



FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF BURLINGTON

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



Mission and Values

Mission

We are united in our commitment to live out our mission to inspire spiritual growth, to care for each other and our community, to seek truth, and to act for justice.

Values

We are guided by our values:

Love: Nourishing lives with love, caring and compassion.

Service: Building a community for justice, equity and empathetic action.

Openness: Celebrating the wonders of life and spiritual transformation with boldness, joy, courage and openness.

Respect: Engaging all with kindness, understanding and mutual respect as faithful democratic stewards of all we hold dear.

Ends

We lead to see that our global ends are actualized:

Justice & Outreach: FUUSB uses its power as an organization and faith community to work for social, economic and environmental justice.

Worship & Music: FUUSB's welcoming worship, supported by powerful and diverse music and art, acts as a magnet that fosters spiritual growth, compassion, introspection and impetus to action.

Caring & Belonging: FUUSB is a compassionate community, offering all who engage in its ministries a profound sense of welcome, belonging, and spiritual care through life's joys, struggles, and sacred passages.

Spiritual Growth & Learning: FUUSB provides diverse opportunities for transformational spiritual growth, faith development and personal discovery, promoting lifelong learning for all ages and stages of life.

Stewardship & Resources: FUUSB generously stewards our mission and strongly supports ministries, activities and an historic building and spaces.



President's Report

2020 President's Report

Even in the best of times, it is difficult to write a president's report for the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington. How does one summarize in a few paragraphs the many different forms of ministry that are so valuable to our community and congregation? But in times of disruption and uncertainty it is even more important that we find the anchors that keep us grounded. Thus, I am thankful for the privilege of writing the annual president's report for the FUUSB. The FUUSB continues to be a solid spiritual home for our congregation and our community. I am reassured whenever I see pictures of Church Street in the news or Facebook feed. There at the top of the street is our steeple, lit up not just with light, but with our hopes.

The Board of Trustees extends a most sincere thank you to the people who keep our Society and Meeting House going. We are blessed with a phenomenal staff and lay leadership that, in a matter of days this spring, turned the FUUSB into a virtual community. Through their efforts, many of our activities continue through Zoom or YouTube. We all crave the day when we can meet again in person. We should all have confidence that the FUUSB will be here for us through this challenging time and beyond.

I say "confidence" because the board spends a great deal of time looking at our numbers and speaking with Rev. Tricia and Christina about what is happening in our community. Despite being in only her first year with the FUUSB, Rev. Tricia has inspired and challenged us.

In the spring of 2019, the board and congregation developed five developmental goals:

- Develop strong, intentionally diverse lay leadership
- Assist the congregation to live effectively at its current size
- Assist the stewardship team in growing the financial stewardship of the congregation
- Modify our policy-based governance model to better serve the needs of a mid-sized congregation
- Actively and meaningfully welcome, support, and empower congregants who are black or other persons of color, LGBTQ+, have disabilities, and other congregants with marginalized identities

These goals inform all decisions of the board, minister, and staff. Rev. Tricia's monthly reports to the board show these goals in action as our vibrant community lives our mission. We have learned that we can be made even more inclusive and effective with minor adjustments, not major changes.

Continued on next page

President's Report

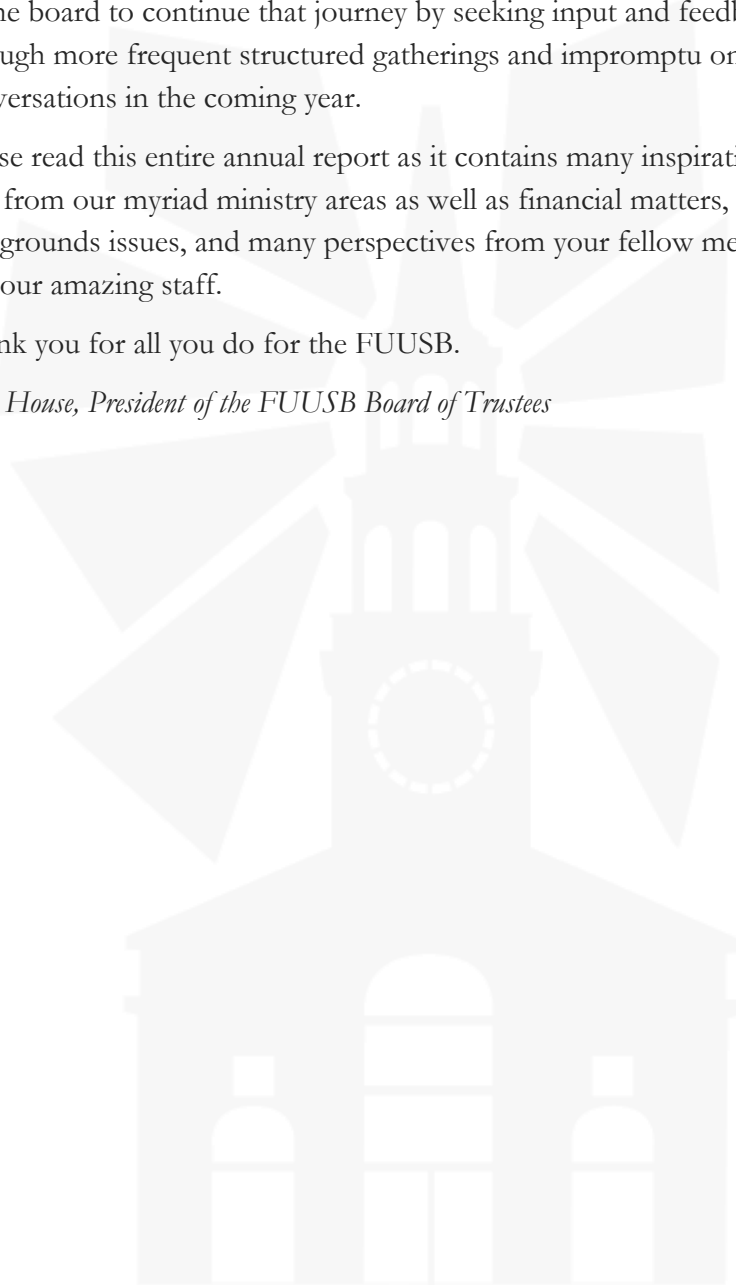
Financially, the FUUSB is in good shape (please see the Finance Team's report for additional details). Our members have stepped up to the challenge of the annual pledge drive, showing commitment to our collective future. Knowing that all of us are affected differently by the economic upheaval of 2020, many members have increased their support through the Angel Fund, which is designed to offset the very understandable reductions in pledges from those of us who are more significantly impacted by the current economic conditions.

