



Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of South County, RI



Annual Meeting

June 11, 2023

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of South County
27 North Road
Peace Dale, RI 02879**

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UUCSC

2023 Annual Business Meeting Agenda

June 11, 2023

Approval of the Minutes of the 2022 Annual Business Meeting

Acceptance of the Reports

Approval of the Annual Budget

Report of the Nominating Committee

Election of Officers and Directors

Election of Nominating Committee

Installation of the Board

Minutes of the UUCSC Annual Meeting June 12, 2022

Call to order: 11:12AM by President Elizabeth Donovan.

Invocation: Rev. Denis Paul asked that the spirit of a recently deceased member, David Hurdis, guide us by the example of his commitment to his beloved community.

A quorum of 36 members was needed and 60 were present.

MOTION: Linda Whyte Burrell moved that the minutes of the 2020-2021 Annual Meeting be accepted as written.

PASSED unanimously.

Reports from the president, minister, staff and committees were included in the Annual meeting packet. They will be posted on the website. The president urged members who have not yet read them do so because they give an amazing insight in to the amount of work done in the congregation.

Treasurer Mary Alice Kimball presented highlights of the budget stating that it is very similar to the one approved for the past year. Cost of living salary increases and higher fuel costs have influenced the budget projections that led to a proposed deficit of approximately \$20,000. In the past few years, deficits have been projected, but because of unexpected donations the accounts have ended in the black. Excess funds of \$15,000 from a year ago have been banked and can be used to cover a large part of the proposed deficit should no angel appear with unexpected funds.

MOTION: Val Follett moved that the budget be accepted as presented.

PASSED unanimously.

Penny Hall gave report on the Carolyn Steele Hurdis Social Justice Fund. The task force assigned by the Board to allocate the \$50,000 bequest left by Carolyn has decided to fund social justice projects at the rate of \$5000 per year. Proposals are currently being sought and those selected should be funded soon. Carolyn's daughter, Becky, wants to attend the first project. It is possible for people to make future donations to this social justice fund.

MOTION: Sandy Ketrow moves that the recommendations of the task force be accepted.

PASSED unanimously.

Nominating: Linda Whyte Burrell presented the slate.

Patricia Hindley Vice-president 2022-24

Elaine Stannard Director 2022-24

Russell Stokes Director 2022-2023 (filling Trish Hindley's vacated seat)

Mary Fulton Clerk 2022-2024

**MOTION: Patricia Hindley moves that the slate be accepted as presents.
PASSED unanimously.**

The nominating committee will begin again as the pandemic has created confusion.
Gail Burchard, Val Follett and Linda Whyte Burrell will serve with terms to be determined.

**MOTION: Elise Bender moves to accept the configuration of the nominating committee as presented.
PASSED unanimously.**

Expressions of gratitude and gifts were given to outgoing Board members Elise Bender and Bill Rodriguez.

Installation of the new Board.

Motion: Linda Whyte Burrell moves to adjourn at 12:47.

Respectfully submitted.
Mary Fulton, Clerk

President's Report

President's Annual Report June 11, 2023

UUCSC made great strides forward this year. We had our first full year with our Minister, Rev. Denis Paul, and also with our Congregational Administrator, Sara Kaplow. Both have proved to be invaluable members of our staff and our congregational life. We hope they will be with us for many years to come.

Our committees became fully functioning (though understaffed). Many of the new initiatives introduced by Rev. Denis have proved very popular—Beverages and Banter; the expanded use of Worship Associates; the monthly displays of worship theme-related artwork in the sanctuary; and the quarterly congregational dinners. Rev. Denis has worked extremely well with DRE Lee Cowan and MD Mike Galib and they truly serve us as a Ministry Team. We are very fortunate!

There was no doubt that we were ready to meet in person and to fully interact with each again after two years of Covid—we missed each other! But the year was not without its challenges. Covid 19 kept us on our toes and meeting the needs of ALL our congregants continued to prove difficult. The Board engaged the congregation and made thoughtful decisions based on all the available information. And the congregation rewarded us with patience and kindness.

During the summer we picnicked (or tried to — I think it rained every Monday night), we met for hikes, beach dates and kayak paddles and we met for services, every Sunday but one.

We began the church year with a congregational meeting in September to start the process of looking at who we really want to be. What matters to us most is our loving community, our connection to and acceptance of each other, and our spiritual growth. We will continue to look at how we can reach out and connect to our broader community and to invite them in. We participated in community events — parades, protests, discussions and more. We held our Holiday Fair, open to the whole community, for the first time since the

pandemic began. We made new tee-shirts. We figured out our live-streaming problems. (I can't say enough about our minister who is a "one-armed paper-hanger" when it comes to managing the Zoom worship services and making it look so easy!) We had our first new member ceremony in three years. We held book groups and had deep discussions about racial justice. And there is so much more!

Sad challenges included the loss of several of our beloved long-time members: former member Rick Medeiros, along with John Glasheen and Essjay Foulkrod, a seventh generation UU — all three with accomplishments too numerous to mention here.

We are a busy place but there is so much more to do. It has become undeniably clear that we cannot maintain our current methods of operation and remain fiscally prudent. Despite us all giving to the best of our abilities we are entering the new year with a deficit budget. This is not a surprise; we have been spared facing this reality by good fortune and particular circumstances the past few years. So, what do we do? That is a question for us all to answer together. It is scary but it is indicative of what is happening to all churches and many institutions—the world is changing, and we need to change with it. This question will likely be a big part of our work in the next few years.

