one service each month: Kim and Barbara Andres, Katie Malich, Roberta Frye, David Olson, Wendi Gladstone, Michael Young, Steve Young, Denise Helton, Dwight Flowers, Audrey Lyness, Bryan Cahill, Barbara Gibbs, and substitutes Karen Patch, Patricia Wright, and Beverly Alison. The Chairperson is Barbara Gibbs.

The responsibilities of the Greeter Team are to greet and welcome visitors and answer any questions or inquiries, providing directions as needed, and inviting each visitor to fill out and wear visitor name tags. In addition, visitors are invited to fill out information which includes signing up to receive Thursday announcements electronically, as well as the online newsletter.

WELCOME TABLE: Welcome Table volunteers serve following each Sunday morning service; the Table is on the patio or inside Forbes' Hall. Its members are: Carol Ring, Kim and Barbara Andres, Maria Scremin, Sheila Cummins, Wendi Gladstone, and Barbara Gibbs, Chairperson. One or two of the above are at the table for 30 to 40 minutes following each service. Carol Ring is in charge of gathering, ordering, and creating visitor packets to pass out at the table each Sunday. This includes information about UUSM in particular as well as pamphlets about Unitarian Universalist in general, which are ordered from UUA. New member applications are distributed from this table when requested.

All who come through our open doors on Sunday mornings are also warmly met by members of the **Ushering Committee**. Chair Dan Patterson seeks more ushers, who each serve once a month.

WELCOMING CEREMONY: The Membership Committee performed a Welcoming Ceremony in December, which

acknowledged seven new members. Barbara Gibbs, Sarah Robson, and Nina Emerson were the core leaders for the ceremony, along with the Rev. Greg Ward. Linda van Ligten coordinated the gift bags, and each new member received a gift of a chalice, handmade by our own potter, Ellen Levy.

VISITOR AND NEW MEMBER PACKETS: An accomplished goal this past year was the rewriting of the Visitor and New Member Packets, updating and providing a logical, informative, clean structure, thanks to the efforts of Nina Emerson and Carol Ring, with input from Linda van Ligten and Sarah Robson.

WELCOMING LETTER: We have plenty of visitors to our church who are encouraged to fill out the brief Visitor Information Card found in the hymnals in each pew. Some do so and many do not. This information finds its way to Barbara Andres who then sends a warm, welcoming letter to each visitor and invites them to return not only to our next Sunday Service but also to our Visitor Meet-Up held the first Sunday of each month. The committee this year changed the name from Visitor Orientation to Visitor Meet-up in order to be less formal and more open and friendly. The Meet-Up is hosted by Sarah Robson along with Norm Richey, who represents the Board of Directors. This coming year, the committee will be looking at ways to increase visitor participation in this meeting.

MEMBERSHIP ORIENTATION PROGRAM: Sarah Robson developed and wrote a three-hour Membership Orientation program that will be offered as part of the path to membership. The program includes a brief history of UUism, a brief history of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica, a presentation and discussion of the Seven Principles, and an introduction and brief presentation of Committee Chairs describing the goals and work of their respective committees. Hopefully, this will encourage prospective members to join in one or two of the committees that pique their interest. During this program, new members will be encouraged to actively become part of the UU Community family by volunteering their time. The Orientation Program will then end with a tour of the church campus.

BRING A FRIEND SUNDAY: The committee sponsored a "Bring A Friend Sunday," including fliers made by Sarah Robson. The committee plans more such events with the hope that – through announcements, publicity, and encouragement – more members will participate by bringing a friend or friends. This could be an important avenue of potentially growing our membership.

EXIT INTERVIEW: When someone resigns from Church Membership, Norm Richey contacts each one for an exit interview, either by email, phone, or in person, to not only understand the reasons why someone has left, but to also make sure they know the door is always open for them to return to visit or to be reinstated as members. Our present membership as of April 9th, is 293.

VISITOR MEETUP: We have rebranded our Newcomer Orientation, held the first Sunday of the month, with a more zesty title: Visitor Meetup. Our present Church Membership as of April 9th is 293. As most know, our church population is aging. It is thus a critical task not only of the Membership Committee this coming year, but of every member of our community, to support and assist in the goal of growing church membership with people who are attracted and committed to our vision, mission, and values, along with our social justice programs. We welcome those who are "seeking" a community to find us here at UUSM, and feel welcomed, especially younger adults and families who will be this church's future.

Current members of the Membership Committee include: Nina Emerson, Barbara Andres, Kim Andres, Barbara Gibbs, Joe Engleman, Carol Ring, Linda van Ligten.

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP

Richard Mathias, Men's Discussion Group Leader/Facilitator

The purposes of the Men's Discussion Group are to offer a special opportunity to the men of the congregation and other like-minded men to join our welcoming group in provocative and stimulating discussion, and to get to know others with UU perspectives in a more meaningful way. We have done well during the past many years and in 2018 in meeting our goals.

We meet the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month in the Cottage. The group has also been involved in volunteer efforts at Step Up on Second and the West Side Food Bank. We have done fundraising for the church and gathered items for donation to Goodwill. We have also congregated at a member's home to watch sporting events on TV. We have done bowling and bike riding.

There are no regularly committed "members" of the group. I, Richard Mathias, am the current leader/facilitator and there are about 8 to 12 men who attend more or less regularly. I believe that we gained a few more men in 2018 who more or less regularly attend.

A big endeavor the past two years has been hosting the Dining for Dollars pancake breakfast. In addition to the donations by attendees at \$10 each (approximately 45 to 60 people), the Men's Group returned about \$260 to UCCSM after expenses. We have agreed to host the event again this year on Saturday, October 26, 2019.