A primary goal of the board this year has been increasing our transparency regarding financial decision-making. It is imperative that we all understand how our mission is supported by our budgeting decisions. We made several good steps towards a more inclusive process this year, including the Our Mission, Our Money meetings in January and the budget presentation at the April MAG (Ministry Area Gathering) meeting. It is the hope of the board to continue that journey by seeking input and feedback through more frequent structured gatherings and impromptu one-on-one conversations in the coming year.

Please read this entire annual report as it contains many inspirational details from our myriad ministry areas as well as financial matters, building and grounds issues, and many perspectives from your fellow members and our amazing staff.

Thank you for all you do for the FUUSB.

Dan House, President of the FUUSB Board of Trustees



Board of Trustees

First UU Society Board of Trustees



Dan House, President



Todd Clason, Vice President



Leandre Waldo, Secretary



Hope Baker-Carr



Charity Clark



Louis deRosset



Stuart Graves



Melinda Lee



Stephen Rainville

Developmental Senior Minister's Report

Developmental Senior Minister's Report



It is an honor and a joy to serve as your Developmental Minister. Thank you for welcoming me and Peter so warmly last August, and for your readiness to work with me through these last ten months. I am grateful every day for your kindness, your sense of humor, your openness to new ideas, and especially for your devotion to this First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington. This is a congregation rich with love, openness, talent, and high expectations. Together,

you occupy an important spot in the city and a unique place in this community's history. I'm glad to be here with you now, and for the next few years.

There's no question this has been a remarkable year – full of all the usual work of transition, plus a giant set of unprecedented challenges that arrived with the pandemic this spring. A little more than a year ago, you made the decision to delay your search for a new settled minister in order to spend four or five “developmental” years learning about your congregation as it is now, and how you might prepare for what First UU might become in the future. Your Board led the way in that important new direction, with the invaluable help of Interim Senior Minister Rev. Susan Milnor, Developmental Assistant Minister Rev. Andrée Mol, and many of you.

The developmental goals have been my focus since before I arrived. But the only way to make progress toward any of them is through everything that First UU does: worship, faith development, pastoral care, justice work and stewardship. Getting to know many of you has helped me understand why the particular developmental challenges of governance, staff roles, leadership, inclusion and stewardship are important to this congregation. Board members and I have worked well together, modifying the monthly reporting structure to focus on each developmental goal and making time to talk openly with one another. The Board, other staff and I are committed to sharing our emerging assessments with you, and seeking your input in the months to come.

Working together, we develop trust. All of us needed a great deal of trust, patience, and good will to navigate the complex set of changes required by the COVID-19 pandemic. The abundant skill and flexibility of First UU staff was never more evident than in those early confusing weeks as we closed the Meeting House and shifted to all online gatherings. Christina, Erika, David, James, Mary and I are constantly learning new ways to collaborate, and to stay in touch with many of you while working remotely.

Continued on next page

Developmental Senior Minister's Report

Ministerial transitions are always hard – especially so when there is suddenly one fewer minister. Staff and lay leaders have risen to the challenges of this transition and worked with me to find ways to continue all the Society's essential programs – even to adapt and add to those programs when opportunities arise. It's not possible to thank everyone by name who has helped me this year. But several key groups have worked particularly hard to smooth the way: Care Network, Membership, Pastoral Care Associates, Stewardship, and Worship Associates, as well as the Transition Team. I am very grateful for all of them!

None of us knows what the next months will bring – when life at First UU will return to normal, or how that “normal” will be changed by this experience. It's already clear that we will be mining lessons about congregational life and inclusion for many years to come. While that prospect is daunting, it is also important.

Thanks for sharing that work with me. We've made a good start together. This has been a hard year, and a good one, too. We will make it through this current time and can look forward to more years of collaboration, celebration, and learning.

Please take good care of yourselves, and of one another!

With love and blessings,

Rev. Tricia Hart

Developmental Senior Minister, 2019-2023



Director of Operations & Finance's Report

Director of Operations & Finance's Report



It's interesting to do an Annual Report and take stock of the year. I found myself going back a bit longer and thinking of my time here at FUUSB. In July I will celebrate 22 years working for this Society. That's a really long time. I have worked with nine different ministers, four property managers, five DRE's, and seven administrative professionals. There have been joyful times, sad times, celebratory times, stressful times and so many changes. But there has never been a time like this spring ever before.

The fall began with the great promise of a new Developmental Minister. I must admit I was a bit nervous. But getting to know Tricia has been a delight. My historical memory has been challenged for sure. And learning how to work with each other has been fun and interesting. Tricia has taught me to look at my work here in a brand new way. We began by looking at the Board Monitoring Reports. These are monthly reports that the minister and I do to let the Board know what we're doing in specific areas of congregational life. But with Tricia, you never just look at one thing. We listed every report on a white board and then we started with connections. How does each monitoring report connect to the five developmental goals, and how does each one of those connect to our values and mission statement? When Tricia looks at something, she is always thinking about how that one thing is connected to everything else in the Society. I have never worked with anyone who did this. It is quite amazing and exciting. I'm still learning how to do this well, and I'm finding a new level of excitement in an old job.

