

# **Annual Report 2015-2016**



**First Unitarian Church  
South Bend, IN**

## **Board of Trustees 2015-16**

Joseph Gress, *President*  
Gary Metzler, *Vice President*  
Fern Hamlin, *Secretary*  
Chuck Leone, *Treasurer*

Tama Crisovan, *Trustee*  
Gail deSomer, *Trustee*  
Sharon Kniss, *Trustee*  
Don Marti, *Trustee*

## **Church Staff**

Minister: Rev. Chip Roush  
Director of Youth Religious Education: Heather Eschbach

Interim Office Coordinator: Kathy Vetter  
Pianist: Ketevan Kartvelishvili  
Nursery Care Provider: Emily Wood-Munn

Intern Minister (September 2015-March 2016): Angi Gamble

## **Committee Chairs**

Adult Religious Education	Gail deSomer
Aesthetics	Melanie Smith-Guillaume
Building & Grounds	Kathy Vetter
Care	Mary Hagen & Lois Holm
Children's Religious Education	Antonette Needham
Committee on Ministry	Susan VanFleit
Endowment	Barbara Williams
Finance	Chuck Leone
Marketing	Becky Lindstrom
Membership	Gail DeSomer
Peace & Justice	Greg Young
Social	Kathy Platt
Stewardship	Gary Metzler
Worship Arts	Florence Klečka

**First Unitarian Church  
Annual Congregational Meeting  
May 22, 2016**

**Agenda**

1. Call to Order
2. Determination of a Quorum
3. Opening
4. Approval of Congregational Meeting Minutes (Report, p. 1)
  - a) May 17, 2015
  - b) December 13, 2015
  - c) April 10, 2016
5. Reports
  - a) Minister (Report, p. 11)
  - b) President (Report, p. 12)
  - c) Vice President
  - d) Treasurer (Report, pp. 14-16)
6. Approval of 2016-2017 Operating Budget (Report, p. 14)
7. Approval of Endowment Disbursement
8. Approval of By-Law and Endowment Policy Changes (Report, p. 17 & 18)
9. Elections (Report, p. 21)
  - a) Officers and Trustees for 2016-2017
  - b) Endowment Committee Member
  - c) 2017 Nominating Committee
10. Committee Reports (Report, p. 22)
11. Volunteer of the Year Award
12. Recognition of 2015-2016 Board
13. Other Business
14. Adjournment

**Annual Report  
2015-2016  
First Unitarian Church**

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## Draft Congregational Meeting Minutes

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\* \* **DRAFT** \* \*

Annual Congregational Meeting  
17 May 2015

The meeting was called to order by Gail deSomer, board president, at 12noon.

Determination of a quorum. Fern Hamlin, board secretary, reported that there were 52 signed-in members in attendance.

Opening—Rev Chip Roush.

Approval of minutes. Dale Gibson moved, and Susan Van Fleit seconded, that the minutes of the 18 May 2014 annual meeting be approved as read. Motion carried. Tom Platt moved, and Dan French seconded, that the minutes of the 21 Sept 2014 special congregational meeting be approved as read. Motion carried.

Minister's report—Chip Roush. Written report in printed annual report.

Announcements—Gail deSomer.

- A meeting of all interested members will be held 27 May 2015, 7pm, to map out next year's church calendar.
- New ad hoc committees: Outdoor Space (Kathy Vetter, coordinator), September SB150 concert.

President's report and recognition of 2014-15 board—Gail deSomer. Written report in printed annual report and some verbal comments, highlighting the accomplishments of the year. Highlights of vice-president's report. Looking ahead: need to support RE; major building repair/replacements in the future; money for mortgage payments will need to be found after the capital campaign funds are all used.

Volunteer of the year award. Gail bestowed the award for 2014-15 to Kathy Vetter, chair of building and grounds committee, who has worked unstintingly since we moved into 801 E Washington to work out the many 'kinks' in the building systems and coordinate the demands that come with owning our own building.

Treasurer's report—Karen Dickson. Recap of how the 2014-15 budget has worked out. Noted the need for mortgage money starting in January 2017, once the capital campaign funds have been used up. Concerns for physical plant needs that will be coming: HVAC system, roof. Review of proposed 2015-16 budget. Discussion:

Dave Wistreich asked from whom he can get details regarding line items 242 (HVAC preventive) and 243 (HVAC repairs). Answer: Kathy Vetter, building and grounds chair.

Dale Gibson asked if the pledge amount budgeted for accurately reflected the pledges made. Answer: yes. Joseph Gress, vice-president and stewardship drive coordinator, noted that the amount pledged is actually \$147,00, but a few pledges have yet to come in.

Gail deSomer commented on line item 220 (cleaning services), noting that this past year it has been done completely by volunteer church members, and that this will not be the case for 2015-16. She also directed attention to line item 351 (endowment repay), which reflects the congregation's previously expressed wish when the vote was taken to allow endowment fund money to be used for the new building.

Melanie Smith-Guillaume expressed thanks for the report having been made available on-line in advance of the meeting. She also expressed thanks for the addition of line item 351 (endowment repay). She thought it would also be good to plan for major building expenses, to save money in the budget in an on-going manner. She suggested that a line item be added for this purpose.

Gail deSomer explained that there had been such a line item in the budget that the board originally considered, but it would have created a depressingly large deficit.

Melanie Smith-Guillaume suggested that such a line item be included, even if the budgeted amount is zero, so that the congregation keeps the need for this in mind.

Dale Gibson moved, and Barbara Boyd seconded, that the proposed budget be approved.

Dave Wistreich asked what the money in the money market was for. Karen Dickson, treasurer, answered that it was non-operational funds, mostly the capital campaign.

Kathy Vetter noted that we were now banking at First Source and using their accounts system.

Anne Mannix asked why we didn't use the capital campaign money to pay down the mortgage now. Gail deSomer, president, explained that we needed the capital campaign money to make the monthly mortgage payments.

Bill Stevens moved that we add a 'Sinking Fund' line item, with zero dollar amount, to the budget. Jim Curlee seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Jan Wilen felt that we need to educate the congregation of the need to have money for major maintenance items. Gail deSomer, president, noted that this is in Joseph Gress's vice-president report.

Barbara Williams noted that this is a sabbatical fund balance on the financial recap, but nothing for this in the budget. Chip Roush noted that he does hope, at some point, to take a sabbatical.

Anne Mannix commended Karen Dickson, treasurer, on the budget.

Amended motion to approve the budget with the addition of a 'Sinking Fund' line item with a zero budget was carried with one abstention.

Elections—Gail deSomer, president. Gail explained that we had not been able to announce the proposed nominations 10 days before this meeting, as required by church by-laws. Therefore, from the floor, David Mayfield made the following nominations:

for Vice-President --- Gary Metzler  
for a 2-year term as treasurer --- Chuck Leone  
for a 1-year term as trustee --- Gail deSomer  
for a 2-year term as trustee --- Sharon Kniss  
for a 2-year term as trustee --- Don Marti

for a 3-year term on the endowment committee --- Jim Ward

for the Nominating Committee  
Gail deSomer, 1 year  
Dan Holm, 2 years  
[Mark Kricheff, continuing for 1 more year -- clarified the following month]  
Alternate, Barb Carmichael

Continuing on the board:  
President --- Joseph Gress  
Secretary --- Fern Hamlin (1 more year)  
Trustee --- Tama Crisovan (1 more year)

Continuing on the endowment committee:  
Barbara Williams, year 2 of 3  
John Wegener, year 3 of 3

David Mayfield moved for the adoption of the slate of candidates, Dave Wistreich seconded. Dave Wistreich also noted the congregation's gratitude for all who serve in leadership positions. Motion carried.

Other business. Dan Holm offered thanks to Gail deSomer, president, for her leadership on the board.

Kevin Barry moved, and Tom Platt seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.45pm.

Fern Hamlin  
Board secretary

\* \* **DRAFT** \* \*

## **Special Congregational Meeting 13 December 2015**

The meeting was called to order by Joseph Gress, board president, at 12.05pm.

It was determined that the quorum was satisfied. (33 members had signed in when the meeting began; 2 more signed in later.)

Joseph explained that the business of the meeting was to approve signing a contract for a new HVAC system costing up to \$160,000; borrowing up to \$112,000 from First Source; and funding the balance.

As an unrelated announcement, Joseph noted that Charlotte Hale, our office manager, no longer works for us. A search for her replacement has begun. Church credit cards were used for unauthorized purchases and a police report has been filed. Carlton will cover the office for the rest of the month; Kathy Vetter will be the office person for January and February.