As I finish up my two-year term as the President of the Board of UUCSC I am confident that we will find a way forward. And I intend to be here to participate in the discussion and decisions and the work. I am proud to have served as President and I want to thank each of you for trusting me and supporting me and each other as we made our way through some very difficult times. I knew when I accepted this position that it would be an opportunity to learn and it far exceeded my expectations in that regard. I learned not only about the operation of our congregation, but I learned new lessons in getting along with people and how to accept them where they are and how *everyone* has things to teach us. I learned so much from Rev. Denis and from each and every one of you. Thank you all for your hard work, your loving spirits and your commitment to making the world a better place.

With joy and gratitude and optimism for the future of UUCSC.

Elizabeth Donovan
President
May 25, 2023

Minister's Report

Minister's Annual Report May, 2023

Last year, after only a few months with you and more than two years of pandemic life, I ended my report by saying that I looked forward to another year with you all as we redefine "normal." Now, I am surprised just how normal the world feels again, even though it is undeniably different.

UUCSC is still a congregation that operates like a family, though the average age is inching upward every year. Despite the grayness of our hair, the energy for the work and love of the congregation remains high. Our commitment to social justice is as strong as it has ever been. There's a universal feeling among us that we want to be present to the world, not to increase our membership and income (though that would be nice) but to bring our saving message to the world. And our message *is* saving in this political environment that gets more hostile and divisive each year.

UUCSC looks a little different. We've lost some members to death, most recently Essjay, our oldest, at 97 years. We've lost others to new habits formed during the pandemic. But we've also gained new members. We just welcomed nine people, and have at least seven more lined up for membership in the fall. The sanctuary is graced by new artwork each month, reflecting our liturgical themes. We're welcoming the children and into the services more frequently. Perhaps best of all, we are eating together more often than we have in years, enjoying one another's company.

We started the year in September the way we always do, with Water Communion, plus an informal congregational meeting. We talked about the things that were working, how we wanted to move forward and where we wanted to focus our attention. We summed up our mission statement in 6 words: Welcoming; Loving; Growing Spiritually; Seeking Justice. Those words have since been committed to new tie-dyed t-shirts created by the Membership Committee.

We also talked about having the Coordinating Committee come up with a plan for evolving our model of leadership development from the Nominating Committee into something more sustainable over the long haul. That committee is still working on it, and in the meantime leadership has begun evolving from a "the sisterhood of getting it done," to more of a "siblinghood of getting it done."

In the last few months, it's become clear that the existing organizational model is unsustainable in the long term. When it was first created, it was based on organizational models typical of voluntary associations in the post-war era: men made the decisions (the board) and women did the work (committees). Here at UUCSC women have made most of the decisions and done most of the work. Regardless of gender, the nature of the work has changed. Much of what used to take gaggles of volunteers can now happen with one computer and a few key strokes by one person. (Remember typed newsletters, mimeos and hand-addressed envelopes?) Maybe we could do with fewer committees?

Meanwhile, the demands of the treasurer have exploded over that last 20 years, because of complex software systems, government regulations at every level, and requirements of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Maybe we could divide tasks between two or three people, including a paid staff person?

The world has changed, and not just because of Covid-19. The world has just changed. It is changing, and that isn't going to stop.

One thing is clear: While other denominations are flailing, we are thriving. We are thriving because of the love, vision and commitment of the members, leaders and staff of this congregation. We are thriving because Unitarian Universalism is a theology the world needs right now. We are thriving because we see the opportunities in all of the challenges that face us.

I'm looking forward to the year ahead with you. I can't wait to see what we come up with next.

In Peace,
Rev. Denis Paul

2022-2023 UUCSC RE Committee Annual Report

RE Committee: Lee Cowan (temporary chair), Bethany Sorrentino, Barbara Pagh, Pam Santos, Jenny Rebecca, Amber Collins

The RE program has 32 children and youth registered this year. We have an average of 10 kids attend each Sunday.

We have met many of our goals this year and have plans for next year:

1. Run OWL: This has been highly successful! We've helped to run an 8-9th grade class at WUC and a 10th-12th grade class held here and at WUC with 6 kids from our congregation attending. We plan to host a training in the fall for elementary aged facilitators so we can offer classes for that age group next year.
2. Build Community: Internally: Our community dinners have been smashing hits! Our community art pieces have been beautiful visual examples of community. Strong sharing circles every Sunday that we're downstairs. And the Sidekicks program is off to a great start! UU Community: Creating and maintaining a partnership with WUC has been great UU community building. Hosting the OWL training and meeting people from three different congregations. Broader Community: We haven't reached out to the wider community specifically with the kids, but did participate in SK Pride. We'd like to reach out much more next year.
3. Congregant Visits to RE: Nick Smith is single handedly making this happen consistently, leading us in song. And Barbara Pagh came to help us make dozens of sheets of beautiful handmade paper. We plan to expand this next year by inviting congregants down for one-time visits just to hold space with us, as "Spiritual Partners."
4. Incorporate and Live our UU Principles: The principles were regularly discussed and linked with activities and crafts.

RE really shined with this year's Special Events and Services, which included a Birthday Party, Chalica Dinner, Winter Solstice, Solstice Labyrinth walk, Bread Communion, Valentines Day, and will include an RE Sunday service and Flower Communion.

