



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH *of Santa Monica*



REPORT ON PROGRAMS

**Fiscal Year
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022**

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REPORT ON PROGRAMS

2021-22

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LEADERSHIP

2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Beth Brownlie
Vice President..... Eileen McCormack
Secretary..... Larry Weiner
Treasurer..... Vilma Ortiz
Past President Jacki Weber
Member at Large Abby Arnold
Member at Large Norm Richey
Member at Large Linda van Ligten
Member at Large Mike Monte

2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Eileen McCormack
Vice President..... Norm Richey
Secretary..... Larry Weiner
Treasurer..... Vilma Ortiz
Past President Beth Brownlie
Member at Large Siobhan Braybrook
Member at Large Linda van Ligten
Member at Large Abby Arnold
Member at Large Mike Monte

STAFF

Developmental Minister.....Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae
Minister Emerita..... Rev. Judith E. Meyer
Director of Music..... Saunder Choi
Accompanist..... Ryan Humphrey
Choir Section Leaders..... Jyvonne Haskin,
Chloe Vaught, David Peterson,
Kion Hadeiri
Church Administrator.....Nurit Gordon
Administrative and Financial
AssistantCyndee Hayes
Audio Video Technician.....Mia Bringas
Communications Coordinator.....Sibylla Nash (Esther Chase)
SextonsKevin Roller and
Thomas Ahern

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

2020-2021	2021-2022
Barbara Kernochan	Karl Lisovsky
Karl Lisovsky	Sheila Cummins
Sheila Cummins	Dan Patterson
Natalie Kahn	Teresa Castelli
Dan Patterson	Wendi Gladstone

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 and the Pacific Western Region 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 2021-2022



DEVELOPMENTAL MINISTER REV. JEREMIAH LAL SHAHBAZ KALENDAE

When this church year began 10 months ago, we had just concluded a virtual GLAM Summer Road Trip to our sibling congregations around Los Angeles and we were busy transforming our sanctuary so that we could begin livestreaming our services from the sanctuary. Our Spirit-Level Grant and your generosity provided \$20,000 so that we could rewire our audio system, install two cameras, a new speaker system, hang microphones, and purchase the computers, sound boards, and other technology to evolve from offering pre-recorded services to offering live services following various health and safety protocols. A tremendous amount of work by our staff, volunteer leaders and consultants went into installing our technological infrastructure and we spent months once again learning a new way to offer worship. The leadership of Saunder Choi and Aubrey Sassoon and others were critical to this endeavor. We hired a new Audio-Visual Manager at the beginning of the year to help to provide the expertise, quality, and consistency we needed and embarked upon the second major change in our worship life following a year and a half of creating virtual worship.

This was our third church year dealing with the uncertainties, anxieties, stress, and loss brought into our lives by the global pandemic. Despite the dire circumstances we were facing, we have continued to grow and transform ourselves as a beloved community with the leadership of our amazing Board of Directors, our talented staff, and our many exceptional congregational leaders and committed members. I would like to especially thank our Presidential Team—Beth Brownlie, Eileen McCormack, and Jacki Weber — for providing the non-anxious and resilient leadership we needed to care for our beloved community in this difficult period and to continue to make

progress in our Developmental Ministry objectives.

One of the major Developmental Ministry objectives we focused on this church year was developing proposed Bylaws for the congregation to consider for adoption at a Special Meeting of the Congregation in the late summer or early autumn. Our Bylaws Refresh Taskforce, which was chaired by Past President Patricia Wright and included Beth Brownlie, John Zinner, Bob Dietz and me, met throughout the year to research best practices, study similar congregations and consult with the UUA to draft the proposed Bylaws. I think our efforts will be helpful not only to our congregation but may also serve as a model for other congregations when they need to update their bylaws. If you weren't able to attend one of our Bylaws Town Halls, I will preach on the Bylaws later this summer and we will continue to offer opportunities for education and feedback before the Special Meeting is called.