MINISTERIAL INTERN COMMITTEE

Tom Peters and Kikanza Nuri-Robins, Co-Chairs

The Ministerial Intern Committee exists for the specific and limited time frame that UUSM is committed to hosting an Intern Minister. It is, therefore, a task force. Its primary charge is to support both the congregation and the ministerial intern. For members of the congregation, they model ways to give helpful feedback, and they provide encouragement and opportunity for members at large to do so. For the Intern, the committee provides all the requirements needed to satisfy our denomination's Ministerial Fellowship Committee's process for welcoming a minister into fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). The Committee helps the Ministerial Intern develop the required Learning and Serving Covenant (LSC) and works with the Ministerial Intern to communicate/partner with the congregation about learning goals. The Ministerial Intern Committee also works to ensure the congregation is in compliance with the timing and format of the required mid-term and final evaluations.

SUPPORTING THE UUSM MISSION

A great effort has been made to balance a myriad of diverse perspectives to offer a balanced team. This balanced team models building a congregational home that supports our vision that provides opportunities for spiritual and personal growth in an interactive and intergenerational community, that is welcoming

and inclusive and that assumes an active responsibility for our community and world.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Rev. Kikanza Nuri-Robins (Co-Chair), Tom Peters (Co-Chair), Aubrey Sassoon, Beverly Shoenberger, Olga Felton, and Cassandra Winters. We meet once a month, typically on Sunday after the 11:00 am service.

INTERACTION WITH THE BOARD

The committee works under the intern and the intern under authority of the Developmental Minister and the UCCSM Board of Directors. The committee interacts indirectly with the board as the Ministerial Intern is required to attend the board meetings.

COMMITTEE GOALS

- Arrange for greeting and farewell receptions for the Ministerial Intern.
- Help the Ministerial Intern communicate needs and progress to the congregation and invite feedback from committees and members at large, and promote relationship with congregation.
- Help the chair of the Intern Committee and work in conjunction with the Ministerial Intern and the Supervising Minister to complete the mid-term and final evaluations in accordance with the requirements set out by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.
- Help the Ministerial Intern complete and turn in the Learning and Serving Covenant (LSC) to the Ministerial Credentialing Director at the UUA.
- Help the Ministerial Intern complete the goals listed in the LSC, including providing accountability.
- Help the Ministerial Intern in their efforts to gain experience serving the UU faith in the larger community. Help the Ministerial Intern in their efforts to gain experience in worship skills by preaching in neighboring congregations.
- Encourage the Ministerial Intern to get experience in collegial settings. Offer a safe and transformational Internship Experience.

COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Arranged a meet and greet reception for the Ministerial Intern and congregation. Helped arrange housing to keep within Robin's budget.
- Set up Google Drive training and a space to share communication between members and Robin.
- Helped the Ministerial Intern communicate needs and progress to the congregation and invite feedback from members of the congregation.
- Video recorded Robin's sermons for training purposes.
- Provided feedback for Robin on a wide variety of issues that informed the overall internship and a mid-term evaluation.
- Set up a "Process Observation" to help us keep on task for effective meetings and action items. Developed a charter for the committee.
- Discussed aspects of the LSC specific to our congregation.
- Set-up communication with administrative staff for pulpit announcements as well as announcements in the order of service and church newsletter.
- Helped facilitate interaction with Robin and the various members of the congregation and committees associated with the flow of money in our church for a report later presented to the board.
- Assisted Robin in her efforts to gain more experience serving the UU faith in the larger community via introductions and accompanying her to events in the LA area.

In meetings starting in 2019, our meeting agendas asked Robin to report on the seven competencies for discussion and feedback:

1. Worship/Rites of Passage
2. Pastoral Care

3. Spiritual Development
4. Social Justice
5. Administration
6. Larger UU Faith
7. Leading the Faith into the Future

General Observation

The committee enjoyed working with Robin throughout the year. Robin consistently displayed a well-balanced degree of professionalism, enthusiasm, and kindness, as well as being open to constructive criticism and feedback.

See also: Intern Minister Robin Stillwater.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

Rebecca Crawford, Chair

The purpose of the Music Committee is to work with the Music Director, the Minister, and the congregation to support the Music Program. We raise funds to support our program, create special events for our community and the larger community, and provide communication and education about our traditional, quality music program.

The Music Committee members are: Saunder Choi, Director of Music and Choir Director; Rebecca Crawford, Chair; Cindy Kelly; Kim Miller, assistant; Leslie Beauvais, fund raising, concerts, and talent; Diana Spears, community outreach; Barbara Andres and Kelly Hatfield, hospitality for Dining for Dollars; and Lars Kjeseth, sustainability of the music program. Rima Snyder is the music catalog librarian.

Our Goals Are to:

1. Increase visibility.
2. Provide more help with cataloging and storing of music.
3. Cultivate a list of guest artists.
4. Raise money for the Music Fund.
5. Support musical events.
6. Continue our outreach to the community.
7. Add new members to our committee.

INCREASE VISIBILITY: The Music Committee prepares posters, flyers, and programs for musical events, and writes copy for the Newsletter, Online Newsletter, and Order of Service each month. We also provide copy for newspapers and for our church Facebook page. We maintain two bulletin boards in the Music Room for showcasing our choir and posting events.

MAINTAIN AND CATALOG MUSIC: Under the direction of our Director of Music Saunder Choi and Choir member Rima Snyder, our very valuable collection of music is cataloged and saved. Each member of the choir is given a number and has a file in which copies of the sheet music are placed. This allows for individuals to use the same copy – with all its notations. Collection and refiling are handled by Norb Gallery, Diane Fletcher-Hoppe, and Kim Miller.

CULTIVATE A LIST OF GUEST ARTISTS: Under the direction of Leslie Beauvais, we have started to reach out to people within and outside the church who would like to perform at services and events. She is compiling a list of these performers.

RAISING MONEY TO SUPPORT OUR MUSIC PROGRAM: The committee raises money to support the music ministry. The reason for this is that the amount of money allocated by the Operating Budget of the church does not fully pay for our section leaders, our



music purchases, or for the upkeep of two pianos, the organ, and a keyboard, or to sponsor guest musicians, or for other ongoing support for the music ministry.