One request we have from the congregation is input on what we should keep in our archives from the DRE office. We would like to clear it out and want to make sure we save anything of significance for our congregation's historical records.

Many blessings,
Lee Cowan
Submitted May 16, 2023

2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE ASSISTANT

Below are notes pertaining to my position this year as Finance Assistant:

- My primary duties which consume most of my time are working on daily and monthly financial tasks. This includes paying invoices on a timely basis and recording my payments and any manual checks that are paid by the administrator in QuickBooks. Also summarizing all collections deposited by Jeff into Washington Trust and any PayPal contributions deposited into Bank Newport which are also reported to me by Jeff. I also work with Mary Alice to make sure the payroll is reported to the payroll processing company in order to process the monthly payroll accurately and on time. Mary Alice summarizes the payroll in order for me to enter it into QuickBooks. Part of the month end activities include the reconciliation of all of the bank accounts, running preliminary reports for Mary Alice's review. After she does a thorough review, she sends me any correcting entries needed and also some normal month end entries that cannot be made until everything is posted and reviewed.
- Year-end financial activities also take a lot of time and review after the month of June is closed. There are many reports that need to be prepared in order to confirm reporting accuracy. These reports are used for reporting to the Finance Committee, and also for yearly UUA reports. This year we did not have to report to Bank Newport since the mortgage balance is so low, but we did still prepare the reports.
- Calendar year end tasks include issuing 1099's and issuing W 2's to the staff.
- Mary Alice completed the UUA financial section this year and I assisted as needed.
- The Workers Compensation audit was completed online with a small increase due to additional payroll.
- After the budgets are finalized, they are entered into QuickBooks. provided requested information pertaining to the current year budget and next year's budget in order to help develop accurate estimates for next year. During the year I also provided budget versus actual information to staff and various committees as requested.
- This year we transitioned the pension from TIAA to Empower. In the past we were uploading a file to TIAA and now the data is entered directly into the Empower website and the payments are made through an EFT transaction.
- Support was provided to committees as requested, such as Finance, Facilities and others with financial analysis, and other support as needed.

Thanks for all your support and wishing everyone a great summer.