Our Intersectional Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Commission continued to make progress this year as we reflected together on how to be more inclusive and how to catalyze personal transformation through contemplative work. To achieve this, we offered another semester of Beloved Conversations—the premiere Anti-Racism program for churches offered by our Unitarian Universalist seminary in Chicago. We've also grown pastorally this year as we merged our Pastoral Associates program and our CareRing Team into a unified Pastoral Care Team. The pandemic really strengthened our capacity to offer spiritual care through a variety of methods—including phone calls, postcards, spiritual counseling, and circle of caring meetings offered throughout the year—and this is all helping us to realize our developmental ministry objectives to strengthen our covenantal relationships and deepen our relationships to each other. Lastly, in terms of our developmental work, we created a Leadership Development Steering Committee that is diligently working to pilot a cutting edge Leadership Development program in a few months. This will be a program for established and emerging leaders to learn and hone leadership skills in the context of UU values and spirituality. We've already recruited some of our most gifted leaders to offer this dynamic program in the fall. Despite the many odds that were against us in this pandemic church year, we are continuing to make significant developmental ministry progress.

Beyond the work of developmental ministry, we've continued to fulfill our mission through offering liberal religious worship and attending to the many regular activities of church life. Our worship life was vibrant and engaging even as we navigated multiple modes of offering worship again this year. We invited a variety of guest preachers and continued to utilize theme-based ministry to facilitate spiritual deepening through a common consideration of important spiritual themes each month. The Rev. Dr. Kikanza Nuri-Robin's leadership of our Worship Associates program and her nearly monthly preaching schedule brought added excellence

to the congregation's worship life. I have continued to offer worship services that are designed to facilitate our developmental ministry work by grounding us in Unitarian Universalist identity, Principles, traditions, and practices and by expanding our appreciation of different religious cultures and sources of faith. I've also worked to bring us intersectional, anti-racist, and counter oppressive ministry through the varied topics we consider on Sunday



mornings. This year, we witnessed our extraordinary music ministry return to our sanctuary and even our choir is once again regularly offering their spirits and talents to our congregation on Sunday mornings. In December, we reopened our building and offered our first Christmas Eve service in our sanctuary and then in the spring we resumed worship with our community in the sanctuary.

In terms of the regular activities of church life, we have continued to grow the capacities of our Communications Team and have developed a social media presence through the use of online messaging and marketing. We've worked to upgrade our website and we are nearing its launch. Our COVID Steering Committee met throughout much of the year to help guide our congregation through the ever changing realities of the pandemic. Our Stewardship Team worked diligently to raise the funds we need to sustain our community. We launched a major capital project to structurally repair the Arizona Entrance foundation, making it safe, more accessible and green, while also enhancing our ability to appreciate our stunningly beautiful Garden of Eternity. I am thrilled to share in this report that our grant application to the Spirit Level Foundation to support this capital project was approved and we've received a matching grant of up to \$50,000 for next church year to offset costs and help preserve more of our emergency reserves! We also gathered for social action as a congregation for the first time since the pandemic began by attending the Bans Off Our Bodies Rally at LA City Hall, and we marched in the Pride Parade in June. My work has also included serving in the wider community as a community representative on the Hospital Ethics Committee at UCLA and recently I've begun working with the Santa Monica Interfaith Council. We've accomplished more as a congregation than I can possibly summarize in an Annual Report but I hope this gives some sense of how much we've achieved in the past 10 months! It is truly

amazing.

Next church year will arrive with many opportunities and a few challenges. We are in the midst of a rebirthing period and we will have to all pull together to realize our hopes and overcome obstacles. One principal opportunity and challenge that faces us is our desire to create a flourishing religious education program for our children and youth in the wake of years of upheaval and the instability of the pandemic. I am happy to share that we have coventated with our beloved Rev. Dr. Kikanza Nuri-Robins and she will serve as a consulting minister next year who will focus on organizational development as it relates to our congregation's capacities to offer excellent religious education for our young people. I don't think we could have a better partner in this critical work that is beyond the scope of developmental ministry. Another principal opportunity and challenge we face is returning to financial health in the midst of significant losses of income caused by the pandemic. The loss of our established in-person fundraising efforts and the loss of most of our renters through the duration of the pandemic caused approximately \$125,000 in annual income to evaporate overnight. We've worked diligently to reduce costs and secure grants, payroll rebates, and other funding sources to offset these losses and we hope the dissipation of the pandemic will mean our normal fundraising activities can resume and our renters will return. We're also going to continue to need the generosity of all of us to help support



our community in this transitional period as it will take time to regain what was loss. Our \$50,000 matching Spirit Level grant will go a long way towards helping us to move with some grace through this period.