Joseph reviewed why the HVAC system needs to be replaced. He discussed the recommendations from the energy consultant, the \$154,000 quote from Allegiant for a new system; the review by Roland Klockow, an independent consulting HVAC engineer. Klockow viewed the concept of the proposed system favorably but had concerns about some of the specifics, concerns which only became available last week. After hearing these concerns at last week's board meeting, the board determined that it was not ready to sign a contract with Allegiant. Chuck Leone, treasurer, presented highlights of the concerns: too expensive; state approval needed; ventilation not adequately addressed (which would be a concern for the state); furnace not necessarily needed in the attic; a different configuration for the heat pumps would be more efficient.

Jerry Brooks asked how many estimates had been obtained. Chuck answered, one. Joseph explained that we have other quotes for replacing parts of the existing system; two years ago, Panzica estimated \$109,000 to update parts of the system, and this year Jim Ward and John Wegener had estimates of about \$100,000 to update the system. Kathy Vetter noted that we decided to get an independent review rather than first looking for a different system, which would be difficult to compare.

Peggy Stevens asked if the consultant thought we should look elsewhere for a system. Joseph explained that the HVAC task force will be meeting with the consultant this week to discuss the findings.

Barbara Williams moved, and Walt Tomasch seconded, that we should secure affidavits of independence that disclose any financial relationship with any HVAC contractors from Jonathan Burke (the energy consultant) and Roland Klockow (the HVAC engineer). Motion carried with 24 in favor, 8 opposed, and 5 abstaining.



Joseph discussed where the money for a new system would come from:

\$ 48,000 from capital campaign and building fund

\$112,000 from First Source Loan

A new system could save us at least \$800 a month in energy costs, maintenance, repairs. He saw three options for today's meeting:

1. Authorize the board to sign a contract for an HVAC replacement system
2. Don't authorize signing now but hold another congregational meeting to authorize when there is a new plan
3. Authorize the board to get a second quote, decide on the system, and sign a contract for no more than \$160,000.

Anne Mannix moved, and Florence seconded, option #3. Discussion. Concerns were expressed that the congregation should know what the final plan was before any contracts were signed. Walt Tomasch noted that too proprietary a design can be more expensive to maintain. Ultimately, Anne withdrew the motion, with Florence's agreement.

Alan Hamlet moved, and Dale seconded, that the board be authorized to get an alternate HVAC design, evaluate the full cost of the system including costs for obtaining state approval, and that the board should evaluate the design, get additional bids if possible, and then ask for congregational approval. As a friendly amendment, accepted by Alan and Dale, Darlene Catello asked that the cost for repairing and/or replacing the current HVAC system be found. Motion carried with 33 in favor, none opposed, and 5 abstaining.

The meeting adjourned at 1.30pm.

Fern Hamlin  
Board secretary

**\* \* DRAFT \* \***

**Special Congregational Meeting  
10 April 2016**

Meeting Called to order at 12:08 with a quorum established. It was established there are 12 proxy votes.

Purpose of the meeting: to review and vote on a contract for a new HVAC system.

Joseph Gress, President of the Board of Trustees, reviewed a power point presentation of the history of the HVAC system:

The December proposal was \$160,000. The congregation was concerned with this cost and requested the HVAC Task Force go back and seek 2 quotes.

The proposed design is for residential furnaces with 95% efficiency energy star rating and air conditioners with 14 SEER. The combined pairs would create 5 zones - the conference room, hall, offices, classrooms, and sanctuary. The proposal also includes a 30 gallon electric water heater.

Bid process - we had an independent engineer draw up the blueprints and put this plan out to bid. The HVAC Task Force solicited bids from 9 contractors. Four contractors expressed interest in bidding, but only Allegiant submitted a bid, for \$94,000.

The proposal is for \$94,000 plus \$10,000 in contingency costs to be used only if needed. The congregation asked for 2 bids, but we were only able to obtain one.

Why other contractors did not follow up:

- Great Lakes H&C said it was more than they wanted to take on.
- Goff H&C was very interested but the size of the ducts was larger than residential and they did not have the equipment needed.
- Dynamic was not comfortable with residential equipment.

The proposal recommended by the Board of Trustees, the HVAC Task Force and the Finance Committee is to approve the contract with Allegiant H&C to replace our heating and cooling system for \$94,000 with \$10,000 contingency.

How to pay:

- \$10,000 from a disbursement from the Endowment which will need to be approved at the May Congregational meeting.
- \$76,764 from other existing savings: capital campaign, capital improvement fund, the building fund (leaving a prudent amount of savings)
- \$17,236 in the form of a loan from 1st Source Bank

Members and Friends may contribute to reduce or eliminate the need for a loan.

Question by Jim Curlee - since the scope of the project changed can you tell us the qualifications of the engineer in regards to residential systems?

-Answer: Roland Klockow is an independent contractor who specializes in residential HVAC systems. Several of the HVAC task force -- Jim Ward, Alan Hamlet and David Mayfield -- are engineers. It was felt that since the usage of the building is light for a commercial building, the consensus of the committee was comfortable with a residential system.

Question by Barbara Williams - will there be heat in the bathrooms?

-Answer: yes

Comment about heat pumps - Kathy Vetter clarified that in talking to Roland Klockow in December, he did not think that a heat pump system would get state approval because it would not have provided proper ventilation. We already have state approval for the current proposed system.

Question by Lois Holm - Are all the pieces going to fit in the mechanical room.

-Answer - yes, the furnaces and hot water heater will fit in the mechanical room, the air conditioners will be outside.

Question by Barbara Williams - Is anyone concerned that other contractors were not confident in a residential system?

-Answer by Alan Hamlet - only one contractor was concerned about the design, the other had concerns about not having the correct equipment.

Chuck Leone discussed how to fund the project, referring to the "orange sheet" that had been handed out at the meeting.

Funding:

- from the Endowment - an annual distribution of \$10,000 (not from principal) to be approved at the May congregational meeting
- \$15,000 from the church's Building Fund (\$10,000 will be kept for roof repair and other needs)
- \$11,764 from the new Capital Improvement fund
- \$50,000 from the Capital Campaign fund
- \$17,236 loan from 1st Source Bank (if needed)

As a reminder - According to Janet Bogar, we expect \$64,000 to be left in the Capital Campaign Fund as of August 2017 [which marks the end of the first three years of our mortgage, the period for which the Capital Campaign was intended]. After using \$50,000 of that for the new HVAC system, we will keep a reserve of \$14,000 to pay for 1/2 of the mortgage payments after August 2017, as we transition to paying for the mortgage from the operating fund.

Motion by Kathy Vetter - we approve, as the Board recommended, a contract with Allegiant for the installation of a new HVAC system with the funding sources previously detailed.  
Seconded by Dale Gibson.

Discussion:

Questions by Dan Holm - if approved, what is the timeline?

- Answer by Kathy Vetter - if approved we plan to sign a contract on Tuesday with work to begin on Wednesday. It is expected to take 60 days.

Question by Dan Holm - when will the solar panels be installed?

- Answer by Kathy Vetter - we need to wait on the solar panels until the work on the mechanical room is finished and after the roof leak is repaired by Dudek roofing. The solar panel installation will only take a couple of days.

Comment by Anne Mannix - "this is a new high water mark" - recognition to the HVAC Task Force and Finance Committee.

Comment by Alan Hamlet - the quote for the new hot water heater seems high. Suggestion - get another quote from Home Depot, for example.

- Joseph Gress clarified that the quote from Allegiant was for \$3000 for the 30 gallon hot water heater.

- Anne Mannix - comment - it may not be worth the trouble to get another quote.

- Chuck Leone - the complication with the water heater is that it also requires new plumbing. The old water heater was gas, the new one is electric and it has more details than a home water system. The old water heater was part of the boiler system.

- Kathy Vetter - insulation will also be added to the pipes. There is also the advantage that the same contractor will have both warranties.

- Jim Curlee - \$3000 is for the water heater and a lot of other things - let's go for it.

- Dan Holm - let's call the question.

Vote: yes – 30 no – 0 abstentions - 0

Proxy votes: yes – 12 no – 0 abstentions - 0

Joseph showed one more slide on the Power Point about our future finances. The cost of the loan is less than what the maintenance and repair would be on the old system.