One of the biggest projects on my plate this year has been moving our database program from ACS to Realm. After months of research and negotiation, we decided on this particular product and began the transition in October. In early December we had three days of on-site training for staff, and a "soft-rollout" to the congregation over the holidays. Lay Leaders were trained on Realm at the February MAG meeting, followed with a congregation-wide invite to activate Realm accounts. At this point, we have 308 members who have activated their accounts. Have you?

The other main project for me this year was updating our Employee Handbook. I say updating, but our last update happened over 8 years ago, so it was truly a rewrite. Luckily, the UUA now has a sample employee handbook that I could use as a starting point. From there you need to adjust every single page to meet the needs of your congregation. A draft of this handbook went to the Board in November and then to our lawyer.

Continued on next page

Director of Operations & Finance's Report

After addressing their questions and concerns, the final draft was voted on by the Board in February. The new handbook will take effect on July 1, 2020. It meets all federal and state requirements, but most of all it reflects our UU values.

All the while I was working on the Realm rollout and the handbook, all the regular parts of my job continued. Working with the Stewardship Team on this year's campaign, developing the 2020/21 Budget, researching health insurance, staff supervision, MAG meetings, Member Care meetings, and enjoying the friendship of so many wonderful members.

And then came March and Coronavirus. Within one week's time we went from pondering the idea of possibly working from home to packing up our things and actually working from home. We went from thinking about social distancing during coffee hour, to having a virtual coffee hour. And of course figuring out how to provide our congregation with meaningful worship during this very stressful time.

I have never been prouder to be a part of this staff. We came together and found a solution for that Sunday. And it was okay, but it wasn't great. So then we figured out another way. And that worked better, and then it has continued to get better every week. We also figured out how to keep groups meeting and keep the work of the Society going in the time of Stay Home, Stay Safe. The learning curve during this period has been unimaginable. Every single staff member has risen to the challenge.

As I write this report in early May, we are working on how to have our Annual Meeting via Zoom. How do we vote? How do people ask questions? How do we register everyone? Lots of things to think about. What will tomorrow bring? I have no idea. But I believe we are up for the challenge.

I have the great honor to supervise Mary Williams, our Society Administrator; Anne LaPierre, our Bookkeeper; Sally Gullion, our Ceremony Coordinator; and David McFeeters, our Facilities Manager. This group forms a team that keeps the operations of FUUSB running smoothly. Each one is a professional who cares deeply about their job and about our Society. I feel fortunate to work with them. I thank each one of them for their service to this community.

In closing, I wanted to reflect on one last thing. This has been a difficult year for me personally. My mother had a heart attack in late August and my father passed away one month later. Working for an organization that allows its staff the time to heal from grief and take care of their spirit means the world to me. For this I offer each and every one of you my sincere gratitude and appreciation.

Christina Fulton, Director of Operations & Finance

Caring and Belonging

Staff Lead: Rev. Patricia Hart, Developmental Senior Minister

Caring & Belonging: FUUSB is a compassionate community, offering all who engage in its ministries a profound sense of welcome, belonging, and spiritual care through life's joys, struggles, and sacred passages.

Care Network Team, Lynn Douglas, Chair; Justin Jackson, Meal Train Coord.

Membership Team, Linda Graves & Sarah Russell, Co-Chairs

Pastoral Care Associates Team, Linda Graves & Martha Molpus, Co-Chairs

Women's Alliance, Ellen Hsieh, President

Women's Spirituality, Elizabeth Clayton, Chair

The **Pastoral Care Associates Team**, initiated by Rev. Andrée in 2018, has continued with supervision by Rev. Tricia to provide spiritual support in the form of a listening and loving presence for members and friends, especially during times of challenging life circumstances. Additionally, members of the team were inspired to initiate a weekly meditation series in an effort to support congregants and friends during the stressful time of physical distancing.

The **Care Network Team** continued its work of visiting, organizing meals, delivering shawls, sending cards, and helping the FUUSB community with many other needs. Visits from Care Network Team members are a highlight for many in our community who are in care facilities, or who are recovering from more short-term illnesses. During this time of isolation, team members are reaching out with cards, phone calls, and the occasional driveway chat. As always, please let us know if you are in need.

Under Rev. Tricia's guidance, the **Membership Team** has continued the work that Rev. Andrée began during their year as Developmental Assistant Minister for Pastoral Care and Membership. The team keeps in close touch with those who are newest to the congregation with information about upcoming programs and careful follow-up to assure they are feeling connected to the Society. The team organizes and leads the New UU Part 1 and 2 classes on al-



Front (left to right): Brenda Dupuis, Linda Graves; middle: Sarah Russell, Kim Watkin, Deborah Ragione; back: Doug Watkin, Abbie Nelson, Cee Cee Cox, Ralph Undercoffler

ternating months and holds a monthly "Staying Connected" group. They conduct monthly "Signing Sundays" for those who are ready to sign the Membership Book, and work with Rev. Tricia to introduce these new members to the congregation during Welcoming Ceremonies. The Membership Team recruits and trains Welcome Ambassadors, ushers and greeters, and maintain a section of the Caring and Belonging bulletin boards with pictures of new members and information about the steps to membership.

Justice and Outreach

Staff Lead: Rev. Patricia Hart, Developmental Senior Minister

Lay Lead: Zoe Hart

Justice & Outreach: FUUSB uses its power as an organization and faith community to work for social, economic and environmental justice.