Our Developmental work will continue next year and we're excited to hopefully complete the Bylaws Refresh work in the next few months and then begin a congregation-wide effort to discern how the mission and vision of our congregation is evolving with the times. We will also be launching a new Committee for the Ministry to consider our strategic plans in more depth. The leadership development program will also hopefully engage established and emerging leaders throughout the congregation to foster

greater leadership to help us pull through this period of rebirth and renewal as a congregation. We believe the possibilities and opportunities to renew our liberal religious ministry in the new church year are endless and we hope you'll help us to realize and seize them.

Lastly, I conclude with offering the names of the beloved members of our community who died in the past year. Let us honor their spirits and memories, and the spirits and memories of all the members of that mighty cloud of witnesses—our ancestors—that surrounds us now and always.

- Sanna Egan
- Sherman Neusom

Because they are remembered, they live.

Amen.



PRESIDENT BETH BROWNLIE

Another trip around the sun! I hope you and your loved ones are healthy and well AND boosted. We are still in this liminal time...in the midst of a pandemic, moving towards a time when we are in an endemic time of this pandemic. Things look brighter, and we are getting back to working in our offices, traveling, seeing friends and family after two years or more. We are finally getting back to a new normal and getting together in our beloved Sanctuary...seeing each other again. We are trying our best to be gentle with each other as we navigate this liminal time. When do we wear masks, when can we hug each other, who can come to church?

Being president during this time has been hard, transformative, easier, harder, joyful, difficult...and in the end it was ok and I made it through and we made it through together. We saved a lot of Greenhouse emissions, not having to go to the church several times a month for meetings. We found out that we could conduct effective board meetings, virtually. We tried our very best to keep meetings shorter because doing Zoom meetings is really tiring.

In the past two years, we developed a new model of

leadership that I hope will continue. Jacki Weber, myself and Eileen McCormack were a tri-presidency. We took turns running meetings and made decisions collectively. **We made our work lighter because there were many hands.** I am so thankful to my tri-presidency team (Eileen and Jacki) for engaging in this effective model. It made this volunteer position possible for busy working people. I hope future leaders will continue this model, as it makes volunteering so much more possible for busy folks.

Thank you to the team working on the refresh of the bylaws: Patricia Wright, Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae, John Zinner and Bob Dietz. The team will continue to take community comments and suggestions and make the bylaws the best they can be, refreshed for a community who is committed to growing and learning. We anticipate voting these refreshed bylaws into being in September.

A big thank you to Abby Arnold for shepherding our Arizona Entry Structural Repair project through the City of Santa Monica approval process. We will be starting this summer and get this project done so we can get our rental spaces available again. We need this important revenue stream! Abby, you are the architect and City of Santa Monica whisperer.

I am so grateful that we continue to be engaged in our anti-racist/anti-oppression work, as community members are attending more of the Beloved Conversations programs by the Fahs Collective. My hope is that our whole community gets to attend one of these sessions in the near future. My wish is that we continue learning about how we can co-create an anti-oppression/anti-racist community and spread it out to the world.

We have done so much in the past year as a community. We are allowing more grace for all of us who are just having a hard time with this new world. We are having more empathy towards each other in these very trying times. We have had some difficulties. We found out that Zoom does not work for kids and youth in RE! We will work to rebuild our Youth RE, brick by brick. We are committed to offering OWL. A big thank you to all those folks – Shanna Shaked, Beth Rendeiro and Linda Van Ligten and the OWL facilitator – who brought this back this Spring for our K-2nd graders. We will continue to offer this next fall to our 7-9 graders. Youth RE rebuilding will be my personal work in the coming year as my kid needs it – all our youth need it – a safe place to just be yourself.

Thank you to our Worship Associates. They continued this year in virtual land, creating transformative worship along with Rev. Jeremiah, Director of Music Saunder Choi, our Amazing Choir Section Leaders, and our awesome tech team, Aubrey Sassoon and Mia Bringas, creating much joy in all our hearts. We transitioned to a great hybrid service where we can now broadcast our services to those who would like to stay at home. **We are the envy of the UU world because our tech and Worship team is amazing!**

I have deep appreciation for our Communications Team that created a new website. I have seen a sneak peek of the new website and it's awesome. I look forward to that



coming soon. Our Communications and News Magazine team transformed its tech game not only to produce a great online news magazine, but they continue to bring our live streaming services to Facebook and Youtube. Our virtual coffee hour is just as lively as the in-person one we have here at 18th and Arizona. You help us stay connected! These leaders and those in small group ministries like the Pastoral Care Associates, the Green Living Committee, the AAHS group, the Hunger Task Force, Adult RE, and other small groups which make our community experience so rich and vibrant.