FUNDRAISERS: Leslie Beauvais organized the very delightful “Leslie and Friends” held on April 14. The committee provided organizational support to Leslie by making flyers and programs for the concert, organizing hospitality for the performers, and providing people to receive donations at the door.

SUPPORT FOR MUSICAL EVENTS AT THE CHURCH:

- The committee twice organized the sponsorship of Second Sunday Supper and Singing of Carols in December.
- We co-sponsored, with Faith and Action and the Green Committee, the Roy Zimmerman Concert on December 9, by advertising and collecting money.
- The committee will also support the choir’s Dining for Dollars Concert on June 8 and provide refreshments afterward.

OUTREACH TO THE COMMUNITY:

- A few members and friends of the choir annually sing Christmas carols at nearby nursing homes. If you are interested in caroling, please talk with Cindy Kelly.

See also: Director of Music Saunder Choi.

NEWSLETTER TEAM

In Spring 2018 the Newsletter Team did an evaluation of the costs and benefits of the 12-page monthly printed church newsletter to assess for time and cost efficiencies.

• **COST:** The team tracked our time and found that more than 100 hours per month were invested to produce the newsletter, with time donated by highly skilled professional writers, editors, and designers. This represented the largest contribution of volunteer time outside of Sunday morning activities.

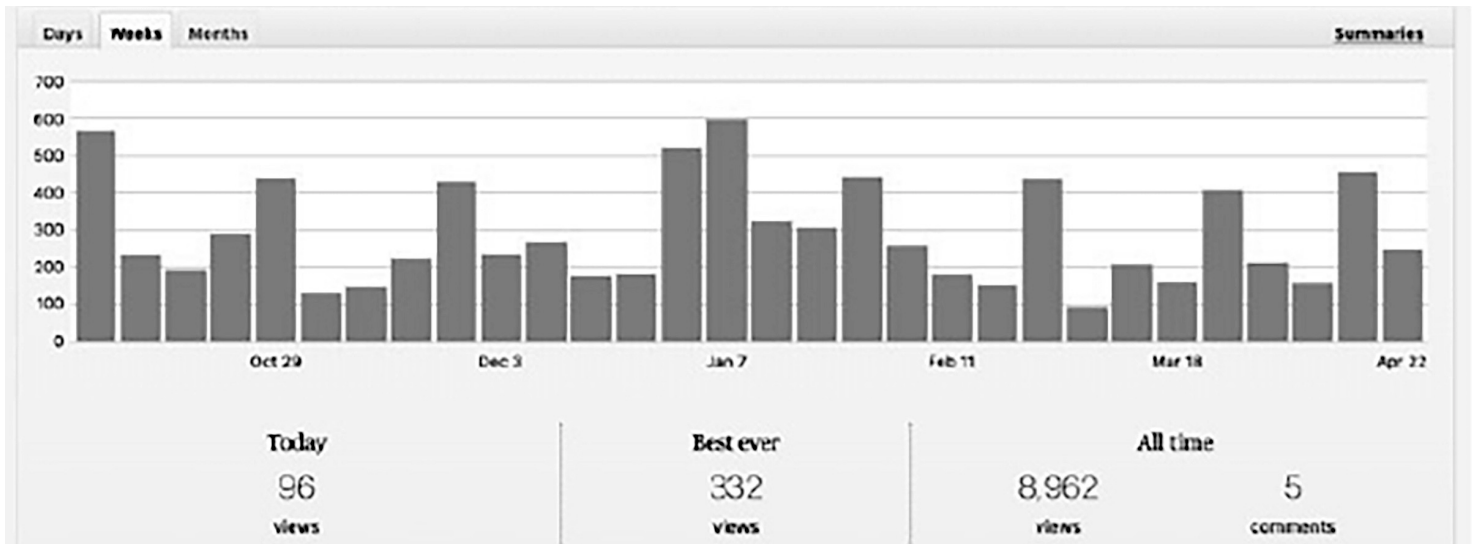
• **UTILIZATION:** The analysis found that less than half of pledging households (about 120) received the monthly newsletter by mail, and less than 20% received it by accessing it online during the month in which it was published.

Based on this analysis, the Communications Team and Newsletter Team requested an increase in the budget in order to mail the full-color newsletter to each congregant household and Friends of the church. The intent was to touch members when they are not at church, motivate them to come to church, and to invite them to church activities. A lower-cost alternative of mailing a black-and-white version to all member households and Friends was also suggested. Any recipient would be welcome to opt out of the mailed newsletter.

Neither request was approved for inclusion in the 2018-2019 church budget.

In September 2018 we began to migrate the newsletter content to an online format at news.uusm.org. Editors began using the highly flexible free WordPress content management system. The





online newsletter has many advantages over a printed version:

- It can be updated daily, so changes can be made if a time or room changes.
- Members and Friends can easily subscribe to receive notifications of articles as they are published to stay up-to-date with the latest news.
- Articles can be added as they are written and don't have to wait up to six weeks for publication, as they did when the printed newsletter was published monthly.
- An unlimited number of articles can be posted with no space restrictions or limit on photos.
- A variety of people can post and edit articles, reducing pressure on editors.
- Repetitive design work is reduced. The online newsletter required one design process, and then each article follows a standard format.
- A monthly email Newsletter Digest containing five or six lead articles highlights new content of the online newsletter.
- Thursday Announcements and other messages emailed to the congregation by the office — as well as articles at uusm.org — include links to articles at news.uusm.org, providing up-to-date and consistent information, and vice versa.

During the Fall months, a small team worked to create, print, and mail a one-page Newsletter Digest to those who previously received the printed newsletter, to assist in the transition to a digital format.