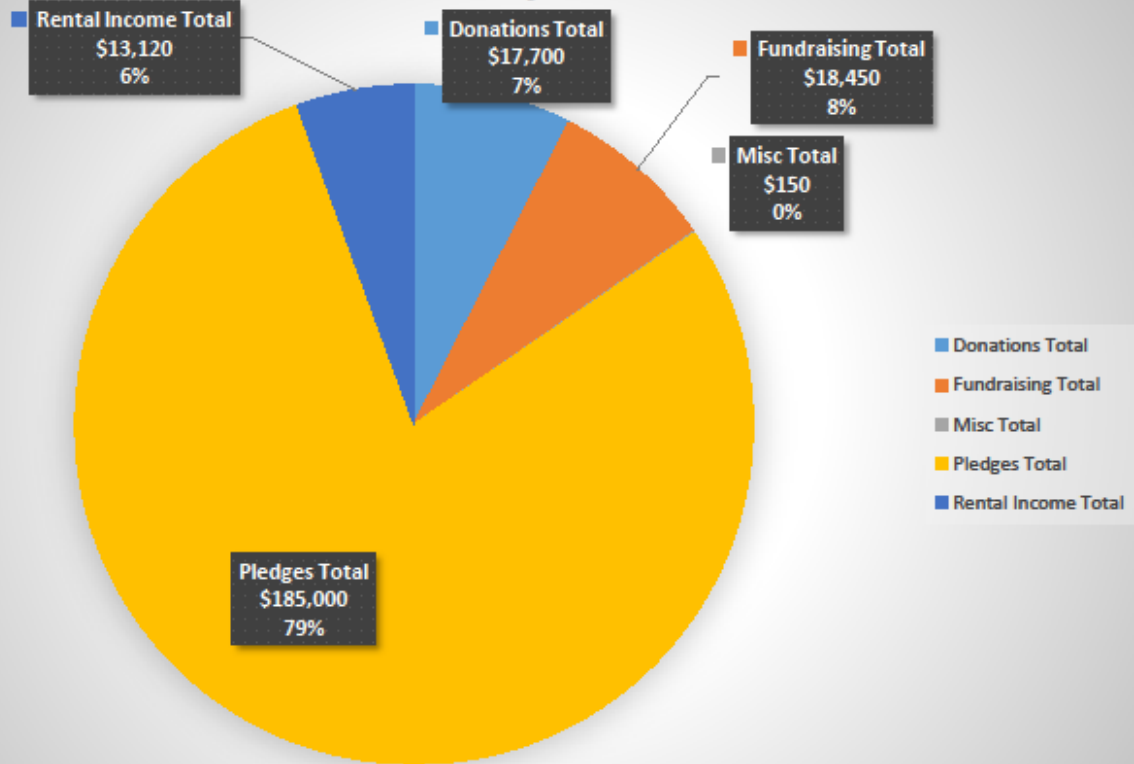
Regards,
Sue

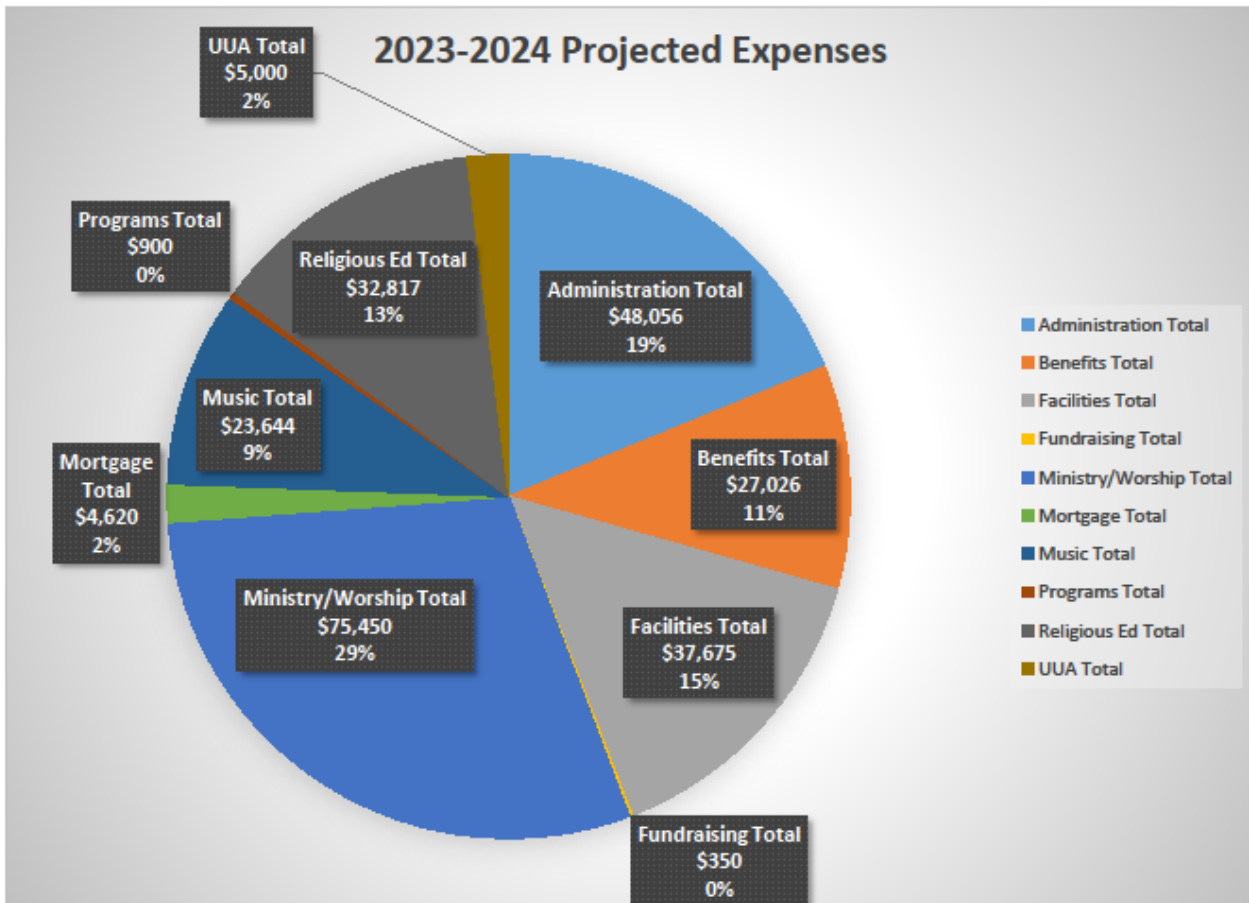
Budget Summary

Projected Budget 2023-2024

	<u>2023-2024</u>
	<u>Projected</u>
	<u>Budget</u>
Income	
Donations Total	17,700.00
Fundraising Total	18,450.00
Misc Total	150.00
Pledges Total	185,000.00
Rental Income Total	13,120.00
Grand Total	234,420.00
Expenses	
Administration Total	48,056.00
Benefits Total	27,025.50
Facilities Total	37,675.00
Fundraising Total	350.00
Ministry/Worship Tot	75,450.00
Mortgage Total	4,620.00
Music Total	23,643.50
Programs Total	900.00
Religious Ed Total	32,817.20
UUA Total	5,000.00
Grand Total	255,537.20
Net Profit/Loss	-21,117.20

2023-2024 Projected Income





Mary Alice Kimball, Treasurer

Facilities Committee Report

FACILITIES TEAM 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Team Members: Sally Barney, Ed Burrell, Guy Latour, Barbara Nowicki, Janice Marielle, Chris DePaola, Pete Migliaccio and Jean Burke

Accomplishments:

- Walkway from parking to ramp completed
- Center railing at Entrance installed in honor of Nina Collier

- Broken & missing ceiling tiles in RE replaced
- Lighting of North parking area now working
- Paint under sink in nursery removed and shelf repaired
- Hole at landing of stairs from kitchen to basement repaired and painted
- Unused items in Oneto Room closet and under stairs leading to furnace room removed
- Removed logs outside nursery, reset loose stones in retaining wall in RE play area and remove edging and pipes along sidewalk in RE play area
- Carpenter bee holes at entrance treated
- Installed additional gutter downspout at Entrance to prevent water cascading on ramp and freezing
- Removed tiny nonfunctional toilet in RE
- Repaired railing of stairs outside Choir Room
- Created and maintained new perennial and herb garden at Entrance garden
- Completely re-worked and maintained the established Entrance garden
- Obtained diagnosis of cause of bubbling paint in sanctuary (moisture penetrating exterior brick wall via cracked bricks, failed caulk etc.) and obtained quotes to repair, moisture proof and repaint