Thank you to the many administrative committees that do the important work to help the congregation run smoothly - the Facilities Team, Communications, Finance, Investment, Nominating, and Personnel committees. Thank you to an outstanding staff: Rev. Jeremiah, Saunder, Mia, also the spectacular Nurit, Cyndee, Sibylla, and our sextons, Tom and Kevin. Deep gratitude to all of you, my people, for your gifts, your treasures and your talents, and commitment to our UU Community. We all bring so much and make it all so rich and rewarding...even in a global pandemic. **Blessings to you all!**

TREASURER VILMA ORTIZ

SAVINGS. We have \$826,000 in savings as of the end of March 2022. These are allocated into various funds including: Emergency Fund (almost \$100,000) and the Catastrophe Fund (\$195,000). Several years ago, we established an Endowment Fund which currently has almost \$300,000.

INVESTMENTS. We maintain accounts in the following institutions.

BoA. We have a checking and savings at Bank of America that we use for regular financial transactions such as depositing income and paying expenses. At the end of March 2022, we have approximately \$25,000 in our BoA accounts.

Merrill. We historically have held CDs at Merrill. We have been closing these accounts over the last few years. These accounts are now all closed.

SHFCU. Self-Help Federal Credit Union invests in socially responsible ways. Approximately half of our savings (\$410,000) are held in CDs at SHFCU. The SHFCU CDs are in amounts of \$50,000 with staggered maturity dates so that a CD matures every 3 months.

UUCEF. UU Common Endowment Fund is a diversified fund designed for long-term investments managed by the UUA. We have several accounts with UUCEF with almost \$390,000.

BUILDING PROJECT. We are currently renovating the Arizona Street Entrance because of structural foundation issues. The project is expected to cost approximately \$225,000.

Spirit Level Foundation Grant. The foundation

prioritizes funding construction projects and provides grants of up to \$50,000, which require congregations to raise matching funds. We applied for a grant in the amount of \$50,000; we expect to raise at least \$25,000, and hopefully close to \$50,000, as matching funds..

2021-2022 OVERALL FINANCIAL STATUS. Our income as for fiscal year 2020-2021 of April 2022 is \$382,405 (we project that our income to be approximately \$446,000 at the end of the fiscal year). Our expenses as of April 2022 are \$476,535



(we project that our expenses will be \$556,000 at end of the fiscal year). This would leave a deficit of approximately \$110,000.

2021-2022 Income. Pledge income is lower than we had anticipated while other donations from church members are as expected. Fundraising was low because we were unable to do our traditional fundraisers. Rental income is low because our church building has been closed.

2021-2022 Expenses. We continue to have many of the same expenses. Staff involved in worship—minister and music—continue to work producing our high-quality Sunday services. We spent this year transitioning from online services to hybrid services to meeting in-person while still streaming our services. Our office staff continues to run our church. Some of our expenses are lower because we did not meet in person all year.

2022-2023 OVERALL BUDGET. We expect our income for fiscal year 2021-2022 will be about \$524,000 while our expenses are expected to be about \$557,000. This would leave a deficit of \$35,000.

2022-2023 Income. We anticipate developing a robust fundraising effort that includes both in-person and online strategies. We expect that rental income will increase now we are open.

2022-2023 Expenses. We do not expect significant changes to our expenses. We will have some reduced expenses (for example, the office assistant's hours were reduced from 30 to 15 a week).

CONCLUSIONS.

We have weathered a global pandemic and economic crisis for more than two years, yet we remain a strong community. We—the board, finance committee, minister, and I—will continue to work diligently to monitor the financial status of the church and to address issues that arise. We appreciate your gifts to our beloved community.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC SAUNDER CHOI



PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE

To provide and program music for Sunday services, as well as special services and concerts.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NAMES AND ROLES

- Ryan Humphrey, accompanist and organist
- Carl Oser, (David Peterson) bass section leader
- Jyvonne Haskin, alto section leader
- Chloe Vaught, soprano section leader
- Darita Seth, (Kion Heidari) tenor section leader

2021-2022 REVIEWS

- Transition from virtual to in-person singing
- Continual adjustments due to the COVID-19 pandemic and church reopening
- Hired Darita Seth and Carl Oser as new tenor/bass section leaders, respectively
- Devised a way to sing outdoors and continue the choir/music ministry
- Successfully transitioned choral singing indoors without any COVID-19 outbreaks so far

The music videos we produced during the pandemic are continually being used in UU congregations around the country, with matching contributions and fees donated to our church.

