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AGENDA & SLATE OF NOMINEES FOR 2017-2018 YEAR

Business to be transacted:

1. Hear the presentation of the Congregational Development Committee

2. Elect officers and Council members-at-large

- **Officers (One-year term)**

President: Tricia Jalbert (previously Vice President)

Vice President: Traci Dorsey (previously member-at-large)

Treasurer: Steve Opre (previously Finance Chair)

Clerk: Jeff Hoye (previously member-at-large)

- **Members-at-large**

New (Two-year term):

Mark Schwartzberg (previously Clerk)

Candy Shirey (previously filling the remainder of Dick Danzinger's term)

Elise DeMichael (new)

Scott Blanchard (new)

Returning

Cathy Goldwater (2nd year of second two-year term)

3. Vote on members for the Congregational Development Committee and Trustees of the Endowment

- **Congregational Development Committee**

Chair: David Wheeler (returning member)

Graham Smith (new)

Donna Ryan (new)

Nan Stearns (new)

Carl Olsen (returning)

- **Trustees of the Endowment**

Lynn Coakley (new - 1st year of three-year term)

Dick Danzinger (returning - 2nd year of three-year term)

Alan Shirey (returning - 3rd year of three-year term)

4. Congregational vote to approve 2017/2018 budget

Copies of the budgets under consideration are available on the Congregation's website, in the church office and have been sent by email/standard mail to members

5. Formal release of the minister from call

The minister will retire at the end of the year (June 30)

Resolution: *To release the Rev. Barbara McKusick Liscord from all responsibilities and obligations to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Milford, effective as of June 30, 2017.*

6. Authorization to spend Capital Campaign Funds

The Council has authorized the worship committee to put forward a motion to spend the remaining Capital Campaign Funds (\$7,145.25) to make Audio/Visual and other improvements to the sanctuary.

Resolution: *That A/V equipment be purchased to improve the worship and other sanctuary experiences. The equipment shall consist of larger TV screens, a stage extension, curtains, additional microphones, plus equipment needed to support these. The source of the money for this effort will be the remaining Capital Campaign funds totaling approximately \$7,200.*

- 7. Hear reports of the officers and of such committees as may report to the meeting and to take such action thereon as may seem appropriate**
- 8. Other business that may properly come before the meeting.**

UUCM ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 5, 2016 – DRAFT MINUTES

1. Meeting Call to Order

Mark Schwartzberg called the meeting to order at 12:07 pm and offered a reading. UUCM Clerk Donna Ryan confirmed that the meeting had a quorum. The current UUCM Member List has 168 members, so 34 members were required to meet a 20% quorum for this meeting and there were 45 members in attendance, so the quorum was achieved.

2. Review of Minutes, 2015 Annual Meeting

The 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes were reviewed and no edits were required.

- Graham Smith motioned to approve the 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes, Scott Bennett seconded, all were in favor, no abstentions.

3. Slate of Nominees for the 2016/2017 Year

Leslie Bennett, as member of the Congregational Development Committee, presented the Slate of Nominees for the upcoming church year.

A. Council

Officers (One-year term)

President: Lynn Coakley (previously our vice president)

Vice President: Tricia Jalbert (previously Council Member at large)

Treasurer: Bob Baker (new)

Clerk: Mark Schwartzberg (previously our president)

Returning at-large Members:

Amy Conley (2nd year of two year term)

Dick Danzinger (2nd year of two year term)

Jeff Hoye (1st year of second two year term)

Cathy Goldwater (1st year of second two year term)

New at-large Member

Traci Dorsey (two year term)

- Graham Smith moved that the slate of nominees be moved in its entirety. Al Landeck seconded. All were in favor, no abstentions.

B. Congregational Development Committee:

This is a one-year term, with a limit of 3 consecutive terms:

Chair: Leslie Bennett (will serve 3rd term)

David Wheeler (will serve 2nd term)

Kristin Rounds

Karen Crossman

Carl Olsen

- Fred Dyke moved that the slate of nominees be moved in its entirety. Lynn Coakley seconded. All were in favor, no abstentions.

C. Trustees:

Chair: Allen Shirey (2nd year of three year term)

Returning Trustees:

Bob Baker (will serve 3rd year of three year term)

Dick Danzinger (new)

- Cathy Goldwater moved that the slate of nominees be moved in its entirety. John Shonle seconded. All were in favor, no abstentions.

At the conclusion of the voting, Reverend Barbara thanked Mark Schwartzberg for his year of serving as President. Debbie Maloney thanked Beth Soederberg for her years of serving on the RE Committee.

Presentation and vote on the 2016/2017 Budget

Mark Schwartzberg led the budget presentation. Pledges fell short of the goal this year. We are still not able to pay our Fair Share dues to the UUA and District nor will we be able to add the hoped for \$20,000 for RE administrative support. Pledge income is \$157,140 and total income is \$206,040. Cost of Ministry is \$109,761 and total expenses are at \$213,687, leaving a budget deficit of \$7,627.

Curt Hermann presented the option to use the “operating surplus” to balance the budget. At the end of May we had approximately \$50,000, which included the balance of outstanding checks and prior years’ surplus monies. Outstanding Pledges total \$30,000 and Curt estimates that \$20,000 of that will be received. He reviewed the remaining \$20,000 expenses and estimates that we will have \$50,000 in the Operating Account. The Finance Committee recommends we have two months of expenses in reserve and based on next year’s budget that is \$36,000. This leaves us with a balance of \$14,000 to cover the \$7,600 deficit in 2016/2017, plus any other one time expenses that the Congregation may approve for the remaining \$6400. If we receive the estimated \$20,000 of outstanding pledges, the shrinkage we had planned at 4% will come in closer to 3% and that is how we arrived at 3% shrinkage for this year.

Discussion:

- Susan Dyke Deschenes proposed that the \$6400 be targeted for Boiler repairs/replacement.
- Bob Baker responded that yes the boiler is old, but the new maintenance company came in and found no leaks and they replaced the outside gas line with larger capacity, which had been a problem. So we may have a few years left. But we should look forward to how the \$6400 should be spent, as the RE 5 Year Plan has an uptick in RE Admin salary in 2017/2018 and we have a large pledge member who is moving away.
- John Shonle stated that he does not like using surplus to fund an ongoing salary, particularly with a \$6000 salary increase. But although he doesn’t like it, he will support this budget, as he understands we do not have a choice.
- Sandy Frades offered that in prior years we had budget surplus, but we called it a carryover and so using it, as we are proposing here, has precedence.

- Lynn Coakley – suggested that as a onetime expenditure we could use the \$6400 to pay a portion of our UUA and District dues, which we have not been able to pay out of the budget for several years. We cannot use it toward salary, but we can use it for something we would like to do.
- Susan Dyke Deschenes – In the past we have sent out a request for a special donation toward specific things. She proposes that we do that instead of using the \$6400.
- John Shonle – The \$6400 is not a real number, it could go up or down. Do not spend it until we have a much better idea of where we are, like in the next May timeframe.

Point of Order – is there a motion on the floor? No, this is a discussion period.

- Susan Dyke Deschenes posed a question – if we pay our Administrator 30 hours, doesn't the law require they receive benefits?
 - Bob Baker responded that the RE 5 Year Plan includes benefits for the Re Admin in the out years.
 - Sandy Frades clarified that the plan includes summer work, but the weekly average across the year will be less than 30 hours.
 - There was then discussion around the fact that an organization's size impacts the rules when you must provide benefits. Steve Opre clarified that if the employee works more than 30 hours a week over a 3 month period, then they may be considered full time, but this rule is for organizations with more than 25 people.
- Motion - Graham Smith motioned that we accept the budget as proposed. John Shonle seconded the motion. Conversation can now officially continue!
- Lynn clarified that if we vote to accept the budget, then we are voting to apply the \$7600 of this year's proposed excess to next year's budget. We are not voting to use the remaining \$6400 of the proposed excess; that needs to be a separate discussion.
- Fred Dyke – We have talked about plans for the future, but the 5 Year RE Plan has not been communicated. Mark explained that Reverend Barbara and Sandy Frades put together a plan to slowly increase the admin support to RE. It provides the \$6300 increase in 2016/2017, an \$8000 in terms of both wage and hours and some benefits in 2017/2018.