Looking ahead to 2017-2018: 1/2 of the mortgage payments will be from the operating budget. For 2018 through 2028 we project a net increase in [the expenses of] our operating budget of roughly \$27,000 per year. This results from the annual expenses of \$32,400 for the mortgage payments and \$2200 for the HVAC system loan, and the projected \$7000 savings from a reduction in maintenance, repair, and utility costs.

Joseph --thank you for your generosity for the HVAC system; \$11,000 has been donated.

Kathy Vetter - demolition will begin Wednesday in the mechanical room. Be aware that workers will be in the building from now until June. There will be updates in the Chirp.

Move to adjourn by Lynn McDonald, second by Rich Wallace at 12:47 pm.

Addendum - "orange sheet" with finances for funding explained and information on the proposal.

Gail deSomer, Acting Secretary

## Proposal to The Congregation of First Unitarian Church, South Bend

### Regarding Replacing our Heating and Cooling System

The Board of Trustees in conjunction with the Heating and Cooling Task Force and the Finance Committee recommend that the congregation approve a contract with Allegiant Heating and Cooling to replace our heating and cooling system. **The cost for this project is \$104,000** which includes \$94,000 for the contract plus a contingency allowance of \$10,000.

This new heating and cooling system was designed by an independent engineer, Roland Klockow.

It consists of three new 95% efficient residential style furnaces and three 14 SEER Air Conditioners. One furnace/air conditioner pair will heat and cool the sanctuary. The second furnace/air conditioner pair will heat and cool the conference room and great hall. The third furnace/air conditioner pair will heat and cool the offices and classrooms.

There will be a digitally controlled duct between the conference room and the great hall so that we can send heat or cool air to the conference room but not to the great hall.

Similarly, there will be a digitally controlled duct between the offices and the classrooms so that we could heat and cool the offices but not the classrooms.

The furnace that we purchased in February will be used to heat the attic so that the fire suppression pipes don't freeze.

To control the temperature in various areas, there will be 7 day programmable electronic thermostats in the following locations:

- *The Sanctuary*
- *The Great Hall*
- *The Northeast Classroom*
- *The Conference Room*
- *The Work Room*

The project includes a 30-gallon electric water heater to provide hot water to the bathrooms and kitchen.

The board recommends the following plan to pay for this project:

• <i>Regular disbursement from the Endowment Fund</i>	\$10,000
• <i>Other Existing Savings (Capital Improvement Fund, Building Fund and Capital Campaign Fund)</i>	\$76,764 <sup>1</sup>
• <i>Heating &amp; Cooling Project Loan from 1<sup>st</sup> Source Bank</i>	\$17,236 <sup>2</sup>
<b><i>Total Amount</i></b>	<b><i>\$104,000</i></b>

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<sup>1</sup> See the next page for additional details.

<sup>2</sup> This would increase our mortgage payments by about \$180 per month. We welcome additional one-time contributions from members and friends to reduce the amount that we have to borrow.

## **Detail of Funding Sources:**

### ***Endowment Fund***

**\$10,000.00** from an *Endowment Fund* regular distribution. The Board requested this amount from the Fund for the heating and cooling project. The distribution will be subject to congregational approval at the Annual meeting in May.

### ***Existing Savings (\$76,764 total)***

**\$15,000.00** from the Church's *Building Fund*. After other commitments from that Fund, there will be about \$10,000 remaining for future building-related issues and projects.

**\$11,764.00** (the entire current fund balance) from the newly-established *Capital Improvement Fund* to which members of the Congregation have contributed since last fall.

**\$50,000.00** from the *Capital Campaign Fund*. After reserves for uncollectible pledges and for payment of the church's mortgage for 36 months (until August, 2017), this amount is available for the heating & cooling project. This will leave a projected balance in the Fund of about \$14,000.00. We plan to use this balance to pay half of the mortgage payments due during the 2017-2018 fiscal year. This will allow our church to transition its operating budget to include the mortgage payment obligation over a two-year period.

### ***Heating & Cooling Project Loan from 1<sup>st</sup> Source Bank***

**\$17,236** is the maximum loan amount that would be needed. Any reduction in the cost of the project (amount of contingency used), or any one-time contributions from Members or Friends, would reduce this amount.

## **Operating Budget Projections:**

The maximum amount of the new *Heating & Cooling Project Loan* (\$17,236) would require loan payments of about \$2,200 per year for the next 12 years. In addition, we will be transitioning our mortgage payments from the *Capital Campaign Fund* to the operating budget starting in the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

**Current fiscal year:** There will be minimal impact on this year's operating. We do not expect to borrow any money for this heating and cooling project until near the end of the project. This will be close to the end of the current fiscal year which is on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Next fiscal year** (July 2016 through June 2017) – If we borrow the maximum amount, we will need to make heating & cooling project loan payments totaling about \$2,200 for the year. We expect that this will be more than offset by reduced maintenance, repair and utility costs.

**Following fiscal year** (July 2017 through June 2018) – We project a net increase in our operating budget of roughly \$9,000 for the year. In addition to the heating & cooling loan payments, we will also have an increase of about \$14,000 in the operating budget as we transition the building mortgage into this budget. This will be partially offset by a reduction in maintenance, repair and utility costs that we conservatively estimate will be about \$7,000.

**Fiscal years 2018 through 2029** – We project a net increase in our operating budget of roughly \$27,000 per year for these years. We plan to include our entire mortgage and the heating & cooling project loan payments in our operating budget during these years.

In summary, we are confident that reduced maintenance, repair & utility costs as a result of this heating & cooling project will more than cover the maximum proposed new loan payments. However, as we've mentioned several times before, we will face significant challenges as we transition our building mortgage into our operating budget over the next two years.

## Minister's Report, Rev. Chip Roush

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***Bring your need for healing,  
and your power to heal.  
There is work to do  
and you have all you need to do it  
right here in this room.***  
--Rev. Angela Herrera

This year, our new building became our congregational *home*. Just as love made the Velveteen Rabbit “Real,” our loving cooperation has transformed an ex-medical office into a vibrant church. Although we faced several challenges, we rose to the occasion each time, with commitment and a generosity of spirit that was truly remarkable.

From a furnace failure in midwinter, to a series of thefts (petty larceny from our parked cars, and embezzlement from our office credit cards), we were fortunate to have many members step up and do what they could to help. Some lent us a space heater or a fan, and some donated dozens (hundreds?!) of hours to protect our physical building and our financial wellbeing.

Not all of our challenges were unhappy ones. We served as a Teaching Congregation, providing Angi Gamble with an Internship to help launch her along her ministerial career. Many, many people helped to welcome and teach Angi, by asking her questions, giving her feedback, attending her events, serving on her committee, and by underwriting her stipend. [We are continuing our educational efforts, by serving as a research site for Sarah Johnson, a graduate student at Notre Dame.]

We also had our first funerals in our new building, and are looking ahead to our first gala wedding in this space—all of which involved many hours of volunteer time to plan how to present these important rites of passage in this new unique space.

As always, we engaged with the issues of our society. Many of us donated several hours, and a few donated \*many\* hours, exploring whether or how to offer Ibrahim Parlak (or other immigrants) a Sanctuary in our building. Close to two dozen of us participated in one or more of the several conversations on race and racism that we presented.

All of this was on top of the usual mind-boggling number of volunteer tasks that our members and friends do as part of our “normal” ongoing operations. If it does take love to make a thing “Real,” then our congregation is the genuine Real deal—really!

So may we be,

Rev. Chip

## President's Report, Joseph Gress

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It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as president of your board of trustees for the past year. The board has dealt with several interesting and challenging issues during this time. In this report, I would like to reflect on three of these: considering becoming a sanctuary congregation, challenges with replacing Carlton Higginbotham as our office administrator and our congregation's first experience with an intern minister. A fourth topic, replacing our heating and cooling system has taken a large amount of the board's time. However, this topic has been discussed extensively in two congregational meetings so I will not dwell on it further today.

### 1. Becoming a Sanctuary Congregation

The first topic, considering whether to become a sanctuary congregation, came to the board's attention several days before Christmas last year. At that time, ten members of the congregation petitioned for a congregational meeting to discuss offering Ibrahim Parlak sanctuary in our church. At that time, it appeared that Ibrahim was on the verge of being deported to Turkey where torture seemed to be a real possibility. Many in our congregation have been aware of Ibrahim's situation for many years and felt that he was being treated unjustly by our government.