Animal Ministry, Janet Schneider, Chair

Climate Justice Team, Jud Lawrie, Chair

Economic Justice Task Force, Gene Bergman, Chair

Gun Violence Task Force, Jud Lawrie, Chair

Immigration Justice Team, Bernie Carver, Chair

JUMP, Woody Fulton, Treasurer

Love & Justice Ministry, Zoe Hart & Kim Watkin, Co-Chairs

Partner Church, Bill Suiter, Chair

Racial Justice Team, Gabriel Ely & Peggy Owen Sands, Co-Chairs

In May, the **Racial Justice Team** (RJT) and many members of the congregation completed five UUA webinars called Knotty Conversations, to help white UUs learn about white supremacy/fragility and how to be a better ally in the work for Racial Justice. We completed the book discussion group, learning about the history of racism in the UU denomination. The RJT clarified goals for the future with Rev. Tricia and will meet Tyeastia Green, the City of Burlington's first Director of Racial Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, in May to find ways we can support her work. We have plans to follow the Beloved Conversations Curriculum in the coming year with other groups in the state.



In view of the escalating climate crisis, in early 2020 we decided to form a **Climate Justice Team** at the Society. The focus of the team will be the many intersecting issues involving environmental justice. As of May, we have had two meetings, the first face-to-face, and the second via Zoom due to the coronavirus. In proceeding we will be looking at activities such as lobbying at the statehouse for aggressive climate change legislation, collaborating with local



climate/environmental organizations such as 350Vermont, the Sunrise Movement, Extinction Rebellion Vermont, the Vermont Sierra Club, and Vermont Interfaith Power and Light. We also anticipate getting involved with the UUA's very promising "Create Climate Justice" project:

uua.org/environment.

Justice and Outreach

The **Gun Violence Task Force** has been relatively inactive in 2020. We continue to collaborate with Gun Sense Vermont in trying to pass additional gun safety legislation in Montpelier. There are several gun safety bills pending in this session such as requiring a gun purchase waiting period, mandating the safe storage of firearms in homes, and banning commonly-owned semi-automatic rifles. However, due to the disruption of the normal legislative schedule and process by the coronavirus, their fate is highly uncertain.



"Thank you for giving me hope. Thank you for showing me that good people always exist. Thank you for making me smile. Thank you for being accepting. Thank you for everything."



—Always Hannah



JUMP Client 4/17/19, Hand drawn thank you card

Until March 2020, **JUMP** (Join Urban Ministry Project) was serving an average of 11-12 clients per day, four days a week at First Congregational Church, providing food assistance (supermarket gift cards and vouchers to smaller markets), gasoline and bus pass assistance, personal items, diapers, ID procurement, and a welcoming smile and a listening ear. Then, everything shut down, and under the direction and with the commitment of Managing Director Wanda Hines, JUMP developed a whole new way of operating, without face-to-face meeting. JUMP is now taking clients online and over the phone, and sending Hannaford and Shell cards directly to vetted clients. In addition, volunteers will be contacting clients by phone every three months to check on how they are doing. Thank you to all First UUers who have contributed time, toilet paper, personal items and

money. And thanks to First UU for keeping JUMP as a line item in the annual budget! If you are interested in becoming involved with JUMP as a welcoming volunteer, committee or board member, please contact Woody Fulton. Thank you!



Stewardship and Resources

Staff Lead: Christina Fulton, Director of Operations and Finance

Stewardship & Resources: FUUSB generously stewards our mission and strongly supports ministries, activities and an historic building and spaces.

Facilities Manager, David McFeeters

Finance Team, Alana Shaw, Treasurer; Kameron McConnell, Asst. Treasurer

Garden Team, Nancy Knox, Chair

Planned Giving Team, Alex Hsieh & Janice Lange, Co-Chairs

Property Team, John Davis & Doug Watkin, Co-Chairs

Stewardship Team, Nancy Knox, Chair

The **Finance Team** stewards the Society's finances in support of our mission, ministries, activities and the historic building and grounds by reviewing and comparing the monthly financial statements to the budget, reviewing the Board's proposed budget near yearend and discussing future needs as they arise. Even though the pandemic caused the Society to pivot its service and administration to function remotely, the Society was able to keep all employees on staff and not lay anyone off. To that end, through the Federal CARES Act we received a forgivable Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program loan. By June 30, we will apply for forgiveness of this loan. Though the outside rental income and the weekly share-the-plate contributions have decreased due to the stay at home order, the yearend finances are projected to be healthy and strong.

Stewardship Team: The 2020 Stewardship campaign started in early March, with a theme of "Making a Difference." We planned to connect with UUs at neighborhood "cottage parties," and then COVID-19 happened. We moved to online formats, getting the word out with virtual content and social media. First UU members and friends have responded with amazing generosity this year, affirming the importance of our beloved First UU Society in our lives at this challenging time. We also created the "Angel Fund" to help those unable to pledge this year, due to difficult financial situations. We sent handwritten thank you notes to all pledgers, to make personal connections at this difficult time. We have raised over \$461,000 from over 270 pledges. We are extremely grateful to all of our First UU community members, as well as those who volunteered to help with the cottage parties, for all of their support during our campaign.



Stewardship and Resources

The **Endowment Team** serves the mission of this Society by assuring the Society's endowment funds are managed with the appropriate level of risk to achieve the returns necessary for the near- and long-term needs of the Society. The Endowment Team works with an outside firm to oversee our investments and assure that our investments are socially responsible whenever possible. The Team also meets regularly with the fiduciary of the Nims Fund to monitor their investment practices and provide input regarding the needs of the Society for which the Nims Fund was created.