SO, WHAT IS AHEAD:

- Solve moisture problem on east wall of sanctuary
 - Waterproof \$25,000 with 6-10 life expectancy, or
 - Install siding (need to determine feasibility and cost)
- Resolve bubbling paint problem on east wall of sanctuary and gender neutral bathroom
 - Scrape and plaster \$1,000
 - Repaint w/unknown life expectancy unless moisture solved
 - Two Brothers: \$4068
 - DMP: \$7,823
- Install new windows in Minister's and Admin Offices and rework walls \$15,000 - 25,000
- Replace fire doors in RE - need quotes
- Numerous other small tasks

Respectfully submitted,
Sally Barney and Jean E. Burke

Finance Committee Report

Finance Committee - Annual Report - June, 2023

Your Finance Committee is comprised of Aline Couture – Chair, Mary Alice Kimball – Treasurer, Jeff Berry-Collector, Sue Strakosch, Patrick Gilligan, Sandy Ketrow and Marcia Boyd.

Our team is growing, as two new members have joined us this year. Barbara Nowicki in November and Brietta (Brie) Oaks joined after attending our meeting in May. They both bring a wealth of knowledge and experience as we share the tasks needed to successfully run UUCSC. We are thrilled they have joined us!

This year we received many gifts from you, our congregation.

When the Stewardship Campaign did not reach our goal, YOU, the Congregation responded generously in committing to pay an additional month of pledge dollars and we raised over \$16,000 in one week.

We also received pledge payments from prior years.

We are most grateful to our generous Community.

More Good News...

The generous bequest from our beloved Carolyn Hurdis is being used to provide funds to offer THREE OWL (Our Whole Lives) programs for different age groups. Also, a grant was given to the Peacedale Elementary PTO to hold a wonderful program providing cultural enrichment to the Title 1 School and expose the students and staff to the indigenous community in which they live.

A task group comprised of Jeff Berry, Penny Hall, Gail Burchard and Caleb Grant are soliciting ideas from the congregation for additional uses of these funds. Carolyn's causes were Education and Social Justice.

Nina Collier's daughter, Susan, gave the UUCSC a gift of a middle railing on our front steps in remembrance of her mother. We thank Nina's family for remembering her with this thoughtful gift.

Our Living Legacy Campaign (OLL) continued to receive pledged funds. Our original mortgage was \$500,000 in 2008 when we purchased our building.

As of June 2019 the mortgage was \$341,818 and through our Campaign we have reduced this mortgage by \$270,000.

The balance is now \$40,960 (as of April 2023). Our interest rate was lowered in August 2021 to 2.780% and our mortgage payment is \$381.30, down from the original \$2,500 monthly. Because of this low interest rate, Bank Newport (holder of the mortgage) recommended we continue the monthly payment rather than pay it down in large amounts as we have done in the past. We continue to monitor this approach with each interest rate adjustment.

We currently hold \$21,375 in reserve. The Board, in discussion with the Finance Committee, decide the best use for these funds – either to reduce mortgage or use the monies for Capital Expenditures to fix our building.

This is remarkable – and We Thank All of YOU!

Budget for 2023-2024...

Our budget for the year 2023-2024 has been prepared and is ready for your approval. We are estimating that it will be a deficit budget. While this is not good news, your finance committee and Board of Directors are working to reduce this gap and making future plans toward a balanced budget.

Finally...

We need to hear from you. If you haven't already done so, please fill out a pledge card so we can better anticipate next year's income. We recognize that in these changing times, finances can change, and these pledges can be revisited if that occurs.

A special **Thank You** to all our members for all your support. Your pledges enable us to plan effectively.

Respectfully submitted by UUCSC 2022-2023 Treasurer, Mary Alice Kimball, and your Finance Committee

[Link to Pledge Card](#)

Stewardship Committee Report

Stewardship Committee Report 2023-24 Pledge Campaign

The committee is composed of Mary Fulton, Sky Kimball and Debbie Johnson.

The campaign began on 2/14/23 and ended 3/21/23. The theme was BEE-LOVED Community. The pledge card was revised to allow for information about estate planning and a place added indicating no pledge. The information on the UUCSC website was updated with the current letter and pledge form. 150 packets were mailed to every identified member and friend. 80 responded. The goal was set for \$200,000 although this goal was not attained in the previous year. On 3/21 the pledges totaled only \$162,000. President Elizabeth Donovan made a special appeal for pledges to be amended. Several people did so and the final total for the campaign is \$178,000. The need for additional fund raising is still apparent.

Mary Fulton will chair the Stewardship committee for a third year. The theme will be A LOVING INVESTMENT. Mary is actively seeking a replacement for 25/26. The Stewardship notebook has been updated and will be ready to pass along to the next chair.

Communications/Publicity Committee

Annual Report for the Communications Committee, 2022-23

The Communications Committee membership remains stable and committed to their work. The chair, with active support from the committee, continued to work closely with the staff to provide current information to the congregation and beyond through the UUCSC website <https://uusouthcountryri.org>, our weekly newsletter titled UUCSC NEWS AND UPDATES, and our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/UUCSC/>.