Point of Order – John Shonle reminded us that the motion on the floor is to accept this year's budget. This RE Plan discussion is not relevant.

Mark Schwartzberg asked if there was any more discussion on the budget. There was none. He then called for a vote to accept the budget, including the deficit which will be paid by surplus.

- **Majority in favor, one opposed, one abstention. The budget carries.**

4. Report on memorial rentals to members

At the November congregational meeting the Council was charged to review our policy regarding rentals of the church to members for family memorial services.

At the December Council meeting the following language was adopted to be included in our rentals information:

“There is no charge for the use of any sacred space for a memorial service for a UUCM member. This includes the Sanctuary, Emerson and Fireside .”

5. Discussion of symbols on our building and in our sacred spaces

Over the course of the past several months there has been discussion of symbols in our sacred spaces, particularly regarding the cross which adorns our steeple. The cross is typically identified as Christian and also shows up in our lighting fixtures in our sanctuary. The chalice is a newer symbol for UUs, expresses inclusivity and has replaced crosses in some congregations. After discussing the history of various symbols Mark Schwartzberg offered the following resolution:

- Resolution – Whereas the cross does not represent the totality of our UU Faith and whereas we wish to debate the all-inclusive nature of our faith and to remain in place with the members of our community so that they may all feel their faith journeys are accorded worth, we resolve to engage as a community in a deeper discussion of the symbols of faith which adorn our sacred spaces and which represent us to the wider world and with which we surround ourselves in the building which is the home of our spiritual community.

Discussion:

- Bob Eaton – Where do you see the cross? During the summer it can only be seen across the street. It is not a Christian Cross on our steeple, it is a Celtic Cross. He estimates it weighs several hundred pounds since it is made of cast iron and it will require a crane to remove. Why are we so focused on the issue of the cross? Last year our youth were visiting area churches and he heard that they faced derogatory comments regarding our rainbow flag. This is a more serious issue that we should be dealing with.
- Sandy Frades – She has heard from a few members of the congregation that came from other faith backgrounds that have been put off by the cross on our church. She wonders what this means and encourages further discussion.
- John Shonle – He likes the idea of a further discussion taking place over a longer time and not just deciding to take any action too quickly.
- Nancy Baker – She believes a serious discussion will help us all learn something about our symbolism. It is much better to be known for what you are for rather than what you are against.
- Ruth Heden – How would it look to the community if we brought in a huge crane to remove our cross? It would not help our broader relationship with the community.
- Beth Soederberg – In addition to the cross, you look at our beautiful stained glass windows and you see that symbolism is everywhere. But our people represent what we are about. We need more modern things in our sanctuary that represent what we do now.
- Al Landeck – He pointed out that the resolution was to have discussion, not to have the discussion now.
 - Scott Bennett moved that we adopt this resolution. Sandy Frades seconded. No further discussion.
 - Majority in favor, two opposed, no abstentions. Resolution Passes. Discussions will be organized by the Committee on Ministry, Council or the Worship Committee.

7. Committees:

Committee reports were available in the annual report packet. Committee Chairs were asked if there were any additions to their reports.

- Curt Hermann of the Finance Committee said that Statements of Pledges will be sent out by early next week. We need to close the books. It is important that pledges get in before the end of the fiscal year, June 30th. Likewise any expense reports or any expenditure by the operating departments need to be in by then as well.

8. Meeting adjournment

John Shonle moved to adjourn the annual meeting, Bob Baker seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Ryan, UUCM Clerk 2015/2016

MINISTER'S REPORT

"We are living through a time of enormous change. This isn't generational change; this is a shifting of the paradigms. Many of the assumptions about what made religious leaders and movements relevant and vital through the time of the Enlightenment no longer apply. What is it that 21st century leaders need to know in order for religion to evolve, maintain its functionality, and continue to reshape the human community for the common good?"

--Rev. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of UCC

Maintaining Relevance, Credibility and Vitality in a Postmodern World

We are about to complete our 15th year of shared ministry together. We have so much to be grateful for in the excellent leadership of our Council: Lynn Coakley, President; Tricia Jalbert, Vice-President; Bob Baker, Treasurer; Mark Schwartzberg, Clerk; Cathy Goldwater, Jeff Hoye, Amy Conley, Dick Danzinger, Candy Shirey (stepping in for Dick) and Tracey Dorsey and all the many people who lead and participate in our committees, task groups, small groups and other innumerable dimensions of our ministry. Thank you all so very much. I have been such a lucky minister to be ministering with all of you.

It has been another year of abundant accomplishments in our ministry and writing this report is more poignant than usual, as we lead up to completing our ministry together at the end of June. Your council has done a wonderful job with your transition and I'm excited for you as you look forward to welcoming your interim minister, Rev. Carol Strecker, in August.

The quote above points to the changing times we find ourselves in and the challenging task of meeting the needs of our current members and looking beyond our walls to see how we might best serve the greater good for the generations to come. UUCM is so fortunate to have this beautiful building and land as a place to convene and serve the community. Congregations tend to be slow to adopt change and of course, that is not always a bad thing. I know that my reflections on how the world is changing and suggestions on how we might want to consider changing have not always been comfortable for everyone. I returned from sabbatical with the thought that our congregations need to become community centers for spiritual growth, learning and social justice. One idea is to symbolize that broader purpose replacing the cross on the top of the steeple with a chalice. Currently, our building is a better representation of our roots than our branches.

I know that your interim period will be full of reflection about who you want to become. We have started some of that work in the last two years, experimenting with the sanctuary space and whole congregation worship. Shifting the minister's role from key worship provider to community organizer, supportive of others' gifts for ministry and of family and children's and youth programming. I know this has been disappointing to some and I appreciate the compliment paid by people letting me know that they want more of my sermons. I have found that it takes more time to coordinate others to lead worship than doing it myself, but the time is spent connecting with congregants and facilitating connections among congregants. Working on projects together is a wonderful way to create bonds. Also, as IKEA has taught us, people tend to be fond of things they build themselves. I am so delighted with the growing collaboration between the Children's and Youth Faith Formation and Worship Committees. Getting away from a siloed way of doing things toward a more holistic view of community life is the way to go. This doesn't mean that there isn't a time and place for generation-specific opportunities.

Our experiments over the last two years were based on my reading, attending workshops and consulting with other ministers of UU breakthrough congregations. Studies show that young adults are looking for more embodied worship, which will take a more flexible worship space than we currently have. I encourage you to visit faith communities that have made these changes.

In reviewing the 2016-2017 congregational year, I find that much of what we began in the 2015-2016 year continued. And so, like last year, I've organized my report around key words of our mission statement adopted in 2009.

HONOR EACH. ENRICH ALL

Our spiritual community welcomes all people

and honors the human dignity of each individual.

Grounded in our Unitarian Universalist Principles,

we enrich one another and challenge ourselves

to heal and strengthen all lives and to care for our shared earth.