This was the most emotional issue that has come before the board in my tenure on the board over the past four years. We began many of our board meetings this year by reading the "Covenant Between the Board of Trustees and the Minister of the First Unitarian Church of South Bend". This document is on our church website. Two of the articles in this covenant are:

- *Listen, allowing each to have their say and their opinion without rancor or judgment, holding with respect our differences.*
- *Assume the best of intentions of all those involved, being aware of our human limitations, and working toward reconciliation when needed.*

This was challenging in the case of whether to offer sanctuary to Ibrahim as everyone on the board developed differing passionate and deeply held beliefs about how to proceed. I am most grateful that, in my opinion, everyone on the board followed our covenant as we debated this topic.

In a split vote, the board decided to offer temporary sanctuary to Ibrahim until the congregation could meet to make a final determination. Luckily, sanctuary turned out to not be necessary as a judge provided a stay of deportation at the last moment.

In retrospect, I recommend a change to our by-laws to help us make better decisions in the future. The change would require congregational approval of any action that commits the church to civil disobedience. We might also look at changing the bylaws to allow a shorter meeting notice period when there is an emergency.

One of the challenges with offering sanctuary in our church to anyone at this time is providing them with a reasonably comfortable place to live, sleep and bathe. After holding cottage conversations on the topic, the peace and justice committee has concluded that we do not have and will not have the proper facilities for the foreseeable future. However, it is my hope that, after we have paid off our mortgage, that we will be able to renovate our basement. One possibility that is attractive to me is that this renovation might include a small apartment



that could be put to various uses including being used for sanctuary if the need ever comes up again.

## **2. Challenges with Replacing Carlton Higginbotham as our Office Administrator**

Carlton Higginbotham retired after many years as our office administrator on July 1, 2015. After advertising the position, reviewing applications and interviewing candidates, the board of trustees decided on Carlton's replacement and arranged for one month of overlap for training purposes.

After several months, it became clear that the new office administrator was not meeting our needs and the board decided to dismiss her. At that time, we learned that she had made substantial unauthorized charges on our church credit card. We filed a police report and an insurance claim in this matter. The total amount of unauthorized charges was approximately \$10,000 of which \$5,000 was covered by our insurance.

Kathy Vetter has served as our interim office administrator since January 1. We expect to hire a new permanent office administrator before the end of the fiscal year on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **3. Our First Experience with an Intern Minister**

In September 2015, our congregation hired our first intern minister, Angi Gamble. Angi's internship ended on March 31<sup>st</sup>. As her internship was nearing its end, Angi made many positive comments to me about all aspects of her experience with us including her interactions with the congregation, internship committee, board and minister. I thought that she made many positive contributions to our congregation in her time as an intern and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

The board of trustees discussed the lessons learned from the internship process a few weeks ago. The sense of the board was that the two most important lessons from this experience were to follow the UUA guidelines including on salary and office space and to plan ahead. I think that helping to fund an internship would be a good and appropriate use of a future endowment disbursement

## **Conclusions:**

I strongly encourage anyone who is passionate about our church to seriously consider becoming a member or officer of the board of trustees. You will learn and grow more than you can imagine and can have a tremendous sense of satisfaction about making a difference in our community.

Certainly, there are challenges to being on the board. One of the more difficult for me is accepting people as they are. However, this (accepting people as they are) is a good spiritual practice and one that I have gotten lots of opportunities to work on during my time on the board.

Several people have asked me recently where I want to focus my energies once I am no longer on the board. I think that it is important to maintain a balance between giving to others and to nourishing one's own spirituality. I believe that it is important for me to spend much of my "free" time in the next year on the second part of this balance (nourishing my own spirituality) and practicing giving others the opportunity to make their mark on our church.

## Proposed 2016-17 Operating Budget

*As approved by the Board for submission to the Congregation*

Item	2014-15 Budget	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Budget	2015-16 YTD 4/30	2015-16 Projected	2016-17 Proposed	Comments
<b>Income</b>							
110 - Pledges	\$131,000	\$127,767	\$148,000	\$118,141	\$141,769	<b>\$140,000</b>	See Note 1.
115 - Pledges - Additional	\$4,000	\$19,808	\$4,000	\$1,879	\$2,255	<b>\$3,000</b>	
120 - Loose Offering	\$4,000	\$6,087	\$4,000	\$4,610	\$5,532	<b>\$5,000</b>	
130 - Building Use Fees	\$0	\$445	\$500	\$1,190	\$1,428	<b>\$700</b>	
143 - Service Auction	\$10,375	\$15,696	\$11,000	\$11,556	\$11,556	<b>\$11,000</b>	
145 - Other Fund Raisers	\$1,500	\$5,229	\$2,500	\$3,644	\$4,373	<b>\$3,500</b>	
160 - Retreat Inflow	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>	
170 - Newsletter Inflow	\$0	\$10	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>	
199 - Miscellaneous	\$0	\$514	\$0	\$2,542	\$3,050	<b>\$1,000</b>	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$150,875</b>	<b>\$175,556</b>	<b>\$170,000</b>	<b>\$143,562</b>	<b>\$169,963</b>	<b>\$164,200</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>							
210 - Church Insurance	\$10,000	\$7,334	\$10,000	\$5,628	\$6,754	<b>\$7,500</b>	
220 - Cleaning Services	\$7,000	\$85	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	<b>\$1,000</b>	See note 2.
230 - Building Supplies	\$500	\$495	\$700	\$0	\$0	<b>\$800</b>	
240 - Building & Grounds	\$5,000	\$4,110	\$3,000	\$1,967	\$2,360	<b>\$3,000</b>	
242 - HVAC Preventive	\$0	\$0	\$5,400	\$6,097	\$6,097	<b>\$400</b>	
243 - HVAC Repairs	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	\$3,294	\$3,294	<b>\$100</b>	
310 - Gas	\$3,000	\$4,561	\$4,000	\$2,548	\$3,058	<b>\$3,500</b>	
320 - Electric	\$10,000	\$7,862	\$8,000	\$5,935	\$7,122	<b>\$4,000</b>	See note 3.
330 - Telephone	\$900	\$975	\$1,000	\$859	\$1,031	<b>\$1,050</b>	
340 - Water & Trash	\$3,000	\$2,705	\$1,000	\$1,052	\$1,262	<b>\$1,200</b>	
351 - Endowment Repay	\$0	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	<b>\$100</b>	
350 - Rent	\$2,500	\$1,294					
355 - Snow Removal	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$415	\$415	<b>\$500</b>	
360 - Security	\$400	\$384	\$400	\$384	\$461	<b>\$500</b>	
365 - Alarm Fees	\$0	\$300	\$200	\$0	\$0	<b>\$100</b>	
370 - Elevator & Sprinkler	\$0	\$0	\$1,300	\$1,958	\$2,350	<b>\$1,300</b>	See note 4.
410 - Admin & Office	\$3,000	\$2,385	\$3,767	\$4,626	\$5,551	<b>\$5,000</b>	Includes new software
415 - Copier	\$4,000	\$3,893	\$2,000	\$2,528	\$3,034	<b>\$2,000</b>	
420 - Postage	\$400	\$294	\$400	\$153	\$184	<b>\$400</b>	
430 - Payroll Taxes and Expenses	\$1,900	\$2,115	\$2,000	\$1,459	\$1,751	<b>\$2,040</b>	
435 - Payroll Processing						<b>\$1,500</b>	For outsourced payroll processing.
510 - Worship Committee	\$500	\$500	\$600	\$0	\$0	<b>\$600</b>	
511 - Sun Service Supplies	\$200	\$200	\$150	\$0	\$0	<b>\$50</b>	

