

**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis  
ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16**

**Introduction**

The annual report of the Fellowship is an overview of the life and work of the congregation over a church year / fiscal year. It includes basic information about membership, budget performance, and other things related to our by-laws. As an organization with a clear mission, it also aims to report on our progress toward stated goals in relation to our mission. It is a snapshot of the full, lively and complicated life of the Fellowship in a given year. In addition, it is grounded in the understanding that we are a religious congregation, first and foremost.

This Annual Report is organized into sections, which reflect the major areas of our mission and goals.

**WORSHIP**

Sunday morning worship services are at the center of the life of the UU Fellowship of Corvallis. Weekly Sunday attendance during the 2015-16 church year averaged 212. Guest speakers included Dr. David Robinson, Rev. Lois Van Leer, Rev. Marilyn Sewall, and Balasz Scholar Rev. Sandor Kovacs. For a series on "Other Histories" (on racism) speakers included Richard Mayuk (Native American), Russ Yamada (Japanese American) and the Oregon Humanities Programs' Walida Imarisha (African American).

Music is an integral part of worship. The choir provided support for the services two times per month, with a drop-in choir once per month. Special music programs included a December choir concert, the annual Holiday Carols Sing-Along, and a spring concert presentation of the Paul Winter Consorts' *Missa Gaia*.

**EXPLORE (Lifespan Religious Exploration)**

The theme for 2015-2016 for children and youth was: Peace, Justice & the Web of Life. 115 children and youth registered; 21 adult volunteers served as guides and advisors. Average weekly attendance was 45 children and youth.

The Our Whole Lives program (OWL – comprehensive sexuality education) K-12 included over 60 children and teens, in 4 age groups, with 11 trained adult facilitators. UU RE directors also hosted OWL facilitator trainings for the PNWD, for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> & Adult/Young Adult OWL. DRE Michael Molk attended a Beloved Conversations workshop (anti-racism), the LREDA Fall Conference, & the UUA General Assembly.

Middle school and high schoolers participated in retreats and district conferences at South

Beach State Park, Salem 4-H Camp and Seattle. Children, youth and advisors participated in community service through the Benton County Food Drive and by making crafts to sell at the UUFC Holiday Bazaar.

Upcoming Summer Sundays theme for 2016: "Creative Arts"-music, poetry, arts & crafts, nature, movement, and animals.

The RE theme for 2016/2017 will be "Who Are UU?: Putting our Principles into Practice." We'll also again offer Coming of Age for 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> graders and are considering offering Adult OWL, and/or Young Adult OWL. Plus, we have a big opportunity coming to participate in a Community Garden service project for all ages.

Adult Religious Growth and Learning received dedicated staff time from director Ann Mbacke in the 2015-16 church year. With the help of an able steering committee, programing for adults became more coherent and more visible in general. Several classes were offered as part of a Core Curriculum for adults, including UU history and identity. The Over-65 program had strong attendance plus several working groups. Study of anti-racism and equality was ongoing. DRE Ann Mbacke attended training and workshops on OWL, Addictions Ministry, and the UUA General Assembly. The annual Women's and Men's retreats were successful and appreciated.

The RE Council will meet on June 8, as an ad-hoc group, to review and evaluate the RE program, and think creatively about addressing any emerging needs.

**LOVE (Community Connections, Pastoral Care, Communication)**

Pastoral Care expanded into a Fellowship Care and Support team with 20+ trained volunteer listening companions and ongoing training each month. Pastoral Care Coordinator (Diana Vezmar-Bailey) is responsible for training and coordinating listeners, organizing crisis response, integrating pastoral care into many areas of church life, and support of the work of others – for example, justice and outreach work.

Connect-Up was a major new program of the Program Council, under the leadership of Wendy Sutton. Remembering the long success of 7-at-7 dinners, Connect-Up aimed to help small groups gather around any shared interest. Hosts offered suppers, outings, film evenings, book studies, cooking together, game nights, etc. Sign-ups for activities happen on the last Sunday of each month for the following month. Response has been enthusiastic.

Communication was coordinated by Monica Jacobson Tennesen. The goal was to streamline and coordinate our communication platforms. The monthly newsletter remains in the center of our communication strategies. From the newsletter, timely announcements are made each week by e-mail, on Sundays, and throughout the week on the AboutUUFC e-mail list, augmented by posts on the UUFC Facebook page several times a week, and regular twitter updates. The format of the weekly announcements changed from a newsletter –style online format to a Word document posted as a PDF. Efforts to understand which forms of communication work best for which readers, and how to help more people get more of the

information, are constant and ongoing.

### **ACT (Justice and Outreach)**

Leadership of the Justice Council was taken on by members Larry Roper and Ann Pemberton. The Justice Council continued to work on formative issues related to coordination and effectiveness of UUFC justice and outreach work. A new area of work which emerged is the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Task Force, which began by focusing on anti-racism, multi-culturalism study and action.