HONORING EACH. *Our spiritual community welcomes all people and honors the human dignity of each individual.* **Hospitality** is at the core of this aspect of our shared ministry, and we do a good job of warmly welcoming new folks when they arrive at our doors. I recommend that we also have someone at the information table after worship. It is AFTER worship that people are more likely to want information and be willing to share their contact information so that we can keep up our connections with them. We welcomed **4 new members** into our fellowship. Our **building and grounds**, where we welcome everyone, continue to be well maintained by our Property Committee chair, the Friday Guys and our custodian, Sue Wahlen. The Shelley property becomes more and more beautiful, as the Friday Guys have worked many days, in addition to Fridays, to get it ready for worship and play. As we explore changes to our **sanctuary** and experiment with a smaller space for worship, many are aware that the job of **ushering** has changed, with a greater expectation that ushers will find each person who arrives to worship with us a place in our sanctuary. Although we abandoned experiments on expanding the stage area, we leapt ahead with audiovisual experiments. Two flat screen TVs provide visuals and we added new hearing enhancement devices. Many thanks to Candy Shirey for creating beautiful audio-visuals that have enhanced our worship experiences. I know the worship committee will be looking for others who would like to create these audio-visuals for worship.

Two sparkling gems of hospitality continue to shine in the monthly **community supper** we host at UUCM and the monthly **SHARE 1st Tuesday dinner**, which we put on with other faith communities. Many thanks to our leaders of those efforts: Nancy Danzinger, Barbara Smith, Dona Eaton and others who take turns leading each particular dinner. We have learned that the dinners help assuage loneliness, as much as hunger. Each person who crosses our threshold is welcome. As Rev. Betty Foster used to say, "No matter who you are, and no matter what you look like."

ENRICHING ALL. *We enrich one another.* Our theme-based congregational life is one way that we enrich each other. We reflect on each month's theme in worship, small group conversations and religious education for children, youth and adults. Many thanks to: 1) the UUCM Soul Matters Theme Resource circle for contributing to the theme resource materials each month; 2) Music Director Carolyn McCreary, along with music planners Linda Goodman and Joe Pollock, for choosing music to fit each month's theme; 3) Nancy Baker for creating and maintaining "weekly tid-bits" with art and poetry on each month's theme, which has increased it's readership by virtue of our collaboration with UU Nashua and UU Manchester; 4) all who engaged in conversations about the themes, whether in small groups, at coffee hour, in the car or around the kitchen table at home; 5) Our Office Administrator, Jamie Ferrier and the newsletter and website team (Dona Eaton, Pat Nelson, Bryan Higgs) for making the resources accessible.

Theme-based congregational life offers the opportunity to go deeper in our personal reflections and our conversations with one another along our spiritual journey. The themes for the 2017-2018 will be "What

does it mean to be a people of: Welcome, Courage, Abundance, Hope, Intention, Perseverance, Balance, Emergence, Creativity and Blessing.”

Another benefit of being part of the Soul Matter’s Theme Circle is our **collaboration with UU Nashua and UU Manchester**, who share the same themes. This makes for beautiful opportunities to co-create small group ministry sessions, and to share pulpits and faith formation programs.

Worship has been rich with offerings from many members of the congregation. I coordinate worship and support other leaders in a variety of ways. When I’m not leading the entire worship service, I do the welcome, joys and sorrows and, often, the benediction. People have reported to me that they have been very happy with the quality of the services this year.

I’ve been attending as many **Children’s and Youth Faith Formation Committee (CYFF)** meetings as possible and generally supporting children’s programming. I have continued to coordinate the high school youth group. Emily Jones and I created a program that combined the elements of a Coming of Age program with activities that worked for high school youth from all grades, regardless of whether they had ever participated in a Coming of Age program. The program flagged with my sabbatical absence last fall, but had a satisfying culmination with the wonderful worship that the youth led on May 21. It was an honor and great joy to lead the group with Emily Jones and Kristin Rounds, such talented, experienced teachers. Al Landeck led games, which the youth very much enjoyed. Many thanks to the parents who provided meals: Cammie Opre, Leslie Bennett, Kim Shapiro and Julie Adl-Zarabi.

Ferry Beach. This continues to be an important part of our congregational life. These immersive experiences where individuals and families can side step the ordinary stream of busy lives may be the ‘church’ of the future. In the future, I hope a concerted effort will be made to increase attendance of high school youth.

GROUNDING IN OUR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST PRINCIPLES. When someone asks me, “**What’s a Unitarian Universalist?**” I say that we have diverse beliefs and we are united by seven ethical principles. Our principles are woven through worship, small group ministry sessions, our UU & You classes and faith formation programs for children and youth.

UUCM is a member of the networked congregations of the **Unitarian Universalist Association**, enjoying benefits of being Unitarian Universalists well beyond religious identity. The UUA and UU Ministers Association develop our religious education, leadership development curricula and ministerial formation. Our faith depends on religious leaders, such as your minister, to support the development and growth of new ministers. As part of this network, we promise other Unitarian Universalists our trust and mutual support. We have been lucky to have support from our regional staff as we have experimented with doing things differently. Kim Sweeney has made several visits and offered the CYFF and Worship Committee’s training in creating whole-congregation and collaborative worship.

A time of ministerial transition is often the time when we remember and need our UUA connections more than ever. I hope UUCM will begin again to give to the UUA at a fair share level.

Collaboration with other UU Congregations: I continued to meet monthly with Rev. Allison Palm, minister from Nashua and Rev. Patrick McLaughlin. See the Adult Religious Faith Formation report. Rev. Allison and Rev. Patrick and I swapped pulpits, which led to people from those other congregations attending Adult Faith Formation programs that I led. I attended the regional UU Minister’s gathering last November, which included an inspiring worship workshop by Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Lewis of Middle Collegiate Church in NYC. She showed us how she uses video and photos woven with her sermon- very effective. I also attended the spring meeting of the Northern NE Minister’s Association for an inspiring workshop with Pat Humphries and Sandy O of Emma’s revolution on social justice song writing and finding our social justice witnessing voice. I led a worship service focused on transitions and facilitated a difficult conversation among colleagues. I continued as part of a study group of UU ministers that meets each January/February in Sudbury.

Teaching Congregation: How wonderful it has been to have Kali Fyre our ministerial intern with us again this year- 20 hours a week. In my role as her Teaching Pastor, I am an adjunct professor at Meadville Lombard Theological School and attended Meadville's convocation again in this past January. I meet with Kali each week to talk about her ministry with us. Kali led worship several times this year and participated in most worship services. She has been involved with our prison ministry (WITT) and has become an expert in supporting people who have suffered domestic violence. She is a leader at Meadville in teaching others about domestic violence. As a teaching congregation, we all share in the **formation of a new UU minister**. And Kali provided a steady and appreciated ministerial presence while I was away on Sabbatical in October and November.

Professional Oversight: One role of every professional association, including the UU Ministers Association (UUMA), is to participate in oversight of fellow professionals. For the last year and a half, I have served as one of three "Good Officers" for the Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont region. In that role, I assist when there is: 1) tension between a minister and the institution s/he serves, 2) tension between a minister and UUA staff, and 3) tension between 2 or more ministers. I attended attending more "Good Officer" training prior to General Assembly last year.

General Assembly (GA): Kali and I attended the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly last year in Columbus, Ohio. It was a particularly inspiring GA, featuring William Barber and our own Bill Sinkford as speakers and responding soulfully to the Pulse Nightclub shooting tragedy in Orlando. I have decided not to attend GA in New Orleans this year (June 21-25), since it occurs in my penultimate week with you and there is much to accomplish as I pass the baton along to Rev. Carol. I plan to vote in the UUA President election on-line. Let Lynn Coakley know if you would like to serve as a delegate and vote remotely. As always, you will be able to watch live streaming of much of the plenary and large worship services from New Hampshire. Perhaps a group of us can gather at UUCM to watch together. I think Lynn is hoping to facilitate that.