Item	2014-15 Budget	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Budget	2015-16 YTD 4/30	2015-16 Projected	2016-17 Proposed	Comments
620 - Service Charges	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$555	\$555	\$0	
710 - Membership Committee	\$200	\$303	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$400	
720 - Social Committee	\$100	\$65	\$100	\$60	\$72	\$200	
725 - Coffee & Tea	\$200	\$409	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$100	
730 - Events Committee						\$500	New Committee
735 - Aesthetics Committee						\$400	New Committee
740 - Care Committee	\$100	\$84	\$100	\$30	\$36	\$100	
745 - Peace & Justice Com	\$200	\$60	\$200	\$0	\$0	\$200	
750 - Denom Dues	\$9,130	\$9,130	\$9,690	\$7,182	\$8,618	\$9,350	
760 - Finance Committee	\$500	\$84	\$100	\$71	\$85	\$100	
761 - Stewardship Campaign	\$400	\$399	\$400	\$201	\$241	\$400	
766 - Fundraiser - Auction	\$675	\$495	\$500	\$446	\$446	\$500	
769 - Fundraiser - Other	\$250	\$792	\$250	\$1,354	\$1,625	\$500	
808 - DRE Professional Exp.	\$500	\$175	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$1,000	
809 - DRE Salary	\$7,210	\$7,210	\$7,355	\$6,008	\$7,210	\$7,502	Represents a 2% increase
810 - Religious Education	\$2,000	\$1,889	\$2,000	\$537	\$644	\$2,000	
811 - Adult RE	\$100	\$0			\$0	\$100	
812 - Background Chcks	\$100	\$129	\$100	\$0	\$0	\$100	
815 - Child Care	\$1,000	\$583	\$800	\$981	\$1,177	\$1,000	
910 - Minister's Salary & Housing	\$53,000	\$53,000	\$54,060	\$45,050	\$54,060	\$55,141	Represents a 2% increase
911 - Intern Minister	\$0		\$0	\$2,724	\$3,269	\$0	
915 - in lieu of FICA	\$4,055	\$4,055	\$4,136	\$3,446	\$4,135	\$4,218	Represents a 2% increase
920 - Sabbatical Funding						\$100	
930 - Minister's Expense	\$5,300	\$4,741	\$5,406	\$1,507	\$1,808	\$5,718	Represents a 2% increase
940 - Minister's Pension	\$5,300	\$5,300	\$5,406	\$4,505	\$5,406	\$5,514	Represents a 2% increase
945 - Minister's Insurance	\$7,824	\$9,389	\$8,000	\$10,760	\$12,912	\$14,500	Represents an 81.25% increase
960 - Office Personnel	\$15,141	\$19,158	\$12,480	\$9,108	\$10,930	\$15,600	
965 - Administrator's Pension	\$1,514	\$1,850	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
976 - Marketing	\$500	\$557	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$500	
980 - Music	\$4,200	\$4,918	\$4,500	\$3,225	\$3,870	\$4,300	
998 - Employee-caused loss	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,029	\$12,029	\$0	See note 5.
999 - Miscellaneous Expense	\$0	\$757	\$0	\$2,138	\$2,566	\$1,000	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$171,799</b>	<b>\$165,024</b>	<b>\$170,000</b>	<b>\$150,821</b>	<b>\$177,418</b>	<b>\$167,683</b>	
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>-\$20,924</b>	<b>\$10,532</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>-\$7,259</b>	<b>-\$7,455</b>	<b>-\$3,483</b>	See note 6.

## Notes for Proposed 2016-2017 Operating Budget:

1. This is a conservative estimate of pledges expected. 23 pledging units have not yet responded.
2. This amount anticipates the continuation of regular volunteer cleaning with funds set aside for major cleaning projects.
3. Lower electric utility expenses result from a new HVAC system and new solar panel power.
4. We may change the elevator service vendor as well as the inspection schedule, thus creating savings.
5. The Church has submitted a claim under its insurance policy. The investigation by the insurance company is complete and we are waiting for a decision. The policy limit for this loss is \$5,000.00.
6. There are adequate operating reserves to cover this deficit.

## Non-Operating Funds Statement, as of April 30, 2016

Fund	30-Jun-15	30-Apr-16	Change	
<b>Building Fund</b>	\$31,482	\$40,056	\$8,574	Note 1
801 E. Washington	\$562	\$493	-\$69	
<b>Capital Campaign</b>	\$117,056	\$82,710	-\$34,346	Note 2
<b>Capital Improvement</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	Note 3
<b>Endowment Disbursements</b>	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0	
<b>Endowment Set-aside</b>	\$0	\$100	\$100	
<b>Invisible Church</b>	\$12,294	\$11,509	-\$785	
<b>Minister's Discretionary Fund</b>	\$940	\$1,699	\$759	
<b>Operating Funds Temp</b>	\$0	\$10,797	\$10,797	
<b>Pre-Paid Pledges</b>	\$11,200	\$5,020	-\$6,180	
<b>RE Capital Expense Fund</b>	\$483	\$483	\$0	
<b>Solar Panel Fund</b>	\$0	-\$59	-\$59	Note 4
<b>Teen Service Project</b>	\$2,695	\$2,695	\$0	
<b>Unrestricted Savings</b>	\$3,535	\$3,576	\$41	
<b>Women's Group Fund</b>	\$262	\$262	\$0	
<b>Sabbatical Fund CD</b>	\$682	\$682	\$0	
<b>UUA CEF Endowment</b>	\$115,104	\$247,096	\$131,992	Notes 5,6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$299,295</b>	<b>\$410,119</b>	<b>\$110,824</b>	

1. The Building Fund contains Solar Panel donations.
2. \$31,436.42 of this fund was used during April 2016 for the HVAC project.
3. This is a new fund for donations for the HVAC system replacement. The balance of \$12,063.58 during April 2016 was used for the HVAC project.
3. At the end of each month, this account is swept into the Checking Account.
4. Equipment for the solar panel project has been purchased from this fund.
5. The UUA CEF Endowment balance is at Mar 31, 2016 and is adjusted for market gains and losses.
6. \$75,000 of this fund is permanently restricted to prohibit use of principal.

## **Proposed By-Law Changes**

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As recommended by the Board of Trustees on May 11, 2016

*Administrative Note: Additions are in bold; deletions have been crossed through.*

### **Article VI Officers and Trustees**

6. The Board of Trustees shall have charge of the general welfare and the property of the Church, the conduct of all its business affairs, and the control of its administration, including the appointment of such committees as it may deem necessary; provided, however:

- a. no single contract or purchase involving the expenditure of more than 3% of the annual budget of the Church may be authorized without approval of the members at a regular meeting or special meeting of members;
- b. no cumulative increase in overall annual Church expenditures of more than 5% of the annual budget of the Church may be authorized in any one fiscal year without approval of the members at a regular meeting or special meeting of members;
- c. any increase in expenditures shall identify the funding source of such increase-;
- d. no action committing the church to civil disobedience may be authorized without approval of the members at a regular meeting or special meeting of members.**

*Administrative Note: This adds an entirely new section d.*

### **Article XIII Amendments**

Each proposed amendment must be given to the Secretary in writing. All voting members of the Church shall be given due notice by ~~mail~~ **electronic transmission or through US Postal Service** of the proposed amendment(s) at least ten (10) days prior to a vote. Amendments to By-Laws shall be adopted when 2/3 of the congregation present and voting at a congregational meeting are in favor of the amendment.

*Administrative Note: This matches how **Article V - Meeting, Number 3** (Notice of Meeting) was already changed.*

## **Proposed Changes to the Endowment's *Plan of Operation***

Changes recommended by the Board of Trustees on April 13 and May 11, 2016.

*All changes are in Part B.*

- **B. Plan of Operation, 1. Endowment Committee**, paragraph 9

*These changes simply reflect the new name and status (separate LLC) of the UUA's endowment fund, the minimum deposit amount, and the date the Board approved the new UUCEF Subscription Agreement and it was signed by Joseph Gress.*

- **B. Plan of Operation, 2. Distributions**, paragraph 1

*This change was requested by the Endowment Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees.*

- **B. Plan of Operation, 4. Disposition or Transfer of FUND**, paragraph 1

*As in the first changes, this simply reflects the date of the new UUCEF agreement.*

*Administrative Note: Additions are in bold; deletions have been crossed through.*

### **A. RESOLUTION TO IMPLEMENT THE ENDOWMENT FUND**

WHEREAS, stewardship involves the faithful management of all the gifts we have been given—time, talents, the created world and money, including accumulated, inherited, and appreciated resources; and

WHEREAS, the religious mission and work of this congregation may be supported through the transfer of property (cash, stocks, bonds, real estate), charitable bequests in wills, charitable remainder and other trusts, pooled income funds, charitable gift annuities, and assignment of life insurance and retirement plans; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Congregation to encourage, receive, and administer such gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion expressed by the grantors and in accord with the policies of this congregation; and

WHEREAS, a new and separate fund known as the ENDOWMENT FUND (hereafter called the “FUND”) was authorized by amendment to the congregation's By-laws in annual meeting assembled in May 2003;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that

the purpose of this FUND is to enhance the mission of First Unitarian Church of South Bend, Indiana, apart from the general operation of the congregation.

no portion of distributions from the FUND shall be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation; only in particular, temporary, difficult circumstances, and where integrity of gift restrictions permit, may this congregation, by action in meeting assembled, use FUND distributions for its own operating or support services; and

except where specifically authorized otherwise in the terms of a gift, authorizations for distributions from the FUND may be made annually, in amounts not to exceed 5% of the average fair market value of the FUND over the previous four complete quarters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Endowment Committee (hereinafter called the “COMMITTEE”) shall be the custodian of the FUND; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following Plan of Operation sets forth the administration and management of the FUND.