### ***A Very Few Highlights of UUFC Social and Environmental Justice Work, 2015-2016***

As individuals, many members of UUFC live their UU values by contributing much energy, time, and money to local, state, and national social and environmental justice organizations. In the 2015-16 church year, the Social Concerns Committee raised over \$16,000 for local charitable and nonprofit organizations and Syrian refugees, through collections, the weekly Sunday snack table, and seven action lunches.

UUFC welcomed Blaise Ntakarutimana, a Unitarian refugee from civil unrest in Burundi (East Africa). Blaise arrived in the USA in January, by invitation to study in a short-term program at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago. He had fled Burundi a month earlier. Once in Chicago, he asked Jill McAllister (they had met years before when she worked with Unitarians in Burundi) if he could come to Corvallis to stay while he applied for political asylum. We have supported all of his needs, and helped him become acclimated to the USA and to Corvallis. His application for asylum was approved in July 2016. He has become a well-loved and respected member of our congregation and community, a teacher and example of courage.

UUFC made internal changes that reduce carbon and methane in the atmosphere—for example, making the annual bazaar and monthly action lunches very nearly landfill free, monitoring our energy use, and working to lower energy usage.

Members of the Climate Justice Committee (CJC) presented two workshops at the 2015 UUA General Assembly -- one in conjunction with the Investment Committee on divesting from fossil fuels and the other on the basics of climate change science and some of the foreseeable impacts.

UUFC congregants Nancy Kyle and Roberta Smith travelled with the UU College of Social Justice to the Arizona-Mexico border to learn about immigration issues. They were overwhelmed by the sheer number of people in desperate circumstances, largely because of U.S. policies. But they felt hopeful when they saw how many groups (NGOs, and legal, health, and faith organizations) are working to relieve the suffering.

Climate Justice Committee members wrote letters and testified in favor of carbon pricing bills in the Oregon legislature, attended rallies and hearings protesting LNG export terminals and

pipelines on the Northwest coast, and offered educational opportunities about animal agriculture and the contribution of methane to global warming. CJC supported the Lummi Nation in their resistance to the destruction of their native lands by the fossil fuel industries and helped begin interfaith climate justice work in Corvallis. CJC prepared a booklet of resources and activities for the congregation for Climate Justice Month.

UUFC is a sustaining member of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition and supports Mid-Valley Health Care Advocates (60+ members) by providing free space for their meetings.

Working together, CJC, the Investment Committee, and the Board of Trustees wrote and approved new policies that allow the Investment Committee to invest part of the UUFC endowment locally (e.g., Seeds for the Sol) and enable congregants to contribute to loan funds for local nonprofits whose missions conform to UU values.

Representatives of the Fellowship Care and Support Team and CJC began planning a retreat for justice advocates to take place in April 2017.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

There were 27 new members in 2015-16 and we reported 311 official members to the UUA.

## **ADMINISTRATION (Management and Personnel)**

Administrative changes during the 2015-16 church year included the following changes in staffing:

~The establishment of a 1/3 time (.33 FTE) Business Manager, to oversee all bookkeeping and financial records, tracking of the annual budget, and negotiation of contracts as needed. In September Desiree Senechal was hired for this position. Due to family health issues, she resigned from the position in April. Jean Gilbert, serving as interim church office administrator, took on the added position of Business Manager.

~The creation and establishment of a 2/3 time (.66 FTE) Church Operations Manager position, filled by Jamie Petts in July 2016. This position expands the role of office administrator from clerical support to include program coordination and overview.

~ We said goodbye to RE Associate Ann Mbacke and wished her well in her move to California. We welcomed new RE Associate Rachel Kohler to a ½ time (.5 FTE) position.

## **GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE (Board, Finance Council, Coordinating Council)**

The Board of Trustees met monthly. A summary of Board actions July 2015 – June 2016 is as follows:

- **Aug 2015: adopted a new policy, 1.5 describing a council structure for coordination and administration of Fellowship programs and activities. Approved the appointment of Jean Gilbert as temporary Office Manager, upon the departure of Yaney MacIver for personal**

reasons. Agreed to update the policy on the Four Council Structure (RE, Program, Justice and Coordinating Councils) to include a Finance Council, as an umbrella for Investment and Stewardship committees plus business administration, and approved Russ Karow as Finance Council chair.

- Sept 2015: Approved the hiring of Desiree Senechal as Business Manager.
- Oct 2015: Approved the establishment of criteria for the Fund for Justice Outreach Fund Group.
- Nov 2015: Finalized Board Goals for 2015-16 (posted on UUFC website).
- Discussed joining Black Lives Matter, and a local micro-lending partnership with Seeds for the Sol.
- Dec 2015: Appointed a Conceptual Design Team to take next steps in exploration of building renovation, enhancement, expansion – to report back in May 2016.
- Jan 2016: Approved contract for compensation for a Pastoral Care coordinator, discussed possible consultants for a capital campaign, approved \$9000 loan to Seed for the Sol.
- Feb 2016: Approved job description for Church Operations Manager at 2/3 time.
- Mar 2016: Accepted report of \$18,835 spent to repair classroom wing roof, approved hiring of Jeff Susor as capital campaign consultant, discussed potential sale of the rental house (2935 NW Circle Blvd). to the Corvallis Zen Circle.
- Apr 2016: Approved contract with Jeff Susor as capital campaign consultant; approved policy 3.11 Revolving Loans, amended policy 3.8 amended to explicitly include local investments, approved policy 9.3 outlining relationship between UUFC and Senior Hub – a sub-group of Over 65, and approved a contract with Jean Gilbert for a new position as Business Manager, following the departure of Desiree Senechal due to family health issues.
- May 2016: Approved recommendation of Conceptual Design Team to hire architect.
- June 2016: Approved contract for and welcomed Jamie Petts as Church Operations Manager, completing a move to full-time professional church administration (with business manager). Heard summary of Capital Campaign Feasibility Study from consultant Jeff Susor, with a written report to come in July. Considered timeline and next steps toward capital campaign. Approved written proposal for sale of house at 2935 NW Circle Blvd to the Corvallis Zen Circle.