In addition to continuing the base level of distributions that the funds have regularly provided and responding to uses of principal by the board, the Endowment Team has worked with the Finance Team and Board on increasing the distributions to support the Society through this period of transition to help bridge the gap in the budget.

The investment policies are drafted based on the input of the needs of other teams of the Society to fulfill their ends.

In reviewing the performance of the First UU and the Meeting House portfolios the Endowment Team is responsible for, they have held up well in the current financial upheaval and should continue to support the mission of the Society as intended.

The **Property Team** has been fortunate to have David McFeeters working as Facilities Manager. Bob Furrer, who retired in 2018, continues to assist as a Caretaker and Special Projects consultant.

Major projects completed in 2019-20 included our new sign, restoration of the palladium window on the south side of the Meeting House, and window sills and frames of the 1816 Sanctuary and 1868 Parish Hall addition.

Property Team members built a wall between Christina Fulton's office and the Whitney Young, Jr. Room. Maintenance work continued with bulkhead and fan repair at our Elmwood Avenue property and deck roof repair at our Clarke Street property. New carpets were installed in our east entryway and upstairs by the Whitney Young, Jr. Room. Doug



Facey donated five large boulders that are placed under the pine tree on the east side of the Meeting House. The Property Team also established a new subcommittee, the Climate Response Team, charged with studying the energy needs of our Meeting House with the long-term goal of being fossil-free by 2030.

Stewardship and Resources

Finally, the Property Team's goal this year is to improve members' ability to access the Meeting House without a caretaker. This will include work on a new alarm and keypad system. Another focus will be the east entrance door and ramp for improved physical access to the Meeting House.



Spiritual Growth and Learning

Staff Lead: Erika Reif, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Spiritual Growth & Learning: FUUSB provides diverse opportunities for transformational spiritual growth, faith development and personal discovery, promoting lifelong learning for all ages and stages of life.

Faith Development Team, Erika Reif, Chair
Youth Ministry Coordinator, Gabriel Ely
Chalice Circles, Hope Baker-Carr, Coordinator
Labyrinth Ministry, Carol MacDonald, Chair
Library Team, Jeanne Lynch, Chair
Theme Circles, Rodney Lowe, Coordinator



Director of Lifespan Faith Development's Report:

I began to serve in my current role in July, bringing with me many years of experience with the families of this congregation, and was immediately engaged in the search for a new Faith Development Assistant and Youth Ministry Coordinator. By summer's end, we were very fortunate to welcome Margo Whitcomb, a long-time volunteer at the Montpelier congregation, actor, and accomplished director, as the former; and

Gabriel Ely, former FUUSB youth group member and parent, with much experience in education and social justice work, as the latter.

To add to all of this staff turnover, what had been known as the Family Ministry Team started the year with a new name. Despite the name change, the **Children's Faith Development Team** continued to seek opportunities for community-building and faith development across generations in the spirit of the Family Ministry movement, including a multigenerational game night and co-sponsoring a community carol sing with the choir.



Sunday morning classes were offered to children in preschool through seventh grade, led by volunteers, roughly half of whom were not parents of children in the program. Curricula included the Montessori-based Spirit Play; Riddle and Mystery, an exploration of the big questions in life; and UU History. In addition to classroom Sundays,

Spiritual Growth and Learning



we had several multigenerational worship services and many successful “Zigzag Sundays,” with multigenerational group activities. These included two cheer-spreading field trips to the Cathedral Square assisted living center, a songwriting workshop with Music Director James Stewart, spiritual practice explorations, a children’s stewardship campaign

kickoff, and a very special visit from the live raptors of Outreach for Earth Stewardship.

We continue to be proud of our OWL (Our Whole Lives) human sexuality program, this year welcoming children from outside our congregation to take part in our early elementary OWL class for the first time, and continuing to offer our middle school OWL class to 20 students equally split between the youth of our congregation and others.

Children’s Faith Development classes and activities, and Middle School and Elementary OWL, all ended abruptly in mid-March; trips, service activities, game nights, and celebrations were cancelled or postponed indefinitely. Serving the Faith Development of our families will take a very different form for the foreseeable future and the Children’s Faith Development Team will continue to seek innovative ways to continue this important work.

With so much change in staffing to contend with, we were slow to expand our offerings for adult spiritual exploration and faith development. In late February, we brought in

visiting minister David Ruffin for a mini-retreat to support our many Circle facilitators, “a circle of renewal and support for this foundational spiritual practice within our communi-



ty.” Other offerings were just making their way onto the calendar when the global pandemic caused us to pivot. Happily, we are closing the year with a five-part series, Encouraging Faith Leaders, now held virtually on Zoom.

Erika Reif, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Spiritual Growth and Learning

This year the **Yuuth Group** met at least weekly. During our meetings and sleepovers in the Meeting House, we made art and music, held community-building restorative circles, planned events, pondered the monthly themes, played games (including the long-forgotten Ring Game created by a FUUSB Yuuth in the early 2000s), and deepened our connections to each other.

Yuuth also found opportunities to connect with the broader FUUSB and Burlington communities. We cooked, served and ate meals at ANEW Place each month, visited the Cathedral Square assisted living facility on Cherry Street with children twice, served pancakes and lasagna, babysat on Valentine's Day, attended services, and planned and led a Family Chapel on the theme of resilience.

Our year is ending in not quite the way we had planned. We were not able to do our local service project as planned in April and the trip we looked forward to making to Rhode Island for General Assembly in June cannot happen with GA being a virtual affair this year, but we are now meeting virtually twice a week. We are getting to know the 8th graders who will be joining Yuuth Group officially in the fall, providing each other support, teaching each other new skills, writing a blog for the FUUSB community's enjoyment, and exploring games and activities that make video chatting feel less like sitting in front of a screen for an hour (or two). Our youth-led service is going to be a little different this year, but we are working on it and are looking forward to sharing what we have put together. - *Gabriel Ely, Youth Ministry Coordinator*

The **Library Team** reviewed the long list of missing books based on the inventory done last year. There were a considerable number of books that were lost, stolen, or attempts to contact the borrowers were unsuccessful. Many of these were replaced, often with updated versions when available. The LGBTQ collection was reviewed and many new books were added to that collection.