Since the beginning of 2019, the newsletter has been available only as an online publication, with a consistent readership. Since launching last September, the site has been viewed 9000 times, with a one-day high of 332 views.

news.uusm.org views per week, September to April
 (See chart above)

In early 2019 Abby Arnold, editor-in-chief since May 2017, resigned from that role, and the Newsletter Team leadership role was redefined slightly to replace the editor-in-chief with a managing editor (currently co-held by Pam Teplitz and Barbara Andres). The entire congregation, and the Newsletter Team in particular, is very grateful to Abby for shepherding us through many difficult transitions with love and patience.

Newsletter Team members were assigned to various categories of postings; e.g. Minister's blog and upcoming services summary, Lifespan Religious Exploration (LRE) program offerings and updates, Board of Directors and governance news, Art Wall and other events, Peace and Social Justice events and endeavors, etc. Newsletter Team members were also trained on editing and

publishing in WordPress, the platform on which the newsletter site is built. As part of the Communications Team, the Newsletter Team continues to coordinate with talented Webmaster Elizabeth Fuller, who manages the extensive content of the congregation's primary website, uusm.org.

The result is a collaborative, time-efficient production with the following goal: To foster a shared sense of community, identity, and purpose at our church by connecting members to programs and events, letting visitors to the church know about events and ministries to which they can contribute their talents, and introducing UUSM to the larger community. Our guiding principles are the Unitarian Universalist Seven Principles and the UUSM Church Covenant.

The Newsletter Team meets quarterly or as needed. We welcome new members, especially those with writing, editing, or WordPress expertise. Contact us at newsletter@uusm.org.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Members of the Nominating Committee are:

- Linda van Ligten, Chair from August 2018 to March 25, 2019;
- Pat Gomez, Chair beginning April 1, 2019;
- Barbara Gibbs, Kikanza Nuri-Robins, Liza Cranis, and Nalani Santiago.

The Nominating Committee consists of six members, each serving a staggered three-year term. Each year two members rotate off the committee and two new members are elected by the congregation. Members who complete a three-year term may be re-elected for a subsequent three-year term. Committee members select their Chair.

The responsibilities of the Nominating Committee include:

- Creating a slate of nominees to be elected at the Annual Meeting.
- Identifying potential leadership candidates from among the voting members of the congregation for open positions on the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee. Nominees are elected by the congregation at the annual meeting held in May.
- Assisting the board in filling positions on the board and Nominating Committee that may be vacated during the church year.
- In any year that a Ministerial Search Committee is to be formed, creating a full slate of candidates for election.
- Recommending to the board, for ratification, qualified church members to serve on the Personnel, Investment, and Finance Committees as positions are vacated.

The focus of the Nominating Committee's work this year has

been to get to know more church members and to strengthen existing connections in order to build a strong pool of potential leaders that ensures our congregation's ability to live up to UUSM's Mission Statement. Each committee member is committed to making time to seek out members of our church community whom they do not know, or do not know well, and spend time getting to know them and learning how they may wish to serve the congregation.

The Nominating Committee's 2018-19 accomplishments are:

- Created its covenant.
- Began working on its charter.
- Created a tentative committee work schedule for the 2019-20 church year.
 - Recommended that the board appoint Carl Hoppe, Garland Allen, and Stephen White to the Investment Committee to fill vacated positions.
 - Put together a full slate of qualified nominees for the 2019-20 church year for the Board of Directors and Nominating Committee; this included:
 1. The current President, Vice President, and Secretary for a second one-year term each.
 2. Vilma Ortiz as Treasurer to replace Cheryl Sims, who is stepping down at the end of the current church year.
 3. Abby Arnold and Barbara Andres to replace Board Members-at-Large Margot Page and Ed Brand, who are stepping down at the end of the current church year.
 4. Two new members of the Nominating Committee to replace Barbara Gibbs and Liza Cranis, who are completing their three-year terms.
 - The Committee is currently searching for a candidate for the Finance Committee to replace Steven DePaul, who will step down at the end of the current church year.



PASTORAL CARE PROGRAM

Rev. Greg Ward

The Pastoral Care Program helps provide care and attention to members of the church in accordance with the implicit mission for the church to love and respond to one another in times of need. Beyond this goal, the Pastoral Care Program is intended to activate compassionate and responsive leadership within the congregation as a whole.

COMPONENTS AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE PROGRAM:

MINISTERIAL TEAM: Rev. Greg Ward, Robin Stillwater, and Rev. Kikanza Nuri-Robins, consulting.

PASTORAL ASSOCIATES' TEAM: Bettye Barclay (Chair); Jo An Peters, and Karen Hsu Patterson.

CARE RING TEAM: Linda van Ligten (Coordinator); Rev. Greg Ward, Robin Stillwater, Greg Wood, Beverly Alison, Helen Brown, Tom Ahern, and Katie Malich. In addition, the following people network with our Care Ring Team, offer outreach, and share

feedback with the Coordinator: Kim Andres, Rick Teplitz, Larry Weiner, Sylvia Young, Alison Kendall, and Amy Lacombe.

MEETINGS:

Pastoral Associates meet on the 1st Tuesday of the month from 7:00 to 8:30 pm; the meetings are confidential.

The Care Ring Team meets on the 1st Wednesday of the month from 1:15 to 2:30 pm; meetings are open and information is sensitive but not confidential.

FOCUS OF THE 2018-19 YEAR:

The Pastoral Care Program has now been operational within UUSM for over a year. All three components of this program work together to fulfill our on-going goals:

- To coordinate the efforts of the three basic areas of the Pastoral Care Program: (1) Ministers; (2) Pastoral Care Associates; (3) Care Ring Team.