Analytics of all digital platforms show continued increase in use by our congregation and beyond. It appears that the congregation is developing higher expectations for current news and accessible information, which encourages our progress forward.

Besides our typical budget items for Zoom, the website and Constant Contact, we purchased 30 radio ads on the Classical Radio Station WCRI 95.9 FM for a month in March-April as outreach for new members. We will be determining through anecdotal reports if this expenditure produced any results. If so, we have budgeted for two more months in 2023-24.

One thread throughout the year was the initiation of a discussion to help all committees to use Google Drive to maintain records and transition when chair changes.

We met on Zoom regularly at 4:00 PM every other month in the week preceding the scheduled Coordinating Council meetings (Sept., Nov., Mar., May and held one additional meeting in March.) We plan to continue this schedule for the next year.

Linda Dupuis, who managed the Membership Directory, resigned from the Communications Committee in May.

Committee Members:

Etta Zasloff – Website content, Newsletter Editor

Betsy Dalton – Facebook

Will Bender - Webmaster

Sky Kimball – Zoom Tech +

Barbara Pagh - Photographer

Elizabeth Donovan – Board Liaison

The committee welcomes new members with an interest in improving communications at UUCSC.

Submitted by Etta Zasloff

Membership Committee Report

Membership Committee Annual Report 2023

Members: Gerre Alderwick, Jeanne Arthur, Charlie Donnelly, Sky Kimball, Patience Peck (joined in April), Linda Dupuis (left in April) and Val Follett, Chair

The Membership Committee welcomed nine new or returning members this Spring.

The contents of the Path to Membership folder and the Visitor Packet were updated this year.

We offered a newcomer Meet and Greet luncheon in March, a luncheon and New to UU class in April, followed by the New Member Sunday on May 7, with refreshments following. New members were given a rose, a copy of [A Chosen Faith](#), and one of our brand new t-shirts – designed by a subcommittee of Gerre Alderwick, Jeanne Arthur and Charlie Donnelly.

The tie-dye t-shirts are available for purchase for \$20 after church many Sundays.

The Committee continued to greet attendees each Sunday, along with our band of merry Ushers. We made new and sturdier name-tags for the congregation.

A Welcome letter was sent to anyone filling out a Welcome card. Contact was maintained in person on Sunday mornings and through emails.

Linda joined the Committee as the keeper of the Directory, which was weighing her down. In April, Charlie, Sky and Val agreed to take on that task. We are still on a learning curve.

We worked at calling “the missing” in our Directory, to update it. We need to put more effort into that task next year.

Respectfully submitted,

Val Follett, Chair

Music Committee Report

Music Committee members: chair Alison Buffum, Susan Pavlow, Nick Smith, Sandy Ketrow

Our music program steadily returned to normal this year. the choir sang without masks, put masks on when not singing for the first part of the year. The choir is now maskless, which makes everything easier.

The choir's numbers have stayed steady but members travel a lot, so Mike's had to contend with "who will be here when," which could be challenging at times.

The choir performed the Christmas Eve service with gusto (and the help of some seasoned singers).

Then new pieces were perfected and the choir performed a concert along with Mike's other choir, "Sine Nomine." That endeavor was quite moving and successful.

Mike continues to provide the choir with interesting new pieces. He continues to teach skills such as how to count while singing in order to be precise.

A shout out to Jane and Lou Rubenstein for continuing to maintain our Music Library.

The annual music service is being planned for June 11th this year. As in past years (before covid), Mike will get the day off and we will have guest UUCSC musicians filling in

It's been an eclectic and fun year.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Buffum

2022-23 Personnel Committee Annual Report

Membership:

Elizabeth Dalton, Chairperson

Susan Pavlow, Member

Clare Sartori, Member

Ann Seemann, Member

Nick Smith, Member

Purpose:

The UUCSC Personnel Committee recommends and maintains staff policies, procedures, and practices in order to promote harmonious and productive relations between staff and congregation. The Personnel Committee facilitates a staff needs assessment and performance evaluation annually. The Personnel Committee ensures that the UUCSC is staffed appropriately with qualified personnel who meet or exceed performance expectations and demonstrate commitment to the UUCSC and its work. The PC is not responsible for oversight of or negotiation with the minister. This responsibility is shared by the Board and Committee on Ministry.

2022-2023 Activities:

Staff Contracts: In 2022-23, the Personnel Committee worked cooperatively with the Financial Committee and the Board of Directors in the development/review/revision/implementation of contracts for continuing staff: Michael Galib, Music Director; Lee Cowan, Director of Religious Education; Sara Kaplow, Congregational Administrator; and Susan Rogala, Bookkeeper. Additionally, the Personnel Committee assisted with the development and implementation of letters of agreement for UUCSC nursery aides, in collaboration with Lee Cowen and the Board. While Personnel is not directly involved in the development/revision of the Minister's contract, Personnel is available to assist the Board on this issue, as needed.

Meetings: In 2022-23, the Personnel Committee met regularly (approximately every 2 months) to review personnel status, current work needed according to the Personnel Committee calendar (available in the Personnel Committee Handbook on the UUCSC website), and any issues or problems to be addressed. Meetings were held on Zoom or in person, depending upon need and member availability.