- Christmas Eve Service with full choir and outdoor singing
- Bhagavad Gita service with Rohan Ramanan, guest musician

- Dining for Dollars (UUSM Choir Talentpalooza and auction) in June 2022
- Hiring new section leaders in Spring 2022 because Carl and Darita have moved on to other jobs. A lot of transitions is understandable as we transition out of COVID-19 lockdown into a new normal.

- Regular Choir rehearsals/singing have resumed indoors, still masked and social distanced

GOALS FOR 2022-2023

- More stable staff singer hires (I am hoping we won't need to hire new section leaders anytime soon)
- Grow music program by including more participation by congregation members and guest UU musicians
- Choir concert of Elizabeth Alexander's *Kindling: Reflections of a Limitless Faith* (Fall 2022)
- Christmas Eve services
- Earth Day concert (Spring 2023)
- Dining for Dollars Concert (June 2023)

ADULT RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the Adult Programs / Adult Religious Exploration ministry is to provide opportunities for members and friends of UUSM to connect with each other, deepen and enrich our spirituality and values, and help us embrace lives of compassion, integrity and joy. We hope to nurture beloved community as we work together for peace and social justice in this world. To meet these primary goals, we endeavor to offer fulfilling classes, impactful discussion groups, and special events on an array of topics rooted in our Seven Principles and relevant to the Six Sources of our congregation's spiritual life.

THE COMMITTEE

Currently our committee consists of (in alphabetical order) Teri Lucas, Beth Rendeiro, Sarah Robson, and James Witker, with a revolving chairperson. The committee meets on the evening of the first Monday of the month, and is actively looking for new committee members. Sarah Robson continues to do the press for Adult RE offerings.

2021-2022 IN REVIEW

With the continuation of COVID best practices, we have limited our groups primarily to online offerings. We have started to branch out to controlled in-person groups this current year, including Adrienne Sumpter's *SoulCollage™* and a part of the *Men's Group* facilitated by Jim Rheinwald.

The news blog increases attendance, and Sarah Robson continues to write one-off articles for new groups a few weeks before the first class to increase the group's enrollment and success.

The members of the committee have greatly supported



all volunteer facilitators by assisting with publicity (calendar, announcements and newsletter), technology, and registrations.

The volunteers listed here have provided excellent ongoing programming through the year: Dorothy Steinicke's *Nature Journaling*; the twice-weekly *Open Meditation Wellsprings* facilitated by Bev Shoenberger and Norm Richey; *Monday Night Meditations* hosted by Bev Shoenberger and Carol Ring; the *UU Men's Group* facilitated by Jim Rheinwald; and the *Science Non-Fiction Book Group* hosted by Rebecca Crawford.

Jacki Weber and Beth Brownlie are continuing to host *Fostering an Undefended Heart: Morning Meditation and Check-in*. Bettye Barclay is also offering her impactful *Writing for Discernment*, rooted in monthly themes.

Norm Richey's *New Year's Resolution Workshop* had a committed group of attendees, many of whom made significant changes in their lives. This is the second year Norm has kindly donated his time to this endeavor.

Also, Judith Martin-Straw presented *The Artist's Way* and the highly creative and fun group, *The Unthinkable Mind*. Sarah Robson and James Witker facilitated a five-part book study of Karen Armstrong's "A History of God," inviting deep theological reflection from diverse perspectives.

The programs generally attracted between 4 and 12 people on average.

OUTLOOK FOR 2022-2023

We continue to encourage UUSM members to form groups, classes, and workshops based on their interests and skills. With the hopeful lifting of restrictions, we aim to increase more in-person offerings, depending on the desires of the facilitators and interested members.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR NURIT GORDON

FINANCIAL

The past year have been tough as our finances went through changes which were not under our control. On one hand we lost significant income from rentals and fundraising, but on the other hand, our expenses were reduced. We received a few grants that over all helped our financial stability.