TO CLARIFY THAT THE MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR A PASTORAL CARE PROGRAM INVOLVE:

1. Support and training for the various components;
 2. Coordination of the components working together;
 3. Triage and personal care in times of crisis (death and/or significant loss or trauma);
 4. Rites of passage coordination (memorials, etc.).
- To offer basic outreach and attention to members of the congregation and to convey that they are loved and their well-being matters.
 - To understand that a Pastoral Care Program for a congregation this size requires everyone's awareness and participation.
 - To support the ongoing work of a Pastoral Associates component which augments and extends the Ministerial outreach by focusing on helping people process with critical transitions in life (change in identity due to loss of loved one, loss of health, change of jobs or lifestyle, etc.).
 - To clarify that none of the people within the three components of the Pastoral Care Program are equipped, trained, or licensed to offer anything in the realm of professional social services or transportation services. The program is intended for – and training is given to – offer care, empathetic attention, and referrals to professional services where appropriate.

REQUESTS FOR CARE CAN BE MADE THROUGH:

1. The pages of the Milestones Book
2. Emails sent to **PASTORALCARE@UUSM.ORG**
3. Requests submitted to the minister, Pastoral Associates members, Care Ring Team members, and/or to the Administrative and Finance Assistant.

GOALS FOR THE 2019-20 YEAR:

- Continue to recruit and employ care-givers who offer outreach to those in need.
- Help convey and offer periodic trainings and resources to all members of the congregation so that, together, we can offer consistent caring outreach to all members on a regular basis.

PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE (PSJ)

Deidre Dietel, Chair

The PSJ has continued its work on behalf of the goals of racial justice, immigrant rights, and labor rights, and in opposition to racial, ethnic and religious bias and repression in the United States and other parts of the world. PSJ is a committee of our congregation's Faith In Action Commission (FIA).

PSJ activities include educational events, among them

speeches, films, and panel discussions, as well as distributing relevant materials at the FIA table in Forbes Hall on Sundays and at various events; and participation in marches, demonstrations, and vigils. In these activities it often collaborates with other groups, particularly Clergy and Laity for Economic Justice (CLUE), the Committee for Racial Justice (CRJ), and Organizing for Action (OFA). The Committee anticipates that it will continue to address these and related issues in the coming year.

RACIAL JUSTICE: In July, our support of the Anaheim 3 (who were arrested in February 2016 when they protested a KKK rally) concluded with a rally and court support when a plea deal was reached on July 9th. In October and November, along with other UU congregations across the country, we phone banked in support of Florida's Voting Restoration Act for formerly incarcerated workers – which was passed. Our Black Lives Matter banner was defaced, and in January we replaced it with a larger one that included the updated “Side with Love” graphics. After three days it was cut down and stolen. We currently have two feather banners that are displayed outside during services, a provision until the banner can be mounted in a less vulnerable location. In January, we hosted a screening of “The Great White Hoax: Donald Trump and the Politics of Race and Class in America.” In February with Adult RE we co-sponsored a program on the UU Common Read, *White Fragility*, by Robin DiAngelo; this discussion was led by Audrey Lyness and Roberta Frye. In March we co-hosted a screening of “Humanitas” with AAHS, which was introduced by the filmmaker Je Hooper, a leader-in-training with the American Ethical Union.

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS: In December we answered the call of UUSC and made cards with messages of welcome for immigrant families to decorate their partner shelters. PSJ hosted former Church accompanist, Louis Durra, who discussed his experience working with refugees in France.

LABOR AND OTHER ISSUES: The evening of September's Second Sunday Supper we hosted Estee Chandler, founder of the LA chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace. She introduced and led a discussion of the documentary “Occupation of the American Mind: Israel's Public Relations War in the United States.” In October we partnered with the League of Women Voters for a non-partisan presentation about the November ballot initiatives. We once again hosted Roy Zimmerman's politically humorous music after December's Second Sunday Supper.

January brought the LAUSD teachers' strike. For six days we walked picket lines, rallied, and brought supplies and support to the teachers in our neighborhoods. In March and April, we partnered with Adult RE and the Green Committee to lead a three-part discussion on the UUA Common Read: *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Environment*, edited by Manish Mishra-Marzetti and Jennifer Nordstrom. PSJ continued to join CLUE and other community supporters to picket with workers struggling for fair treatment at Le Merigot hotel. Besides continuing their fight for a contract, they have spearheaded a campaign for a city ordinance on workers' safety. We are currently working to support this campaign and inform the congregation about the proposed ordinance.

OTHER PROJECTS: In July PSJ hosted our first Dining 4 Dollars fundraiser and it was successful. We plan to host another one in September 2019. We are currently planning our annual contingent of the LA Pride Parade in West Hollywood which is coming soon, on Sunday, June 9th.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee meets regularly to address personnel issues, oversee staff hiring, and review and revise personnel policies. In the past year, UUSM welcomed three new staff members: Saunder Choi, Director of Music; Cyndee Hayes, Administrative and Financial Assistant; and Diego Andres, Communication Coordinator. In the coming year, the committee will work with staff and committees to recruit and hire a Director of Religious Education.

Current Committee members are Garland Allen, Alan Brunell (Chair), Rebecca Crawford, Sylvia Young, plus the Rev. Greg Ward, non-voting member.

Personnel Committee members are selected by Nominating Committee and ratified by the Board of Directors. The chairperson is selected by the committee and ratified by the board. The committee must have at least four standing members, two of whom shall be or have been members of the board.

Personnel Committee functions also include making recommendations to and advising the board about personnel policies and procedures and about personnel issues regarding the Church paid staff and ministers; reviewing and recommending revisions of the job descriptions and employment agreements; reviewing and recommending changes in the compensation for all paid staff and ministers; and reviewing complaints, questions, or disputes from the Church paid staff or from members of the Congregation. We are happy to get questions from church members; if you have questions, please email Alan Brunell.



RIGHT RELATIONS TEAM (RRT)

Aubrey Sassoon and Sue Stoyanoff, Co-chairs

The congregation voted at the 2018 Annual Meeting to adopt the Congregational Covenant of Right Relations. At that point, the Right Relations Team (RRT) shifted its focus toward activities to empower individuals to live into the Covenant, to understand that conflict is inevitable, and to understand the means to maintain supportive and respectful relationships with others in the congregation, especially when in disagreement or conflict.