Partner church: Thanks to your fundraising, I was able to accompany a group of 7 visiting our partner church and village in Transylvania in September. Some of us stayed with Rev. Tamas Tofalvi and his wife, Kinga, and their daughter, Fanni, and other UUCM pilgrims stayed in the homes of villagers. Rev. Tamas along with his dedicated congregants created amazing experiences for us. Just this past Monday, Peggy Stokes and I skyped with Rev. Tamas and Kinga. Fanni was there, too- so grown up! They would welcome UUCM visitors, but you might not want to visit in September. They are expecting a sibling for Fanni, then. If you have the opportunity to travel to the village in 2017 or 2018, you can be sure that Rev. Tamas and Kinga will be enthusiastic hosts. The UU Partner Church council can also help get you there and arrange for you to see sites related to Unitarian history. Carl and Sue Olsen and Erna Johnson give rave reviews of their trip last year arranged by John Dale of the Partner Church council.

CHALLENGING OURSELVES: We have been challenging ourselves in several areas: reconsidering the efficacy of our worship space, continuing to work on the Shelley Property, remaining in conversation even when we have differences of opinion. I recommend continuing the challenge begun two years ago with Rev. Olivia Holmes- challenging our culture around finances for operating the work of the congregation. What a beautiful job Cammie and Steve Opre did on the positive vibe pledge campaign. Love my t-shirt and bumper sticker!

We challenge ourselves by crossing borders in caring for people who have been marginalized. Our commitment remains strong in caring for people who are homeless with the **Nashua Soup Kitchen** and the **Anne Marie House**.

Crop Walk. I participated in the Crop Walk again this year- with a small but hardy group. Many thanks to Susan Deschenes for once again coordinating our participation.

Women in Transition. I continue to heartily support our prison ministry, which has gathered strength under the leadership of our Minister Emerita, Rev. Jeanne Nieuwejaar. The team has begun to offer real

assistance to women who have been released from prison and have begun the arduous journey of rebuilding their lives. Prison ministry represents an intersection of justice issues: economic, racial, and gender.

Professional Development. I challenge myself to continually learn more to better serve our ministry, attending study groups and workshops and constantly reading and consulting with other ministers. As one minister said, “religion” is a bad brand- yet people of all ages are still looking for community and meaning.

HEALING AND STRENGTHENING: *We challenge ourselves to heal and strengthen all lives.* In our shared ministry, the work of “healing and strengthening” stretches across the full range of human emotion. This has been a year of heavy pastoral concerns, beginning with last July with support of Rex Lint and his family as he was dying and the sudden death of Debess from an accident, which also involved a young person who grew up in our congregation. The congregation did a beautiful job of hosting Debess’ Memorial. And I’m grateful to Minister Emeritus, Olav Nieuwejaar for officiating at Rex’s memorial while I was away on sabbatical. Since then numerous people have been critically ill and having surgery.

As your minister, I meet with many members and friends of the congregation as they go through difficult life passages. My practice is to offer to meet with each person three times and then make a referral to another counseling professional. I also make home and hospital visits.

On the joyful side, I’ll be officiating at one more wedding for a member before I leave in June. My usual practice is to meet with the couple at least three times, I give them questions to consider, and then we create a ceremony together that represents their values, particular stories and the promises they make to each other for their future.

In the Unitarian Universalist tradition, each wedding and memorial service represents the particular couple or a celebration of the particular person who has died. I do not do “fill in the blank” weddings, memorials or graveside services. Each service is crafted for the people involved. In terms of your minister’s time, it is useful to think of each of these services as requiring the same amount of time it takes to create a worship service, about 30 hours.

There were no **Child Dedication** ceremonies this past year.

Many thanks to the members of the **Pastoral Care Network Committee**, who significantly magnify our healing ministry with practical and emotional support. They invite and coordinate all UUCM members and friends into a mutual ministry of care.

We have a plan for the month of July, after I leave and before Rev. Carol begins in August. If an emergency arises, the on-call council member will first get a call and then refer the matter either to the Pastoral Care Coordinator and if necessary to a minister on call. Specifics of this plan will appear in the July newsletter that will come out before the end of June.

CARING FOR THE EARTH: I hope you will give more attention to this area of our mission in the years to come.

SUPERVISION OF STAFF. We are also grounded in our UU principles as we manage staff performance and morale. Each employee has the right to clear knowledge of what is expected of him or her and to work in an environment where they are treated respectfully. One important ‘behind the scenes’ responsibility that I have is supervision and coordination of staff. I run weekly staff meetings and meet with each individual staff member for a “check-in” at least once month. I conduct annual performance reviews and update job descriptions and set goals. I make staff recommendations to Council. I’m grateful for the attention and talent of our Personnel Committee Chair, Dan Rothman. Since all staff positions consist of shared ministry with our community’s volunteers, I nurture coordination between staff and volunteers and seek feedback from volunteers about staff performance. Personnel Committee and appropriate volunteers lend extra support during the hiring process of each staff member. I’m grateful for the excellent orientation and training our volunteers give new

employees in their particular work sphere. Since the Council gave me supervisory responsibility in the spring of 2013, staff members have more readily served the purposes of the church.

This staff management responsibility is always more time-consuming when we have staff changes, which we fortunately did not experience this past year. I'm confident that your excellent staff will serve you well for this interim period. Please take the time to thank them. I'm looking at the title for the role that Jamie Ferrier currently holds- Office and Faith Formation Administrator to see if that is the most accurate given her responsibilities. Her Faith Formation (f/k/a Religious Education) responsibilities expanded dramatically this past year as Sandy Frades stepped back from leading our Religious Education efforts. Jamie continues to grow in her understanding of all her many roles and is a delight to work with. She has initiated projects that have enhanced the life of the Congregation, including a Community dinner the week before Xmas which youth and their families put on.

We are lucky to have other great staff members as well. Music Director, Carolyn McCreary, is completing her 6th year with us. She is fun to work with and knows how to work collaboratively in creating worship and caring for the music ministry of our community. Custodian, Sue Wahlen, remains dedicated to the work of keeping our building clean and hospitable and sports a cheerful attitude, even when faced with some pretty yucky things to clean up.

LOOKING BACK FIFTEEN YEARS

As part of the transition process, Joe Sullivan, of the New England Regional UUA staff conducted exit interviews of the council and me. Last Tuesday night, I got together with the Council to share what we have learned in our time together. We all were gratified to see the large body of positive work we have done together over the last 15 years of shared ministry. Here is the list that the Council and I brainstormed- just as it flowed and in no particular order:

- Quality Sunday worship.
- Developing lay leaders for worship and minister's collaboration with lay leaders on worship
- Summer conversation circles, usually lay led, some by minister.
- Shifted from music program centered on an excellent pianist to a music director who sees role as music ministry, with a choir and lay people involved in planning music, and coordination with minister and worship
- Theme based ministry- Soul Matters monthly themes- in worship and faith formation programs and collaboration with other congregations.
- Better personnel management – formed personnel committee and established policies; made minister staff supervisor with hiring/firing authority. Minister pursued training in this area.
- Harmonious relationship with former ministers, Rev. Jeanne Nieuwejaar and Rev. Olav Nieuwejaar, Minister's Emerita and Emeritus, while they served as District Executives and since.
- Involved Ministerial Associate Rev. Betty Foster in the life of the congregation and supported her designation as Ministerial Associate Emerita.
- Good job coordinating the staff; harmonious working environment for staff.
- In RE-area, we developed 3 DRE's who had never done this before
- Brought minister compensation up to guidelines
- Started small group ministry program, which has now been our longest term, most well attended adult faith formation program
- Adult Faith Formation collaboration with other congregations (Nashua, Manchester) and pulpit swapping with those congregations.
- 1st joint social event with Manchester and Nashua last summer.
- Additional Pulpit swapping with Keene, Concord, Peterborough, Auburn ME, Norwich, VT
- Not dependent on minister to resolve difficulties. Effective Committee on Ministry.