Handbook Review and Development/Revision: The Personnel Committee supports the work of the staff and the various committees involved with the staff. To this end, 5 Handbooks are available with concise information outlining the work of these committees in collaboration with staff. All Handbooks are available on the UUCSC website. This year, the Personnel Committee Handbook was developed and the RE Director & Committee Handbook was reviewed and revised. Both Handbooks were approved by the BOD on 5/17/23.

Proposed for 2023-24:

Comprehensive Policy Handbook Review: The Personnel Committee will review and revise the remaining Handbooks, which include the Congregational Administrator Handbook, the Search Committee Handbook, and the Music Committee Handbook. Updated versions of each of these handbooks will be presented to the BOD for approval and once approved, will be posted to the UUCSC website. Such document reviews, contract work, staff liaison work, and regular meetings will continue to take place throughout 2023-24.

Submitted by Elizabeth Dalton, Chairperson

Social Justice Report

2022-2023 Social Justice Committee Annual Report

Cathy Solomon, Chair
Penny Hall, member
Nancy Richman, member
Etta Zasloff, member

Background

In May 2022, a survey of the congregation indicated that the three most important social justice topics were Environmental Justice/Climate Change, Racial Justice and Women's Equality.

During the summer, Cathy created an advisory team to help guide the UUCSC Social Justice agenda. The advisory team includes Penny Hall, Nancy Richman and Etta Zasloff. The advisory team generally meets monthly between Sept and June.

Accomplishments

- Mission Statement: A new mission statement was created: Learn, Educate, Advocate.
- Anti-Racism Committee: Nancy Richman volunteered to lead the twice monthly Anti-Racism discussion group. Her annual summary is included within this report.
- Becoming a Better Neighbor” Several South County social service organizations were highlighted over the year to learn about what services they provide. Those included were The Warm Center, RICAN, and the Jonnycake Center in Peace Dale.
- Communication: The UUCSC Social Justice page was updated to be more relevant. And a Call To Action email was created to alert those members who choose to be on the list of urgent advocacy opportunities going on in our area.

- Legislative Action: Monthly participation in the UU Legislative Ministry of RI. During the year, we held legislative forums on climate action and health care.
- Women’s Equality: The Social Justice team signed on as a member of a coalition to help pass the Equality in Abortion Care Act which would eliminate health insurance bans that prevented lower income women from obtaining abortion care.
- Social Justice Coalition in South County: UUCSC joined with Peace Dale Congregational Church in reaching out to other faith based organizations to fight hate and support one another in our outreach efforts. Several meetings have been held and discussions continue as to what shape this will take.
- Climate....Changed! A six part Zoom series on environmental/climate change issues took place from March 22 through April 25. Folks from other congregations including Peace Dale Congregational and St. Augustine also attended.
- United Against Hate: UUCSC Social Justice along with the US Attorney’s Office and Tri-County Community Action Agency are co-sponsoring a workshop on identifying, reporting and preventing acts of hate on May 31st at the Prout School auditorium.
- Meeting on 6/13 with Westminster UU Social Justice Group to explore areas we can work together.
- Other Community Support
 - Pride Event, Wakefield
 - Trans Day of Joy, Wakefield
 - Earth Day Cleanup in South Kingstown, April 22
 - Peace Parade, Wakefield, April
 - South Kingstown 300th Anniversary parade, June 17
 - Pride Event
- Anti-Racism Committee, *submitted by Nancy Richman*

The anti-racism group meets on the second and fourth Mondays of each month, from September through June. Over the course of the year, the group decided to intentionally include antisemitism under the umbrella of this group. Meetings were regularly attended by a consistent membership of 10-12, with others that attended sporadically throughout the year. Two meetings included attendees who were not UUCSC members or friends. Over the course of the year, we had lively, engaged discussions on a range of topics, readings, books, workshops, and films including:

- The 3-part PBS series by Ken Burns, U.S. and the Holocaust
 - The Pyramid of Hate and the Pyramid of Love
 - Through role plays we practiced engaging in effective and constructive “crucial conversations” across differences, while avoiding the common traps and flash points.
 - The podcast Breaking our Addiction to Contempt
 - The film: Who we are: A chronicle of racism in America
 - The UU 8th principle
 - The article: New ADL Report Shows Alarming Rise of Antisemitic Behavior in Schools
 - TED Talk: Loretta Ross – Don’t Call People Out, Call Them In
 - The workshop, White Supremacy in Rhode Island
 - The online talk: Antisemitism is Everyone’s Concern
- **Share the Plate**

Barbara Beckwith took charge of STP in August and is doing a great job. For the period of July 2022 through April we have raised \$3,150.78 for local non-profit agencies. These include:

Movement Education Outdoors
 Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
 Mixed Magic Theatre
 Southern Rhode Island Volunteers
 Friends of the Saugatucket
 Jonnnycake Center for Hope (full amount won’t be posted until end of June)

Goals

- Community Support:
 1. Continue to show up in support of community events.
 2. Stand up against hate and prejudice.
 3. Support causes that are in line with our principles.
 4. Learn more about needs in the community. Educate the congregation about it and determine appropriate actions.
 5. Advocate for action. Make a difference.
- Environmental/climate Goals
 1. Convene a group to discuss reinstatement of UU Green Sanctuary
 2. Continue to educate congregation and community on good environmental practices
 3. Create a climate resiliency plan for UU and ultimately, for the community
- Racial Justice
 1. Continue with discussion group, with more focus on education and advocacy
 2. Expand racial justice education to include the community
 3. Begin to focus on justice for those who have been unjustly incarcerated.
- Women’s Rights - Get involved in passing the ERA

- Other causes - do we have the bandwidth to take these on?
 1. Housing
 2. Immigration
 3. Gun safety

Challenges

- Will need a new anti-racism committee facilitator if Nancy Richman is elected board president
- Need a person to focus on climate change
- More involvement from the congregation

Needs from board, staff, congregation

Innovative ways we can offer out our facility to non-profits to help people and to also bring in income?