Committee Member's Names and Roles:

The delegation of duties in the RRT has been purposefully fluid to ensure that members do not become overly burdened. Sue Stoyanoff and Vilma Ortiz are our Co-Chairs, Audrey Lyness acts as our facilitator, and Cassie Winters, Linda van Ligten, and Aubrey Sassoon are our general members.

This Year's Goals and Achievements:

As individuals and as a church community, we have changed since we first began the Right Relations process in 2016. Together we have grown through opportunities to listen to one another and to understand and respect each other's differing thoughts and opinions. The RRT continues to evolve in the ways we lead and take part in our community's growth by holding space for community members to honor their own development in living into our Congregational Covenant of Right Relations.

The RRT has continued to meet twice a month. Rev. Greg Ward and Robin Stillwater joined us once a month. RRT members attended board meetings and consulted with Board President Jackie Weber on matters relating to RR.



In 2018-19 we convened or participated in:

- Four Requests for Right Relations assistance to support direct communications.
- One RRT Listening Circle, on September 30.
- One RRT Covenant Workshop, on October 14, partnering with the Pastoral Care Associates.
- For Rev. Greg’s “UUSM History Part 2” program, on January 6, RRT provided process observation and facilitated conversation about the Congregational Covenant of Right Relations.
- RRT’s day-long retreat, on January 26, with the theme of “Trust Building – From Braving Discomfort to Storming.” Rev. Greg and Robin Stillwater joined us.
- For Rev. Greg’s “Braving Insight” meeting on February 3, RRT provided process observation.
- RRT and the board’s “Big Rock #3 Meeting” on February 12 explored the relationship between the two groups.
- RRT “Intergroup Dialogue” on March 3 addressed what it means to belong to community.
- Regional Healthy Congregations Team meeting, on April 11: three RRT members participated in this Zoom meeting facilitated by the Rev. Tandi Rogers of the UUA’s Pacific Western Region.
- RRT Congregational Evaluation of the work of the RRT (April-May 2019).

Goals for 2019-20:

We continue to view the role of the RRT as evolving to meet the current and on-going needs of our community. With the resignations of the Rev. Greg Ward and our DRE Kathleen Hogue, we are aware of heightened emotions of loss, sadness, anger, and abandonment. We will convene Listening Circles through the summer, offering opportunities to communicate feelings in safe, accepting gatherings.

We will use responses to our survey to guide us to better meet the hopes and needs of our community.

We plan to recruit new members of the RRT, to strengthen the Team.

Right Relations Team members: Audrey Lyness, Vilma Ortiz (Co-Chair), Linda van Ligten, Cassandra Winters

SCIENCE NON-FICTION BOOK GROUP

Rebecca Crawford

The Science Non-Fiction Book Group meets once a month, on the third Tuesday, to discuss a thought-provoking array of science-related books, including biography and history of science. Some of the list from 2018-19 includes: *Dark Territory: The Secret History of Cyber War*, by Fred Kaplan; *Lab Girl: A Story of Trees, Science and Love*, by Hope Jahren; *The Big Ones: How Natural Disasters Have Shaped Us (and What We Can Do About Them)*, by Lucy Jones; *The Confidence Game: Why We Fall For It...Every Time*, by Maria Konnikova; *The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S. Standard of Living Since the Civil War*, by Robert J. Gordon; *How to Clone a Mammoth: The Science of De-Extinction*, by Beth Shapiro; and *Black Hole Blues and Other Songs from Outer Space*, by Janna Levin. All are welcome.

SECOND SUNDAY SUPPER COMMITTEE

Beth Rendeiro, Chair

In 2008, during some difficult financial times for many in our community, Ron Crane suggested hosting a warm, nutritious meal once a month for all who wished to attend. A beloved tradition was born and became known as Second Sunday Supper. For a few years, Ron and his partner, John Fels, were the primary hosts. Soon Sue Bickford was always present, and after that Alan and Amy Brunell took over for a few years. Next came Kate Schlesinger who oversaw the monthly event for a year or two, then I took it on in my role as co-chair of Membership for two years. When I stepped down, Melinda Ewen, Barbara Gibbs, and Rhonda Peacock stepped in for a year, followed by Kim Miller who kindly and bravely made it happen in the void of no one else volunteering.

It became apparent a year ago that Kim had plenty on her plate, so I offered to organize a committee of dedicated volunteers who would see to it that this important, inclusive community event continued to be part of our experience together. So, as you can tell, it takes a village, people, and I am deeply grateful to the group who said yes when asked in the past and presently and, hopefully, well into the future. Alan Brunell, Karl Lisovsky, Kim Miller, Linda van Ligten, and I have worked together for a year to join with all of you to assure the continuation of our beloved Second Sunday Suppers. Recently, Amy Brunell and Kathy Cook have joined us and we have a wonderful time together when we plan!

Thank you to this generous, lively, committed group of people who care about welcome, hospitality, and the benefits of breaking bread together.

This year we tried a new approach to hosting and assigned different groups and committees to host each month. And it worked! Overall, every month there were at least six folks, and frequently up to twelve, who were willing to help with publicity, bring entrees, do set-up and tear down and be the hosts for the evening. One of our committee was always present to support and participate.

Beginning now, we are asking each group and committee to let us know which month your group would like to host. We already have some requests on the calendar.

Thank you to Kim Miller who had the brainchild of raising funds to pay people in our congregation to help with the clean-up, which is a big job. If you would like to donate to the Second Sunday Supper clean-up fund (so you don’t have to stay late when it’s your turn to host) please contact me, Beth Rendeiro, or donate here and identify “SSS Clean-up fund” as the recipient:

[HTTPS://WWW.UUSM.ORG/MAKE-A-DONATION](https://www.uusm.org/make-a-donation)

Our goals for the coming year are to increase the numbers of us who bring our own plates and utensils to help with our green goals, to have each month fully covered by hosting groups who have stepped forward and generously offered to host (as opposed to being asked), and to add the hosting of the **THANKSGIVING FEAST** to our committee’s work (of course, still ably overseen by Kathy Cook).