- Held workshops on difficult conversations and conflict management.
- Growing UUSC contributions – very intentional about it.
- Improving membership process, though fallen away the last few years.
- Friendly, welcoming culture.
- Pastoral care network- led by a different member of the Pastoral Care Committee- coordinates a network of care from the whole congregation; workshops on listening and other pastoral care arts.
- Amazing property improvements: new kitchen, basement new rooms and emergency exit;
- Acquiring the property next door; beautiful grounds
- Created wayside pulpit
- Sanctuary improvements – sound system, A/V
- 1st Youth service trip with youth last spring – very rewarding
- End-of-life planning workshops.
- Became a teaching congregation with Meadville-Lombard student
- Partner Church – 2 pilgrimages (2004 and 2016); and brought new minister and his family here spring 2016, which revitalized our connections.
- Monthly Community supper – hosted here at UUCM- where community members in need of fellowship and food mingle with our own congregants; sometimes includes a sing-a-long in the sanctuary.
- Monthly serving of supper at SHARE- our local social services program, along with other faith communities
- Garden Box project- a MLK day service project providing raised beds and compost boxes to SHARE clients with mentoring at their homes. Evolved to a community garden at SHARE.
- Revived our Welcoming Congregation program with educational programs, inviting people from other faith communities; Rainbow flag is always displayed now (used to be only on specially designated days)
- Revived Ferry Beach retreat
- Green Sanctuary certification (2 sustainability conversation series)
- Hosted Interfaith 350 day worship and witnessing on the oval
- Hosted Interfaith concert.
- Early on, took active role in early Souhegan Interfaith services.
- Major website upgrade
- Quality electronic communications (weekly and monthly newsletters)
- Attractive, consistent brochures and business cards with logo
- Portable, memorable mission statement
- Prison ministry (women in transition)
- Social Justice activism: pipeline, bridge to Selma, Minister's outspoken support of movements and issues. Support of Climate riders.
- Streamlined bylaws.
- Created policies and procedures manual for staff and other operational manuals.
- Served as sanctuary for congregants who were driven from their homes after an ice storm; some spent many nights here until power was restored to their homes. Other came here to fill water bottles, wash dishes, access the Internet and warm up. The Christmas Day dinner began that year and has continued ever since. Later, a Thanksgiving Day feast was added.
- Generally, outreach to the Milford area community has expanded.
- Participated in Family Promise- housing families in transition in our basement –rotating with other faith communities. Now volunteering at Anne Marie House, where families live without having to move around.
- Transgender signs on our bathrooms.
- Hosted beautiful memorial services
- Began All Souls service- planting bulbs in the garden- and other special worship services, like Winter Solstice Service, Peabody Mill and Animal blessing service.

No doubt you have your own memories. There are thousands of interactions, conversations and experiences worth remembering. We are lucky that, on balance, most have been positive. And we've learned much about what matters most from difficult experiences, too. That's the beautiful benefit of abiding in an intentional, meaning-making faith and community. I am so grateful to all of you for letting me into your lives, allowing me to minister with you. You have taught me so much about love, faith and commitment. I will miss you more than you can know.

With love and abundant blessings to each and every one of you as individuals and as this wonderful UUCM community,

Barbara

Rev. Barbara McKusick Liscord

MINISTERIAL INTERN REPORT

This second year of my internship began with a return to the annual retreat to Ferry Beach in Maine, this time joined by my partner, Jack. I assisted Rev. Barbara in offering worship on Saturday and Sunday mornings, Jack and I participated in Trivia on the Porch, and Rev. Barbara and I joined a community conversation about questions and feedback regarding the anticipated Whole Congregation Worship experiences for the upcoming year.

At the end of Sept. when Rev. Barbara headed to Transylvania and Szekelyszentmihaly on pilgrimage with members of the congregation, and then on to sabbatical, I had a more visible role in the congregation than I had done during the sabbatical in the spring. I led worship three Sundays during that time, including at our Peabody Mill Center service and Thanksgiving weekend, offering bread and cider communion. I also offered a visible pastoral presence in November for post-election processing, and offered an evening Vespers service the day following the election for those with strong emotions at the results.

I have continued to work with the worship committee this year, and with the Women in Transition Team for much of the year. I participated in Council meetings during Rev. Barbara's sabbatical, and several others through the remainder of the church year. Over the summer I met with the worship and faith formation teams as we worked with Kim Sweeney to develop programming for the church year. I met with

There were, again this year, some absences in my time with the congregation, as I again had opportunities for "pulpit supply" where I lead worship as a guest speaker at other congregations over this year. I also was in Chicago for attendance at intensives for my classes three times – for a week in Oct/Nov for a class in Tulsa, OK at All Souls Unitarian on the topic of Multiracial Congregations as Faith Formation, for 2 ½ weeks in January (also included Convocation) and for the last week of March. I participated in a total of six courses over this year, in addition to my internship work here with the congregation: Leadership Studies, the previously mentioned Multiracial Congregations as Faith Formation, UU History and Polity, Preaching as If You Mean It, and History of Global Christianity through Meadville; additionally, I completed a correspondence course on Christian Scriptures through St. Stephens Seminary in Edmonton. I completed my final assignments for all courses on April 28, qualifying for graduation. The graduation ceremony was held in Chicago on May 21, 2017 where I received my Masters in Divinity (MDiv.).

As my final year of internship here at UUCM comes to a close, I am grateful for the blessing of your lessons and support over the past two years, and an additional third year prior to that when I worked directly with Barbara. You have been a truly wonderful teaching congregation, with so much to offer to me, as your direct intern, but additionally to the classmates with whom I worked in collaborative groups. Our opportunity to share each other's experiences allowed us to learn from many sources. You have contributed in some way to the development of my 34 fellow graduates. I am excited for possibilities that I have for my future as a minister, and I will profoundly miss our shared ministry. I hope that the exciting time of change ahead for you might, one day, include a return to the role of teaching congregation. UUCM has much to share with the development of Unitarian Universalist ministry!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been my great honor to serve our congregation as the President of the Council this year. I am fortunate to have been able to serve with an exceptional group of committee volunteers, lay leaders, and our fabulous staff.

Highlights of the year include:

- A congregational trip to Transylvania
- Successful continuation of our ministries during the minister's sabbatical
- Adult Faith Formation collaboration with Manchester and Nashua UU congregations
- Welcoming Youth Observers to our Council Meetings
- Spirit of Creativity, A Fair Share Affair, an evening of arts to benefit the UUA
- The Positive Vibe Pledge Drive, with pancakes and prizes
- All of us working together on so many things - the Holiday Fair, the Crop Walk, the Auction, the Community Dinners, the Soup Kitchen, and the WITT, to name but a few.

This year at UUCM has been shaped by change. This fall, we implemented a number of changes to our worship services as well as to our faith formation offerings. This winter, we received Rev. Barbara's letter of resignation. This spring, we are trying to hold on to all the goodness of the past, but still move forward towards the opportunities of the future.

Change is hard. It forces us out of long-established habits and comfortable routines. As a faith community, we are called upon to trust each other. To honor each person's own journey. To respect all our different ways of reacting to these changes. And still to remain in covenant with each other.

Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal religion. The relationships we have with each other are based on a covenant of faith and trust. The relationship the congregation has with the minister is based on a covenant of faith and trust. The relationships our congregation has with other local faith communities and the wider UU movement are based on a covenant of faith and trust.

As we move forward into another year that we know will contain change, I encourage each of us to hold fast to our faith and trust in each other. Remember that not everyone accepts change at the same pace. Trust that we will all get to where we need to be. Have faith that we all want what is best for our community, even if we disagree about how to achieve that.

UUCM is our spiritual home. And, as Robert Frost says, "Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in."

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn R. Coakley, President

TREASURER'S REPORT

Income

As of May 15, 2017, total regular income of \$185,387 is consistent with a pro-rated budget for this time in the fiscal year. Pledge income is currently at \$130,161 and is expected to finish the year about \$3600 under budget.

Plate income is currently at \$10,076, or 88% of budget for the year. Of this, we have shared \$3,275 with outside organizations. We regularly share 35% of our plate collection with outside organizations, and in some cases we will share an entire plate or the proceeds from a fund raiser. We always pass through any donations that are indicated as fully intended for the plate recipient.

Total fundraising is at \$23,242 slightly under our yearly budget of \$25,700. Our fundraising efforts continue to provide a significant portion (13%) of our total income so far. Many thanks are due to those who organized and ran the Holiday Fair, the Auction, Trivia Night and all the other fund raising events.

Expenses

Total YTD expenses are \$177,125 or \$9847 below a pro-rated budget for this time in the fiscal year, mainly as a result of the mild winter along with lower spending by Religious Education and committees. We expect expenses to end the year below budget by about the same amount.

Cash Flow Projection

As of May 15, 2016, we have a positive cash flow of \$14,052 with about \$57,552 in the Treasurer's operating budget bank account. Our estimated expenses for the rest of the year are about \$22,000, and our estimated income is \$24,000. We expect to have about \$59,000 in cash at the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2017). We should maintain a minimum balance of approximately 2 months of anticipated operating expenses or \$36,000 which would leave us with approximately \$23,000 in excess reserve to be applied to the budget deficit in 2017-18. With the projected budget deficit at \$35,000 for 2017-2018, only \$24,000 of operating reserve will be left in the Treasurer's account at the end of next year.

Summary

We started the year in good shape with \$43,500 in the Treasurer's account; we will end the year with more, approximately \$59,000. Our ability to pay bills and make payroll was helped by the large balance in the Treasurer's account. Next year, the operating reserve in the Treasurer's account will be significantly reduced due to a deficit budget.

Thank you to all who support our church financially and through the generous donations of your time and talents. It is because of these that we are all able to enjoy the extensive programming and worship opportunities that exist here at UUCM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert L. Baker, Jr., Treasurer

TRUSTEES' REPORT

The Trustee's mission statement continues as “to preserve and grow the Endowment”.

And our purpose continues,

“to furnish a stable financial base that will provide for a continued Unitarian presence in the Milford area”.

Our targeted allocation is 75% in equity and 25% in debt, each distributed among highly rated Mutual Funds. Where possible, we invest in socially responsible funds.

As of the end of April 2017, our Endowments total value is \$378,400.

As of the end of April 2016 our Endowments value was \$319,991.

After considering that \$8850 of our increase was gifts during 2017, our investment return was roughly 15.5%, which by any measure is a very very good year for our asset allocation strategy.

We thank all of our donors for their contributions during fiscal 2017. Our holiday appeal gathered \$3750, and a few additional bequests totaling \$5100 rounded out the balance. We are grateful for all gifts received.

Recent reports on the UUCM Endowments policies and investments can be seen on the UUCM Members and Friends webpage, under the Money> Trustees link on the left side of the page.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT

As of June 4, 2017, there is \$7170 in the Capital Campaign fund. A motion will be made at the annual meeting to spend this money on sanctuary improvements.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert L. Baker, Jr., Treasurer

SHARE-THE-PLATE REPORT

Through our plate, we provided money to special appeals from the UUSC for Haiti Relief and the New Start Project. We supported our denomination through plate sharing with the UUA, UUSC, and UU Ministry for Earth. We helped support local organizations like SHARE, Bridges and Boys & Girls Club of Milford.

This year the children asked you to select an organization to share the plate during the Children/Youth Service and you voted for the Boys & Girls Club of Milford. For the Coming of Age Service, they selected our Rise Against Hunger project to support. UUCM is hoping to host a Rise Against Hunger event during the next church year. To do so, we need to raise at least \$3,000.

For the fourth year in a row, due to budget constraints, the plate split is 65% to UUCM and 35% to non-profit organizations. We can be proud that, by the end of the church year, we will send over \$3,600 to organizations that need our help. However, we are down by 30% in our giving this year from last year.

Here is the breakdown through the service on 5/14:

<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i># Plates</i>	<i>%</i>
SHARE	\$ 1,046	11	30%
UUA "Fair Share" Dues	\$ 554	5	16%
Partner Church	\$ 292	3	8%
UUSC	\$ 267	3	8%
UUA Standing on the Side of Love Campaign	\$ 207	2	6%
Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter	\$ 174	2	5%
UUSC – Haiti Relief	\$ 164	2	5%
Bridges	\$ 121	1	3%
New Start Project [Special Guest Speaker]	\$ 112	1	3%
Merrimack Home Health & Hospice Care	\$ 109	1	3%
Souhegan Valley Boys & Girls Club	\$ 103	1	3%
UU Black Lives Matter	\$ 98	1	3%
UU Ministry for Earth	\$ 92	2	3%
Anne-Marie House	\$ 89	1	3%
Ferry Beach Endowment	\$ 82	2	2%
<i>Note: We had no snow days this year!</i>	\$3,510	38	

Another way of looking at our plate share:

<i>Recipient Grouping</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>%</i>
DENOMINATION SUPPORT	\$ 1,464	42%
LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS WHERE WE VOLUNTEER	\$ 1,309	37%
LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS	\$ 333	9%
STRONG UUCM CONNECTION	\$ 292	8%
SPECIAL APPEALS & ONE TIME RECIPIENTS	\$ 112	3%

These numbers do not include the plates on 5/22, 5/29, 6/5 and 6/12 with one planned for the UUA, one for Anne-Marie House, one for our Rise Against Hunger project, and one unknown.

Share-the-Plate Planners: Rev. Barbara McKusick Liscord, Sandy Frades, and the Worship Committee

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

This has been a very busy year for the Worship Committee. We met monthly and sometimes more often to assist the Minister, the intern Minister, the Music Director, and Faith Formation Committee with planning for worship services and other events with a spiritual component. We provided or had a large part in at least 2 worship services a month.

As part of discussions this year with Kim Sweeney, our UUA consultant, we added more Whole Congregation Worship (WCW) where children and youth stay in the service. We planned for this to happen about twice a month, but it was actually a little more frequent due to the Minister's sabbatical in the fall and the needs of the Faith Formation Committee. These services were meant to be interesting and engaging for the kids rather than just having the kids sit in the Sanctuary.

This year we added a Media Director to prepare and run audio and visuals for many worship services. As the church year unfolded, we experimented with equipment, and grew the visual components significantly to the point where over 50 images supported and integrated many worship services. We now have 5 people trained in doing this task. We continued our Technical Director tasks to prepare the sanctuary for worship.

We experimented with creating a worship service using a collaborative creation model, and we hope to use this model again next year. The Sermon Seminar program, led by Nancy Baker, will become part of this model with members of the congregation participating in service creation around a monthly theme along with core members of the worship committee.

When there were guests in the pulpit, a member of the Worship Committee acted as a producer to make sure that the Order of Service was created, audio/visual needs were met, and responsibilities in the service were assigned as the speaker wished. The producer welcomed the guest, introduced him or her during the service, and helped the guest engage with people during coffee hour.