## **B. PLAN OF OPERATION**

### **1. The Endowment Committee**

The COMMITTEE shall consist of three (3) members, all of whom shall be voting members of First Unitarian Church of South Bend, Indiana. No member may serve concurrently on the COMMITTEE and the Church Board of Trustees (hereafter called the "BOARD"). Except as herein limited, the term of each member shall be three (3) years.

Upon adoption of this resolution by the Congregation, it shall elect three (3) members of the COMMITTEE: one (1) for a term of three (3) years; one (1) for a term of two (2) years; and one (1) for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, at each annual meeting, the Congregation shall elect the necessary number for a term of three (3) years.

The Nominating Committee of the Congregation shall present new members for the COMMITTEE to be elected at the annual congregational meeting in the same manner as for other offices.

No member shall serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. After a lapse of one (1) year, former COMMITTEE members may be re-elected

In the event of a vacancy on the COMMITTEE, the BOARD shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy until the next annual congregational meeting, at which time the Congregation shall elect a member to fulfill the term of the vacancy.

The COMMITTEE shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently as deemed by it in the best interest of the FUND. A quorum shall consist of all three members. The COMMITTEE shall select from its membership a chairperson, financial secretary, and recording secretary. The chairperson, or member designated by the chairperson, shall call and preside at all meetings.

The recording secretary shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings of the COMMITTEE and supply a copy thereof to each member of the COMMITTEE. Each member shall keep a complete copy of minutes to be delivered to her or his successor. The secretary shall also supply a copy of the minutes to the Church Board.

The financial secretary shall assist the church's treasurer in maintaining complete and accurate books of accounts for the FUND.

Recommendations to manage and control the assets of the FUND are to be made by the COMMITTEE, in such a manner as they deem wise and prudent, for approval by the BOARD, with execution by the delegated member of the COMMITTEE as necessary. Investment management shall be provided through the ~~UUA General Investment Fund~~ **Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund, LLC ("UUCEF")** where newly acquired assets funds will be transferred ~~on a quarterly basis~~ **when the minimum deposit amount (\$1000) is reached**, according to an agreement signed in ~~September, 2005~~ **December, 2015.**

The COMMITTEE shall report to the BOARD on a quarterly basis and provide a written report to the Congregation at the annual meeting.

## **2. Distributions**

The COMMITTEE shall abide by and keep a record of the terms and restrictions of all gifts to the FUND ~~and shall determine what is principal and income according to accepted accounting procedures.~~

Lifetime and testamentary unrestricted gifts to the FUND shall accumulate until a fair market value of \$150,000 is achieved, after which annual distributions may commence. However, should the fair market value of the FUND decline to less than \$150,000, distributions shall be made only upon a 2/3 majority vote of approval of the members present from the Congregation.

Expenditures from the FUND shall be recommended by the COMMITTEE and approved by the BOARD for presentation to the Congregation at the annual congregational meeting. Suggestions or requests for funding are to be submitted to the COMMITTEE by March 1 of each year. Such requests may be submitted by church members, other committees, or the BOARD.

Authorization for annual expenditures shall be made upon a 2/3 majority vote of approval of the members present from the Congregation at the annual meeting. In the event of an emergency, distribution may be made by a 2/3 majority vote of approval of the members present from the Congregation at a specially called meeting.

## **3. Amending the Resolution**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any amendment to this resolution, which will change, alter, or amend the purpose for which the FUND is established shall be adopted by a 2/3 majority vote of the members present at an annual meeting or a meeting called specifically for the purpose of amending this resolution.

## **4. Disposition or Transfer of FUND**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event that First Unitarian Church of South Bend, Indiana ceases to function as an active congregation with property still held by the Unitarian Universalist Association under the agreement signed ~~on September 26, 2005~~ in December, 2015, thereafter such remaining property shall forever become the property of the Association to be held by the Association for its general purposes.

### **C. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION**

This resolution, recommended by the Church Board and accepted by the Congregation at a legally called congregational meeting, is hereby adopted.

First Unitarian Church

Dated this 20th day of May, 2007



## **Nominations**

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### ***From the Nominating Committee:***

#### **Board of Trustees**

##### ***Officers***

Vice President: *No nominee*  
Secretary: Melanie Smith-Guillaume

##### ***Trustees***

Two-year Term: Eli Williams  
Two-year Term: Florence Klecka  
  
One-year Term: Tama Crisovan (completing Sharon Kniss' term)

#### **Endowment Committee**

Three-year Term: Dan French

### ***From the Board of Trustees:***

#### **Nominating Committee**

Chair Person: Joseph Gress (outgoing Board President, one-year term)  
Current Member: Dan Holm (2<sup>nd</sup> year of two-year term)  
New Member: Susan Van Fleit (1st year of two-year term)  
  
Alternate: Rich Wallace

# Children's Religious Education Program Report

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**Director of Religious Education: Heather Eschbach**

Children's Religious Education Committee Chair: Antonette Needham

## Classes: September 2015-May 2016

Class	Curriculum	Teacher(s)
Nursery (0-3 years)	n/a	Emily Munn-Wood
Preschool-Kindergarten (3 years - K)	<i>Creating Home</i>	Kay Azar Alexandria Trusov Rich Wallace
1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> grades	<i>Picture Books of World Religions</i>	Gary Metzler Jim Ward
5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> grades	<i>World Religions - A Year's Curriculum for Junior Youth</i>	Lois Holm Dan Holm

**Average Attendance for Sunday mornings:** 13 children (range of 5-27)

### How our kids experienced fellowship:

- Intergenerational services: Water Ceremony, Children's Holiday Pageant, Christmas Eve, RE Moments, Stories For All Ages, Flower Ceremony
- Monthly potluck lunches after service
- Participated in an evening of Popcorn Theology with RE teachers and classmates

### How our kids experienced social justice:

- Pumpkin Decorating Contest to raise money for UNICEF.
- *Guest at Your Table* service & collection
- CASIE Center Stocking Project: collected donations, stuffed over 100 stockings, & learned about helping children in need from Carolyn Hahn (hosted by Mary Beth Dickey & Antonette Needham)
- Earth Day Celebration/Tree Dedication

### Committee challenges and concerns:

- Continuing need to recruit volunteers. Help needed from congregation.

### Committee activities and accomplishments:

- Continued RE Moment in almost every service
- Held Easter Egg Hunt
- Helped plan several Intergenerational Worship service (Water Ceremony, GAYT, Holiday Pageant, Christmas Eve)
- Hosted a Teacher Appreciation Dinner for 28 people

- Purchased items for the CASIE Center Stocking Stuffer from donations from the congregation
- Held regular RE Committee Meetings
- Interviewed, hired, and trained new Nursery Care Provider

**Goals for the next year:**

- Increase online presence via webpage and Facebook
- Increase volunteerism; teachers and various other opportunities with the congregation-at-large
- Start an RE program for summer and evaluate its effectiveness
- Offer OWL Class(es) for youth
- Re-evaluate Four Year Curriculum Plan and adjust as needed

**Special thanks to:**

- Our committed RE teachers: Emily Munn-Wood, Kay Azar, Alexandria Trusov, Rich Wallace, Gary Metzler, Jim Ward, Lois and Dan Holm
- Intern Minister, Angi Gamble for supporting the RE program
- Rev. Chip Roush for supporting the RE Committee
- All of our volunteers who made RE successful!

**Committee Members:** Heather Eschbach, Allyson Kricheff, Christina Menis, Antonette Needham, Susan VanFleit and Joseph Gress (Board Liaison)

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## Committee Reports

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### ❖ **Adult Religious Education:** *Gail de Somer, Chair*

Despite a lack of a formal committee, there has been a wealth of opportunities for Adult Religious Education at First Unitarian Church. In October and November, the curriculum "Articulating our UU Faith" was offered with 13 attending. This group then organized a church service in February, sharing what was learned in the class.

Throughout the winter, Marilyn Shaul again facilitated the "Great Decisions" discussion course with 12 attending. In March and April, "Parent as Resident Theologian" drew in 7 attendees. The Care Committee has organized offering "Facing Death with Life" beginning in May.