Investment in audio visual materials that would enable us to host film series or discussions for which we could charge an admission fee.

Worship Committee Report

2022-2023 UUCSC Worship Committee Annual Report

Adria Evans, Chair.

Members: Amber Collins, Ann Seemann, Kathy Swink, Nancy Richman, Sue Strakosch (plus Rev Denis and Lee Cowen)

UUCSC held 50 Sunday services between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. (July 4th no service; June 26 GA service). Of these, 15 were officiated by members of the Worship Committee, and most included invited speakers. 15 is fewer than in the past because Lee Cowan took on 4 intergenerational services. In addition, members of Worship (and other congregants) have been on the bima (Hebrew for the stage area) aiding Rev Denis. Several delivered "Spiritual Reflections."

In addition, Worship has organized and maintained Virtual Ushers to host our services via zoom. This was possible due to the technical experimentation and persistence of Rev Denis and Nancy Richman and to Kathy Swink's soliciting congregants and WC members to be Virtual Ushers. The tech challenges and glitches persist and keep us inventive and humble.

Producing our services also includes publicity through the newsletter and the website and organizing the Order of Service for that week.

Our main goal is to continue to create meaningful experiences for the congregation.

Challenges. As we face the summer (and for Christmas and the New Year), one challenge is to have music for some of the services. With Michael and the choir on vacation, we have to seek musicians out and often decide about their selections. I WOULD LIKE an operating group of music people to actively join in our creation. Also, though we would like some outdoor services, this entails rounding up folks to move tables, some chairs, and hymnals; again there's extra labor in that endeavor. It also would be helpful to have more folks competent as Virtual Ushers.

Our Joys: Our sustained rapport with Rev Denis, Michael, and Lee. Our budget, which allows us to support speakers. That folks from Facilities and Membership keep our Sundays comfortable and friendly. Publicity help from Etta and Sara who produce the newsletter and update our home page each week.

We could use another active member.

Respectfully submitted,

Adria Evans, Chair

May 25, 2023

Nominating Committee Report

Report of the Nominating Committee

Nominees and continuing members of the Board of Directors:

President	NANCY RICHMAN	2023-2025
Vice-President	Patricia Hindley	2022-2024
Clerk	Mary Fulton	2022-2024
Treasurer	vacant	2023-2025
Director at-large	CHARLIE DONNELLY	2023-2025
Director at-large	RUSSELL STOKES	2023-2025
Director at-large	BETHANY SORRENTINO	2023-2024

Nominee and continuing on Nominating Committee

Linda Whyte Burrell	2021-2024
Valerie Follett	2022-2025
HARRY BUFFUM	2023-2026

Those in capital letters are presented to be elected on June 11, 2023. Others are continuing in their current positions.

Our nominee for President, while just recently welcomed as a member of UUCSC, has a history as a UU, and has strong experience in Board work and leadership. Nancy has attended our Board meetings most of the past year, and was appointed by the Board of Directors two months ago to fill a vacancy.

Bethany, too, was recently welcomed as a member of UUCSC, and has a long relationship with us having served as our DRE.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Burchard, Val Follett, and Linda Whyte Burrell, chair

Pastoral Care Report

Pastoral Care Committee

Under the compassionate and joyful leadership and guidance of Rev Denis, the members of the Pastoral Care Committee serve in the ministry of being a presence to Members and Friends of UUCSC in times of crisis. We supplement Rev Denis in attending to congregants when appropriate, and in following up when directed by him.

Any congregant aware of a need, can contact any member of the committee.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Beckwith, Sky Kimball and Linda Whyte Burrell, chairperson

Helping Hands Report

2022-2023 UUCSC Helping Hands Annual Report

Helping Hands Workgroup: Bethany Sorrentino, coordinator
Randi Marten, co-coordinator

It has been a pleasure to facilitate connections between those in our community with needs and those who are willing to lend a hand.

We continue to maintain lists of around 30 congregants willing to help with meal preparation and delivery, transportation, friendly cards or visits, etc. This year, we have had around 10 requests, most of which we were able to assist with. We have provided meals, rides, help organizing storage areas, and respite care to congregants. For the few requests that we were not able to facilitate, we were able to provide recommendations or referrals to services in the wider community that could be of use.

We have also established a new email address for requests: uuhelpinghands@gmail.com. We are slowly updating this in the appropriate areas. Recently, I experimented with sending out a general email to our volunteers listing recent requests. This received a lot of positive feedback, and I plan to grow this into a regular (although still occasional!) communication method.

One area I'd like to grow in is proactively reaching out to members of our congregation who we know are going through hard times. Since both of the Helping Hands coordinators are not regularly in services, it would be helpful to add another person to our team who is a regular in-person and can update us on those we might reach out to.

Other than that, it has been a pleasure to be in this role and I look forward to continuing this important work.

With love,
Bethany Sorrentino
Submitted May 25, 2023