There were 43 worship services this year. Here is a summary of these worship services. Note that some services fall in more than one type of worship.

<i>Type Worship Service</i>	<i>No. of Services</i>
Whole Congregation Worship	24
Minister or Intern Created	14
Worship Committee Created	12
Collaborative/Group Created	6
Sermon Seminar	5
Guest Ministers/Speakers	5
Music Services	4
Worship Committee Shared with Minister or Intern	4
Short Service with Workshops	3
Off-Site	3
Youth Produced	2

This is a year of good-byes. We have very much enjoyed working with our intern, Kali Fyre for three years. Watching her grow as a minister and helping her with worship services was a rich experience for all of us and we will miss her. After fifteen years Rev. Barbara is leaving. The Worship Committee will miss her very much as we had worked closely and formed a real partnership with her over worship needs and possibilities. As a Committee we grew stronger and more open to new ideas under her leadership. We wish her the best as she moves on to new challenges and connections.

Alan Shirey left the committee during the year. We thank him for his time on the Worship Committee.

Committee Membership: Nancy Baker, Sandy Frades, Kali Fyre, Linda Goodman, Rev. Barbara McKusick Liscord, Carolyn McCreary, Carl Olsen, Joe Pollock, Hal & Doris Sands, and Candy Shirey.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Note on terms: There has been a move in Unitarian Universalism to use the words “faith formation” rather than “religious education” with the idea that we are always “forming.”

ADULT FAITH FORMATION (with Nashua & Manchester)

The most significant development in the Adult Faith Formation strand of our ministry is our collaboration with UU Nashua and UU Manchester. Since last year, I have met monthly with Rev. Allison Palm, minister of UU Nashua, Sandra Greenfield, Interim Director of Lifespan Faith Formation (Nashua) and Rev. Patrick McLaughlin, minister of UU Manchester about combining forces for Adult “Faith Formation”, formally known as “Religious Education.” All three congregations share the same monthly themes- see Theme Resource materials section.

This year we shared numerous programs which were advertised in our electronic newsletter, a brochure that was updated monthly (available on our garden door shelf), weekly printed and emailed updates, and on our website. I offered an end of life series and a UU Heritage tour and connected the churches to our Milford area series dealing with white privilege. Our Ministerial Associate, Kali Fyre, led a discussion in Nashua on the film *Defying the Nazis- the Sharp’s War*. We also advertised events happening at each church, which fit the principles and purposes of our congregations, such as yoga, Buddhist meditation groups, sacred circle dancing and song circles.

Rev. Allison and I took turns writing the small group sessions related to each theme. Sandra Greenfield led the sessions with her facilitators and gave valuable feedback.

THEME RESOURCE MATERIALS. I have continued to contribute ideas to the Soul Matter’s Sharing Circle (a circle of ministers and religious education professionals), so that we have access to resource materials related to each month’s theme. UUCM provides access to these resources on our website and with paper copies on our Garden Door Shelf. They include spiritual practices, quotes and on-line resources for each person’s spiritual growth. Our worship and religious education committees participate in picking the themes for the next year. As I leave and before Rev. Carol arrives, Nancy Baker is the contact person for the Soul Matter’s Sharing Circle.

WORSHIP. Sunday worship continues to be our most regular offering for all-ages faith formation. A great deal of time and effort by minister, lay leaders, music director and musicians goes into planning meaningful Sunday morning experiences.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

The goal of Small Group Ministry continues to be to provide a comfortable and confidential environment where participants may share joys and concerns, and explore a variety of topics. Small Groups give folks a chance to delve more deeply into ideas introduced in worship and process thoughts and feelings arising from the monthly theme materials.

In addition, small group members provide care and connection when crises arise and each group accomplishes at least one volunteer project. During this 2016-2017 year, six groups met- facilitated by David Harris (meeting at the home of Carol Hess and Jed Callen in New Boston and the home of Lou Springer in Mont Vernon), David Wheeler (in Hollis), and Carl Olsen (Milford). I continued the practice of meeting with the facilitators about once a month.

Many thanks to all of our facilitators and group participants for this steady mutual ministry.

Getting ready for our 14th year of Small Group Ministry. All our current facilitators have said they would like to continue facilitating small groups next year. Let Jamie know if you would also like to facilitate a group next year and she will let Rev. Carol know.

NANCY BAKER'S OPEN DOOR. Nancy provides weekly gems with art and poetry related to each month's theme. Folks from UU Nashua and UU Manchester are also enjoying this offering. Go to the UUCM website Adult Programs list to register to be put on this distribution list. This is the link: tidbits.uucm.org/.

SERMON SEMINAR. Nancy Baker once again led the Sermon Seminar this past year. This next year, she plans to change it to form teams of people to collaborate on several worship services per month using the theme of the month. This will create another opportunity for people to go deeper with our themes. Look for her explanation in the upcoming newsletter and sign up. I suspect this will be a new way of working with the minister as well.

MEMOIR WRITING. Many thanks to Rev. Jeanne Nieuwejaar for leading this program, which participants have found deeply meaningful.

--Submitted by Rev. Barbara McKusick Liscord

CHILDREN AND YOUTH FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Sue Olsen Members: Julie Adl-Zarabi, Emily Jones, Erna Johnson, Donna Ryan, Kristin Rounds, Cathy Goldwater. CYFF Administrator: Jamie Ferrier.

The Children and Youth Faith Formation Committee (CYFF) focused this year on providing engaging, welcoming circles for all children and youth. Grateful thanks to the circle leaders this year: Emily Jones, Kristin Rounds, Donna Ryan, Leslie Bennett, Crista Burrell, Al Landeck, and Rev. Barbara (HS Youth). We also had several regular helpers, including Cora Zingales, Julie Adl-Zarabi, and Jeff Hoye. The CYFF Committee worked with the Worship Committee to support the participation of children in Whole Congregation services. CYFF provided "busy boxes" for use during services.

Special events and activities included a Halloween party with games and snacks; HS Youth provided assistance with the event. Other special activities included making wildflower seed pods to provide for pollinators/ bees; making gingerbread houses prior to Christmas; and making thank-you gifts for circle leaders.

Throughout the year, CYFF sought feedback from parents and other congregants regarding the Whole Congregation services. Some parents/ grandparents completed a survey mailed to all, while others provided oral

feedback. CYFF discussed concerns that attendance by families with children seemed to be low on Whole Congregation Service days.

Several members of CYFF expressed concerns about safety policies and provisions. In October, CYFF conducted a fire drill for all circles. The response indicated several areas for further discussion. CYFF requested help from the Milford Police Dept. regarding how best to deal with a threatening intruder. CYFF members joined a police officer who toured building and made recommendations for dealing with a threatening intruder. Further action is needed to address these recommendations.

Starting in February, CYFF began discussion of plans for the coming church year. A proposal to hold children's circles prior to church, starting around 9:45, was discussed with parents/ grandparents and carefully considered by CYFF. The Committee decided not to make such a significant change at the beginning of an Interim year, but to make this a topic for discussion during the coming year.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT

Once again this year, UUCM has had a group of individuals who have a special interest in maintaining, inspecting, and improving our shared space at 20 Elm Street. These are our Friday Guys. The state of our building and grounds speak to their efforts.

Over the year, granite sills were installed around windows in Barnum, original doors have had safety hardware installed so they swing out and have crash bars, screening has been installed on high Sanctuary windows. A major effort last summer by Beth Jasper got an invasive weed somewhat controlled in our gardens. The cracks in the asphalt have been filled. The surface is awaiting a sealcoat application.