The Coordinating Council, made up of leaders of the RE, Justice, Program and Finance Councils, plus the chairs of Buildings and Grounds, Membership, Pastoral Care, and Worship, plus the minister and Board President, met in January and October 2016. The function of the Coordinating Council is to enhance communication and cooperation between these major programs/departments of the Fellowship.

## **Minutes of UUFC Annual Meeting**

**May 15, 2016**

Meeting called to order at 12:45pm

### **Sale of Adjacent House at 2935 NW Circle to the Corvallis Zen Circle**

President Kyle Jansson gave a presentation with the pros and cons of selling the house next door to the Zen Circle. An engaged, and respectful, discussion followed. Most of the concern centered on parking. Robert's Rules of Order were respected, but not slavishly followed. The motion to sell the house was seconded, and a paper ballot was taken. The final result was 155 to 18 in favor of selling the house to the Zen Circle.

### **Nominating Committee Presents Slate of Officers and Trustees for 2016-17**

Russ Anderson presented the slate of officers and new trustees for the congregational vote. The slate was approved by unanimous vote.

### **Presentation of Building Design**

Chris Bentley reviewed the wish list of the congregation, based upon congregational input over the past 1 ½ years through the World Cafes and multiple get-togethers during the past several months. The next step will be to get with an architect for a preliminary concept design. After the results of the Feasibility Study are in, they will then go back to the architect with actual dollar amounts available to support a new design.

### **Presentation of Finance Feasibility Study**

Kyle described the Feasibility Study, and how all could participate, whether on-line or with a paper survey. He introduced Jeff Susor, of Praxis Nonprofit Strategies, as our consultant who will help us determine what our level of support is for a capital campaign.

40 households, representing a wide demographic, have been chosen for the interviews by Jeff. The questionnaire will be made available to everybody via the UUFC website.

### **Climate Change Investment Report**

Sheryl Stuart announced the results of the Investment Committee's work to divest from fossil fuel investments: all of our investments carbon-free! In addition, they have invested \$20,000 with the Seeds for Sol, a Corvallis initiative to fund solar panel installations on homes.

### **Adoption of FY 2017 Budgets**

Kyle presented the Operating Budget and noted that we were going to run a slight deficit this year. The past several years we have had surpluses, so the Board feels confident about finishing with a balanced FY17 budget at the end of the FY17 fiscal year. The proposal was moved and seconded, and passed unanimously.

Kyle presented the Building Research and Design Budget. This is a truly deficit budget for now. It is presented to track expenses and income for the building project separate from the operating project. The expenses will be covered by revenue raised in the capital campaign. It was moved, seconded, and also passed unanimously.

### **Religious Education**

Michael Molk presented the theme, "Who are UU? Putting our Principles into Practice" for next

**year's Religious Exploration Program and requested volunteers.**

**He also requested volunteers for the Sunday summer school – Summer Creative Sundays.**

**Michael presented a new community service project for all ages – the new Willamette Park Community Garden. We have rented space for volunteers to garden to produce food for the food banks and soup kitchens.**

**A President's Perspective: The Year in Review and the Year Ahead**

**Kyle presented his views of the good work we had accomplished in the past year, and looked towards the new year.**

**Meeting adjourned at 2:45pm.**

**FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2015-16**

**(Separate Document)**

**SUMMARY OF BUILDING DESIGN PROCESS for 2015-16**

**Two “Discovery Workshops” were held with DiLoreto Architects to help identify our wants and needs. These workshops were critical for helping identify the top goals for moving forward with the building renovation project.**

**SUMMARY**

**FY15-16 Budget Accomplishments**

**Moved from clerical support to Administration by hiring a Business Manager and Church Operations Manager.**

**Increased staff salaries to parity with UUA guidelines.**

**Secured the building for prevention of rats, and repaired the roof.**

**Provided leadership training for current and future leaders.**

**Taking more financial responsibility for our groups, such as Partner Church and the Women's Retreat.**

**Building the foundation for more active Shared Ministry.**

**Supported providing OWL for non-members**

**Contracted for, and started, the feasibility study for major building enhancements.**

**Invested in significant music programs**

**Divested from fossil fuel investments and invested locally in a solar program.**