Please be in touch with ideas, offers of help, and if you are interested in helping with clean-up or joining the committee. Thank you for your reading time!





Kit Shaw and Gretchen Goetz, Co-Chairs

The Stewardship Committee's purpose was to plan and organize the annual pledge campaign and be involved in any activity that involves financial stewardship of UUSM. Also, to communicate with the congregation about their pledge, the importance of their financial support, and to thank them.

Committee members: Kit Shaw, co-chair; Gretchen Goetz, co-chair; Rev. Greg Ward, advisor member; Cindy Kelly and Robin Doyno, members. Assistance was also provided by Sarah Robson (Institutionalizing a Ministry of Generosity Team, IMG), Olga Felton (IMG), Intern Minister Robin Stillwater, our Board of Directors, Church Administrator Nurit Gordon, and Administrative and Financial Assistant Nancy Thompson. Without this team effort, the pledge campaign would not have been possible.

The committee's focus was to plan, organize, and implement the annual pledge campaign. This year, the pledge year was changed to align with the church budget fiscal year (previously, pledges were raised and collected according to the calendar year). Thus, the pledge campaign was designed to run from March 3 to 24, in order to have results for the Finance Committee and Board of Directors to develop a recommended budget for presentation at the annual meeting in May.

The pledge drive theme was **"THIS IS WHAT GENEROSITY LOOKS LIKE..."** Under Rev. Greg's guidance, we developed a campaign to recruit "Connectors" to go out and meet one-on-one with members and friends of the congregation. Connectors asked the following questions:

- What breaks your heart about the world right now?
- What gives you hope?
- Who taught you about generosity? (With what were they generous?)
- How do you carry forth that generosity and what is it that you hope people see in your examples?

Approximately 35 Connectors were recruited between late January and mid-February. Rev. Greg and Robin Stillwater held a trio of three-hour training sessions to train all of the Connectors. Connectors were assigned three to five pledging units to contact for one-on-one conversations.

In addition to one-on-one conversations, there was an incentivizing campaign for members to raise their pledges. For a second year, pledges were matched using funds from the Sustainability Fund (*see Sustainability Pastoral Letter*), if they met the following criteria:

- Anyone who increased their pledge by at least 10% will have their increase matched up to \$500.
- Anyone who increased their pledge by 20% will have their increase matched up to \$1000.
- Anyone pledging below the target average (\$1700) who increased their pledge to be at or above our \$1700 will have their increase matched up to \$1000.

The pledge campaign kick-off began with a church-wide luncheon on March 3. Minister Emeritus Ernie Pipes and longtime

member Helen Brown attended the festive event and spoke as Honorary Chairs of the pledge drive.

The summary of the pledge drive is as follows (as of April 9):

- Increased pledges: 85
- Same pledge as last year: 36
- Decreased pledges: 22
- New pledges: 5
- Matching dollars from the Sustainability Fund: \$27,700

The Stewardship Committee sent personal thank-you notes to all who pledged, and on April 5 hosted a thank-you dinner for all Connectors and solicited their comments. The committee's goals for next year include continuing to make one-on-one connections with members and friends of the congregation.

SUPER SENIORS

Helen Brown

In Super Seniors we share friendship and information about helpful resources for those over 80 years of age. Super Seniors have had a year of various illnesses resulting in many being unable to attend the monthly Sunday morning group. We continue to see one another, however, on Fridays in Bruno Lacombe's exercise group whenever possible.

Why don't you join us? Please contact Helen Brown by phone for more about this group.

WORSHIP ASSOCIATES

Rev. Greg Ward

PURPOSE OF THE WORSHIP ASSOCIATES' TEAM:

The Worship Associates exist to:

1. produce consistent high-quality worship which integrates inspiration, ideas, music, and learning to challenge UCCSM Members and Friends to transform and grow into the best relationship with self, others, and the world;
2. offer diverse programming from a variety of perspectives including race, class, age, sexuality, gender, cultural, intelligences, social and experiential framework; and
3. develop leadership and organization skills and abilities.

The Worship Associates' Team reports to the Minister.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE WORSHIP ASSOCIATES' TEAM:

Worship Associates Reports to Lead Developmental Minister.
MINISTERIAL CONSULTANT: Rev. Kikanza Nuri-Robins.

WORSHIP ASSOCIATES' EXECUTIVE TEAM (OUTGOING): Abby Arnold and Margot Page; (incoming) Dorothy Steinicke, Rima Snyder; Rev. Kikanza Nuri-Robins serves with the Developmental Minister on the Executive Team.

2ND YEAR WORSHIP ASSOCIATES: Leon Henderson-MacLennan, James Witker, Cassie Winters.

1ST YEAR WORSHIP ASSOCIATES: Sue Bickford, Natalie Kahn, Alison Kendall, Aubrey Sassoon.

We meet the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at the church.

The Worship Calendar with all the information for upcoming services, coordinated with major church events, music, RE programs, etc. can be found at:

[HTTPS://DOCS.GOOGLE.COM/SPREADSHEETS/D/1C7CNYEM_HVV9QDZKXEUBKSKSJUIZGDJLUOWE8PM25P8/EDIT#GID=1406220120](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1C7CNYEM_HVV9QDZKXEUBKSKSJUIZGDJLUOWE8PM25P8/edit?gid=1406220120)

Focus of the 2018-19 Year:

The Worship Associates is still a new program here. We set a

significant number of goals for this, our second, year:

- Demonstrating succession of leadership with four members rotating off and four new members coming on.
- Demonstrating a succession in Executive Leadership (monitoring calendar of services, assigning mentors to new members, planning monthly meetings and annual retreats).
- Maintaining a platform of tools that provide the guidelines and structure allowing each Worship Associate to understand the liturgy and to design, develop, and produce quality worship programming.
- Maintaining a tiered organizational structure to encourage continual learning and cultivate leadership throughout the three-year commitment of being a Worship Associate.
- Encouraging ways in which the energy produced in worship could channel into other vital areas of the church including into RE, Social Justice, Music, Stewardship, Adult Learning, and vision.
- Encourage the Worship Associates' Team to continue with the strong lay-led Summer Worship Services that are comparable in quality to the services presented by ordained clergy.
- To continue consistent structure and quality in order to earn the congregation's respect and trust.
- To have fun.