Worship and Music

Staff Lead: Rev. Patricia Hart, Developmental Senior Minister

Worship & Music: FUUSB's welcoming worship, supported by powerful and diverse music and art, acts as a magnet that fosters spiritual growth, compassion, introspection and impetus to action.

Director of Music, James Stewart

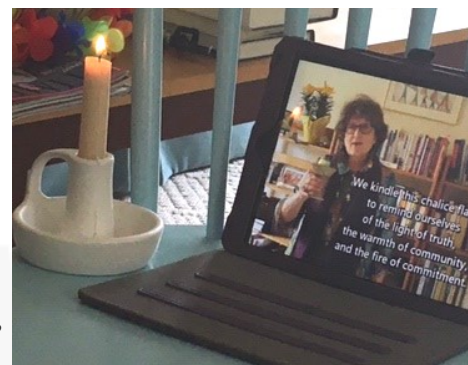
Flower Power Team, Peggy Derby & Susan Raimy, Co-Chairs

Hospitality Team, Ellen Wollensack, Chair

Welcome Ambassador Team, Deborah Ragione, Chair

Worship Associates Team, Maeve McBride, Chair

Sunday worship and music continued to be at the center of FUUSB's identity and purpose this year – which is notable, because so many significant changes were also taking place. In the fall, the congregation returned to a single service at 10 a.m., and began working with an (almost) new Music Director, a new Director of Lifespan Faith Development, and a new solo Developmental Minister. Then shortly after 2020 began and new routines were beginning to take hold, the pandemic changed everything. The



shift to exclusively online worship services happened very quickly, and not



without challenges – but that transformation, too, was successful, and in many ways illuminating. Though all of us miss the gifts of gathering in-person, we are discovering some of what becomes possible when the service becomes accessible to more people through technology. Every staff member has worked well and creatively to adapt to this new reality, along with many lay leaders, members, and our wonderful choir and musicians.

The **Worship Associates Team** meets on a monthly basis to both worship together and plan the Sunday services with Rev. Tricia. The team works to design each worship experience as a “vessel,” which fosters spiritual growth and makes connections, as well as being an impetus for justice work. We do this through sermons given by ministers and guests, music, readings, congregational interactions, announcements, and inviting written joys and sorrows. This year we began offering short reflections during most services, in which a worship associate writes and reads their own piece about the theme of the month or the sermon topic. We practice the skills of public speaking, coordinating parts of the services and familiarizing ourselves with new technologies. This year we said goodbye to Rodney, and welcomed Mavis and Cheryl to the team.

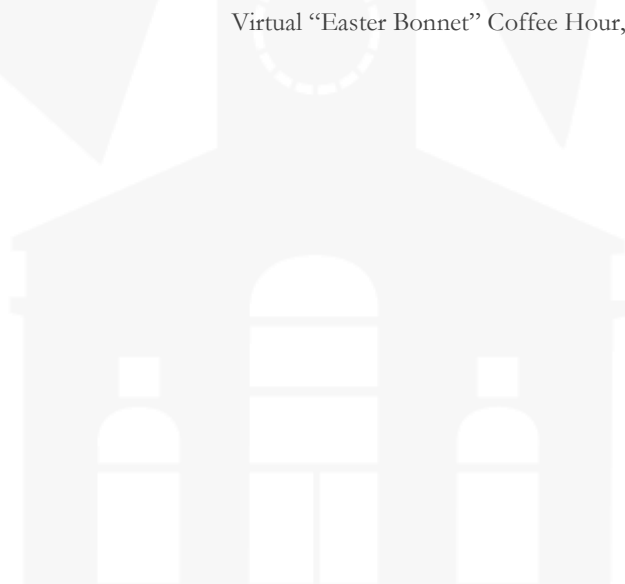
Worship and Music

We are grateful for the learnings that Rev. Tricia has shared with us this year. In the transition to online worship during this pandemic time, we are continuing to meet, to stay nimble to the changing times, and to offer our gifts to worship in creative ways.

The **Flower Power Team** continued its work of providing flower arrangements to enhance the worship experience. We stopped in March because of the restrictions due to COVID-19 and continue to be on hiatus. Membership on the team has remained the same with seven regular and one seasonal participant. Co-Chair Peggy Derby met once with the Worship Associates to create some lines of communication so that Flower Power can coordinate with and answer Worship's needs, and is working on developing more hangings for the arch and a catalog of those so that we can have more variety.



Virtual "Easter Bonnet" Coffee Hour, April 12, 2020



Independent Teams

Independent Teams

Endowment Fund Team, Jason Cadwell, Chair

Healthy Congregation Team, Nancy Hellen & Noah Patullo, Co-Chairs

Nominating Team, Tom Porter, Chair

Safety Team, Lisa Lax, Chair

The **Healthy Congregation Team** (HCT) continued to develop a number of healthy communication and conflict resolution tools. Deep Listening Circles and reflective listening skills were practiced and outreach to the congregation explored. A member trained in nonviolent communication. During April and May the HCT offered online Deep Listening Circles to the congregation to strengthen our bonds and lessen our isolation due to COVID-19.

The Restorative Circles group continued to practice the skills and reflect on the process of this communication tool which is available to the congregation as a conflict resolution process.

By offering these communication tools the HCT promotes a compassionate community and provides opportunities for spiritual growth and personal discovery.



Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting Warning Notice

The congregation is warned that the **Annual Meeting** of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington will be held at **11:00 a.m., Sunday, June 7, 2020**. The meeting will be held remotely via a Zoom meeting. The Zoom link for the Annual Meeting is <https://bit.ly/3fM8MxU>. Please see the attached instructions for information regarding how to participate in this meeting.

The following items of business will be addressed and voted on by the membership:

1. Accept the minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting.
2. Elect candidates for openings on the Board of Trustees, the Officers of the Society, the Nominating Committee, and the Endowment Team.
3. Vote on a request from the Property Team to utilize funds from the Meeting House Fund for repairs and maintenance to the Meeting House.
4. Vote on the proposed budget. A summary of the proposed budget is included with this warning and is also available online at <https://bit.ly/35VhTaE>
5. Other matters properly placed by the Board before the meeting.

People who signed the membership book as of 5/11/2020 and made a pledge and contribution of record in the last year are eligible to vote.

The following members have been nominated by the Nominating Committee to be on the Board of Trustees:

Hope Baker-Carr – Trustee at large (serving a partial term expiring in 2021)

Rodney Lowe – Trustee at large (3 year term, expiring in 2023)

One nominee to serve a 3 year at large term will be announced at the annual meeting.

The following members have been nominated by the Nominating Committee to be Officers:

Leandre Waldo - Secretary (2 year term, expiring in 2022)

Kameron McConnell - Treasurer (2 year term, expiring in 2022)

Three nominees to serve on the Nominating Committee will be announced at the annual meeting.

One nominee to serve on the Endowment Team will be announced at the annual meeting.

Nominees can be nominated from the floor with the prior consent of the nominee.

Annual Meeting

A Word from Our Director of Operations & Finance Regarding the Budget

Our main focus in designing a budget each year is to make sure that our financial plan supports the mission and values of FUUSB. Early in this calendar year, the Board invited members to participate in one of a few “Our Money, Our Mission” gatherings. In these meetings we were able to look at our mission and how we put our money to work in support of it. The Board and Finance Team members took careful notes and we kept everything we learned in mind as we worked on the 2020/21 Fiscal Year Budget.

This budget shines by offering a clear focus on two main goals: 1) Building on our strengths, and 2) Fairly compensating and retaining our staff. With a modest increase in pledge income, we were able to carefully allocate funds for maximum impact, and rely on general fund reserves to meet the deficit.

We are projecting to end our 2019/2020 fiscal year with a surplus. When our congregation ends a fiscal year with a surplus, that surplus is moved into our general fund. The general fund is like a savings account that provides us with a cushion during difficult times and also an opportunity to stretch to meet our goals at other times.

In April the decision was made to apply for a Payroll Protection Program (PPP) Loan to assist with payroll and benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic. We were awarded just over \$108,000. This loan will be forgiven as long as we meet the requirements to spend at least 75% of these funds on continuing to pay and provide benefits to our staff. We fully expect this loan to be forgiven by early in the next fiscal year. When forgiven, these funds will be considered part of our General Fund balance.

In a time when everything is feeling quite uncertain, our leadership has chosen to be guided by their faith. Their faith that our Society will continue to be a relevant and necessary presence in our community. That faith is essential as we move through these unprecedented times. That being said, our Staff, Finance Team and Board are committed to carefully watching and considering our financial position throughout the next fiscal year. We are prepared to reevaluate and make adjustments to the budget if or when it becomes necessary. We are dedicated to informing the congregation of our financial status throughout the year.

In faith,

Christina Fulton

FUUSB 2020/2021 Budget Summary

As Approved by the Board - April 2020

	FY 2018-2019 Actual	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021	
	Actual Income & Expenses	Total Approved Annual Budget	Total Proposed Annual Budget	Increase/ (Decrease) vs. Prior Yr. %
		INFLOWS/INCOME		
Pledge Income	\$461,364	\$468,445	\$477,989	2%
Loose Plate Collections	\$30,083	\$25,000	\$25,000	0%
Subtotal Congregational Income	\$491,447	\$493,445	\$502,989	2%
Rental Income	\$153,890	\$158,955	\$158,955	0%
Trust Income/Distributions	\$157,418	\$148,200	\$168,521	15%
Other Income	\$22,684	\$19,500	\$20,950	7%
Subtotal Non-Congregational Income	\$333,792	\$322,655	\$346,426	7%
Total Inflows to General Fund	\$825,239	\$816,100	\$849,415	4%
		OUTFLOWS/EXPENSES		
Payroll/Benefits	\$606,705	\$558,298	\$599,394	8%
Operating Expenses	\$120,170	\$122,005	\$125,530	3%
Buildings & Site	\$70,600	\$72,100	\$74,000	2%
Ministry Teams	\$72,830	\$84,980	\$86,765	3%
Total Outflows from General Fund	\$870,305	\$815,383	\$865,688	6%
Net Increase / (Decrease) to General Fund	(\$45,066)	\$717	(\$16,273)	-2369%
General Fund Balance, End of Year	\$186,825	\$187,542	\$171,269	-9%