There have been "Black Lives Matter" discussions by Rev. Chip. In addition, there is the ongoing Non-Violent Communication (NVC) group as well as GOSH (Group of Open Source Happiness), both started by Rev. Chip.

The Care Committee and Peace and Justice committees have sponsored book discussions this past year. Any suggestions for topics or format for future adult religious education are welcome.

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### ❖ **Aesthetics Committee:** *Melanie Smith-Guillaume, Chair*

During the year, the Aesthetics Committee has worked to frame and hang many items on the walls of the church. We acknowledge and thank Jim Ward, who hung most of these. We really appreciate his patience and perseverance. The items include:

- Historic pictures of our church buildings on the wall in the Board Room
- Scissors from ribbon-cutting at our grand opening (Board Room)
- Pictures of the Board and Staff on the south chase
- Framed modern Seven Principles poster
- List of Founding Members
- Welcoming Congregation poster
- Large bulletin boards in the hall opposite the workroom
- Volunteer of the Year plaques

We cleaned and organized the basement and labeled shelves and spaces for committees. We also organized much of the RE space on the east side of the basement using categories furnished by the RE Director Heather Eschbach.

We helped Elizabeth Scarborough with the purchase of the bookshelf for the church library. We worked with the Peace and Justice Committee and Chip on the issue of broadening communication of upcoming events.

Committee Members: Barb Carmichael, Gail DeSomer, Marie-Noelle DeSomer, Susan VanFleit

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### ❖ **Building and Grounds Committee:** *Kathy Vetter, Chair*

It has been another busy year for the B&G committee. Our biggest project was the HVAC system, which we knew was on shaky ground at the beginning of the fiscal year, and

indeed failed before the winter was out. We communicated with the congregation multiple times about the issues and the options, so I won't say more on this topic other than to express my thanks to all those involved in the design and approval process, and of course to the congregation for trusting the process and ultimately approving the renovation. Special thanks go to Joseph Gress, Chuck Leone and David Mayfield, who, while I coordinated things and dealt with logistics, provided the intellectual thinking and calculating to get our HVAC system designed and the funding approved. *I also want to thank all of those who have contributed to the HVAC fund. **With some very generous donations, it appears that we will not even need to take out a loan. Yea!***

I am happy to report the HVAC renovation is moving along, and should be complete by the contract deadline of June 13. Beyond the HVAC system, we have roof problems (venting issues and related minor leaks) that need to be addressed before our solar panels can be installed. We are trying to get estimates for the repairs, but this is a busy time for roofers.

Although we did get a toilet replaced while still under our one-year building warranty, most of the year we have been on our own. We are making lists of what needs to be done, and what needs to be inspected, but just last month I learned something new: our domestic water backflow preventer needs to be checked twice a year. – I add this detail, not because I think many will understand it (I barely do), but because it shows the complexity of our new building, and how much more time it takes than our old building on North Shore.

Time and space are short, so I will close with thanks to: Gail deSomer and Jane Marz who have regularly cleaned the building; David Mayfield for doing a little bit of everything, everywhere; Jim Ward and Bill Skidmore who have helped with several of my projects; Tom Platt who washed all of the windows; all those who have mowed the lawn, weeded the gardens, and or cleared the walkways; and to Fern Hamlin, who as the Board Liaison to Building & Grounds put up with many questions, and supplied lots of support.

Committee Members: Chuck Leone, David Mayfield, Kathy Vetter, Fern Hamlin (Board Liaison)

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❖ **Care Committee:** *Mary Hagen and Lois Holm, Co-chairs*

The Care Committee endeavors to support the members and friends of our community by providing connections between those who are going through life's transitions and those who can help. Some of the ways we support one another is by offering soups (from Purple Porch), meals, visits, phone calls, sending cards, providing transportation, and loaning medical durable goods.

- Our loan department has expanded to include baby/toddler furniture, and CD's and books as resources for help while going through those transitions in life.
- The Care Committee (CC) sponsored the book discussion, Being Mortal, led by Rev Chip.
- Helping Rev Chip with three funerals this year has been our great honor: Elizabeth Scarborough, Pat Tollens, and Dustin, Jan Bower's son.
- The CC is sponsoring the UUA curriculum, "Facing Death with Life" with qualified facilitators. Plan to attend throughout this summer.

*With this in mind, we encourage you to fill out the Emergency Contact form, which is stored in the church office's confidential file.*

- The “Undie Sunday” collection for Broadway Christian Parish was well supported with over 150 pieces of underwear for the Parish’s work with homeless or semi-homeless men and women.

Our community appreciates all those members and friends who help one another. Please remember to notify Rev Chip or a member of the Care Committee of a need for yourself or another.

*Love is the spirit of this community.....and to help one another.*

Committee Members: Barbara Boyd Jim Curlee, Gail deSommer (Board liaison), Dale Gibson, Wendy Lohman, Jim Ward, Rev. Chip Roush

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❖ **Committee on Ministry:** *Susan VanFleit, Chair*

The Committee on Ministry met regularly with Reverend Chip Roush to fulfill our purpose of assessing and supporting the effectiveness and health of the ministries of the congregation. We also completed two major tasks: the finalization of a church survey for members and friends and an evaluation of the minister.

At each meeting, we discussed various topics relevant to the ministry of our church, such as RE, open communication, and conflict resolution, which provided a way for us to monitor congregational life and health.

Finishing and distributing the church-wide survey took up most of the committee’s time in the fall. The results were compiled and made available on the church website and in print. Several comments were received from church members. We encourage the board to take time to carefully review the survey results which provide an interesting snap shot of our church and various suggestions we may use as we formulate future goals.

In the spring, the CoM completed an annual evaluation of the minister which was then shared with him.

Committee Members: Kevin Barry, Susan Van Fleit, Rich Wallace

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❖ **Endowment Committee:** *Barbara Williams, Chair*

Committee met quarterly throughout the year. Goals were to improve the visibility of the Endowment and to educate the congregation about the role of the Endowment Fund. To those ends a brochure was developed and distributed. Member Jim Ward presented the concept of the Endowment Fund and its purpose at a Sunday Service. The Committee is preparing a Legacy Book to record names of donors to the fund and their honorees.

Two church members, Pat Tollens and Elizabeth Scarborough, died during the year. Contributions from their estates and on their behalfs were made into the fund. Because of those contributions as well as a deposit of money made by the Board to repay some of the money withdrawn in the fall of 2014, the Fund balance as of April, 1, 2016 is \$248,000.

Because of the problems with lack of timely reports as well as relatively high administrative fees and only certain windows for depositing moneys to the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF), the Committee considered alternative investment opportunities for the Endowment moneys that are not specifically restricted to the UUCEF.

In response to a proposal for special project for annual funding consideration, the Committee is recommending that \$10,000. be withdrawn from the Fund to be used for installation for a new HVAC system in the Church building.

Committee Members: Jim Ward, John Wegener, Barbara Williams

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❖ **Marketing Committee:** *Becky Lindstrom, Chair*

The Marketing Committee is comprised of Becky Lindstrom, Jim Ward and Florence Klecka. Becky, a small business owner, serves as the chair of the committee, bringing her skills in brand development, design and social media to the position. Florence has been a member of both the church and the committee for many years, and is able to provide insights into the history and evolution of various policies and procedures. Jim Ward has a passion for increasing the visibility of the church in the broader Michiana community and has a great sense for how we can target our advertising to potential new members.

The committee has transitioned from more traditional, costly types of advertising forms (primarily print media) to projects that will increase the visibility of the church both on social media and within our local neighborhood. Short radio spots are still run on WVPE during the main church “season” and will continue as funding is available.

Facebook is used extensively in Michiana by individuals and groups as a way to learn about local events, share information with friends and create a network of likeminded supporters. Posts to the church Facebook page have been made with greater frequency over the past year to advertise many different types of information from upcoming services and events, to congregation and local social justice news. As a result, the page now has 356 followers (increasing by an average of 1-2 people/week) and our posts reach an average of 500 people/month.

The two biggest challenges the committee tackled over the past year have been the church website and exterior sign. The general design for a new outdoor sign has been approved by the board and a new logo design has also been approved. The only hurdle at this point is figuring out where the new sign will be located, since city zoning rules have changed and now require a visibility triangle on the corner of each street. The church may potentially need to have two signs, one located on E. Washington and the other at the entrance to the parking lot on St. Peter, in order to more clearly establish our physical presence in the neighborhood.