Additionally, the Friday Guys assist the inspectors for our lift, fire code, and safety inspections.

A major focus is being made to assist with improving the audio/visual experience in the Sanctuary and classrooms.

We are moving forward on the memorial wall in our garden. We are looking into granite slabs onto which memorial plaques will be attached.

We are always looking for extra hands to help with garden tasks in the growing season and snow removal in the winter months. Please join us on a Friday morning from 9 to noon.

In faith,

Barbara Smith,

Property Chair

UUCM COMMUNICATION TEAM REPORT

In 2016-2017, the Communication Team continued to make improvements to the website, the eNews process, and ways we communicate at UUCM. We welcomed Rebecca Moore to our team and have especially appreciated her new perspective, expertise, and contributions to the enhanced website that is in development.

Website:

- Website usage decreases – The trend of increased pageviews on uucm.org which we had experienced over the past three years has reversed. Between Sept 1, 2016 and May 18, 2017, there were 20% fewer unique pageviews than the same period last year. (This roughly parallels decreased church attendance.)
- CTeam is completing work to migrate the website to a Responsive theme, making it easier for folks to view on their smart devices. We plan to transition to the new site this summer.
- Consolidated website content and moved pages to more appropriate sections.
- Added pages to support these events: Pledge drive, Ministerial Transition, Adult Ed programs shared with Nashua/Manchester.
- Created new blog/site for Nancy Baker's Tidbits. Provided support to Nancy and subscribers to assure that subscribers can get the content as simply as possible.
- Added a new Sign Up Here page so people could go to one location for all signups.
- Researched most searched keywords related to UU in New Hampshire and general searches for SEO purposes to be later implemented into the website.

eNews:

- Reports in Constant Contact indicate that the people in our congregation who are active and involved do read the newsletters. Readership by infrequent guests is far less.
- A greater percentage of people (50%) read targeted emails than read general weekly/monthly newsletters. Emails with names like "staff changes" and "sad news" are most read.
- Pat Nelson and Dona Eaton share responsibility for Monthly Newsletter.
- Jamie creates the Weekly Update and the Announcements.

Other

- Social Media – Bryan and Pat promote items of interest and events, and add photos to UUCM Facebook page.
- CTeam submits news items to Telegraph and Cabinet for Holiday Fair and other significant events.
- CTeam handles weather-related church closing advisories if notified of such by the Council President.
- Notified Rev B and Jamie that the Telegraph listing for UUCM was quite inaccurate. Recommended changes. Later noted that there was no listing at all for UUCM. It appears that Jamie needs to constantly check.

Respectfully submitted,

Dona Eaton (chair), Bryan Higgs, Pat Nelson, Rebecca Moore

COMMUNITY SUPPER REPORT

The Community Suppers continue to grow and expand in many ways. UUCM Community Suppers are held on the 3rd Wednesday each month. The Community Suppers at SHARE are hosted each Tuesday by area churches, Alisha's Love Child Foundation and the Lion's Club. UUCM is scheduled to host on the first Tuesday each month (every other month we co-host with Amherst Congregational Church).

UUCM volunteers are willing to help each month on a rotating basis at both Community Suppers and the overall number of volunteers is approximately 50. We continue to attract new UUCM people and UUCM Youth Group members.

We are serving approximately 70 - 80 guests each month at UUCM Community Suppers with a higher percentage of guests outside of UUCM and are known in the community at large for our good food.

The Community Suppers at SHARE are held every Tuesday year round and are serving 70 – 80 guests.

Both of these Community Outreach Projects are ways we are living our faith by Honoring Each and Enriching All...our mission statement.

Respectfully submitted by

Nancy Danzinger – Comm. Supp. Volunteer Coordinator

Dona Eaton

Barbara Smith

Sharon Verrill

WOMEN IN TRANSITION TEAM (WITT) REPORT

The Women in Transition Team (WITT) is a community-based organization dedicated to providing support to women who are in transition from the NH State Women's Prison in Goffstown, back to their communities in southern New Hampshire. From our beginning, in Spring 2015, Jeanne Nieuwejaar has served as our advisor. We currently have 15 members who regularly attend our monthly meetings, four of them members of other Milford Area churches. WITT has served 5 clients this past year, two of whom successfully completed their parole period.

Transportation is one of the major ways we provide support to our clients, providing rides to the Parole Office and to doctor appointments. WITT received 168 requests for rides. Cancellations for a variety of reasons resulted in 132 rides given. WITT drivers picked up 4 women when they were released from NH Woman's Prison in Goffstown and took them to locations in Manchester and Concord. As of now, WITT has 14 regular drivers, with 8 on the substitute list. A driver training session is planned for early **June 2017**, after which it is hoped that there will be more drivers added to the list. Anyone interested in learning more about volunteering to be a driver should contact our Transportation Coordinators Sue Olsen and Linda Higgs. Most drivers cover one day a month, with some drivers covering 2 days a month.

As a group we have continued to evolve and we learned more about the difficulties our clients face and how to better serve them. Liz Tentarelli, from the NH League of Women Voters, presented a workshop in October about her advocacy work. We learned how unequal treatment of women in the NH Prison System profoundly affects their ability to sustain themselves and their families upon release. A WITT Advocacy Subcommittee has formed and will continue to develop a plan in the upcoming church year on how we can best focus energy in addressing this very important issue. In November, six members participated in Mentoring Training and we will look at starting a formal mentoring program in the next year, possibly with women still in prison. In December, some of the WITT members accompanied Jeanne to the Women's Prison for her Christmas program.

We held a special meeting in February to talk with Reverend Beth Richeson, chaplain at the women's prison in Goffstown. With her more than ten years of work at the prison, she continues to enrich us with her wisdom on the spiritual and physical needs of the women in prison and after their release. In March, Milford Police Chief Viola and Milford Prosecutor Karinne Brobst met with us to answer legal questions and to advise us on our personal safety. Parole Officer Eric Goyette met with WITT for a second time in early May, offering his insights into his role in our client's lives and answering our questions about the parole process. Jeanmarie Foisie, who works at the prisons in family support, joined us during our May meeting and familiarized us with her work in providing parenting classes and arranging Skype family visits.

It has been a busy year! We have a lot of work in front of us and we look forward to the upcoming year, as we strive to expand our ability to positively influence the lives of our clients. Those who are interested in participating in WITT or just learning more about our work may contact the WITT co-facilitators, Donna Ryan and Linda Pellerin.

FAMILY PROMISE OF GREATER NASHUA AT ANNE-MARIE HOUSE REPORT

UUCM voted in 2004 to become part of an interfaith network supporting families experiencing homelessness. We did this for a while by providing space for families to stay overnight every few weeks in Barnum Hall. Anne-Marie House in Hudson, NH, located on the grounds of the Presentation of Mary, became the permanent site for this program in 2005. Families coming into the program set goals with the Director of Family Services and must save a portion of their income in order to achieve sustainable housing. The families are provided with transitional housing, food, and attend parenting classes and financial literacy classes. Each family has daily and weekly chores. The House had been at full capacity most of this past year which is at 29. It is one of the few resources for single parent fathers and their children.

Currently there are trained volunteers from UUCM who volunteer every seven weeks along with volunteers from other Milford area congregations. We help by providing an evening meal, overnight coverage, or by providing a few hours of coverage on weekend or other times.

Thanks to the following UUCM volunteers: Maureen Bradley, Dona & Bob Eaton, Cathy Goldwater, Linda & Bryan Higgs and Barbara Livoli. And thank you, Rev. Barbara, for all your support through the years!

For more information about the program, visit the web site www.annemariehouse.org or contact me at 603-595-2611 or jlov181@aol.com.

Jean Lovely, Congregational Coordinator