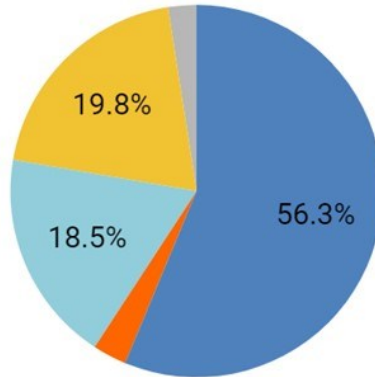
Annual Meeting

2020/2021 Budget Assumptions/Explanations as of April 18, 2020
Income
1% pledge increase
Additional \$5,000 as Non-Pledge Income
Additional \$1,000 Fundraiser Income as per this year's actual
Nims Income is based on a 12 quarter rolling average
Expense
Payroll & Benefits
2% COLA for all staff
Minister's additional 2.6% increase because last year's budgeted was less than what we ended up putting in the contract
Director of LFD - given an additional 2.5% increase to bring her above the UUA minimum
FD Asst - moved from 16 to 19 hrs per week - 10 month/year - now eligible for UUA Benefits
Music Director - moved from .3 to .42 FTE - now eligible for UUA Benefits
Choir Section Leaders - moved from 2 to 3
Director of Op & Fin - 2 year plan to get UUA midpoint - \$4,200 each year
Increase Facilities Manager to 40 hrs per week
Security Staff - added 25 hours per year as projected need
Operating Expenses
UUA Dues - Additional 6% to move us toward fair share
Property & Worker's Comp Insurance Increase
Building & Site Expenses
Church Maintenance - increased as per projection
Parking Lot - increased as per projection
Governance & Ministry
Care Network increase due to need
Pastoral Care Associates did not have a budget line - added per request
Membership Team decrease - did not use current year budget
Racial Justice requested a \$200 increase to help cover the cost of replacing the BLM Banner AND \$2,200 to do Beloved Conversations
Economic Justice requested a \$300 increase to cover the cost of the July 4th BBQ
Fundraising Expenses increased to reflect current year spending
Fundraising Consultant decreased
Lay Leadership Development increase to accommodate covering additional registrations

Annual Meeting

Inflows to General Fund

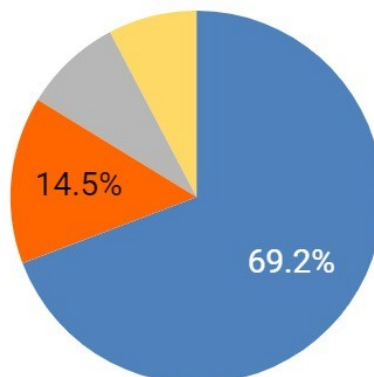
● Pledge Income ● Loose Plate Collections
● Rental Income ● Trust Income ● Other Income



Inflows	
Pledge Income	\$477,989
Loose Plate Collections	\$25,000
Rental Income	\$156,955
Trust Income	\$168,521
Other Income	\$20,950
Total	\$849,415

Outflows from General Fund

● Payroll/Benefits ● Operating Expenses
● Buildings/ Site ● Governance & Ministry



Outflows	
Payroll/Benefits	\$599,394
Operating Expenses	\$125,530
Buildings/ Site	\$74,000
Governance & Ministry	\$66,765
Total	\$865,689

Annual Meeting

Dear Congregation,

Below is the original request for funds to be taken from the Meeting House Fund, from the Property Team to the Endowment Team. As per our by-laws, the Endowment Team voted to recommend this request to the Board. The Board voted to recommend this request to the Congregation. The Board is asking that you approve this request to use funds from the Meeting House Fund for the purposes stated in the request below.

The FUUSB Board of Trustees

January 8, 2020

To the Endowment Team,

First, we want to acknowledge and thank you for the support you gave us in the spring of 2018 that enabled us to ask our FUUSB membership for \$125,000 from the Meeting House Fund to cover four projects: parking lot paving, sign, palladium window restoration, and window frame/sill restoration. Those projects have all been completed and paid for at the cost of \$112,061.

In March of 2019, the FUUSB was awarded a VT Historic Preservation Grant to be paid upon completion of the window projects. The \$18,850 from the VT Historic Preservation Grant has been received. In addition, Wendy Coe and Gene Bergman made a generous \$5000 gift to the FUUSB to help pay for our new sign. Our agreement with the Endowment Team and FUUSB membership was that unused funds from the \$125,000 would remain in the Meeting House Fund. We spent \$112,061, leaving \$12,939 unused. Adding the \$18,850 from the VT Historic Preservation Grant, and the \$5000 gift, there is \$36,789 to remain in the Meeting House Fund.

The Property Team is requesting that the \$36,789 be made available to our Team to cover the costs of five painting projects already contracted to be completed the summer of 2020. Those projects include: 27 Clarke Street house, painting and repair of 30 Elmwood Avenue trim, painting of the Sanctuary trim east and west sides of the Meeting House, south and west clock faces, and the east eve under the bell deck.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Property Team

Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington, Vermont June 2, 2019

Rev. Susan Milnor began the meeting at 11:23 a.m. and noted large attendance.

Opening Prayer: Rev. Susan Milnor presented the opening prayer.

Welcome & Introductions: Board President Tracy Titchner welcomed attendees; Rich Cassidy called the meeting to order.

Accepting Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded and the minutes were approved.

Saying Goodbyes: Tracy Titchner and Dan House acknowledged Rev. Susan Milnor, Rev. Andrée Mol, and Andrea Spencer-Linzie.

Election of Nominating Committee Slate: Jeff Trumbower presented the slate. A motion was made to approve the slate, the motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Song: Kira and Amelia Lawson sang “Come, Come, Whoever You Are.”

Vote on the Proposed Budget: The congregation heard the request of a congregant to revise the budget. The congregation engaged on the topic for some time. A motion was made and seconded to revise the budget, however the motion was withdrawn. Eventually a motion was made to call the question of approving the budget. That motion was seconded. The motion was made to approve the budget, the motion was seconded and the budget was adopted.

Participatory Activity: This activity did not take place with the acknowledgment that the congregation had just actively participated in a thoughtful conversation about the budget.

Other Business: No additional business was presented.

Meeting Close & Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 12:36 p.m.

Submitted by Leandre Waldo, Secretary