The Worship Associates Program has been successful in its second full year. The program continues to exceed expectations on all the goals listed above.

Goals for the 2019-20 Year:

- Continue to increase the diversity – especially in race, age, gender, and multicultural awareness.
- To have another successful year of welcoming new WAs and celebrating retiring WAs.
- To increase our ability to successful channel energy from worship into other church events and programming.

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP

Robin Stillwater (Ministerial Intern)

The Young Adults Group exists to:

1. Encourage and inspire fellowship among Young Adults in the church community, giving them a place where they feel welcome and encouraged.
2. Offer diversity and perspective to the church through a group that can take on things like worship services and activities.
3. Develop leadership and organization skills and abilities.

The Young Adults currently report to Intern Minister Robin Stillwater.

MEMBERS: This new program has a constantly changing roster. At the time of this report, Young Adults members are: Alyssa Wood, Annalivia Martin-Straw, Aubrey Sassoon, Carol P, Denney Pham, Emily Hero, Hannah DeBoer, Jimmy Ranieri, John Edwards, Leo Forest, Matthew Berlin, Michael Monte, Olivia Lea, Patrick Tape-Jones, Sunni Pavlovic, Jake Brunell, Rachel Greenfield, Gabriela Foreman, Michael Monte, Frankie Greek, Alex Emmet, Haley Paddock, Elijah Barone, and "Jessie." While not all of these people come to every meeting or service, they are on the email list and have been active in the past few months.

MEETINGS: We meet the fourth Sunday of the month from 12:30 to 2:00 at either the church or a local brunch spot. Attendance at brunch varies between 4 to 15 people. We have a yearly retreat, which will happen on May 4th.

Focus of the 2018-19 Year:

Young Adults is a brand-new program at UUSM. We had a significant number of goals for our first year:

- Build a program that begins with being led by the Intern

Minister.

- Gain members, having enough people interested that we can have a significant meeting each month.
- Meet at least once a month to go to brunch.
- Have a retreat at least once a year on a non-Sunday, allowing members to get to know each other better.
- Before the Intern Minister leaves, have a group that can take over leadership and continue the program.
- Increase Young Adults being recognized and welcomed in the church when they attend.
- Have fun together.

The Young Adults Program has been mostly successful in its first full year. The program has absolutely exceeded expectations in interest, and it remains to be seen whether it will be able to successfully continue after the Intern Minister leaves. However, it is a group of diverse, powerful, and intelligent members. There is every hope for many more brunches to come.

Goals for the 2019-20 Year:

- Have an organizationally self-sustaining program, or minimal support from the rest of the congregation.
- Have funding in the budget for brunches and to assist with the retreat.
- Continue to increase membership, especially how many Young Adults come each month to brunch.
- Increase Young Adult attendance and participation in weekly worship services.
- Plan and implement a retreat at least once a year.



*Love
and
Justice*



ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF PROGRAMS

COMMITTEE OR TITLE	PAGE NUMBER
AAHS (Agnostics, Atheists, Humanists, Secularists and Skeptics).....	10
Adult Personal and Spiritual Exploration (APSE) (see LRE)	16
Board of Directors (see President Jacki Weber)	6
Camp de Benneville Pines Weekend	11
Care Ring (see Pastoral Care Program).....	23
Choir (see Director of Music Saunder Choi)	7
Church Administrator Nurit Gordon	9
Coffee Committee	11
Communications Team (Comm Team)	12
Developmental Minister Rev. Greg Ward	5
Dining for Dollars (D4\$).....	12
Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) Kathleen R. Hogue	7
Director of Music Saunder Choi	7
Disability Support Group (DSG).....	12
Facilities Development and Maintenance Committee (FDMC)	12
Faith In Action Commission (FIA).....	13
Fiction Reading Group	13
Finance Committee (see Treasurer Cheryl Sims).....	6
Garden of Eternity Committee	14
Green Living Committee.....	14
Greeters and Welcoming Table (see Membership Committee)	19
Hunger Task Force / Lunches for Bunches	14
Intern Minister Robin Stillwater	8
Interweave (see Faith In Action)	13
Investment Committee.....	14
Lifespan Religious Exploration Committee (LRE)	15
Membership Committee	19
Men's Discussion Group	20
Minister (see Developmental Minister Rev. Greg Ward).....	5
Ministerial Intern Committee	20
Music Committee	21
Newsletter Team.....	21
Nominating Committee.....	22
Our Whole Lives Program (OWL) (see LRE)	18
Pastoral Care Program	23
Peace and Social Justice Committee (PSJ).....	23
Personnel Committee.....	24
President Jacki Weber	6
Right Relations Team (RRT)	24
Religious Exploration (RE) for Children and Youth (see LRE).....	18
Religious Exploration for Adults (see LRE)	16
Science Non-Fiction Book Group	25
Second Sunday Supper Committee.....	25
Stewardship Committee	26
Super Seniors.....	26
Treasurer Cheryl Sims; Finance Committee.....	6
Ushering Committee (see Membership Committee).....	19
Worship Associates	26
Young Adults Group	27

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SANTA MONICA

1260 Eighteenth Street
Santa Monica, CA 90404



Phone: 310-829-5436

Fax: 310-998-9181

E-mail: office@uusm.org

Web: www.uusm.org

Newsletter: news.uusm.org



REPORT ON PROGRAMS

2018-19