Overall, we were able to maintain our budget. The fiscal year is not over yet, but I project that we will end up as budgeted or with slightly higher deficit than budgeted.

Our second Paycheck Protection Loan was forgiven. I applied and received the employment tax credit which helped us stay financially afloat.

Our congregation raised \$4,000 for a matching grant to Camp deBenneville and \$10,000 for a matching grant for our Worship Tech assistance in equipment and

staff. We received a \$10,000 grant from the Spirit Level Foundation in February 2022.

Our pledge drive started in April 2022 and the total pledges from pledgers and confirmed rollovers is about \$340,000.

STAFF

We had a few staffing changes this year. We are still cautious and working hybrid, both from home and at the office.

Our Sextons came back to work in September with reduced work hours, as there are fewer in-person meetings, especially rentals.



We needed to purchase streaming equipment and hire Worship tech assistant in order to share our services remotely. We welcomed Mia Bringas to our team a few months ago. We also welcomed two new choir section leaders, David Peterson and Kion Heidari.

Our Communications coordinator, Sibylla Nash is leaving the Church after two years with us, we are in the process of hiring for this position.

SERVICES

We resumed in-person services prior to December 2021 only to stop due to Covid cases increase. We restarted in-person services again in February. Seating is restricted and wearing masks is mandatory. We are asking that only vaccinated people will attend. Attendance is growing as Covid cases are decreasing but we are staying cautious.

We started live streaming in September of last year, purchased equipment and together with hired help and volunteers were able to provide live streaming of our services. This took time and labor and we are grateful to everybody who helped, staff and volunteers.

The Covid Steering Committee kept meeting on regular basis, while monitoring UUA and CDC instructions and following Covid levels as published by LA county. Since we started in-person services, the Committee will meet on as-needed basis only.

FACILITY

The Sanctuary front door work was completed, we still need to install new windows and window frames.

The Arizona Lobby project prep and permitting is finished and the work should be starting soon.

As for Annual Maintenance, we conducted a deep cleaning of interior and exterior of the buildings including upholstery and rugs, we received our backflow certificate, we trimmed our tree large trees, and had the fire alarm and sprinkler tested.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our new website is still work in progress but moving along pretty quickly thanks to our volunteer communications team and staff.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Barbara Kernochan, Co-chair

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Karl Lisovsky, Co-chair
- Sheila Cummins
- Natalie Kahn
- Dan Patterson

The Nominating Committee consists of five members each serving a three-year term.

Each year, one or two members rotate off of the committee and one or two members are elected to join the committee. Members may serve a second term.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for identifying potential leadership candidates from among the voting members of the congregation and putting together a slate of candidates to fill open positions on the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee itself. Nominees are elected at the annual meeting held in June. The Committee is also responsible for filling positions on the Board and the Nominating Committee that may be vacated during the church year. In any year that a ministerial search committee is to be formed, the Nominating Committee is responsible for putting together a full slate of candidates to undertake the search for a new minister.

The Nominating Committee has been responsible for filling vacancies that might arise on the Personnel, Finance, and Investment Committees. We also worked closely in the past with the Membership Committee, collaborating on a “Showcase Sunday” event to acquaint members and friends with committees and activity groups at the church. The event could not take place this past year. Every year, we try to get acquainted with a wide range of members and especially to bring newer members into meaningful connection with the congregation’s work. This work leads to a strong and harmonious Board and other leadership committees, but outreach has proven

especially difficult with Covid restrictions.

Our goals for the year ahead include getting acquainted with newer members of the congregation, strengthening existing connections, and building a strong pool of potential leaders. We anticipate close collaboration with Faith Forward’s Leadership Development curriculum and believe this training will offer a clear pathway for members to get involved in the life and work of the church and to develop the skills needed to be effective leaders.

FAITH IN ACTION: PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

James Witker, FIA Co-Chair

The Peace & Social Justice Committee continued in limited “pandemic mode” from Summer through Fall of 2021. We focused on helping our interfaith community partner, Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE),



and doing remote advocacy to help end urban oil drilling in Los Angeles (now being phased out by City Council!). We also worked toward reproductive justice in the wake of the disturbing legislative developments in Texas and elsewhere. Attendance via Zoom at our meetings during this period was sparse. We found it difficult to draw many participants on Sundays as our meetings would happen after the online “coffee hour” when most people had had enough screens.