The other major project has been redesigning the church website. Around the same time the committee began looking at other congregation website designs to use as a model for our site, the national UUA put out the word that they were seeking pilot congregations to test a new website template. The committee embraced this opportunity and the board approved Becky’s new paid role as a contract website developer. Becky has worked with the committee and board over the past six months to customize the website to our congregation’s needs. The site is in the final stages of development and should be released to the public by the end of May.

The committee has also been evaluating internal communications about news and events to the general congregation and is looking to move from a monthly PDF newsletter and weekly Chirp email, to a weekly MailChimp-based news email and possibly a more in-depth quarterly newsletter to satisfy those members who still enjoy reading lengthier articles. A

communications survey was completed at the end of April by a sampling of congregation members and this information will be analyzed to determine if this is the best course of action.

Looking to the future, the committee would like to continue finding inexpensive ways to increase our visibility around Michiana. With the approval of our beautiful new logo, the release of the website and the access to inexpensive printing services, this may be a great time to create a line of marketing items, from window static cling stickers and bumper stickers to t-shirts, which can be purchased by congregation members.

Committee Members: Florence Klecka, Becky Lindstrom, Jim Ward

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❖ **Membership Committee:** *Gail deSomer, Chair*

A huge thank you to David Wistreich for his years of service chairing the Membership Committee! He retired from this position at the end of 2015 and Gail deSomer took over as committee chair.

Activities provided by the Membership Committee:

- Greeters for each Sunday, coordinated by Alice and John Bentley. Thank you to our greeters for being there every week to greet newcomers and old timers alike. Greeters were: Alice and John Bentley, Heather and Kyle Hulse, Dan and Lois Holm, Kathy and Tom Platt, Michael Coppedge, and Joseph Gress and Ron Robinson.
- Outdoor picnic for new members in July
- "Cookies with Chip" throughout the year, Sundays after church. This provided an opportunity for newcomers to meet in a small group to ask questions of the minister.
- Welcome email letter sent out weekly to those who sign our guest book.
- The "New UU class" was offered in the fall and spring with an Ingathering following it.

**New Members - Fall 2015:** Courtney Carroll, Christina Menis, Ruth Regan, Eli Williams

**New Members - Spring 2016:** Tom Cook & Michelle Minisan, Jane Marz, Laura Pimienta

Committee members: Alice & John Bentley, Gail deSomer, Wendy Lohman and Kathy Platt

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❖ **Peace & Justice Committee:** *Greg Young, Chair*

Peace & Justice Committee Members continue to participate in community events outside the Church. We have connected with other people, and other local organizations. Whether we attend Community For Peace & Nonviolence events, or we sponsor a carry in dinner for Dismas House, or show up for the CROP walk, our Committee Members, as well as other Members of First Unitarian Church, have participated in making our presence, and our values, known to the Community.

The Committee spent \$122 of its budget of \$200 for the activities listed below. We have requested \$200 for the next year's budget.

- Items of food for Dismas House Dinner
- New Books and Videos for Group Meetings



Our "Books to Inmates" effort has been suspended as we wait for the newer managers at the Indiana State Prison to clear their library. There is a backlog of books awaiting delivery, and we expect to resume the request for books later this fall.

The Food Donations are of high quality and the act of bringing in food items to donate to the Northeast Neighborhood Food Pantry can serve as an important 'ritual' to many UUs. We thank Don Marti for his ongoing effort to deliver this offering.

At the end of this Church Year, the P&J Committee considered the idea of our church becoming a *Sanctuary Church*. The Committee concluded that this effort be tabled for now, and decided that issues concerning the building infrastructure of the church are not yet suitable for being a temporary refugee residence. We are thankful to the Board for considering this important matter, and ask for your patience as we delay this request.

As Chair of P&J, I thank the Board for your ongoing support as I sparingly and loosely guide the Committee during my off time at home, or in the Sanctuary of Church. I especially thank Sharon Kniss for her patience and effort in guiding me to serve this Church, and inspiring me to promote peace.

Finally, we are proud of Share The Plate. The generosity of the Church reaches beyond our walls (or sometimes on the roof).

### **Recipients of our Second Sunday "Share the Plate" Donations, 2015-2016**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Amount</b>
June 2015	AIDS Ministries	\$ 473.00
July	Dismas House	\$ 199.50
August	Community Forum for Economic Justice	\$ 311.00
September	Solar Panel Project	An Amazing \$2961
October	Broadway Christian Parish	\$ 540.85
November	Habitat for Humanity	\$ 334.20
December	Heat Amnesty: Center for the Homeless Life Treatment Centers	\$ 237.50
January 2016	Planned Parenthood of Indiana/Kentucky: <i>Women's Health Fund</i>	\$ 528.00
February	The League of Women Voters	\$ 334.20
March	100 Black Men of Greater South Bend	\$ 604.00
April	Community for Peace & Non-violence	\$ 355.00
May	Ibrahim Parlak Defense Fund	\$ 268.00

### **❖ Social Committee: Kathy Platt, Chair**

We coordinate most social events, like Holiday and Summer Round Robins (potluck parties for the whole family), and the Women's Potlucks. Of note, the Women's Potlucks will become a part of an international organization that contributes to causes for women and children around the world, *Dining for Women*, starting this August - watch for more information. One social gathering runs itself - Feasters (4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays).

Our big job is organizing Coffee Hour each Sunday and the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Potlucks. We are always looking for volunteers to help throughout the year to make Coffee one Sunday or to help set-up or clean-up for Potlucks. We also take care of the Christmas Eve Service Reception and provide food for other occasions, such as congregational meetings.

The annual Auction is planned and organized by the committee, although it is a separate task force and may come under the new Event Committee. This year's theme was 'The Great Gatsby/ Roaring 20's' and was again expertly chaired by Ally Kricheff with Chuck Leone as auctioneer. We had a fabulous night of music, costumes, good food and fun.

The Social Committee does a lot of fun work, and is always looking for more people to help. Please contact me (Kathy Platt) if you are interested in being a part of this committee.

Also please note:

- Y1@801 events continued through December 2015, including organizing First Fridays and the Joe Jencks and Kirtan concerts.
  - The Board has formed a new Event Committee that will incorporate some Social events like the Game & Soup Nights, as well as the Art Openings, new Trivia Night, concerts, and other future events. We are looking for people to join this new committee.
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### ❖ **Worship Arts:** *Florence Klecka, Chair*

In the fall, we bade a fond farewell to our accompanist Natasha Stojanovska, and welcomed Ketevan Kartvelishvili, who had served as Natasha's substitute pianist in the past. Guest musicians from near and far, as well as ensembles arranged by Debbie and Dave Carew, added beautiful music to our Sunday services too. Allen DeSomer, Alan Hamlet, and Bill Skidmore continued to provide special music as well. Just as vital, Alan Hamlet, Garry Roberson, David Mayfield, and Kevin Barry took turns manning our sound system.

We began experimenting with different objects to symbolize our Joys & Concerns, to reflect the seasons: origami cranes & lilies, stones, and Easter eggs, as well as the traditional candles. Ideas for autumn are welcome!

This year we had five services conducted by Angi Gamble, our ministerial intern from the fall through the end of March. Rev. Chip also traded pulpits with Jennifer Gray in January, and the Elkhart church's intern, Jenny Peek, will preach at the end of June this year.

There were also many lay-led services, by individual congregants, and "do-it-yourself" services, such as the annual poetry reading, New Year's resolutions, the process of moving house, and talking about our mothers. These were performed with the help of so many congregants that it would take too much space to name them. We are always on the lookout for other topics and speakers, both inside and outside the congregation, so feel free to suggest your ideas to us.

We can't stress enough that, with the exception of Rev. Chip, Angi, Ketevan and Natasha, everyone else who contributes to the weekly services is a **volunteer**. The committee thanks you all for taking part, but remember that this is *your* church, this is *our* church, and we are *all* truly blessed to have each other.

Committee Members: Kay Azar, Deb Carew, Barb Carmichael and Florence Klecka

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**The RE Tree Planting**



**The Board and Intern Minister at Work**



**Social Justice - The Crop Walk**



**The Food**



**The Work of the Auction**



**The Art**

**2015-2016 in Pictures**



This year we said goodbye to our unofficial logo that used Kate Egerton's *Quilt Chalice*.  
We will still enjoy the real *Quilt Chalice* in our entryway.  
Our new official chalice logo can be seen on the front cover.

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