In November, we decided to meet in person outdoors on the UUSM patio for the first time since early 2020. We resumed meeting in person regularly in March and hope to do so going forward. Since early 2022, we have raised awareness about the UFCW Grocery Workers’ campaign for a fair contract and more equitable wages. We’ve also supported Unite Here’s push for the Hotel Worker Protection Ordinance and the Responsible Hotel Ordinance — measures that will add important safeguards for workers and mitigate the negative impact hotels can have on housing.

This Spring, Kate MacQueen led PSJ members to support the United to House LA initiative that would build support for homelessness relief and affordable housing by taxing high-value real estate transactions.

PSJ organized to turn UUSM members out to the “Bans



off our Bodies!” action in Downtown LA on May 14th in the wake of the leaked draft of an upcoming Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade; and also organized a group to participate in the Poor Peoples’ Campaign rally and march on May 16th.

We are organizing our congregation’s return to participating in the LA Pride Parade in June.

More than ever, PSJ needs the time and energy of more volunteers and participants. We have a standing meeting — open to all — every third Sunday, which is a space for everyone to come and talk about the issues that concern you and put our collective UU values to work.

CARE RING AND PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEES

Care Ring Associates throughout the past year have been: Linda van Ligten, Chair; Beverly Alison, Helen Brown, Gretchen Goetz, Amy Lacombe, Beth Rendeiro, Greg Wood, Rima Snyder, Tom Ahern (on hiatus) Audrey Lyness (resigned).

PASTORAL CARE ASSOCIATES throughout the past year have been: Denise Helton, current Chair; Bettye Barclay, former Chair and past member; Cheryl Barnett, Phil Bonachich (currently on hiatus).

During the past months the decision was made to combine the two groups into one, which would operate under the title of Pastoral Care Team. This consists of the Administrative Team of Minister, Linda van Ligten and Denise Helton, with all the team members called Pastoral Care Associates. The members of both groups have taken part in many of the same projects and assignments during the past year, so it makes sense to combine them into one, thus avoiding redundancy and maximizing resources to provide a cohesive range of services to the church community. The role of both groups is to support our members who are going through difficult life transitions or crises, and help them navigate their way to clarity. Additionally, members and friends were referred to community resources, since Covid prevented providing in person contact. During the Covid shutdown, both committees were involved in reaching out to all church members by sending handwritten notes and making phone calls. A warm check in, reminding members and friends that Pastoral Care is available.

More recently, we facilitated two sessions (Care Ring Circles), one in person and one via Zoom, to provide forums for the discussion of challenges during the shutdown, strategies for managing them, and opportunities for connection. During the coming year, we hope to continue our core mission of reaching out to those who are in need, as well as to facilitate more opportunities for our community members to get to know and learn from each other.

Both committees have been involved in ongoing

training from Rev. Jeremiah regarding the elements and theory of compassionate communication, empathetic and deep listening, boundaries, and values clarification. During the coming year, we will continue our training sessions aimed at developing our skills and competencies as **PASTORAL CARE ASSOCIATES**.

ART WALL COMMITTEE

Beverly Alison, Chair

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Bob Dietz
- Carol Ring
- Pam Teplitz

Our committee goal is to challenge, inspire and give pleasure through our varied presentations. We hope to broaden perspectives and enrich our time together sharing art. We are excited about this coming year and the art wall calendar is currently being scheduled. We also look forward to being introduced to new artists through your suggestions. Please email Beverly to introduce her to artists you admire.

Be excited about this coming year - your art wall committee is.

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Brad Hutchinson and John Zinner; staff member Nurit Gordon

This year we made changes and improvements in some areas. The Sanctuary sound system was improved and balanced for streaming and concurrent in-person worship.

The new Sanctuary Lobby front doors are finally operational, with the the gasketing ready to be added.

The front Sanctuary Lobby entry windows are actively getting updated. We experienced long delay due to the contractor’s inability to finish the work.

We have been receiving high water bills suggesting a leak somewhere on the property. We are actively working to understand the nature of the condition. Troubleshooting and plumber’s visits still havents revealed why the water bill is high.

The Arizona Lobby upgrade is Work in Progress and we hope to be finished within three to four months.

We continue to identify and strategize for assets that might require replacement or repair soon.

The FDC committee has a strong membership of people committed to keeping our campus in good shape according to our stated goals.

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
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REPORT ON PROGRAMS

2021-22

